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TREASURY OF TRUTH

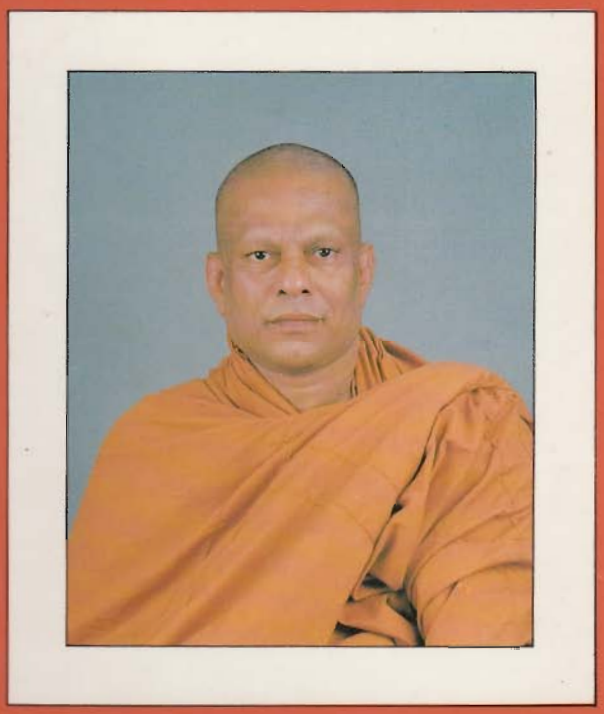
ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA



By Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero

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About the Author



Venerable Weragoda Sārada Mahā Thēro, the Author of The Treasury of Truth (Illustrated Dhammapada) was born in Sri Lanka in 1941. He was ordained a Buddhist monk in 1953, when he was just 12.

He graduated from the Vidyodaya University of Ceylon (Now Sri Jayawardenepura University, Sri Lanka) in 1964. Proficient in Pāli, Sanskrit, Sinhala and Buddhism, he was the Principal of Indurupathvila University College from 1965 to 1967 and also of Suddharmārama University College from 1967 to 1969.

Starting his mission of service to International Buddhism and to the spread of the Buddha-word worldwide, Ven. Sārada Mahā Thero, left Sri Lanka for Penang, Malaysia in 1969. There, he was Principal of the Mahindarama Sunday Pāli School until 1979.

In 1979, he came over to Singapore and founded The Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre. Currently too he is the Chief Resident Monk of the Centre. One of the Founders of American Sri Lanka Buddhist Association, Ven. Sārada Thero is still the Director of that Association.

Ven. Sārada Mahā Thero is the Founder-President of Japan-Sri Lanka Buddhist Centre. He is currently the General-Secretary of that Association. He is the Chief Incumbent Monk of the Jayanthi Viharaya, Weragoda, Sri Lanka.

The most outstanding service Ven. Sārada Mahā Thero renders to the Teaching of the Buddha is the publication of books on Buddhism. About a million copies of Buddhist works published by him, have been distributed free, worldwide. Todate, he has published 68 books, of which six have been authored by him. These titles are: Why Fear Death?, The Buddha Word, Meditation on Loving Kindness, Buddhist Way of Meditation, Buddhism for Beginners and Life of the Buddha in Pictures. The last title has proved the most popular of his books so far. His *magnum opus* is the monumental Treasury of Truth, translation of Dhammapada adorned with 423, especially commissioned paintings illustrating each of the 423 verses in Dhammapada.

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Preface

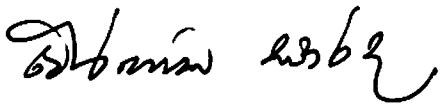
(To the Second Edition)

The initial printing of **"TREASURY OF TRUTH" – 'Illustrated Dhammapada'**, elicited an overwhelming response, from all quarters of the globe. Although we are reluctant to talk extensively about our achievement, the objective truth, has invariably to be stated. Immediately on its appearance, we were inundated by enquiries. With no resort even to an iota of exaggeration, it must be stated that the **Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre** received over 2000 telephone calls in just one single day from enthusiasts who were keen to obtain copies of this work. Most of these enquiries were accompanied by generous offers of donations. In the history of Buddhist Publications, there has never been such a stunning phenomenon.

This solid and exuberant support, left us with no other alternative than to undertake a reprint of our publication. A reprint of a monumental work like the **'Illustrated Dhammapada'** is as exacting an undertaking as its initial printing itself. We made use of this reprinting to insert a few refinements in the text and in its illustrations. Once again I had to count on a team of supporters to see to it that the reprint was brought out in record time. Above all, I am deeply indebted to all those enthusiastic supporters of this publication project who made this early reprint possible.

As author of this work I am deeply committed to the idea of spreading the word of the Buddha world-wide. This work, and all the other books I have been able to publish so far, are distributed free as gifts of Dhamma. But I have always had the blessing of generous donations from well-wishers, whose support ensures the continuation of my mission. The reprint of Illustrated Dhammapada, just a couple of months after it was published originally, is by and large a tribute to all those who thought it proper to make donations. May the blessings of the Triple Gem, bring about success, prosperity and long life to all those who associated themselves with the work at many levels.

With Metta.



Ven. W. Sarada Maha Thero
Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre,
Singapore.
25th May 1994.

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A Radiant Sun

In this world of storm and strife, hatred and violence, the message of the Buddha shines like a radiant sun. Perhaps at no time was that message more needed than in the world of the atomic and hydrogen bombs. Two thousand five hundred years have only added to the vitality and truth of that message. Let us remember that immortal message and try to fashion our thoughts and actions in the light of that teaching. We may face with equanimity even the terrors of the atomic bomb age and help a little in promoting right thinking and right action.

Sri Nehru - Former Prime Minister of India

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COVER: The Buddha's Statue in the Image House of Jayanthi Viharaya, Weragoda, Meetiyagoda, Sri Lanka erected on 3 June, 1953. It is inarguable one of the most beautiful and serene looking image of the Buddha ever constructed. The Author wishes to transfer all the merits that he has accrued in printing Buddhist literature and propagating Buddhism to his late Teacher the Venerable Pandit Yatalamatte Wajiranana Maha Nayaka Thero who was the late Chief Monk of Jayanti Viharaya, Weragoda, Meetiyagoda, Sri Lanka. It was his unending efforts that saw to the successful erection of the Statue.

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ILLUSTRATED
DHAMMAPADA

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Man who achieved a great victory

One of the first scholars to begin the work of translating the Pali Literature into English, was the son of a well-known clergyman. His object in undertaking the work was to prove the superiority of Christianity over Buddhism. He failed in this task but he achieved a greater victory than he expected. He became a Buddhist. We must never forget the happy chance which prompted him to undertake this work and thereby make the precious Dhamma available to thousands in the West. The name of this great scholar was Dr. Rhys Davids.

Ven. A. Mahinda, "Blue Print of Happiness"

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269	The sage totally rejects all evil. He weighs up both worlds. So he is called a sage.	574
270	Killing makes man ignoble. Non-violence towards all beings confers nobility on man.	576
271	Not by rites or rituals, nor by profound learning, not by meditative calm nor by life in solitude.	578
272	...has a monk the bliss of his recluse life, with Nibbānic goal still unreached.	580

MAGGA VAGGA — **CHAPTER 20** — Page
The Path — Number of Verses 17 — No.

273	Best among ways the Noble Path, Ariyan Truths among truths. The Seer among beings.	584
274	This way and none other for purified vision. Enter thereupon and defy all evil.	586
275	Treading this path you shall terminate all suffering. Realising the way, I've made it known.	588
276	Do ye strive yourselves. Buddhas only teach the way. Tread the path and be ye released.	590
277	All conditioned things are transient. Disillusionment through this knowledge leads to release.	592
278	All conditioned things are sorrow-fraught. This knowledge clears your path...	594
279	All things are without self. This disillusionment leads to the path...	596
280	Unenterprising, youthful but lazy, irresolute and weak, fail in their way to wisdom.	598
281	Enter the Path revealed to you by the sages. Restrain yourselves in body, mind and speech.	600
282	From energetic application springs wisdom. Enter upon the way for its increase.	602
283	Cut down the forest, no single tree. 'Tis the forest that begets fear. Be ye freed of that.	604
284	As long as man's passion for woman remains uncut, the mind's held in bondage.	606
285	Cut off passions, like breaking a lily with one's hand. Pursue the path of peace to Nibbāna.	608
286	The unwise plans for the future from season to season, oblivious to dangers which inhere.	610
287	Man dotes on children and wealth. But death sweeps him like a flood a sleeping village.	612
288	When death comes, neither parents, nor children nor kinsmen can protect one.	614
289	Knowing the truth of this, the virtuous and wise should soon clear the path to Nibbāna.	616

PAKIṆṆAKA VAGGA — **CHAPTER 21** — Page
Miscellaneous — Number of Verses 16 — No.

290	Viewing the possibility of greater happiness, the wise should give up the lesser ones.	620
291	Who so causes pain to others and expects happiness, will not be freed from tangles of enmity.	622
292	Defilements increase in them who do what is not to be done and neglect what should be done.	624
293	Constantly contemplative on the body, mindful and alert, they wear off their defilements.	626
294	All failings destroyed, vision put right, and senses truly controlled, he's the wholly perfect man.	628
295	Ridding mind-hindrances with scepticism as the fifth...he's the thoroughly perfect man.	630
296	Mindful of the Buddha, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	632
297	Mindful of the Dhamma, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	634
298	Mindful of the Sangha, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	636
299	Mindful of the body, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	638
300	Delighting in harmlessness, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	640
301	With a mind delighting in self-culture, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	642
302	To renounce and delight therein are difficult. Home is painful too. Let not pain hunt you.	644
303	The confident and virtuous, with wealth and fame, they are praised wherever they go.	646
304	The virtuous are visible from afar. The unworthy, like arrows at night, aren't seen tho' near.	648
305	Taming oneself, alone everywhere, one should ever delight in the woods.	650

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	NIRAYA VAGGA	CHAPTER 22	Page
	Hell	Number of Verses 14	No.
306	He who asserts what's not true and he who denies what's true, both suffer equally in hell.		654
307	Many who don the dyed robe, undisciplined and of sinful ways, thereby get reborn in hell.		656
308	Better for an undisciplined sinful monk to swallow hot iron balls than thrive on public alms.		658
309	Adulterer gathers demerit and lies uneasy. Suffering censure here he faces pain in hell.		660
310	To the adulterer, 'tis limited pleasure and punishment's dread. A sin he should totally shun.		662
311	Ill-lived recluseship to hell-fire leads like kusa grass that cuts when wrongly grasped.		664
312	Slack in deeds, foul in ways and unreliable in the holy-life. These never lead to great results.		666
313	In what's to be done, resolute ye be. Slackness truly degrades.		668
314	Evil is better undone. It does torment the doer. Good deeds done never to torments lead.		670
315	Guard oneself like a border town, against evils' onslaught. Neglect here leads one to ruin.		672
316	Those ashamed of what is not shameful, and unashamed of the shameful are all hell-bound.		674
317	Those fearing what they should not, fearing not what they should are destined for birth in hell.		676
318	Seeing faults in the faultless and none in the faults, those misled are to pain destined.		678
319	Knowing wrong as wrong and right as right, those well-guided ones are in heaven born.		680
	NĀGA VAGGA	**CHAPTER 23**	Page
	The Great	Number of Verses 14	No.
320	As an elephant in battle endures arrows, abuse I endure. But many folks lack that strength.		684
321	The trained is led in pageant. Him the king mounts. Who endures abuse is best among men.		686
322	Trained horses and tuskers are excellent. The self-disciplined excels them all.		688
323	With a true discipline one gets to that ungone region of Nibbāna, and not by any other means.		690
324	The elephant in rut, hardly restrainable, eats not in captivity, remembering its forest life.		692
325	The stupid, slothful and greedy ones, like hogs fattened on swill, repeat births.		694
326	Like a mahout an elephant in rut, I should today mindfully restrain my free roaring mind.		696
327	Like an elephant sunk in mud, elevate yourselves out of the evil way, diligent and mindful.		698
328	If you can get a wise, blameless companion, keep his company joyfully, overcoming all troubles.		700
329	The absence of a fitting companion, lead a solitary life like a king in exile.		702
330	Lonely, easy life, like a lordly elephant in the forest, avoiding evil, is better than evil company.		704
331	Pleasant are friends in need, and goodness at life's end. Ending of dukkha is equally so.		706
332	'Tis lovely caring for one's mother and father. So it is to minister to ascetics and brahmins.		708
333	Pleasant to be virtuous all one's life. Faith, wisdom and shunning evil are equally good.		710
	TAṆHĀ VAGGA	**CHAPTER 24**	Page
	Craving	Number of Verses 26	No.
334	Craving born of heedlessness plunges man from birth to birth like a monkey's leap for fruit.		714
335	Whomsoever craving overpowers, his griefs proliferate like Birana grass after rain.		716
336	Who so rids himself of craving, sorrows totally fall off him like water-drops from a lotus leaf.		718
337	Root out craving like Birana grass for its fragrant root. Let not death repeatedly shatter you.		720
338	With its roots intact, a felled tree grows again. With craving within, pain does ever rise.		722
339	Caught in alluring lustful thoughts, misjudging people are swept away by the flood of craving.		724
340	Alluring thoughts nurture craving. Seeing it sprouted, with wisdom cut it at the root.		726
341	Bound to delights and endearments pleasure-seekers are invariable victims of birth and decay.		728
342	Worldly beings who are enmeshed in craving, like trapped hare, come to grief again and again.		730
343	Worldlings are trapped in their craving like a hare. Let a release-seeker his craving quell.		732
344	He who greedless to greed flies back, behold him as flying from freedom to bondage again.		734
345	Fetters of iron, etc., are not reckoned as strong as desire for wife, children and worldly goods.		736

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346 Wise go forth, rejecting without a murmur the worldly pleasures, a lower but a tenacious bond. 738
347 The wise cast away all dukkha, severing their lustful ties like a spider caught in its own web. 740
348 Mind released everywhere, one's beyond birth and decay, having terminated life's journeying. 742
349 With lust intense, on beauty dwelling, crushed by one's thoughts, craving productively grows. 744
350 To chop off Māra's bonds one must dwell on unwholesomeness and guard one's thoughts. 746
351 Without trembling, craving or blemishes, with one's end reached, this is the last bodily form. 748
352 In this final body now freed of craving and grasping, he is the great being who is greatly wise. 750
353 All-conquering, all-knowing, detached from all, self-liberated, I am now my own Teacher. 752
354 Dhamma is supreme as gift, flavour or delight. Extinction of craving triumphs over all ills. 754
355 Wealth hunts down a fool. Greedy for wealth, the fool ruins himself as he were a stranger. 756
356 Weeds plague fields. Lust destroys men. Giving to the lust-less yields high returns. 758
357 Weeds plague fields. Hatred destroys men. Offering to hateless yields fruit. 760
358 Weeds plague fields. Ignorance destroys men. Giving to the ignorance-free is fruitful. 762
359 Weeds plague fields. Desire plagues men. Giving to desire-less is fruitful. 764

	BHIKKHU VAGGA	**CHAPTER 25**	Page
	The Monk	Number of Verses 23	No.

360 Restraint in eye, ear, nose and tongue is good. It yields good results. 768
361 Restraint in deed, in speech, in mind is good. Restrained fully, the monk ends suffering. 770
362 Restrained in limb and speech, totally composed with inward delight. He is called a bhikkhu. 772
363 Guarded in speech, with no conceit, the monk expounds with sweetness the Dhamma in full. 774
364 Delighting in, pondering over and abiding by the Dhamma, such bhikkhu shall not degenerate. 776
365 Disdain not one's receipts nor envy others. Envious bhikkhu reaches no tranquil mind. 778
366 The monk who belittles not even the little he gets, gods praise him as being pure and alert. 780
367 He truly is the monk who thinks not as I and mine, and grieves not for what truly exists not. 782
368 Dwelling in love with delight in Buddha's word, bhikkhu gets his bliss where conditions cease. 784
369 Bail thy boat, O monk. Emptied, it will swiftly move. Lustless and hateless in Nibbāna be. 786
370 Cut five-fold fetters, in their opposites train. Then he is called Crossed-the-Flood monk. 788
371 Meditate, O monk, and brook no delay. Let no lust baffle you. Groan not as you face the fire. 790
372 Unwise can meditate not. Meditating not, in wisdom fail. Wise and meditative reach thy goal. 792
373 In solitude with a tranquilled mind, a monk who grasps the Dhamma will have bliss supreme. 794
374 As one becomes aware of the rise and fall of the aggregates, one gets the joy of deathlessness. 796
375 Sense-restraint, Pātimokkha discipline and noble friends: 'tis where the wise bhikkhu begins. 798
376 Convivial and courteous, a good disciple becomes extremely joyous and his suffering ends. 800
377 Like a jasmine creeper its faded flowers, so ye bhikkhus, give up your lust and aversion. 802
378 Physically restrained, gently tranquilled, rid of allurements, truly-pacified is the bhikkhu called. 804
379 Exhort yourself, month after month, live mindfully and self-guarded. You'll indeed be happy. 806
380 You lead yourself, you guide your way. Control your own self like a merchant his good horse. 808
381 A joyous bhikkhu who delights in the Buddha's way soon reaches the Saṁsāra's blissful end. 810
382 The tender bhikkhu on the Buddha's way, illumines this world like the moon out of the clouds. 812

	BRAHMAṆA VAGGA	**CHAPTER 26**	Page
	The Brahmaṇa	Number of Verses 41	No.

383 Cut off the stream. Reject sensuality. Conditionality ended, be ye in Nibbāna. 816
384 When in two things one's gone to the end, that knowledge rids him of all that binds him. 818
385 For whom a far or near exist not, with no anguish or entanglement, him a true brahmin I call. 820
386 Sitting meditative, dust free, duties done and highest goal reached, him a true brahmin I call. 822
387 Sun and moon, a warrior in armour, an ardent sage. Above all these Buddha's radiance glows. 824
388 Evil barred, a brahmin; by steady life, a monk; rid of stains, a hermit one truly is. 826
389 Strike not a brahmin, nor latter violently react. Shame on the former, the latter much worse. 828

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148	This body fragile, the ideal nesting place for disease. Life necessarily ends in death.	316
149	Seeing bleached human bones lying all around, how could there be delight in sensuality.	318
150	A citadel of bones, flesh and blood plastered; home of decay, death, hypocrisy and pride.	320
151	Decorated royal coaches perish. Even so our bodies. The revered true Dhamma thrives.	322
152	The unwise man of little learning ages like the bull. His flesh does grow. Not his wisdom.	324
153	Long in Samsāra, the house-builder I sought. Never did I find. Birth's recurrence is painful.	326
154	House-builder, you are shattered. You shall build no more. My mind's gone beyond craving.	328
155	Youth wasted. Spiritual life not lived. Now an old stork broods by a fishless lake.	330
156	Youth wasted. Spiritual life not lived. Now a mere spent arrow perishing in the forest.	332

ATTA VAGGA	CHAPTER 12	Page
Self	Number of Verses 10	No.

157	One who loves himself should guard himself. A wise man checks at least once every night.	336
158	First do the right thing yourself. Then instruct others. One's own purity a wise man treasures.	338
159	If one himself does exactly as one instructs, then with a well-tamed self one tames others.	340
160	Be ye your own protector. Who else is? With a well-tamed self one's found a rare protector.	342
161	A diamond being itself a stone, cuts stones. Likewise, self-wrought evil assails the fool.	344
162	Corrupt behaviour is suicidal, self-ruinous like the strangling Māluvā creeper on a Sāla tree.	346
163	Calamitous, self-ruinous things are easy to do. Beneficial and worthy are most difficult to do.	348
164	The fool's scant respect for the words of the wise invariably spells disaster for him.	350
165	Self-wrought evil defiles the doer. In evil undone one's truly pure. None redeems another.	352
166	With the highest altruism damage not one's welfare. Pursue your goal with wisdom.	354

LŌKA VAGGA	CHAPTER 13	Page
World	Number of Verses 12	No.

167	No depraved vision, no heedlessness, and no low pursuits for worldly gains.	358
168	Diligently active, live the Dhamma to perfection. Such life gives happiness here and hereafter.	360
169	Live dhamma to perfection, not half-heartedly. Dhamma-life ensures happiness everywhere.	362
170	With correct vision of life one slips out of Death's grip.	364
171	The world looks a gaily decked royal chariot. But the wise sink not therein.	366
172	Mistakes corrected makes one to shine like the moon beaming out of a bank of clouds.	368
173	Who so by the power of one's virtues reduces one's evil done, he beams like the moon...	370
174	Of this blind world only a handful escapes like birds escaping from a net.	372
175	Like geese in flight, the wise steadily move away from the world.	374
176	There is no crime that a doubting, shameless liar cannot commit.	376
177	The miserly indeed never praise giving and never make their way to heaven.	378
178	Being a stream-winner is a far greater achievement than a journey to heaven.	380

BUDDHA VAGGA	CHAPTER 14	Page
The Buddha	Number of Verses 18	No.

179	The triumph of Buddhahood is infallible, irreversible and unassailable.	384
180	In Buddhahood is all craving routed. There is neither trapping nor being trapped.	386
181	Buddhas who opt renunciation and contemplative life are beloved even of the gods.	388
182	Human life is hard and rare. So is Buddha and Dhamma rare.	390
183	Refrain from all evil. Practice virtue. Cleanse the mind. This is the teaching of Buddhas.	392
184	Forbearance is the highest religiousness. A true recluse never harms another.	394
185	Abstemious in food, zealous in quest, disciplined, inoffensive one fulfils Buddha's wish.	396

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186	They are unsatiated even with a rain of gold and equally so with sensual indulgence.	398
187	True disciples of the Buddha yearn not even for heavenly pleasures.	400
188	Men in fear seek refuge in rocks, forests, groves, trees and shrines.	402
189	This is no assuring refuge. This is no way to total release.	404
190	Accepting refuge of Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and truly grasping Four Noble Truths.	406
191	Suffering, the arising, the cessation and the Eightfold Path...	408
192	These form the refuge supreme. Via these, the release from all grief and pain.	410
193	The birth of that rare virtuous man leads all else to blissful happiness.	412
194	Buddha's birth, Dhamma's proclamation, Sangha's concord - are all equally blissful.	414
195	He who knows the worthy, Buddha or his disciples, who've transcended all grief...	416
196	Who adores those who are tranquil and fearless, his merit gathered is incalculable.	418

	SUKHA VAGGA	CHAPTER 15	Page
	Happiness	Number of Verses 12	No.

197	For those who harbour no enmity it is blissful to live even among enemies.	422
198	It is comfort indeed to live among the diseased for those with feelings of good health.	424
199	Unagitated we live in comfort in the midst of highly agitated worldlings.	426
200	Possessionless we live in great happiness. Sustained by joy are we like heavenly beings.	428
201	Victory begets enmity. Vanquished lies in grief. Beyond both these lies bliss of equanimity.	430
202	No fire like passions, no loss like wrath, no misery like this self. Nibbāna's bliss supreme.	432
203	Hunger's the severest ailment. Saṁsāric life's an utter dismay. Beyond these is Nibbāna bliss.	434
204	Good health is the best gain. Contentment is the best wealth. In Nibbāna, the highest bliss.	436
205	Through sweetness of solitude and joy of tranquility, via the Dhamma, to innocence and quiet.	438
206	Being with worthy ones is constant happiness. Avoid the fool for perpetual peace.	440
207	In the company of fools one ever suffers. The wise, like kinsmen, are a pleasure source.	442
208	Like the moon, the starry way, do ye associate the wise who are steady and sound.	444

	PIYA VAGGA	CHAPTER 16	Page
	Affection	Number of Verses 12	No.

209	With no application and misapplication, the pleasure-seeker envies the zealous one.	448
210	Not seeing dear ones is painful, so is seeing the disliked. Make no contact with both.	450
211	Reject thoughts of likes and dislikes. Freed of bonds, suffer ye no pain of separation.	452
212	From endearment, grief and fear arise. No endearment, no grief or fear.	454
213	From affection, grief and fear arise. No affection, no grief or fear.	456
214	From attachment, grief and fear arise. No attachment, no grief or fear.	458
215	From lust, grief and fear arise. To the lust-less, no grief or fear.	460
216	From craving, grief and fear arise. No craving, no grief or fear.	462
217	Perfect in virtue and insight and mindful of one's obligations. Such a one is liked by people.	464
218	Keenly on Nibbāna bent, from worldly pleasures freed. He is said to be upstream bound.	466
219	Doers of merit are received in heaven as long-absentees are welcomed by kinsmen.	468
220	Effects of good living welcome the doer hereafter, like kinsmen a relative returning home.	470

	KŌDHA VAGGA	CHAPTER 17	Page
	Anger	Number of Verses 14	No.

221	Shun pride, shun anger, get beyond all fetters. You shall then suffer no pain of mind.	474
222	He who restrains an emerging anger pilots himself with perfect command.	476
223	Conquer anger with love, evil with good, greed with charity and falsehood with truth.	478

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224	In speech be true, feel no anger. Give even out of a little when asked. This is the godly way.	480
225	With constant restraint in body and harmless, to deathless Nibbāna's grieflessness they go.	482
226	For ever vigilant, seeking training day and night, Nibbāna-seekers are freed of defiling traits.	484
227	The silent, the talkative, the modest in speech, are all blamed. Not one is spared.	486
228	There never was and will never be one who is totally blamed or praised.	488
229	With scrutiny, the wise praise those of flawless character endowed with virtue and wisdom.	490
230	Even dēvas and Brahma praise one of such sterling qualities. None could ever censure him.	492
231	Shun misconduct indeed. Live a life of perfect bodily conduct.	494
232	Shun misconduct in speech. Live a life of perfect restraint in speech.	496
233	Shun misconduct in thought. Live a life of perfect mental restraint.	498
234	Those restrained in thought, word and deed, they are the true perfectly trained.	500

MALA VAGGA	CHAPTER 18	Page
Impurities	Number of Verses 21	No.

235	Unprepared for death, thou art, like a withering leaf. Empty-handed, to depart.	504
236	Be wise and strive in earnest. An island for yourself, make. To the ariyan place you shall go.	506
237	At life's end, at death's door you strive. With nothing for the way and no stop in between.	508
238	Quick and wise, an island to yourself make. Stainless, free from death and decay.	510
239	Gradually, and bit by bit, remove your rusty rot like a silversmith.	512
240	Rust born of iron eats it up. So does evil deeds the man who transgresses.	514
241	No-revision destroys learning. Lethargy ruins family life. Apathy a danger to one's beauty.	516
242	Inchastity's a woman's ruin. Miserliness is so to a giver. Evil ways a ruin here and hereafter.	518
243	Ignorance is the worst of stains. Discarding it, O Bhikkhus, be ye all stainless.	520
244	Shamelessly like a crow a man easily lives. In his arrogance, avarice and ambition he stinks.	522
245	Guarded by shame, 'tis difficult living, being care-free and pure in one's ways.	524
246	He destroys life, in theft he indulges. A liar and adulterer, he is.	526
247	...and living in drunkenness steeped, ends up here in calamitous ruin.	528
248	Know ye that evil ways are hard to restrain. Let no greed or evil ways ever drag you to pain.	530
249	Jealous of others' receipt of gifts made in faith, tranquility of mind one will never attain.	532
250	Whoever totally eliminates the aforesaid envy his mind will be tranquil by day and night.	534
251	Lust the fiercest fire; hate the tightest grip, delusion the worst trap, craving the worst flood.	536
252	Easy to detect are others' faults. One's own one hides like a crafty gambler his losing die.	538
253	Detecting and protesting over others' faults, one never rids one's own. Far from release is he.	540
254	The skies are free of foot-prints. While worldlings tarry, the liberated brook no delay.	542
255	Skies are free of foot-prints. Conditioned things never eternal. Buddhas know no agitation.	544

DHAMMAṬṬHA VAGGA	CHAPTER 19	Page
Established in Dhamma	Number of Verses 17	No.

256	An upholder of justice judges not in haste. The wise judge with care the right from wrong.	548
257	Cautious and just, with fairness he leads. Guarded by Dhamma, Dhamma-dweller he's called.	550
258	Profuse in words, one's not thereby wise. Secure, loving and dauntless, wise he truly is.	552
259	By extent of speech, one's no true Dhamma-liver. Alert in its practice, he's the true liver.	554
260	Grey hairs alone make no senior. Merely ripe in years, empty-in-age he is called.	556
261	Stainless, endowed with truth, virtue, love and restraint, such a steadfast one true Elder is.	558
262	Jealous, selfish, deceitful, he is no virtuous man tho' fluent in speech and handsome in form.	560
263	With evil routed out in toto, possessed of wisdom and void of stains, wholesome is he called.	562
264	Full of lies, greed and desire, he can truly be no monk, parading only his shaven head.	564
265	Battling all evils, both great and small, through his conquest of evil is he a samana called.	566
266	By mere begging of food, one is no bhikkhu. Nor by adopting any commoners' way.	568

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267	Beyond good and evil, noble in conduct, loving and discerning he lives, the true monk.	570
268	Not by mere silence, unwise, a sage. It's one with wisdom, weighing with scales for good.	572
269	The sage totally rejects all evil. He weighs up both worlds. So he is called a sage.	574
270	Killing makes man ignoble. Non-violence towards all beings confers nobility on man.	576
271	Not by rites or rituals, nor by profound learning, not by meditative calm nor by life in solitude.	578
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284	As long as man's passion for woman remains uncut, the mind's held in bondage.	606
285	Cut off passions, like breaking a lily with one's hand. Pursue the path of peace to Nibbāna.	608
286	The unwise plans for the future from season to season, oblivious to dangers which inhere.	610
287	Man dotes on children and wealth. But death sweeps him like a flood a sleeping village.	612
288	When death comes, neither parents, nor children nor kinsmen can protect one.	614
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295	Ridding mind-hindrances with scepticism as the fifth...he's the thoroughly perfect man.	630
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297	Mindful of the Dhamma, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	634
298	Mindful of the Sangha, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	636
299	Mindful of the body, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	638
300	Delighting in harmlessness, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	640
301	With a mind delighting in self-culture, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.	642
302	To renounce and delight therein are difficult. Home is painful too. Let not pain hunt you.	644
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	NIRAYA VAGGA Hell	CHAPTER 22 Number of Verses 14	Page No.
306	He who asserts what's not true and he who denies what's true, both suffer equally in hell.		654
307	Many who don the dyed robe, undisciplined and of sinful ways, thereby get reborn in hell.		656
308	Better for an undisciplined sinful monk to swallow hot iron balls than thrive on public alms.		658
309	Adulterer gathers demerit and lies uneasy. Suffering censure here he faces pain in hell.		660
310	To the adulterer, 'tis limited pleasure and punishment's dread. A sin he should totally shun.		662
311	Ill-lived recluseship to hell-fire leads like kusa grass that cuts when wrongly grasped.		664
312	Slack in deeds, foul in ways and unreliable in the holy-life. These never lead to great results.		666
313	In what's to be done, resolute ye be. Slackness truly degrades.		668
314	Evil is better undone. It does torment the doer. Good deeds done never to torments lead.		670
315	Guard oneself like a border town, against evils' onslaught. Neglect here leads one to ruin.		672
316	Those ashamed of what is not shameful, and unashamed of the shameful are all hell-bound.		674
317	Those fearing what they should not, fearing not what they should are destined for birth in hell.		676
318	Seeing faults in the faultless and none in the faults, those misled are to pain destined.		678
319	Knowing wrong as wrong and right as right, those well-guided ones are in heaven born.		680

	NĀGA VAGGA The Great	CHAPTER 23 Number of Verses 14	Page No.
320	As an elephant in battle endures arrows, abuse I endure. But many folks lack that strength.		684
321	The trained is led in pageant. Him the king mounts. Who endures abuse is best among men.		686
322	Trained horses and tuskers are excellent. The self-disciplined excels them all.		688
323	With a true discipline one gets to that ungone region of Nibbāna, and not by any other means.		690
324	The elephant in rut, hardly restrainable, eats not in captivity, remembering its forest life.		692
325	The stupid, slothful and greedy ones, like hogs fattened on swill, repeat births.		694
326	Like a mahout an elephant in rut, I should today mindfully restrain my free roaring mind.		696
327	Like an elephant sunk in mud, elevate yourselves out of the evil way, diligent and mindful.		698
328	If you can get a wise, blameless companion, keep his company joyfully, overcoming all troubles.		700
329	The absence of a fitting companion, lead a solitary life like a king in exile.		702
330	Lonely, easy life, like a lordly elephant in the forest, avoiding evil, is better than evil company.		704
331	Pleasant are friends in need, and goodness at life's end. Ending of dukkha is equally so.		706
332	'Tis lovely caring for one's mother and father. So it is to minister to ascetics and brahmins.		708
333	Pleasant to be virtuous all one's life. Faith, wisdom and shunning evil are equally good.		710

	TAṆHĀ VAGGA Craving	CHAPTER 24 Number of Verses 26	Page No.
334	Craving born of heedlessness plunges man from birth to birth like a monkey's leap for fruit.		714
335	Whomsoever craving overpowers, his griefs proliferate like Birana grass after rain.		716
336	Who so rids himself of craving, sorrows totally fall off him like water-drops from a lotus leaf.		718
337	Root out craving like Birana grass for its fragrant root. Let not death repeatedly shatter you.		720
338	With its roots intact, a felled tree grows again. With craving within, pain does ever rise.		722
339	Caught in alluring lustful thoughts, misjudging people are swept away by the flood of craving.		724
340	Alluring thoughts nurture craving. Seeing it sprouted, with wisdom cut it at the root.		726
341	Bound to delights and endearments pleasure-seekers are invariable victims of birth and decay.		728
342	Worldly beings who are enmeshed in craving, like trapped hare, come to grief again and again.		730
343	Worldlings are trapped in their craving like a hare. Let a release-seeker his craving quell.		732
344	He who greedless to greed flies back, behold him as flying from freedom to bondage again.		734
345	Fetters of iron, etc., are not reckoned as strong as desire for wife, children and worldly goods.		736

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346	Wise go forth, rejecting without a murmur the worldly pleasures, a lower but a tenacious bond.	738
347	The wise cast away all dukkha, severing their lustful ties like a spider caught in its own web.	740
348	Mind released everywhere, one's beyond birth and decay, having terminated life's journeying.	742
349	With lust intense, on beauty dwelling, crushed by one's thoughts, craving productively grows.	744
350	To chop off Māra's bonds one must dwell on unwholesomeness and guard one's thoughts.	746
351	Without trembling, craving or blemishes, with one's end reached, this is the last bodily form.	748
352	In this final body now freed of craving and grasping, he is the great being who is greatly wise.	750
353	All-conquering, all-knowing, detached from all, self-liberated, I am now my own Teacher.	752
354	Dhamma is supreme as gift, flavour or delight. Extinction of craving triumphs over all ills.	754
355	Wealth hunts down a fool. Greedy for wealth, the fool ruins himself as he were a stranger.	756
356	Weeds plague fields. Lust destroys men. Giving to the lust-less yields high returns.	758
357	Weeds plague fields. Hatred destroys men. Offering to hateless yields fruit.	760
358	Weeds plague fields. Ignorance destroys men. Giving to the ignorance-free is fruitful.	762
359	Weeds plague fields. Desire plagues men. Giving to desire-less is fruitful.	764

BHIKKHU VAGGA	**CHAPTER 25**	Page
The Monk	Number of Verses 23	No.

360	Restraint in eye, ear, nose and tongue is good. It yields good results.	768
361	Restraint in deed, in speech, in mind is good. Restrained fully, the monk ends suffering.	770
362	Restrained in limb and speech, totally composed with inward delight. He is called a bhikkhu.	772
363	Guarded in speech, with no conceit, the monk expounds with sweetness the Dhamma in full.	774
364	Delighting in, pondering over and abiding by the Dhamma, such bhikkhu shall not degenerate.	776
365	Disdain not one's receipts nor envy others. Envious bhikkhu reaches no tranquil mind.	778
366	The monk who belittles not even the little he gets, gods praise him as being pure and alert.	780
367	He truly is the monk who thinks not as I and mine, and grieves not for what truly exists not.	782
368	Dwelling in love with delight in Buddha's word, bhikkhu gets his bliss where conditions cease.	784
369	Bail thy boat, O monk. Emptied, it will swiftly move. Lustless and hateless in Nibbāna be.	786
370	Cut five-fold fetters, in their opposites train. Then he is called Crossed-the-Flood monk.	788
371	Meditate, O monk, and brook no delay. Let no lust baffle you. Groan not as you face the fire.	790
372	Unwise can meditate not. Meditating not, in wisdom fail. Wise and meditative reach thy goal.	792
373	In solitude with a tranquilled mind, a monk who grasps the Dhamma will have bliss supreme.	794
374	As one becomes aware of the rise and fall of the aggregates, one gets the joy of deathlessness.	796
375	Sense-restraint, Pātimokkha discipline and noble friends: 'tis where the wise bhikkhu begins.	798
376	Convivial and courteous, a good disciple becomes extremely joyous and his suffering ends.	800
377	Like a jasmine creeper its faded flowers, so ye bhikkhus, give up your lust and aversion.	802
378	Physically restrained, gently tranquilled, rid of allurements, truly-pacified is the bhikkhu called.	804
379	Exhort yourself, month after month, live mindfully and self-guarded. You'll indeed be happy.	806
380	You lead yourself, you guide your way. Control your own self like a merchant his good horse.	808
381	A joyous bhikkhu who delights in the Buddha's way soon reaches the Saṁsāra's blissful end.	810
382	The tender bhikkhu on the Buddha's way, illumines this world like the moon out of the clouds.	812

BRAHMAṆA VAGGA	**CHAPTER 26**	Page
The Brahmaṇa	Number of Verses 41	No.

383	Cut off the stream. Reject sensuality. Conditionality ended, be ye in Nibbāna.	816
384	When in two things one's gone to the end, that knowledge rids him of all that binds him.	818
385	For whom a far or near exist not, with no anguish or entanglement, him a true brahmin I call.	820
386	Sitting meditative, dust free, duties done and highest goal reached, him a true brahmin I call.	822
387	Sun and moon, a warrior in armour, an ardent sage. Above all these Buddha's radiance glows.	824
388	Evil barred, a brahmin; by steady life, a monk; rid of stains, a hermit one truly is.	826
389	Strike not a brahmin, nor latter violently react. Shame on the former, the latter much worse.	828

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390 Avoid things dear. 'Tis triumph for a monk. Abstain from violence. 'Tis pain at its end. 830
391 With no evil done through thought, word or deed, one guarded therein, a true brahmin he is. 832
392 Him who teaches the true Buddha word one should honour, as does a brahmin the sacred fire. 834
393 'Tis not matted hair nor birth nor family, but truth and Dhamma which make a brahmin true. 836
394 What of your matted hair and antelope-skin cloak? Foul within, only your outside you groom. 838
395 Lone meditator in the wilds, dusty-robe clad, lean and worn out, him the true brahmin I call. 840
396 He is no brahmin by mere lineage. Dispossessed, unattached, he is indeed the true brahmin. 842
397 He who's unfettered and craves no more and from bonds is freed, is the brahmin true. 844
398 All trappings discarded, cross-bar barrier lifted up, that enlightened one I call a true brahmin. 846
399 Unaffected he bears up abuse and beating, backed by patience, him I call a true brahmin. 848
400 Angerless, virtuous and dutiful, who's now in his last birth, him I call a true brahmin. 850
401 Not smeared with sensuality like water on a lotus leaf . . . him I call a true brahmin. 852
402 He who here itself sees the end of one's suffering, disburdened...him I call a true brahmin. 854
403 Man of sound judgement who's reached his highest goal . . . him I call a true brahmin. 856
404 Abstemious wanderer who keeps away both from monk and layman, him I call a true brahmin. 858
405 Shunning the rod he neither harasses nor kills. Him I call a brahmin true. 860
406 Free from hostility, violence and passionate grasping one emerges a true brahmin. 862
407 Lust, hate and pride totally felled, like a mustard off a needle. Him I call a brahmin true. 864
408 Polite, instructive and honest in speech, he offends none. Him I call a brahmin true. 866
409 He who takes nothing ungiven of another, great or small. Him I call a brahmin true. 868
410 Not yearn for this world or the next, and liberated and longingless. Him I call a brahmin true. 870
411 No clingings or doubts trouble him, deathless reached. Him I call a brahmin true. 872
412 Gone beyond grip of good and evil, sorrowless and pure. Him I call a brahmin true. 874
413 Like the moon without spots, tranquil and clear. His delight in life ended, a brahmin true. 876
414 Of grasping and doubting totally freed, from Saṁsāra to safety gone him I call a brahmin true. 878
415 Rejecting pleasures, homeless he goes to life journey's end. Him, I call a brahmin true. 880
416 Rejecting craving, homeless he goes to life journey's end. Him, a true brahmin I call. 882
417 Rejects human ties, surpasses the heavenly too. Totally unbound, him I call a brahmin true. 884
418 With likes and dislikes cast away, baseless he conquers this world. Him I call a brahmin true. 886
419 Knowing the rise and fall of beings, perfection he has reached. Him, I call a brahmin true. 888
420 Whose journeying none do ever know. That worthy and pure one, a true brahmin I call. 890
421 Possessing none in time or place, grasping at none anywhere, him I call a brahmin true. 892
422 Noble and excellent, with all battles won, clean and calm. Him, I call a brahmin true. 894
423 Who knows past lives, bliss and woe, and ended thus his life's run. Him, I call a brahmin true. 896

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The Pāli Alphabet

Pronunciation of Letters

a	as	u	in	b*u*t
ā	"	a	"	*a*rt
i	"	i	"	p*i*n
ī	"	i	"	mach*i*ne
u	"	u	"	p*u*t
ū	"	u	"	r*u*le
e	"	e	"	t*e*n
ē	"	a	"	f*a*te
o	"	o	"	h*o*t
ō	"	o	"	n*o*te
k	"	k	"	*k*ey
g	"	g	"	*g*et
ṅ	"	ng	"	ri*ng*
c	"	ch	"	ri*ch*
j	"	j	"	*j*ug

ñ	as	gn	in	Sig*n*or
ṭ	"	t	"	no*t*
ḍ	"	d	"	hi*d*
ṇ	"	n	"	hi*n*t
p	"	p	"	li*p*
b	"	b	"	ri*b*
m	"	m	"	hi*m*
y	"	y	"	*y*ard
r	"	r	"	*r*at
l	"	l	"	se*ll*
v	"	v	"	*v*ile
s	"	s	"	*s*it
h	"	h	"	*h*ut
ḷ	"	l	"	fe*l*t
ṁ	"	ng	"	si*ng*

The vowels "e" and "o" are always long, except when followed by a double consonant, e.g., ettha, oṭṭa. But, to make reading the Pāli text easier, long "e" and long "o" are indicated thus: "ē" and "ō". We adopted this non-conventional method, to make for easier reading.

There is no difference between the pronunciation of "n" and "ṁ". The former never stands at the end, but is always followed by a consonant of its group.

The dentals "ṭ" and "ḍ" are pronounced with the tip of the tongue placed against the front upper teeth.

The aspirates "kh", "gh", "ṭh", "ḍh", "th", "dh", "ph", "bh" are pronounced with "h" sound immediately following, as in blockhead, pighead, cathead, loghead, etc. where the "h" in each is combined with the preceding consonant in pronunciation.

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Acknowledgement

In the religious literature of the world that pre-eminently represents man's continued urge towards the spiritual, **The Dhammapada** occupies a place of high distinction. Its sacred contents have unceasingly influenced human thought, holding aloft the torch of knowledge to light the path of men in their quest for truth and inner solace. In the current global context, **The Dhammapada** has evolved into the stature of an outstanding treasure of the common human heritage, transcending man-made borders and boundaries and rising above limitations imposed by time. **The Dhammapada,** in short, is among the handful of gems of sacred literature esteemed by people all over the globe, irrespective of cleavages of creed, faith and variegated religious professions.

The primary purpose of the present English rendering of **The Dhammapada**, under the title **The Treasury of Truth** is to take the word of the Buddha further afield, in a verbal and visual idiom that will have greater appeal to the modern mind. The eternal wisdom embodied in the verses of **The Dhammapada** holds within it the potential to bring tranquility to men and women troubled by the stresses and conflicts of life as it is being lived by a good majority of the people in today's world of disharmony and distress. In spite of the deeply felt need of the contemporary world, to yearn for peace, solace and tranquility, the word of the Buddha has not generally been presented in a frequency that throbs to the rhythm of the modern mind-set.

The rationale of the present translation, therefore, is to bring **The Dhammapada** closer to generations who are being brought up right round the globe on a staple fare of visual messages emanating in multiple colour, from the world's visual - primary media - both of electronic and print categories.

In consequence, **The Treasury of Truth** has, as its most prominent core feature a series of 423 specially commissioned illustrations, at the rate of one per stanza in The Dhammapada. This veritable gallery of Dhammapada illustrations is the creation of **artist P. Wickramanayaka, a well-known Sri Lankan professional.** He was assisted by artist K. Wi-

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Jayakeerthi. The illustrations bear witness to the wisdom encapsulated in the Chinese proverb, 'One picture is worth ten thousand words'.

An illustration occupies the left-hand side page of the book. On the opposing page the original story, out of which the verses stem, is recounted. To reinforce the impressions created by the illustration and the verbal narration, ample exegetical material is added. In the section entitled 'Explanatory Translation', the Pāli stanzas are given in their prose-order. The Pāli words are explained and a translation of each verse is presented in an easily assimilable style.

Over and above all these, there is a commentary. In this segment of the book, words, phrases, concepts and expressions that need further elucidation are accommodated. The structure of the total work is determined wholly and totally by our perception of the need to make the word of the Buddha lucidly and clearly available to all users of this translation of the Dhammapada. With this in mind, we have provided a caption for each illustration which sums up clearly and vividly the content of each verse, while providing a guide to the understanding of the significance of the illustration relating to the verse.

On the illustration page we have a transliteration of the Pāli stanza in Roman characters. The diacritical marks indicate the proper pronunciation of the Pāli words in the stanza. Right in front of the transliteration we have a poetic English rendering of the significance of the Pāli verse. This English version has been produced by **Buddhist Bhikkhu Ven. Khantipalo and Sister Susanna.**

Together, all these elements make it a unique work, that will ensure the enlightened Dhammapada - understanding not only of the contemporary world, but also of generations to come. The over-riding and consistent measure of this noble publishing endeavour has invariably been the quality and quantum of understanding it will engender in the reader. Each segment of the work is calculated to bring about an escalation of the reader's awareness of what the Buddha said. In effect, the total work strives to approach as close as is possible to the concept the Buddha originally communicated through these timeless stanzas.

It may even sound clichetic to aver that a monumental work of this scope and magnitude could be anything other than the result of sustained team-work. As the Author of this publication, I must record here that I have had the unmitigated good fortune of being blessed by the continued availability of a dedicated team of sponsors, assistants, supporters and co-workers. Pages of the work were sponsored by devotees and well-wishers. Their names appear at the bottom of the pages. I offer my blessings to all those sponsors and trust that like sponsorship will be forthcoming in the future as well.

I deem it my initial duty to extend my grateful thanks to a team within the Dhammapada team. This team is made up of Mr. Sito Woon Chee and his wife Ms. Ang Lian Swee. The latter is known to the Dhammapada team by the name Sītā. They displayed an admirable capacity for sustained effort which was maintained without fluctuations. Their sense of dedication and commitment continued without any relaxation. This two-person team is my best hope for the success of the future projects we will undertake.

I must record my cordial thanks to Mr. Edwin Ariyadasa of Sri Lanka who edited this work. He was associated with this Dhammapada project from its early pioneering steps to its final stage of completion.

As Author, I consider it my duty and privilege to register my deep-felt gratitude to a prestigious team of scholars who provided invaluable editorial support at various levels of this Dhammapada publication. Ven. Dr Dhammavihari Thero of Sri Lanka provided direc-

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tions which contributed vastly towards the escalation of the quality of this work. A special word of thanks is due to Ven. Madawela Punnaji Maha Thero whose observations, comments and interpretations infused wholesome new thinking to the work. The erudition and the vast patience of Ven. Hawovita Deepananda Thero illuminated the editorial work of this book, with his quiet and restrained scholarship. We have drawn lavishly upon his deep erudition and vast experience. Professor David Blundell, presently of Taiwan, assessed the work with a keen critical eye. The appealing typographical presence of this work owes substantially to Professor Blundell who went to work undaunted by the relentless imperative of time. Armed with rare enthusiasm and impressive learning, Mr. Lim Bock Chwee and Mrs. Keerthi Mendis scrutinized the final draft of the work. They have my grateful thanks.

It is a formidable task, indeed, to attempt to offer my thanks and gratitude to all those who, at one time or another, assisted me in this work in a variety of ways. Upali Ananda Peiris spent strenuous hours initiating the computer utilization for this work. As the work progressed Mr. Ong Hua Siong shouldered the responsibility of providing computer support. Mr. J.A. Sirisena was associated with this aspect of the Dhammapada work.

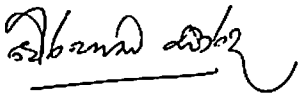
I cannot help but mention with a poignant sense of gratitude, the devotion displayed by **Ms. Jade Wong (Metta), Ms. Diamond Wong Swee Leng (Mudita), Ms. Annie Cheok Seok Lay (Karuna), Ms. Tan Kim Chan (Mrs. Loh) and Ms. Tan Gim Hong (Mrs. Yeo).** They all gave of their best towards the success of this publication.

It is quite appropriate that I should take this opportunity to record my grateful thanks to **Mr. Ee Fook Choy** who has always been a tower of strength to me personally and to the **SBMC** in general. His assistance is readily and unfailingly made available to me on all occasions in all my efforts to propagate the word of the Buddha. I extend an identical sense of gratitude to Mr. Upul Rodrigo and Mr. Daya Satarasinghe whose deep concern for the success of our project can, in no way, go unrecorded.

The persons who assisted me in this project are numerous. It is not at all a practicable task to adequately list them all here however much I wished to do so. While thanking them profusely, I must make it quite clear that I alone am responsible for any errors that may appear in this work.

Before I conclude I deem it my duty to record my grateful thanks to a few special persons; my first English teacher Mrs. K.S. Wijenayake who taught me the English alphabet, Mr. Piyaratna Hewabattage, the outstanding graphic art expert of Sri Lanka, Ven. H. Kondanna, Ven. K. Somananda, Mr. Dennis Wang Khee Pong, Mr. & Mrs. Ang Chee Soon, and Miss. Chandra Dasanayaka whose dynamic support enlivened the total project. And also Mr. Sumith Meegama, Miss. Nanda Dharmalata, and Ven. V. Nanda. My thanks are also due to Mr. Saman Siriwardene, Mr. Nandana and Mrs. Kumudini Hewabattage members of the Heritage House. They collectively determined, by and large, the typographic personality of this noble publication.

I am happy to share with all, the sense of profound joy I experience in being able to present this Treasury of Perennial Transcendental Wisdom to the world. May this work prove a constant companion to all, guiding them along the path of righteousness and virtue towards the ultimate goal of Total Bliss.



Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero
Author - Chief Monk, SBMC, Singapore
25th MAY1994

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Dedication

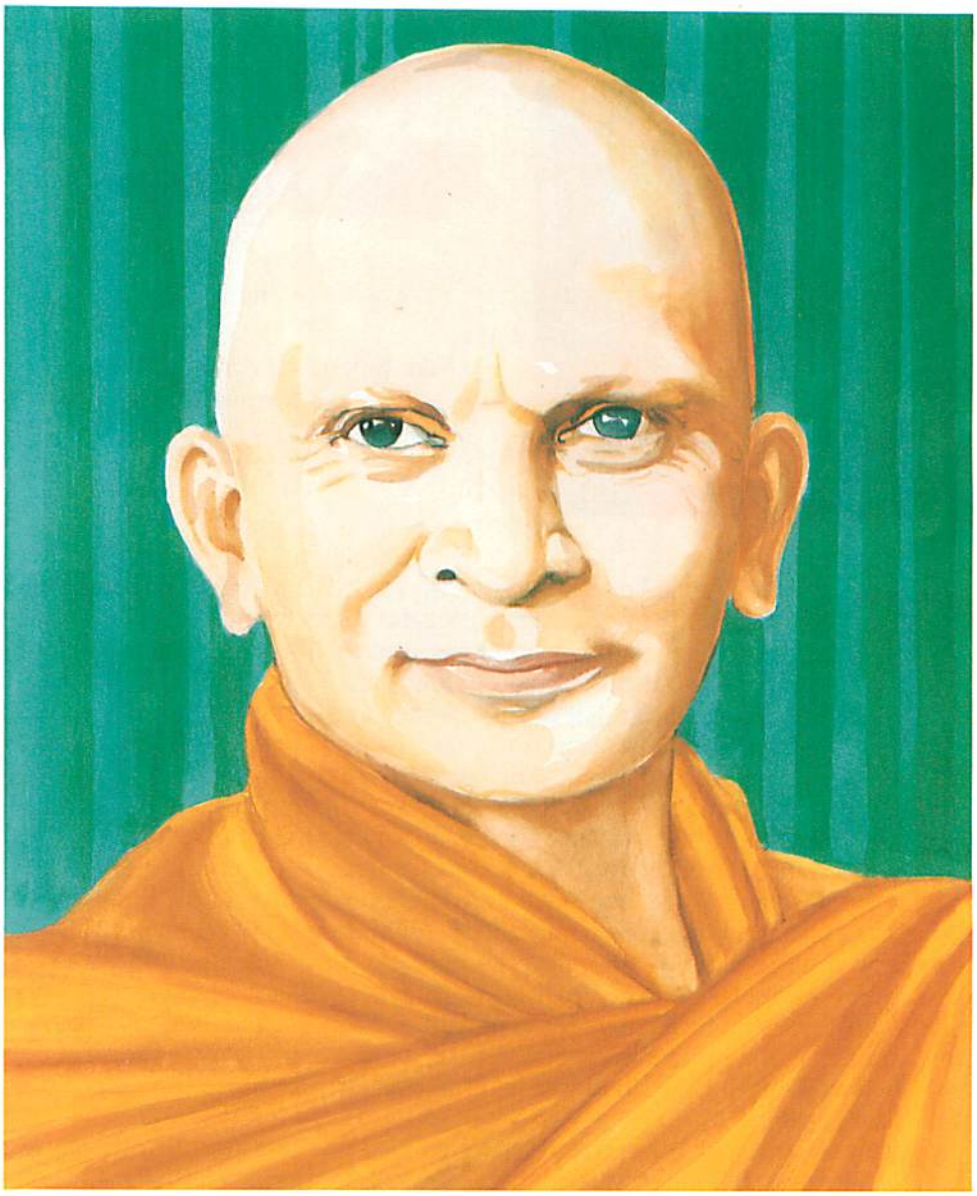
In a world, largely bewildered
and rendered very much
helpless by Man's seemingly
unceasing unkindness to Man,
the well-springs of love, compassion
and affection have begun to
dry up into a weak trickle
in almost every theatre of human existence.

This unprecedented anthology of
the Buddha's Word, in text and copious
illustration is dedicated to humanity,
with the unswerving aim of
guiding its destiny towards
an Era of Peace, Harmony and
wholesome Co-existence.

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Thero - Author

27th November, 1993

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වේරගොඩ ජයන්ති විහාරාධිපති
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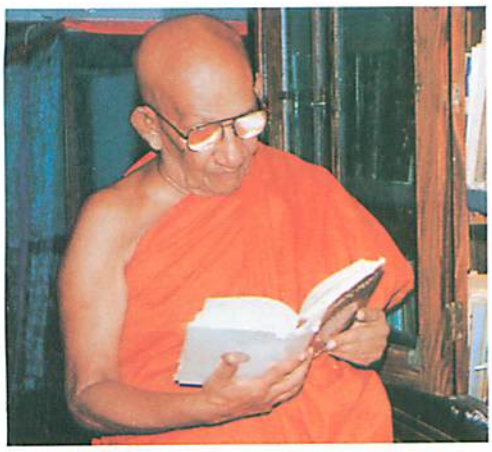
Late Ven. Paṇḍita Yatalamatte Vajirañana Maha Nayaka Thero,
Incumbent of Jayanthi Vihara, Weragoda, Meetiyagoda my Venerable Teacher is the sole source and inspiration of the service I render to the world by spreading the word of the Buddha worldwide through my publication programme spanning so far over a period of more than 25 years. With undiminished gratitude I transfer all the merit I have acquired by pursuing these meritorious activities to the ever-living memory of my late Teacher.

යෝ මාං ප්‍රව්‍රාජයිත්වා ජනක ඉවමුද මේ'හිවෘද්ධිං ව්‍යධත්ත
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රචනය - පණ්ඩිත දඹුල්දෙන සද්ධාණිස්සර නායක ස්වාමීන්ද්‍රයන් වහන්සේ

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Introduction

by

Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya
Maha Nayaka Thero

The Eternal Truth revealed by the Exalted Buddha, could be summed up under the four headings: Dukkha (unsatisfactoriness), its cause, the cessation of Dukkha and the way thereto. The Exalted Buddha expounded the Doctrine of these four Great Truths, illustrating and communicating it to suit the mentality of his hearers of wide ranging backgrounds. All his teachings have been grouped into three collections - or three Baskets (Tripitakas). The three Pitakas are Vinaya, Abhidhamma and Sutta. The present work Dhammapada is the second book of the Minor Collection (Khuddakāgama) of the Sutta Pitaka (The Basket of Discourses). It consists of 423 stanzas arranged in 26 Vaggas or Chapters.

By reading Dhammapada, one could learn the fundamentals of the Buddhist way of life. It leads its reader not only to a happy and useful life here and hereafter but also to the achievement of life's purpose "Summum Bonum" the Goal Supreme. Mr. Albert J. Edmonds- Author of one of the best English translations of Dhammapada says: "If ever an immortal classic was produced upon the continent of Asia - it is the Dhammapada". In the western world, the Dhammapada was first translated into Latin by Prof. Fausball of Copenhagen. The first English translation was by Prof. Max Müller. Since then many English versions have appeared.

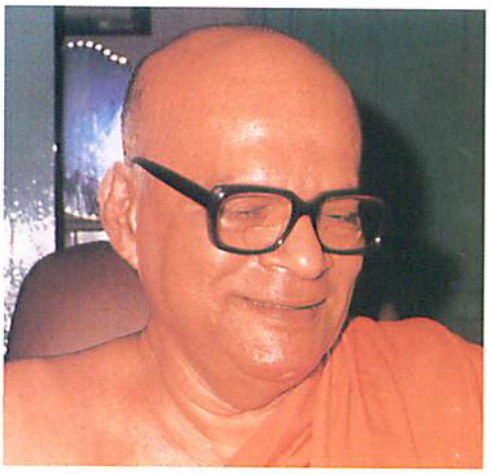
Of all these translations, the present version entitled "the Treasury of Truth" has several claims to uniqueness. It is in this version that all the 423 stanzas have been illustrated. Each of the 423 stanzas has its own especially commissioned illustration. The Author of this work - Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero, is widely known for his efforts to spread the word of the Buddha worldwide. Ven. Sarada a Buddhist Bhikkhu of indefatigable zeal has brought out 69 publications on Buddhist themes, to his credit. His recent work "Life of the Buddha in Pictures" has acquired worldwide acclaim. The present work is a monumental publication.

The structure of the Treasury of Truth, is highly impressive. Here, each stanza is transliterated in Roman characters. The prose order of Pali stanzas is given and the significance of the Pali words, is conveyed. The original story out of which a given stanza stems is also narrated. Popular translations, exegetical material and a commentary are provided to guide the users. I have the greatest pleasure in describing this work as a great contribution to the world literature of Buddhism and related issues. Not only the contemporary world but even generations to come will profit from this work. Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero deserves the praise and the highest recognition of all for this monumental contribution to human culture.

B. Ananda maitreya

Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Maha Nayaka Thero

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Foreword

by

Ven. Dr. Kirinde Dhammananda
Maha Nayaka Thero
Chief Prelate Malaysia (Ph.D., D.Litt.)

I find myself in a specially privileged position to recognize fully and completely, the magnititude of the undertaking of Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero - Chief Incumbent of the Buddhist Mediation Centre, Singapore - who is the Author of "The Treasury of Truth" translation of The Dhammapada.

Objectively viewed, the current translation of the Dhammapada, authored by Ven. W. Sarada Maha Thero, is way ahead of all the other renderings of this great work, for several very important reasons.

"The Treasury of Truth", marks the first-ever occasion when all the 423 stanzas have been illustrated with pictures especially commissioned for this work.

This series of illustrations will have particular appeal to the youthful readers of our day as they are keenly attuned to visual communication. Viewed this way, the present translation of Dhammapada will invariably provide a wholesome sense of direction to those bewildered generations of our time, leading them in the path to higher moral and spiritual achievements.

The present work lends itself readily to an indepth study of this religious classic of mankind, to the great delight of both the scholar and the student.

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero - the individual behind this outstanding gift to the world of religion and culture, is a remarkable person endowed with exceptional talents. Spreading the word of the Buddha abroad is, his avowed life's mission. The global success of his Buddhist publications is further enhanced by "The Treasury of Truth", which, to my mind, is his climactic work todate.

He has 68 Buddhist books to his credit, and he continues to pursue his publication programme with ever accelarating vigour, for the "greater happiness and the greater well-being of the masses" (bahujanahitāya, bahujanasukhāya).

My earnest wish is may the Author of this work Ven. W. Sarada Maha Thero, be blessed with long life and sound health enabling him to spread the word of the Buddha far and wide. May the "Treasury of Truth" be a beacon light guiding the path of today's generations and of the generations to come.

Ven. Dr. Kirinde Dhammananda Maha Nayaka Thero

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Kālāma Sutta

Alaṁ Hi Vō Kālāmā Kankhituṁ Alaṁ
Vicikicchituṁ, Kankhanīyē Ca
Pana Vō Ṭhānē Vicikicchā Uppannā, Ētha Tumhē
Kālāmā Mā Anussavēna, Mā Paramparāya,
Mā Itikirāya, Mā Pitaka Sampadānēna,
Mā Takkahētu, Mā Naya Hētu,
Mā Ākāra Parivitakkēna, Mā Diṭṭhi Nijjhānakkhantiyā,
Mā Bhabharūpatāya, Mā Samaṇō Nō Garūti.
Yadā Tumhē Kālāmā, Attanāva Jāneyyātha,
Imē Dhammā Akusalā, Imē Dhammā Sāvajjā,
Imē Dhammā Viññū Garahitā, Imē Dhammā Samattā
Samādinnā Ahitāya Dukkhāya
Saṁvattantīti: Atha Tumhē Kālāmā Pajaheyyātha.

BUDDHA
(Anguttara Nikaya, Vol. I, 188-193 P.T.S. Ed.)

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Kālāma Sutta

Do not believe in anything (simply)
because you have heard it.
Do not believe in traditions because they
have been handed down for many generations.
Do not believe in anything because it is
spoken and rumoured by many.
Do not believe in anything (simply) because
it is found written in your religious books.
Do not believe in anything merely on the authority
of your teachers and elders.
But after observation and analysis,
when you find that anything agrees with reason
and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all
then accept it and live up to it.

BUDDHA
(Anguttara Nikaya, Vol. I, 188-193 P.T.S. Ed.)

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Tolerance-Peace-Love

TO WIN PEACE

The question that inevitably suggests itself is, how far can the great message of the Buddha apply to the present-day world? Perhaps it may apply, perhaps it may not; but if we follow the principles enunciated by the Buddha, we will ultimately win peace and tranquility for the world.

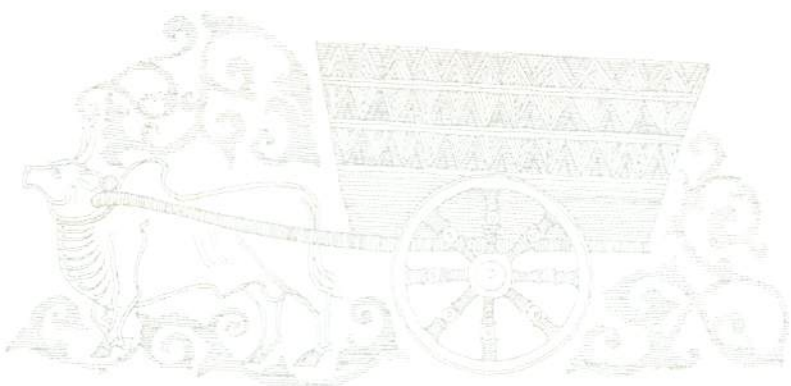
Sri Nehru - Former Prime Minister of India

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Chapter 1

YAMAKA VAGGA

Twin Verses



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Suffering pursues the evil-doer, as the cart-wheel the hoof of the draught ox.

1.	*Manōpubbaṅgamā dhammā* *manōseṭṭhā manōmayā* *manasā cē paduṭṭhēna* *bhāsati vā karōti vā* *tatō naṁ dukkhamanvēti* *cakkaṁ'va vahatō padaṁ (1:1)*	Mind precedes all knowables, mind's their chief, mind-made are they. If with a corrupted mind one should either speak or act dukkha follows caused by that, as does the wheel the ox's hoof.

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YAMAKA VAGGA (Twin Verses)
SUFFERING FOLLOWS THE EVIL-DOER

1 (1) The Story of the Monk Cakkhupāla (Verse 1)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Cakkhupāla, a blind monk.

On one occasion, Monk Cakkhupāla came to pay homage to the Buddha at the Jētavana Monastery. One night, while pacing up and down in meditation, the monk accidentally stepped on some insects. In the morning, some monks visiting the monk found the dead insects. They thought ill of the monk and reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha asked them whether they had seen the monk killing the insects. When they answered in the negative, the Buddha said, "Just as you had not seen him killing, so also he had not seen those living insects. Besides, as the monk had already attained arahatship he could have no intention of killing, so he was innocent." On being asked why Cakkhupāla was blind although he was an arahat, the Buddha told the following story:

Cakkhupāla was a physician in one of his past existences. Once, he had deliberately made a woman patient blind. That woman had promised to become his slave, together with her children, if her eyes were completely cured. Fearing that she and her children would have to become slaves, she lied to the physician. She told him that her eyes were getting worse when, in fact, they were perfectly cured. The physician knew she was deceiving him, so in revenge, he gave her another ointment, which made her totally blind. As a result of this evil deed the physician lost his eyesight many times in his later existences.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 1)

dhammā manōpubbaṅgamā manōseṭṭhā
manōmayā cē paduṭṭhēna manasā bhāsati vā
karōti vā tatō dukkhaṁ naṁ anvēti vahatō padaṁ
cakkaṁ iva.

dhammā: experience; *manōpubbaṅgamā:* thought precedes; *manōseṭṭhā:* thought is predominant; *cē:* therefore, if; *paduṭṭhēna:* (with) corrupted; *manasā:* thought; *bhāsati:* (one) speaks; *karōti vā:* or acts; *tatō:* due to it; *dukkhaṁ:* suffering; *naṁ:* that person; *anvēti:* follows; *vahatō padaṁ:* draught animal's hoof; *cakkaṁ iva:* as the cart wheel.

All that we experience begins with thought. Our words and deeds spring from thought. If we speak or act with evil thoughts, unpleasant circumstances and experiences inevitably result. Wherever we go, we create bad circumstances because we carry bad thoughts. We cannot shake off this suffering as long as we are tied to our evil thoughts. This is very much like the wheel of a cart following the hoofs of the ox yoked to the cart. The cart-wheel, along with the heavy load of the cart, keeps following the draught oxen. The animal is bound to this heavy load and cannot leave it.

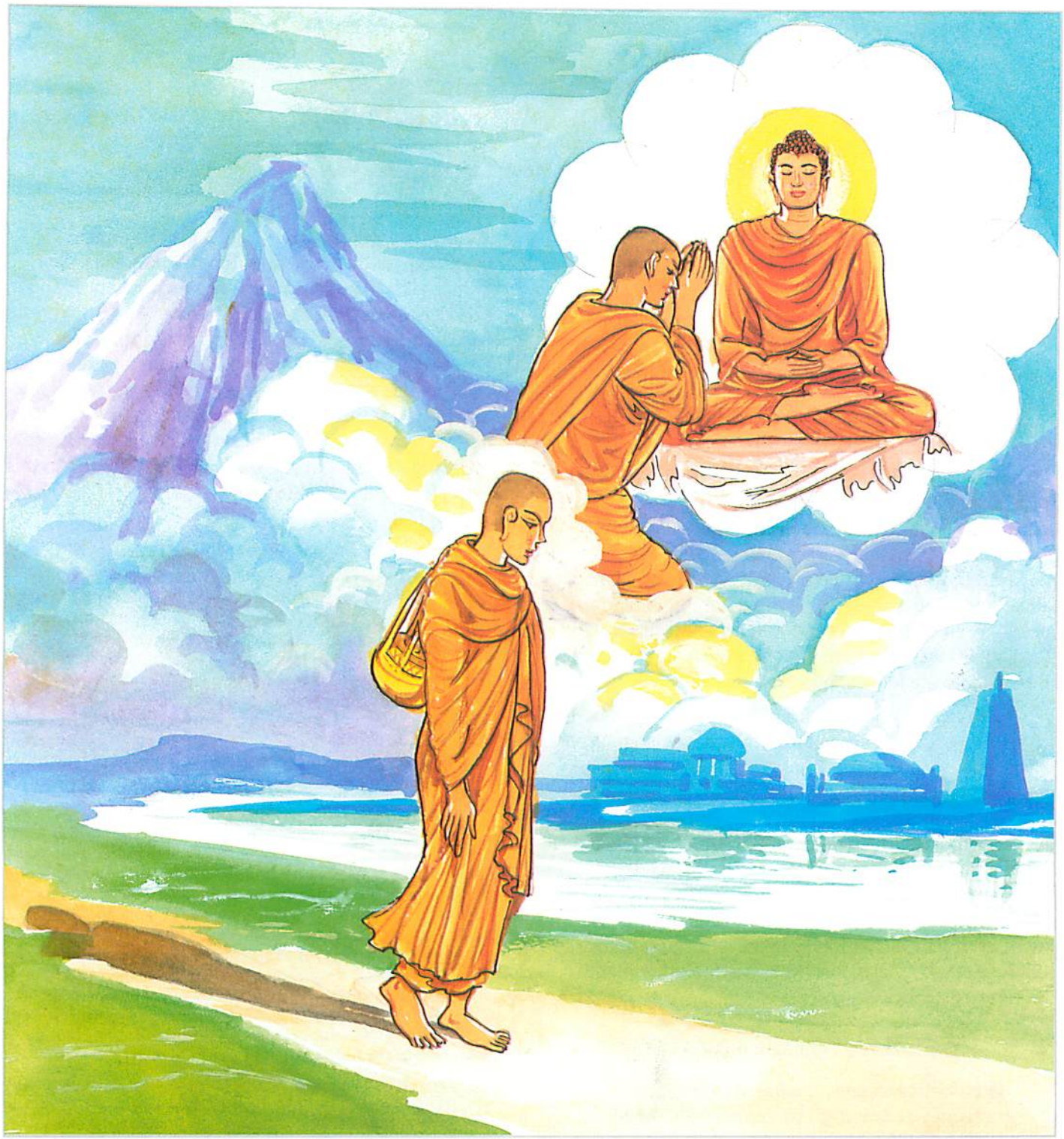
Commentary

The first two verses in the *Dhammapada* reveal an important concept in Buddhism. When most religions hold it as an important part of their dogma that the world was created by a supernatural being called 'God', Buddhism teaches that all that we experience (the 'world' as well as the 'self') is created by thought, or the cognitive process of sense perception and conception. This also proves that writers on Buddhism are mistaken in stating that the Buddha was silent concerning the beginning of the world. In the *Rōhitassa Sutta* of the *Aṇguttara Nikāya*, the Buddha states clearly that the world, the beginning of the world, the end of the world, and the way leading to the end of the world, are all in this fathom long body itself with its perceptions and conceptions.

The word *manō* is commonly translated as 'mind'. But the Buddha takes a phenomenalistic standpoint in the mind-matter controversy that had baffled philosophers throughout history. The duality — 'mind' and 'body' — is rejected by the Buddha. The Buddha explains in the *Sabba Sutta* of the *Saṁyutta Nikāya* that all that we can talk about is 'sense experience', including thought or conception as the sixth sense. The terms *nāma* and *rūpa*, commonly translated as 'mind' and 'body' are not two 'entities' that co-exist in relation to each other. They are only two ways of looking at the single 'activity' called 'experience'. *Nāma* (naming) is 'experience' seen subjectively as 'the mental process of identifying an object' *(rūpa kāyē adhivācana saṁpassa)*.

Rūpa (appearance) is 'experience' seen objectively as an 'entity' that is perceived and conceived through the mental process of identification *(nāma kāyē pathigha saṁpassa)*. *Manō* refers to 'thought' or the mental process of conceptualization, which integrates and makes meaning out of the different percepts brought in through the different senses. This meaningful total 'experience' is the *dhammā*, viewed subjectively as 'identification of an entity' *(nāma)* and objectively as 'the entity identified' *(rūpa)*. *Dhammā* which is this "meaningful totality of experience" is normally seen as pleasant or unpleasant circumstance *(lōka dhamma)*.

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Happiness follows the doer of good, as the shadow that leaves not the person.

2.	*Manōpubbaṅgamā dhammā* *manōseṭṭhā manōmayā* *manasā cē pasannēna* *bhāsati vā karōti vā* *tatō naṁ sukhamanvēti* *chāyā'va anapāyinī. (1:2)*	Mind precedes all knowables, mind's their chief, mind-made are they. If with a clear, a confident mind one should either speak or act happiness follows caused by that, as one's shadow ne'er departing.

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HAPPINESS FOLLOWS THE DOER OF GOOD

1 (2) The Story of Maṭṭakuṇḍali (Verse 2)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Maṭṭakuṇḍali, a young Brāhmin.

Maṭṭakuṇḍali was a young Brāhmin, whose father, Adinnapubbaka, was very miserly and never gave anything in charity. Even the gold ornaments for his only son were made by himself to save payment for workmanship. When his son fell ill, no physician was consulted, until it was too late. When he realized that his son was dying, he had the youth carried outside on to the verandah, so that people coming to his house would not see his possessions.

On that morning, the Buddha arising early from his deep meditation of compassion saw, in his Net of Knowledge, Maṭṭakuṇḍali lying on the verandah. So when entering Sāvatthi for alms-food with his disciples, the Buddha stood near the door of the Brāhmin Adinnapubbaka. The Buddha sent forth a ray of light to attract the attention of the youth, who was facing the interior of the house. The youth saw the Buddha; and as he was very weak he could only profess his faith mentally. But that was enough. When he passed away with his heart in devotion to the Buddha he was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa celestial world.

From his celestial abode the young Maṭṭakuṇḍali, seeing his father mourning over him at the cemetery, appeared to the old man in the likeness of his old self. He told his father about his rebirth in the Tāvatiṁsa world and also urged him to approach and invite the Buddha to a meal. At the house of Adinnapubbaka the question of whether one could or could not be reborn in a celestial world simply by mentally professing profound faith in the Buddha, without giving in charity or observing the moral precepts, was brought up. So the Buddha invited Maṭṭakuṇḍali to appear in person; Maṭṭakuṇḍali then appeared in his celestial ornaments and told them about his rebirth in the Tāvatiṁsa realm. Only then, the listeners became convinced that the son of the Brāhmin Adinnapubbaka, by simply devoting his mind to the Buddha, had attained much glory.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 2)

dhammā manōpubbaṅgamā manō seṭṭhā
manōmayā cē pasannēna manasā bhāsati vā
karōti vā tatō sukhaṁ naṁ anvēti anapāyinī
chāyā iva

dhammā: experience; *manōpubbaṅgamā:* thought precedes; *manōseṭṭhā:* thought is predominant; *manōmayā:* mind-made are they, *cē:* therefore, if; *pasannēna:* (with) pure; *manasā:* thought; *bhāsati:* (one) speaks; *karōti vā:* or acts; *tatō:* due to it; *sukhaṁ:* happiness; *naṁ:* that person; *anvēti: follows; anapāyinī:* not deserting; *chāyā iva:* as the shadow.

All that man experiences springs out of his thoughts. If his thoughts are good, the words and deeds will also be good. The result of good thoughts, words and deeds will be happiness. This happiness never leaves the person whose thoughts are good. Happiness will always follow him like his shadow that never leaves him.

Commentary

How we experience our circumstances depends on the way we interpret them. If we interpret them in the wrong way, we experience suffering. If we interpret them in the right way, we experience happiness. In other words, our happiness or unhappiness depends on the way we think.

Thought also creates circumstances in a futuristic sense. If we harbour ill will and speak or act with ill will, people will begin to hate us. We will be punished by society and the law. After death, we will also be reborn in a realm of suffering. Here, 'thought' refers to *kaṁma* (action) and 'experience' refers to *vipāka* (consequences).

The message finally conveyed by this pair of verses is: "Think wrong and suffer. Think right and be happy." This pair of verses was spoken by the Buddha to show the inevitable consequence *(vipāka)* of good and evil thought *(kamma)*. Man reaps what he has sown, both in the past and in the present. What he sows now, he reaps in the present and in the future. Man himself is responsible for his own happiness and misery. He creates his own hell and heaven. He is the architect of his own fate. What he makes he can unmake. Buddhism teaches the way to escape from suffering by understanding and using the law of cause and effect. Buddhism is very realistic and optimistic. Instead of blindly depending on unknown supernatural powers, hoping for happiness, Buddhism finds the true way to happiness realistically.

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The hatred of those who mull over the wrong done to them keeps on growing.

3. *Akkocchi maṁ, avadhi maṁ*
ajini maṁ ahāsi mē
yē taṁ upanayhantī
vēraṁ tēsaṁ na sammati. (1:3)

Who bear within them enmity:
"He has abused and beaten me,
defeated me and plundered me",
hate is not allayed for them.

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UNCONTROLLED HATRED LEADS TO HARM

1 (3) (4) The Story of Monk Tissa (Verses 3 & 4)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha uttered these Verses, with reference to Monk Tissa. Tissa, son of the Buddha's maternal aunt, was at one time staying with the Buddha. He had become a monk only in his old age, but he posed as a senior monk and was very pleased when visiting monks asked his permission to do some service for him. On the other hand, he failed to perform the duties expected of junior monks; besides, he often quarrelled with the younger monks. Should anyone rebuke him on account of his behaviour, he would go complaining to the Buddha, weeping, very much dissatisfied and very upset.

Once, the Teacher asked him, "Tissa, why have you come to me so sad and sorrowful with tears in your eyes, weeping?" The other monks had discussed among themselves, "If he goes alone, he may cause trouble." So they too went along with him, paid obeisance to the Teacher, and sat down respectfully on one side. Tissa answered the Teacher's question, "Venerable, these monks are abusing me." The Teacher asked, "But where were you sitting?" "In the centre of the monastery in the Hall of State, Venerable." "Did you see these monks when they came?" "Yes, Venerable I saw them." "Did you rise and go to meet them?" "No, Venerable, I did not." "Did you offer to take their monastic utensils?" "No, Venerable, I did not offer to take them." "Tissa, do not act thus. You alone are to be blamed; ask their pardon." "I will not ask their pardon, Venerable."

The monks said to the Teacher, "He is an obstinate monk, Venerable." The Teacher replied, "Monks, this is not the first time he has proved obstinate; he was obstinate also in a previous state of existence." "We know all about his present obstinacy, Venerable; but what did he do in a previous state of existence?" "Well then, monks, listen," said the Teacher. So saying, he told the following story.

Once upon a time, when a certain king reigned at Benāres, an ascetic named Dēvala, who had resided for eight months in the Himālaya country, desiring to reside near the city during the four months of the rains, for salt and vinegar returned from the Himālayas. Seeing two boys at the gate of the city, he asked them, "Where do monks who come to this city spend the night?" "In the potter's hall, Venerable." So Dēvala went to the potter's hall, stopped at the door, and said, "If it is agreeable to you, Bhaggava, I would like to spend one night in your hall." The potter turned over the hall to him, saying, "I have no work going on in the hall at night, and the hall is a large one; spend the night here as you please, Venerable." No sooner had Dēvala entered the hall and sat down than another ascetic named Nārada, returning from the Himālayas, asked the potter for a night's lodging. The potter thought to himself, "The ascetic who arrived first may or may not be willing to spend the night with him; I will therefore relieve myself of responsibility."

So he said to the ascetic who had just arrived, "Venerable, if the ascetic who arrived first approves of it, spend the night at your pleasure." So Nārada approached Dēvala and said, "Teacher, if it is agreeable to you, I would like to spend one night here." Dēvala replied, "The hall is a large one; therefore come in and spend the night on one side." So Nārada went in and sat down beside the ascetic who had gone in before him. Both exchanged friendly greetings.

When it was bedtime, Nārada noted carefully the place where Dēvala lay and the position of the door, and then lay down. But when Dēvala lay down, instead of lying down in his proper place, he lay down directly across the doorway. The result was that when Nārada went out at night, he trod on Dēvala's matted locks. Thereupon Dēvala cried out, "Who is treading on my locks?" Nārada replied, "Teacher, it is I." "False ascetic," said Dēvala, "You come from the forest and tread on my locks." "Teacher, I did not know that you were lying here; please pardon me." Nārada then went out, leaving Dēvala weeping as if his heart would break. Dēvala thought to himself, "I will not let him tread on me when he comes in also." So he turned around and lay down, placing his head where his feet had been before. When Nārada came in, he thought to himself, "The first time I injured the teacher; this time I will go in past his feet." The result was that, when Nārada entered, he trod on Dēvala's neck. Thereupon Dēvala cried out, "Who is that?" Nārada replied, "It is I, teacher." "False ascetic," said Dēvala, "The first time you trod on my locks. This time you tread on my neck. I will curse you." "Teacher, I am not to blame. I did not know that you were lying in this position. When I came in I thought to myself, 'The first time I injured the teacher; this time I will go in past his feet.' Please pardon me." "False ascetic, I will curse you." "Do not do so, teacher." But Dēvala, paying no attention to what Nārada said, cursed him all the same, saying, "May your head split into seven pieces at sunrise."

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Those who do not mull over the harm done to them are appeased.

4. *Akkocchi maṁ avadhi maṁ*
ajini maṁ ahāsi mē
yē taṁ na upanayhanti
vēraṁ tēsūpasammati. (1:4)

Who bear within no enmity:
"He has abused and beaten me,
defeated me and plundered me",
hate is quite allayed for them.

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OVERCOMING ANGER

1 (3) (4) The Story of Monk Tissa (Verses 3 & 4 cont'd)

Now Nārada, perceiving that the curse would fall back on his brother-ascetic, he felt compassion for him, and therefore put forth the power of his meditation and prevented the sunrise. When the sun did not rise, the king had to intervene and ask Dēvala to apologise. Dēvala refused. Then said Nārada to Dēvala, "teacher, I will put forth my power of meditation and make the sun to rise. At the moment of sunrise please keep a lump of clay on your head and submerge in water and rise in different places as you go your way." As soon as the sun's rays touched the lump of clay on his head, it divided into seven pieces. Thereupon Dēvala ducked in the water, and came up in a different place, and ran away. When the Buddha had given his instruction, he said, "monks, at that time the king was Ānanda, Dēvala was Tissa, and Nārada was myself, when at that time he was obstinate."

The Buddha advised them not to keep thoughts of enmity, for this could be only appeased by thoughts of friendliness.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 3)

maṁ akkocchi maṁ avadhi maṁ ajini mē ahāsi
yē taṁ upanayhanti tēsaṁ vēraṁ na sammati

maṁ: me; *akkocchi:* (he) insulted; *maṁ:* mē; *avadhi:* (he) assaulted; *maṁ:* mē; *ajini:* (he) defeated; *ahāsi:* (he) robbed; *mē:* my (belongings); *yē:* those who; *taṁ:* such thoughts; *upanayhanti:* keep coming back to; *tēsaṁ:* their; *vēraṁ:* enmity; *na saṁmati:* never ceases.

When a person holds that he was insulted, assaulted, defeated, or robbed, his anger continues to increase. The anger of such a person has no way of subsiding. The more he goes over is imaginary trouble the greater becomes his desire to avenge it.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 4)

maṁ akkocchi maṁ avadhi maṁ ajini mē ahāsi
yē taṁ na upanayhanti tēsaṁ vēraṁ sammati.

maṁ: me; *akkocchi:* (he) insulted; *maṁ:* me; *avadhi:* (he) assaulted; *maṁ:* me; *ajini:* (he) defeated; *ahāsi:* (he) robbed; *mē:* my (belongings); *yē:* those who; *taṁ:* such thoughts; *na upanayhanti:* does not constantly return to; *tēsaṁ:* their; *vēraṁ:* enmity; *saṁmati:* ceases.

Living in human society, people often quarrel with one another. When such conflicts occur, people often keep thinking about the wrongs done to them by others. When that happens, their anger tends to grow. But in those who forgive and forget the wrongs done to them, anger quickly vanishes. They are then at peace.

Commentary

This pair of verses reveals the psychological principle that is basic to emotional control. Emotion is an excitement of the body that begins with a thought. A thought creates a mental picture which, if held onto, excites a corresponding emotion. It is only when this mental picture is discarded and paid no attention to, that the emotion subsides. The Buddha's constant advice to His followers was not to retaliate but to practice patience at all times and places, even under provocation. The Buddha praises those who forebear the wrongs of others, even though they have the power to retaliate. In the Dhammapada itself there are many instances that show how the Buddha practiced patience, even when he was severely criticised, abused, and attacked. Patience is not a sign of weakness or defeatism but the unfailing strength of great men and women. The secret of patience is to change the mental picture or how you interpret a situation. An example is given in the Shāntivādi Jātaka, where the sāint Shāntivādi was the Buddha Gōtama in his former life. The saint kept repeating the thought, "long live the king may he be free from harm," while his limbs were severed until death, by this cruel king who wanted to test his patience.

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Hatred never conquers hatred. Only non-hatred conquers hatred.

5. *Na hi vērēna vērāni*
sammantīdha kudācanaṁ
avērēna ca sammanti
ēsa dhammō sanantanō. (1:5)

Never here by enmity
are those with enmity allayed,
they are allayed by amity,
this is a timeless Truth.

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HATRED IS OVERCOME ONLY BY NON-HATRED

1 (4) The Story of Kāliyakkhinī (Verse 5)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a certain woman who was barren and another capable of bearing a child.

Once there lived a householder, whose wife was barren. Being unable to bear a child and afraid that she would be mistreated by her husband and her mother-in-law, she arranged for her husband to marry another woman. But on two occasions, as soon as she knew the second wife was pregnant, the barren wife gave her food mixed with drugs causing her to have a miscarriage. On her third pregnancy, the pregnant wife kept it to herself without informing the barren wife. But when the latter came to know about it, she again caused an abortion. Eventually the second wife died in childbirth. Before her death, the unfortunate woman was filled with hatred and vowed vengeance on the barren wife and her future offspring. Thus a feud started.

Among their later existences the two were reborn as a hen and a female cat; a doe and a leopards; and finally as the daughter of a nobleman in Sāvatthi and a female evil spirit. One day she (Kāli Yakkhinī) was in pursuit of the nobleman's daughter and her baby. When this lady heard that the Buddha was giving a religious discourse at the Jētavana Monastery, she fled to him and placed her son at his feet for protection. The evil spirit was prevented from entering the Monastery. She was later called in and both the lady and the evil spirit were admonished by the Buddha. The Buddha told them about their past trouble as rival wives and how they had been harboring hatred towards each other. They were made to see that hatred could only cause more hatred, and that it could only cease through friendship, understanding, and goodwill. Both realised their mistake, and on the admonition of the Buddha, made their peace with each other.

The Buddha then requested the woman to hand over her son to the evil spirit. Fearing for the safety of her son, she hesitated, but because of her devotion and confidence in the Buddha she did hand over her son.

The child was warmly received by the evil spirit. After kissing and caressing the child tenderly like her own son, she handed back the child to his mother. As a result, there was no more hatred.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 5)

īdha vērēna vērāni kudācanaṁ na hi sammantī
avērēna ca sammanti ēsa sanantanō dhammō

īdha: in this world; *vērāni:* hatred (enmity); *vērēna:* through hatred; *kudācanaṁ:* at no time; *na hi saṁmantī:* not subsided; *avērēna ca:* only by non-hatred; *saṁmanti:* are pacified; *ēsō:* this (is); *sanantanō:* ageless; *dhaṁmō:* wisdom.

Those who attempt to conquer hatred by hatred are like warriors who take weapons to overcome others who bear arms. This does not end hatred, but gives it room to grow. But, ancient wisdom has advocated a different timeless strategy to overcome hatred. This eternal wisdom is to meet hatred with non-hatred. The method of trying to conquer hatred through hatred never succeeds in overcoming hatred. But, the method of overcoming hatred through non-hatred is eternally effective. That is why that method is described as eternal wisdom.

Commentary

The principle revealed in this verse is clear. Quarrels can never come to an end by quarrelling. War can never end through further wars. Enmity never ends by returning enmity for enmity. Only by giving up anger, enmity, quarrelling and wars that these evils can be stopped. It is through friendliness, forgiving and forgetting that enmity ceases.

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Some know not that life ends in death. Thought of death prevents quarrelling.

6. *Parē ca na vijānaṇti*
mayamettha yamāmasē
yē ca tattha vijānanti
tatō saṁmanti mēdhagā. (1:6)

Still others do not understand
that we must perish in this world,
those who understand this,
their quarrels are allayed.

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RECOLLECTION OF DEATH BRINGS PEACE

1 (5) The Story of Kōsambi Monks (Verse 6)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha uttered this verse, with reference to the monks of Kōsambi.

The monks of Kōsambi had formed into two groups. One group followed the master of Vinaya and the other followed the teacher of the Dhamma. Once they were quarrelling among themselves over a minor Vinaya rule. Even the Buddha could not stop them from quarrelling; so he left them and spent the vassa, religious retreat in the monsoon season, all alone in Rakkhita Grove near Pārileyyaka forest. There, the elephant Pārileyya waited upon the Buddha.

The lay disciples of Kōsambi, on learning the reason for the departure of the Buddha, refused to make offerings to the remaining monks. This made them realize their mistake and reconciliation took place among themselves. Still, the lay disciples would not treat them as respectfully as before, until they owned up their fault to the Buddha. But the Buddha was away and it was in the middle of the vassa; so the monks of Kōsambi spent the vassa in misery and hardship.

At the end of the vassa, the Venerable Ānanda and many monks approached the Buddha and gave the message from Anāthapindika and other lay disciples imploring him to return. In due course the Buddha returned to the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi. The monks followed him there, fell down at his feet, and admitted their fault. The Buddha rebuked them for disobeying Him. He told them to remember that they must all die some day and therefore, they must stop their quarrels and must not act as if they would never die.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 6)

ettha parē mayaṁ yamāmasē na ca vijānanti tattha yē ca vijānanti tatō medhagā sammanti.

ettha: in this place; *parē:* those others; *mayaṁ:* we; *yamāmasē:* die; *na vijānanti:* do not know; *tattha:* here; *yē ca:* some; *vijānanti:* know (it); *tatō:* due to that (awareness); *mēdhagā:* conflicts and disputes; *sammanti:* subside.

Most of us are not willing to face the reality of impermanence and death. It is because we forget this fact that our lives are transitory, that we quarrel with each other, as if we are going to live for ever. But, if we face the fact of death, our quarrels will come to an end. We will then realize the folly of fighting when we ourselves are doomed to die. Excited by emotions our thought being clouded, we cannot see the truth about life. When we see the truth, however, our thoughts become free of emotions.

Commentary

The essence of Buddhism is facing the reality of death and impermanence. Why we suffer is because we run away from reality, carried away by emotions. Emotions are in conflict with reality; therefore, they are bound to be thwarted by reality. Not only anger but all self-centred emotions come to an end when we face the reality of death. It is a realistic thought that ends all unhappiness. Those who do not face reality in this Buddhist way, continue to be frustrated and angry, and suffer in consequence.

Generally, people are not aware that death will overtake them one day. They act unmindful of this universal truth. Both monks and laymen, unmindful of death and considering themselves as immortals, are often heedless in cultivating virtues. They engage themselves in strife and arguments and are often dejected, with their hopes and aspirations shattered. At times, they postpone their work with the hope of doing it on a grand scale in the future, and end up without being able to do anything. Therefore, it is only proper that one should daily reflect on death.

Being mindful of death is central to the Buddhist way of understanding the real nature of life. There are people in this world, people in various walks of life, who resent the very word 'death', let alone reflect on it. Infatuated by long life, good health, youth and prosperity, they completely forget the fact that they are subjected to death. Immersed in the evanescent pleasures of the five-fold senses, they seek only material satisfaction in this world, completely disregarding a future life, and indulging in vice through the mind, body and speech. They regard this impermanent and evanescent life as permanent and everlasting. It is to arouse a sense of dissatisfaction in such blind and ignorant people, to allay the pangs of sorrow caused by the separation of parents and children, and from wealth and property, to inculcate the doctrine of impermanence in all beings, and thereby convince them of the unsatisfaction of life, and direct them towards the attainment of everlasting peace, that the Buddha preached these words.

A person who has not comprehended the doctrine of the Buddha is infatuated by long life and considers himself as immortal, even though he may see many deaths around him; he is infatuated by good health and considers himself free from disease even though he may see countless diseased persons around him; he is infatuated by youth even though he may see many aged persons and considers himself as one who is not subjected to old age; he is infatuated by wealth and prosperity even though he may see countless persons rendered destitute through loss of wealth; and he never thinks for a moment, that he too, might be subjected to such a state.

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Death overpowers the sensuous, undisciplined and gluttonuous like the wind a weak tree.

7. *Subhānupassiṁ viharantaṁ*
indriyēsu asaṁvutaṁ
bhōjanaṁhi amattaññuṁ
kusītaṁ hīnavīriyaṁ
taṁ vē pasahati mārō
vātō rukkhaṁ'va dubbalaṁ (1:7)

One who beauty contemplates,
whose faculties are unrestrained,
in food no moderation knows,
is languid, who is indolent:
that one does Māra overthrow
as wind a tree of little strength.

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SLOTH DEFEATS SPIRITUALITY

1 (6) The Story of Monk Mahākāla (Verses 7 & 8)

While residing in the neighbourhood of the town of Sētavya, the Buddha uttered these verses, with reference to Mahākāla and his brother Cūlakāla. For Cūlakāla, Majjhima Kāla, and Mahākāla were three householders who lived in Sētavya, and they were brothers. Cūlakāla and Mahākāla, the oldest and youngest respectively, used to travel abroad with their caravan of five hundred carts and bring home goods to sell, and Majjhima Kāla sold the goods they brought. Now on a certain occasion the two brothers, taking wares of various kinds in their five hundred carts, set out for Sāvatthi, and halting between Sāvatthi and Jētavana, unharnessed their carts. In the evening Mahākāla saw Noble Disciples, residents of Sāvatthi, with garlands and perfumes in their hands, going to hear the Law. "Where are they going?" he asked. Receiving the answer that they were going to hear the Law, he thought to himself, "I will go too." So he addressed his youngest brother, "Dear brother, keep watch over the carts; I am going to hear the Law." So saying, he went and paid obeisance to the Buddha and sat down in the outer circle of the congregation.

On that day the Teacher preached the Law in orderly sequence with reference to Mahākāla's disposition of mind, and quoting the Sutta on the Aggregate of Suffering, and other Suttas, discoursed on the sinfulness and folly and contamination of sensual pleasures. Mahākāla, after listening to the discourse, became a monk under the Teacher. Cūlakāla likewise became a monk. But the thought in Cūlakāla's mind was, "After a time I will return to the world and take my brother with me."

Somewhat later Mahākāla made his full profession, and approaching the Teacher, asked him, "How many duties are there in this Religion?" The Teacher informed him that there were two. Said Mahākāla, "Venerable, since I became a monk in old age, I shall not be able to fulfill the Duty of Study, but I can fulfill the Duty of Contemplation." So he had the Teacher instructed him in the Practice of meditation in a cemetery, which leads to Arahatship. At the end of the first watch, when everyone else was asleep, he went to the cemetery; and at dawn, before anyone else had risen, he returned to the Monastery. Now a certain young woman of station was attacked by a disease, and the very moment the disease attacked her, she died, in the evening, without a sign of old age or weakness. In the evening her kinsfolk and friends brought her body to the burning-ground, with firewood, oil, and other requisites, and said to the keeper of the burning-ground, "Burn this body." And paying the keeper the usual fee, they turned the body over to her and departed. When the keeper of the burning-ground removed the woman's dress and beheld her beautiful golden-hued body, she straightway thought to herself, "This corpse is a suitable Subject of Meditation to show to His reverence." So she went to the Venerable, paid obeisance to him, and said, "I have a remarkably good Subject of Meditation; pray look at it, Venerable." "Very well," said the Venerable. So he went and caused the dress which covered the corpse to be removed, and surveyed the body from the soles of the feet to the tips of the hair. Then he said, "Throw this beautiful golden-hued body into the fire, and as soon as the tongues of fire have laid hold of it, please tell me." So saying, he went to his own place and sat down. The keeper of the burning-ground did as she was told and went and informed the Venerable. The Venerable came and surveyed the body. Where the flames had touched the flesh, the colour of her body was like that of a mottled cow; the feet stuck out and hung down; the hands were curled back; the forehead was without skin. The Venerable thought to himself, "This body, which but now caused those who looked thereon to forget the Sacred Word, has but now attained decay, has but now attained death." And going to his night-quarters, he sat down, discerning clearly Decay and Death. Mahākāla developed Spiritual Insight and attained Arahatship, together with the Supernatural Faculties.

When Mahākāla attained Arahatship, the Buddha, surrounded by the Congregation of Monks, travelling from place to place, arrived at Sētavya and entered the Simsapā forest. Cūlakāla's wives, hearing that the Buddha had arrived, thought to themselves, "Now we shall recover our husband." So they went and invited the Buddha. Now when a visit is expected from the Buddha, it is customary for a single monk to go in advance and give warning. When Cūlakāla went home to prepare for alms-giving his wives tore off his robes. Mahākāla's eight wives also thought that they will get their husband also to give up the robes. One day, they arranged an alms-giving for the Buddha and the Disciples and asked the Buddha to leave Mahākāla behind to pronounce the formula of thanksgiving after alms-giving. The Buddha left him at his former home and went away with the other disciples.

(cont'd on page 17)

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Death overpowers not the steadfast thinker just as the wind does not tremble a firm rock.

8. *Asubhānupassiṁ viharantaṁ*
indriyēsu susaṁvutaṁ
bhōjanaṁhi ca mattaññuṁ
saddhaṁ āraddha vīriyaṁ
taṁ vē nappasahati mārō
vātō sēlaṁ'va pabbataṁ (1:8)

One who foulness contemplates,
whose faculties are well-restrained,
in food does moderation know,
is full of faith, who's diligent:
that one no Māra overthrows,
as wind does not a rocky mount.

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SPIRITUAL STRENGTH IS UNDEFEATABLE

1 (6) The Story of Monk Mahākāla (Verses 7 & 8) (cont'd)

When the Buddha reached the village gate, the congregation of monks was offended and said, "What a thing for the Buddha to do! Did he do it wittingly or unwittingly? Yesterday Cūlakāla came and that was the end of his monastic life. But today, a different monk came and nothing of the sort happened." The Buddha sent Mahākāla back and continued on his way. Said the monks, "The monk Mahākāla is virtuous and upright. Will they put an end to his monastic life?" Mahākāla's wives tried to make him a layman but he rose into the air through his psychic power as an Arahat and appeared before the Buddha as he was reciting these two verses. Monk Mahākāla paid obeisance to the Buddha and the Buddha told the other monks that they were wrong about Arahat Mahākāla to compare him with Monk Cūlakāla.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 7)

subhānupassiṁ viharantaṁ indriyēsu asaṁvutaṁ
bhōjanamhi ca amattaññuṁ kusītaṁ hīnavīriyaṁ
taṁ vē pasahati Mārō vātō dubbalaṁ rukkhaṁ iva

subhānupassiṁ: dwelling on the attractiveness of sensual pleasures; *viharantaṁ:* he who lives; *indriyēsu:* in senses; *asaṁvutaṁ:* unguarded; *bhōjanamhi ca:* in food also; *amattaññuṁ:* immoderate; *kusītaṁ:* lazy; *hīnavīriyaṁ:* weak in making an effort; *taṁ:* that person; *Mārō:* emotion personified as 'Māra'"(the equivalent of 'Devil'); *vē:* indeed; *pasahati:* overpowers; *vātō:* the wind; *dubbalaṁ:* weak; *rukkhaṁ:* tree; *iva:* like.

Those who dwell on the attractiveness of sensual enjoyments, and live with the senses unguarded, and are immoderate in eating, they are slothful and weak in perseverance and will-power. Emotions overpower such persons as easily as the wind overpowers a weak tree.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 8)

asubhānupassiṁ viharantaṁ indriyēsu
susaṁvutaṁ bhōjanamhi ca mattaññuṁ saddhaṁ
āraddhavīriyaṁ Mārō taṁ vē nappasahati vātō
sēlaṁ pabbataṁ iva.

asubhānupassiṁ: dwelling on the unattractiveness of sensual pleasure; *viharantaṁ:* he who lives; *indriyēsu:* in senses; *susaṁvutaṁ:* well guarded; *bhōjanamhi ca:* in food also; *mattaññuṁ:* moderate; *saddhaṁ:* devoted; *āraddha vīriyaṁ:* strong in effort; *taṁ:* that person; *Mārō:* emotions personified as 'Māra' (the equivalent of 'Devil'); *nappasahati:* does not overpower; *vātō:* the wind; *sēlaṁ pabbataṁ:* rocky mountain; *iva:* like.

Those who dwell on the unattractiveness of sensual enjoyments, and live with the senses well guarded, and moderate in eating, they are devoted to the Teaching and to persistent methodical practice. Such persons are not overpowered by emotions just as a rocky mountain is not shaken by the wind.

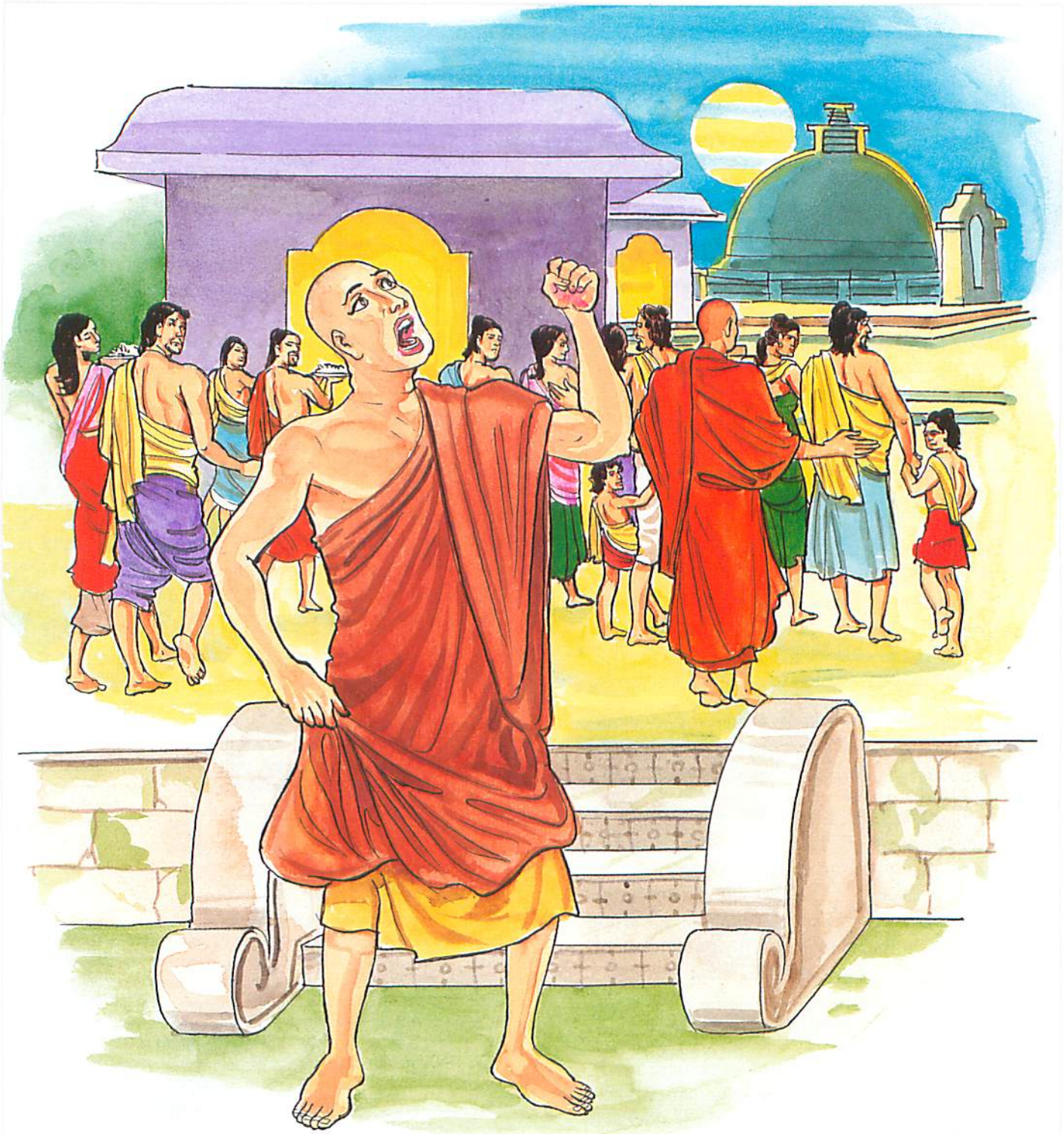
Commentary

Those who have a false idea of optimism and think that life is a bed of roses without thorns, they keep focusing on the pleasant side of life and ignore the unpleasant. As a result, they become attached to things and call them "this is mine" or "this is myself". When these things to which they are attached change and are parted from them, they lament that what is "theirs" and what is "themselves" is breaking up and dying. Those who look at the unpleasant side of life, the thorns in the roses, have their attachments weaken. When this happens, the change and separation from attached objects do not bring about much sorrow or grief.

***Asubhānupassanā*:** does not mean the reflection on the painfulness of pain which produces hatred or aversion. That is called the cultivation of 'the perception of repulsiveness' (paṭhigha saññā), which is also to be avoided. Its true meaning is the reflection on the bad side of sensual pleasure, which people often like to ignore, and in so doing, run into suffering, the very thing that they are trying to avoid. True optimism is not a one-sided view of life but an ability to see a solution to the problems in life. This is the optimism of Buddhism.

This pair of verses reveals the method of finding happiness in life, by giving up attachment to things of the world. The first step is to think realistically. Guarding the senses is learning to stop reacting to pleasant and unpleasant circumstances with desire and aversion. Exercising control in our eating habits and overcoming laziness are necessary to maintain the practice of focusing attention on right things and thereby clearing the thoughts of emotional attachments.

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Those who are tainted, unrestrained and devoid of truthfulness do not deserve the robe.

9. *Anikkasāvō kāsāvaṁ*
yō vatthaṁ paridahessati
apētō damasaccēna
na sō kāsāvamarahati (1:9)

One who wears the stainless robe
who's yet not free from stain,
without restraint and truthfulness
for the stainless robe's unfit.

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THOSE WHO DO NOT DESERVE THE STAINED ROBE

1 (7) The Story of Dēvadatta (Verses 9 & 10)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Dēvadatta. For on a certain occasion the two Chief Disciples, each with a retinue of five hundred monks, took leave of the Buddha and went from Jētavana to Rājagaha. The residents of Rājagaha united in twos and threes and in larger groups gave alms in accordance with the custom of giving alms to visitors. Now one day Venerable Sāriputta said, in making the Address of Thanksgiving, "Lay brethren, one man himself gives alms, but does not urge another to give; that man receives in future births the blessing of wealth, but not the blessing of a retinue. Another man urges his neighbour to give, but does not himself give; that man receives in future births the blessing of a retinue, but not the blessing of wealth. Another man neither himself gives alms nor urges others to give; in future births that man receives not so much as a bellyful of sour rice-gruel, but is forlorn and destitute. Yet another both himself gives alms and urges his neighbour to give; that man, in future births in a hundred states of existence, in a thousand states of existence, in a hundred thousand states of existence, receives both the blessing of wealth and the blessing of a retinue." Thus did Venerable Sāriputta preach the law.

One person invited the Venerable to take a meal with him, saying, "Venerable, accept my hospitality for tomorrow." For the alms-giving someone handed over a piece of cloth, worth one hundred thousand, to the organizers of the alms giving ceremony. He instructed them to dispose of it and use the proceeds for the ceremony should there be any shortage of funds, or if there were no such shortage, to offer it to anyone of the monks they thought fit. It so happened that there was no shortage of anything and the cloth was to be offered to one of the monks. Since the two Chief Disciples visited Rājagaha only occasionally, the cloth was offered to Dēvadatta, who was a permanent resident of Rājagaha.

It came about this way. Some said, "Let us give it to the Venerable Sāriputta." Others said, "The Venerable Sāriputta has a way of coming and going. But Dēvadatta is our constant companion, both on festival days and on ordinary days, and is ever ready like a water-pot. Let us give it to him." After a long discussion it was decided by a majority of four to give the robe to Dēvadatta. So they gave the robe to Dēvadatta. Dēvadatta cut it in two, fashioned it, dyed it, put one part on as an undergarment and the other as an upper garment, and wore it as he walked about. When they saw him wearing his new robe, they said, "This robe does not befit Dēvadatta, but does befit the Venerable Sāriputta. Dēvadatta is going about wearing under and upper garments which do not befit him." Said the Buddha, "Monks, this is not the first time Dēvadatta has worn robes unbecoming to him; in a previous state of existence also he wore robes which did not befit him." So saying, he related the following.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta ruled at Benāres, there dwelt at Benāres a certain elephant-hunter who made a living by killing elephants. Now in a certain forest several thousand elephants found pasture. One day, when they went to the forest, they saw some Private Buddhas. From that day, both going and coming, they fell down on their knees before the Private Buddha before proceeding on their way.

One day the elephant-hunter saw their actions. Thought he, "I too ought to get a yellow robe immediately." So he went to a pool used by a certain Private Buddha, and while the latter was bathing and his robes lay on the bank, stole his robes. Then he went and sat down on the path by which the elephants came and went, with a spear in his hand and the robe drawn over his head. The elephants saw him, and taking him for a Private Buddha, paid obeisance to him, and then went their way. The elephant which came last of all he killed with a thrust of his spear. And taking the tusks and other parts which were of value and burying the rest of the dead animal in the ground, he departed.

Later on the Future Buddha, who had been reborn as an elephant, became the leader of the elephants and the lord of the herd. At that time also the elephant-hunter was pursuing the same tactics as before. The Buddha observed the decline of his retinue and asked, "Where do these elephants go that this herd has become so small?" "That we do not know, master." The Buddha thought to himself, "Wherever they go, they must not go without my permission." Then the suspicion entered his mind, "The fellow who sits in a certain place with a yellow robe drawn over his head must be causing the trouble; he will bear watching."

(cont'd on page 21)

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The taintless and firm in conduct, restrained and truthful, are worthy of the stained robe.

10. *Yō ca vaṇṭakasāvassa*
sīlēsu susamāhitō
upētō damasaccēna
sa vē kāsāvamarahati (1:10)

But one who is self-cleansed of stain,
in moral conduct firmly set,
having restraint and truthfulness
is fit for the stainless robe.

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THE VIRTUOUS DESERVE THE STAINED ROBE

1 (7) The Story of Dēvadatta (Verses 9 & 10) (cont'd)

So the leader of the herd sent the other elephants on ahead and walking very slowly, brought up the rear himself. When the rest of the elephants had paid obeisance and passed on, the elephant-hunter saw the Buddha approach, whereupon he gathered his robe together and threw his spear. The Buddha fixed his attention as he approached, and stepped backwards to avoid the spear. "This is the man who killed my elephants," thought the Buddha, and forthwith sprang forwards to seize him. But the elephant-hunter jumped behind a tree and crouched down. Thought the Buddha, "I will encircle both the hunter and the tree with my trunk, seize the hunter, and dash him to the ground." Just at that moment the hunter removed the yellow robe and allowed the elephant to see it. When the Great Being saw it, he thought to himself, "If I offend against this man, the reverence which thousands of Buddhas, Private Buddhas, and Arahats feel towards me will of necessity be lost." Therefore he kept his patience. Then he asked the hunter, "Was it you that killed all these kinsmen of mine?" "Yes, master," replied the hunter. "Why did you do so wicked a deed? You have put on robes which become those who are free from the passions, but which are unbecoming to you. In doing such a deed as this, you have committed a grievous sin." So saying, he rebuked him again for the last time. "Unbecoming is the deed you have done," said he.

When the Buddha had ended this lesson, he identified the characters in the *Jātaka* as follows, "At that time the elephant-hunter was Dēvadatta, and the noble elephant who rebuked him was I myself. Monks, this is not the first time Dēvadatta has worn a robe which was unbecoming to him."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 9)

anikkasāvō damasaccēna apētō yō kāsāvaṁ vatthaṁ paridahessati sō kāsāvaṁ na arahati

anikkasāvō: uncleaned of the stain of defilements; *damasaccēna:* emotional control and awareness of reality; *apētō:* devoid of; *Yō:* some individual; *kāsāvaṁ vatthaṁ:* the stained cloth; *paridahessati:* wears; *sō:* that person; *kāsāvaṁ:* the stained robe; *na arahati:* is not worthy of.

A monk may be stained with defilements, bereft of self-control and awareness of reality. Such a monk, though he may wear the 'stained cloth' (the monk's robe which has been specially coloured with dye obtained from wild plants), he is not worthy of such a saintly garb.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 10)

Yō ca vantakasāvassa sīlēsu susamāhitō damasaccēna sa upētō sa vē kāsāvaṁ arahati

Yō ca: if some person; *vantakasāvassa:* free of the stain of defilements; *sīlēsu:* well conducted; *susamāhitō:* who is tranquil within; *damasaccēna:* with emotional control and awareness of reality; *upētō:* endowed; *sō:* that person; *vē:* certainly; *kāsāvaṁ:* the stained cloth; *arahati:* is worthy of.

Whoever dons the 'stained cloth', being free of defilements, who is well conducted and tranquil within, having emotions under control and aware of reality, such a person is worthy of the sacred 'stained cloth.'

Commentary

The 'stained cloth' is a symbol of purity for the Buddhist. He holds as sacred and holy this specially prepared monk's robe. The Buddhist bows down in homage to the wearer of this robe. The robe signifies the *Sangha* which is a part of the Holy Trinity of the Buddhist: *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Sangha*.

When a person is ordained as a Buddhist monk, the person feels that he has risen above the mundane realm and become a holy person. This feeling is reinforced when laymen bow down before him. This new 'self-image' helps the newly ordained person to start a new life of holiness. The layman too gets inspiration by seeing and worshiping the wearer of the robe. This veneration of the robe, therefore, is an important part of the Buddhist practice.

This is why a person contaminated by profanity is not worthy of the yellow cloth. It is a sacrilege to wear it, if he is impure. It is a desecration of the sacred robe.

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Those who view the unreal as real and the real as unreal reach not upto the real, misled as they are.

11. *Asārē sāramatinō*
sārē cā sāradassinō
tē sāraṁ nādhigacchanti
micchā saṅkappagōcarā (1:11)

Conceiving the real in unreality
while seeing unreal the truly real,
roaming fields of thought ill-formed:
never they at the real arrive.

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FALSE VALUES BAR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

1 (8) The Story of Monk Sāriputta (Verses 11 & 12)

While residing at Vēluvana, the Bamboo Grove Monastery in Rājagaha, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Sanjaya, a former teacher of the Chief Disciples, the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Moggallāna (formerly Upatissa and Kōlita).

Before the Buddha appeared in the world, there were two Brāhamaṇa villages not far from Rājagaha named Upatissa village and Kōlita village. One day a Brāhamaṇa's wife named Rūpasari, who lived in Upatissa village, conceived a child; and on the same day a brahamin's wife named Moggali, who lived in Kōlita village, likewise conceived a child in her womb. We are told that for seven generations these two families had been firmly knit and bound together in the bonds of friendship; they performed the Protection of the Embryo for the two expectant mothers on the same day. On the expiration of ten lunar months, both women gave birth to sons.

On the day appointed for the name of the children, they gave the name Upatissa to the son of the brahamin woman whose name was Sāri, because he was the son of the principal family in Upatissa village; to the other boy, because he was the son of the principal family in Kōlita village, they gave the name Kōlita. As they grew up, both boys attained the highest proficiency in all the arts and sciences. Whenever the youth Upatissa went to the river or the garden to enjoy himself, five hundred golden litters accompanied him; five hundred chariots drawn by thoroughbreds accompanied the youth Kōlita. The two youths had retinues of five hundred boys apiece.

Now there is a festival celebrated every year in Rājagaha which goes by the name of Mountain-top festival. A couch for the two youths was set up in one place, and the two youths sat together and witnessed the passing show. When there was occasion to laugh, they laughed; when there was occasion to weep, they wept; when it was time to give alms, they gave alms. In this way they witnessed the festivities for several days. But one day, when they had grown wiser, there was no laugh when they might have laughed, as on preceding days, there were no tears when they might have wept, and when their alms were sought they gave no alms.

The following thought, we are told, occurred to the two youths, "Why should we look at this? Before a hundred years have passed, all these people will have gone hence and will no more be seen. It behoves us rather to seek the Way of Release." And taking this thought to heart, they sat down. Then Kōlita said to Upatissa, "Friend Upatissa, you do not appear to be pleased and delighted as on previous days. Nay rather, you are afflicted with melancholy. What is in your mind?" "Friend Kōlita, I sit thinking, 'There is no lasting satisfaction in looking upon these folk; this is all unprofitable; it behoves me rather to seek the Way of Release for myself. But why are you melancholy?" Kōlita said the same thing. When Upatissa discovered that Kōlita's thoughts were one with his own, he said, "Both of us have had a happy thought. It behoves us both to seek the Way of Release and to retire from the world together. Under what teacher shall we retire from the world?"

Now at this time a wandering ascetic named Sanjaya entered the city of Rājagaha, accompanied by a large retinue of wandering ascetics. "We will retire from the world and become monks under Sanjaya," said Upatissa and Kōlita. So they dismissed five hundred retainers, saying to them, "Take the litters and the chariots and go," and, together with the remaining five hundred, retired from the world and became monks under Sanjaya. From the day when these two youths retired from the world and became monks under Sanjaya, Sanjaya reached the pinnacle of gain and renown. In but a few days they had passed the bounds of Sanjaya's teaching. Therefore they asked him, "Teacher, is this all the religious truth you know, or is there something more besides?" "This is all there is; you know all."

The questions Upatissa and Kōlita asked, the others, too, were not able to answer; but every question the others asked, Upatissa and Kōlita answered. In this manner they travelled over the Land of the Rose-apple; then they retraced their steps and returned to their own homes again. Before they separated, Upatissa said to Kōlita, "Friend Kōlita, whichever of us first attains the Deathless is to inform the other." Having made this agreement, they separated.

(cont'd on page 25)

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Viewing the real as real, the unreal as unreal, they being correctly guided, reach the real.

12. *Sāraṅ ca sāratō ñatvā*
asāraṅ ca asāratō
tē sāraṁ adhigacchanti
sammā sankappa gōcarā (1:12)

That which is real they know as real,
that unreal, to be unreal;
roaming fields of thought well-formed
they at the real arrive.

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TRUTH ENLIGHTENS

1 (8) The Story of Monk Sāriputta (Verses 11 & 12) (cont'd)

One day, the wandering ascetic Upatissa saw the Monk Assaji. Upatissa said to him, "Calm and serene, brother, are your organs of sense; clean and clear is the hue of your skin. For whose sake, brother, did you retire from the world? And who is your teacher? And whose doctrine do you profess?" "Brother, I am as yet a mere novice; its not long since I have been a monk; but recently did I approach Buddha's doctrine and discipline." Said the ascetic, "I am Upatissa; say much or little according to your ability; I will understand the meaning in a hundred ways or a thousand ways." At what Monk Assaji said Upatissa received higher excellence. Upatissa next saw his friend Kōlita and informed him that he has attained deathless. He pronounced the same stanza Assaji had pronounced. Kōlita was established in the fruit of conversion. They decided to visit the Buddha. They thought they should ask their former instructor Sanjaya to join them. "You may go; I cannot come," Sanjaya said, "In the past I have gone about as a teacher of the multitude. For me to become a pupil again would be absurd."

"Do not act thus, teacher," Upatissa said. "Teacher, from the moment of the Buddha's appearance in the world the populace has adored Him. Let's also go there. What do you intend to do now?" Sanjaya replied, "Friends, which are more numerous in this world, the stupid or the wise?" "Teacher, the stupid are many, the wise are few." Sanjaya said: "Well then, friends, let the wise men go to the wise Monk Gōtama and let the stupid come to stupid me." Upatissa and Kōlita departed. About two hundred and fifty wandering ascetics of Sanjaya's group also joined the two friends.

Then Kōlita and Upatissa saw the Buddha and became his chief disciples. Upatissa became Sāriputta, and Kōlita became Moggallāna. They informed the Buddha how Sanjaya would not come to see the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 11)

asārē sāramatinō sārē ca asāradassinō micchāsaṅkappagōcarā tē sāraṁ na adhigacchanti

asārē: what are not values; *sāramatinō:* if seen as values; *sārē cā:* and what are values; *asāradassinō:* if seen as not values; *micchāsaṅkappagōcarā:* given to wrong aspirations; *tē:* those (ignorant people); *sāraṁ:* to the values; *na adhigacchanti:* do not attain.

A person interested in spiritual progress must be aware of spiritual values. It is true that material things are also necessary. But they are not the values to be sought after for spiritual progress. If people were to give prominence to material values they cannot attain any spiritual heights.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 12)

sāraṁ sāratō ca asāraṁ asāratō ca ñatvā sammā saṅkappa gōcarā tē sāraṁ adhigacchanti.

sāraṁ: the true values; *sāratō ca:* as true values; *asāraṁ:* what are not values; *asāratō ca:* as not values; *ñatvā:* having understood; *sammā saṅkappa gōcarā:* blessed with right aspirations; *tē:* those (wise individuals); *sāraṁ:* true values; *adhigacchanti:* attain to.

The wise person who is able to recognize the true values leading to spiritual attainments, is capable of attaining to spiritual heights. Such a person is possessed of right views.

Commentary

This pair of verses stresses the importance of a proper 'sense of values' which is essential to the practice of the spiritual path. Our sense of values is what gives direction to our lives. The purity and richness of our lives depend on our sense of values. In fact, our judgement of superiority and inferiority, and our happiness and sense of achievement, are also dependent on this sense of values.

Those who have a wrong understanding of values have wrong aspirations, and they never attain the true riches of life.

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Lust pierces the undeveloped and uncultured mind like rain the ill-thatched roof.

13. *Yathā'gāraṁ ducchannaṁ*
vuṭṭhī samativijjhati
ēvaṁ abhāvitaṁ cittaṁ
rāgō samativijjhati (1:13)

Even as rain does penetrate
a house that's badly thatched,
likewise lust does penetrate
the mind uncultivated.

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LUST PENETRATES UNTRAINED MIND

I (9) The Story of Monk Nanda (Verses 13 & 14)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Monk Nanda, a cousin of the Buddha. Venerable Kāludāyi, knowing that it was the proper time for the Buddha to go to see his father, described the beauty of the journey and conducted the Buddha with his retinue of many Arahats to Kapilapura. And there, in the company of his kinsfolk, the Buddha, taking a shower of rain for his text, related the Vessantara Jātaka. On the following day he entered the city for alms. By the recitation of the Stanza, "A man should exert himself and should not live the life of Heedlessness," he established his father in the Fruit of Conversion; and by the recitation of the Stanza, "A man should live righteously," he established Mahā Pajāpati in the Fruit of Conversion and his father in the Fruit of the Second Path.

On the following day, while the ceremonies of Prince Nanda's sprinkling, house-warming, and marriage were in progress, the Buddha entered the house for alms, placed his bowl in Prince Nanda's hands, and wished him good luck. Then, rising from his seat, He departed without taking his bowl from the hands of the Prince. Out of reverence for the Buddha, Prince Nanda did not dare say, "Venerable, receive your bowl," but thought within himself, "He will take his bowl at the head of the stairs." But even when the Buddha reached the head of the stairs, He did not take his bowl. Thought Nanda, "He will take his bowl at the foot of the stairs." But the Buddha did not take his bowl even there. Thought Nanda, "He will take his bowl in the palace court." But the Buddha did not take his bowl even there. Prince Nanda desired greatly to return to his bride, and followed the Buddha much against his own will. But so great was his reverence for the Buddha that he did not dare say, "Receive your bowl," but continued to follow the Buddha, thinking to himself, "He will take his bowl here! He will take his bowl there! He will take his bowl there!"

At that moment they brought word to his bride Janapada-Kalyāni belle-of-the country, "My lady, the Exalted One (Buddha) has taken Prince Nanda away with him; it is his purpose to deprive you of him." Thereupon Janapada-Kalyāni, with tears streaming down her face and hair half-combed, ran after Prince Nanda as fast as she could and said to him, "Noble sir, please return immediately." Her words caused a quaver in Nanda's heart; but the Buddha, without so much as taking his bowl, led him to the Monastery and said to him, "Nanda, would you like to become a monk?" So great was Prince Nanda's reverence for the Buddha that he refrained from saying, "I do not wish to become a monk," and said instead, "Yes, I should like to become a monk." Said the Buddha, "Well then, make a monk of Nanda." Thus it happened that on the third day after the Buddha's arrival at Kapilapura he caused Nanda to become a monk.

While the Buddha was thus residing at Jētavana, Venerable Nanda, becoming discontented, told his troubles to the monks, saying, "Brethren, I am dissatisfied. I am now living the religious life, but I cannot endure to live the Religious Life any longer. I intend to abandon the higher precepts and to return to the lower life, the life of a layman."

The Exalted One, hearing of this incident, sent for Venerable Nanda and said to him, "Nanda, is the report true that you spoke as follows to a large company of monks, 'Brethren, I am dissatisfied; I am now living the Religious Life, but I cannot endure to live the Religious Life any longer; I intend to abandon the higher precepts and to return to the lower life, the life of a layman'?" "It is quite true, Venerable." "But, Nanda, why are you dissatisfied with the Religious Life you are now living? Why cannot you endure to live the Religious Life any longer? Why do you intend to abandon the higher precepts and to return to the lower life, the life of a layman?" "Venerable, when I left my house, my noble wife Janapada-Kalyāni, with hair half-combed, took leave of me, saying, 'Noble sir, please return immediately.' Venerable, it is because I keep remembering her that I am dissatisfied with the religious life I am now living; that I cannot endure to live the religious life any longer; that I intend to abandon the higher precepts and to return to the lower life, the life of a layman." Then the Exalted One took Venerable Nanda by the arm, and by his power conducted him to the World of the Thirty-three. On the way the Buddha pointed out to Venerable Nanda in a certain burnt field, seated on a burnt stump, a greedy monkey which had lost her ears and nose and tail in a fire.

(cont'd on page 29)

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Lust pierces not the developed and cultured mind as rain does not the well-thatched roof.

14. *Yathā gāraṁ succhannaṁ*
vuṭṭhī na samativijjhati
ēvaṁ subhāvitaṁ cittaṁ
rāgō na samativijjhati (1:14)

As rain does never penetrate
a house that is well-thatched,
so lust does never penetrate
the mind well-cultivated.

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THE DISCIPLINED MIND KEEPS LUST AWAY

1 (9) The Story of Monk Nanda (Verses 13 & 14) (cont'd)

When they reached the World of the Thirty-three, he pointed out five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs who came to wait upon Sakka, king of the gods. And when the Buddha had shown Venerable Nanda these two sights, he asked him this question, "Nanda, which do you regard as being the more beautiful and fair to look upon and handsome, your noble wife Janapada-Kalyāni or these five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs?'

"Venerable," replied Nanda, "as far inferior as this greedy monkey which has lost her ears and nose and tail is to Janapada-Kalyāni, even so far inferior, Venerable, is my noble wife Janapada-Kalyāni to these five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs."

"Cheer up, Nanda!" replied the Exalted One. "I guarantee that you will win these five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs." Said Venerable Nanda, "If, Venerable, the Buddha guarantees that I shall win these five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs in that case, Reverend Sir, I shall take the greatest pleasure in living the exalted life of a religious man."

Now Venerable Nanda, although his fellow-monks despised him for striving to seek celestial nymphs, was nevertheless, living in solitude, withdrawn from the world, heedful, ardent, resolute, in no long time, even in this life, attained the supreme goal of the religious life. This did he know: "Birth is at an end, lived is the holy life, duty is done: I am no more for this world." And there was yet another venerable elder numbered among the Arahats.

In the course of the night Venerable Nanda approached the Buddha, and spoke as follows, "Venerable, I release the Buddha from the promise which he made when he guaranteed that I should win five hundred pink-footed celestial nymphs." The Buddha replied, "Nanda, I myself grasped your mind with my own mind." The monks started saying, "On former days he used to say, 'I am dissatisfied,' but now says, 'I am in no wise inclined to the life of a layman.'" And forthwith they went and reported the matter to the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 13)

ducchannaṁ agāraṁ vuṭṭhi yathā samatividdhati
evaṁ abhāvitaṁ cittaṁ rāgō samatividdhati

ducchannaṁ: badly thatched; *agāraṁ:* house; *vuṭṭhi:* the rain; *yathā:* in such a manner; *samati vijjhati:* does penetrate; *ēvaṁ:* in that manner; *abhāvitaṁ:* uncultured; *cittaṁ:* temperament; *rāgō:* passion; *samati vijjhati:* penetrates.

It is quite necessary that a house should have a well-thatched roof. If the thatching is weak, rain seeps through into the house. Just as the badly thatched roof lets in the rain, the uncultured temperament too is open to passions. The temperament that is not cultured is penetrated easily by lust.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 14)

succhannaṁ agāraṁ vuṭṭhi yathā na samati vijjhati ēvaṁ subhāvitaṁ cittaṁ rāgō na samati vijjhati

succhannaṁ: well thatched; *agāraṁ:* abode, house; *vuṭṭhi:* rain; *yathā:* in such a manner; *na samativijjhati:* does not penetrate; *ēvaṁ:* in the same way; *subhāvitaṁ:* well cultured; *cittaṁ:* temperament; *rāgō:* passion; *na samativijjhati:* does not penetrate.

When the house is protected by a well-thatched roof, it is not at all harmed by the rain, because rainwater cannot seep through it. In the same way, the well-cultured temperament too does not allow passion to come through. Therefore, the well-cultured temperament cannot be penetrated by passions.

Commentary

The terms *'citta'* and *'manō'* are loosely translated by writers on Buddhism as if they were synonymous and interchangeable. Both words are usually translated as 'mind'. Buddhism does not recognize an entity called 'mind' or a 'mind-body' duality. Buddhism, however, recognizes the cognitive *(Manō)* and affective *(citta)* processes of psychophysical activity, which may be seen objectively as physical and subjectively as mental. The term *'citta'* in these verses may also refer to the affective process which may be more appropriately termed 'temperament'.

The term *'bhāvanā'* is also usually translated as 'meditation'. But the term *'bhāvanā'* is more meaningfully translated as 'culture'. *Bhāvanā* is the culture and development of the cognitive and affective processes that lead to good behaviour and happiness.

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Seeing one's own impure action the evil doer grieves and is vexed here and hereafter.

15. *Idha sōcati pecca sōcati*
pāpakārī ubhayattha sōcati
sō sōcati sō vihaññati
disvā kammakiliṭṭham attanō (1:15)

Here one grieves, one grieves hereafter,
in both wise does the evil-doer grieve;
one grieves and is afflicted,
one's own base kammas seeing.

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SORROW SPRINGS FROM EVIL DEEDS

1 (10) The Story of Cundasūkarika (Verse 15)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery in Rājagaha the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Cunda the pork-butcher.

Although the Buddha was in residence at a neighbouring monastery, not on a single day did Cunda do him honour by offering him so much as a handful of flowers or a spoonful of rice, nor did he do a single work of merit besides.

One day he was attacked by madness, and while he yet remained alive, the fire of the realm of suffering uprose before him.

When the torment of the realm of suffering uprose before the pork-butcher Cunda, his mode of behavior was altered in correspondence with his past deeds. Even as he remained within his house, he began to grunt like a pig and to crawl on his hands and knees, first to the front of the house and then to the rear. The men of his household overpowered him and gagged him. But in spite of all they did (since it is impossible for anyone to prevent a man's past deeds from bearing fruit), he kept crawling back and forth, grunting like a pig continually.

Not a person was able to sleep in the seven houses nearby. The members of his own household, terrified by the fear of death, unable otherwise to prevent him from going out, barricaded the doors of the house that he might not be able to go out. Having thus suffered for a period of seven days, he died and was reborn in the realm of suffering.

Some monks said to the Buddha "Venerable, for seven days the door of Cunda the pork-butcher's house has been closed, and for seven days the killing of pigs has gone on; doubtless he intends to entertain some guests. So cruel and savage a being has never been seen before."

Said the Buddha, "Monks, he has not been killing pigs these seven days. Retribution in keeping with his past deeds has overtaken him. Even while he yet remained alive, the torment of the realm of suffering uprose before him. By reason of this torment he crawled hither and thither in his house for seven days, grunting and squealing like a pig. Today he died, and was reborn in hell." When the Buddha had thus spoken, the monks said, "Reverend Sir, having suffered thus here in this world, he went again to a place of suffering and was there reborn."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 15)

pāpakārī idha sōcati pecca sōcati ubhayattha sōcati. Sō attanō kiliṭṭhaṁ kammaṁ disvā sōcati sō vihaññati

pāpakārī: the evil doer; *idha:* in this world; *sōcati:* grieves; *pecca:* in the next world; *sōcati:* grieves; *ubhayattha:* in both worlds; *sōcati:* grieves; *sō:* he; *attanō:* his own; *kiliṭṭhaṁ kammaṁ:* blemished action; *disvā:* having seen; *sōcati:* grieves; *sō:* he; *vihaññati:* is vexed.

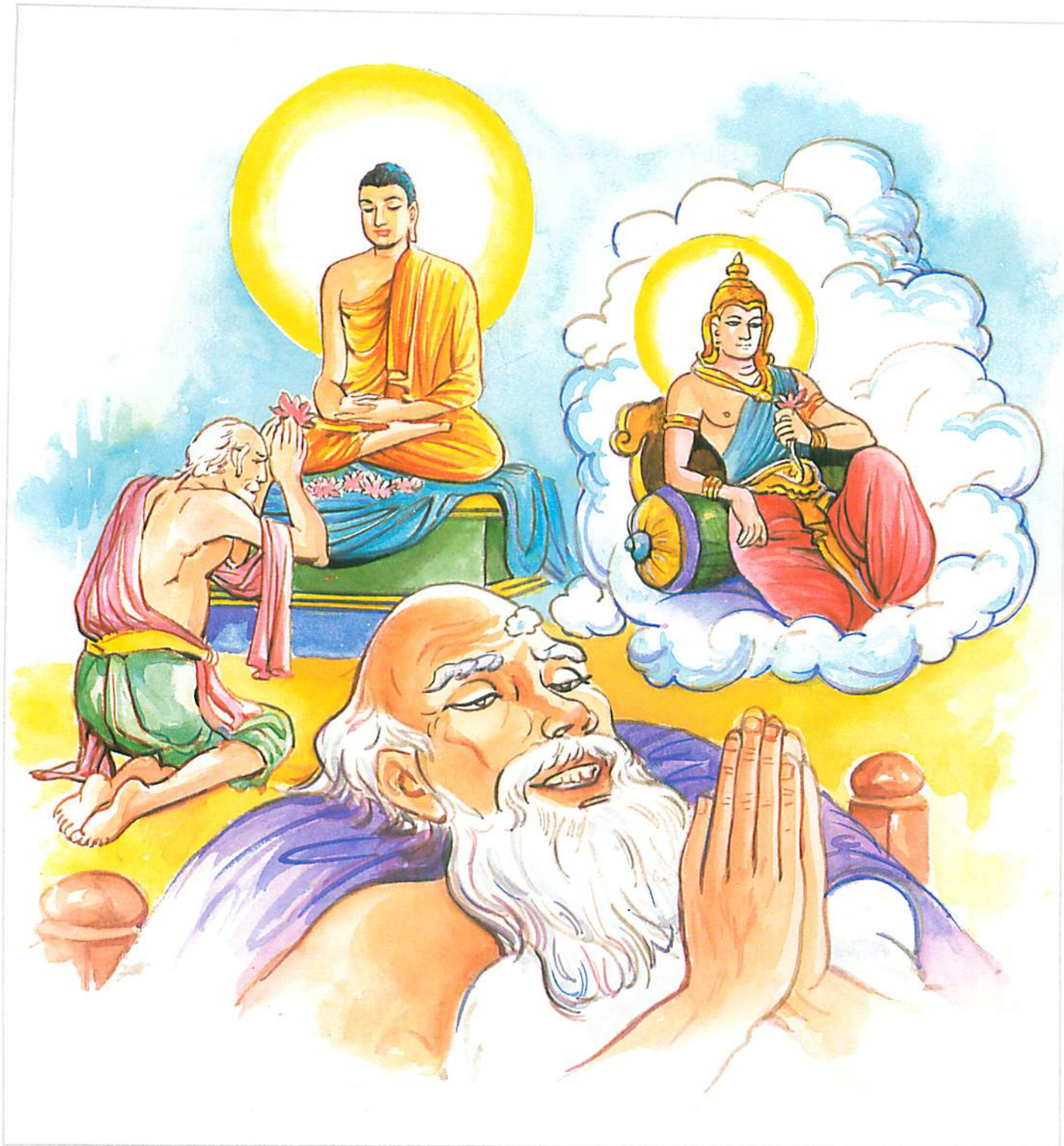
The story of Cunda confirms the utterance of the first verse of the Dhammapada (1:1), that evil begets nothing but evil, by way of consequence. Also that some of the effects of evil deeds are suffered in this very life.

Commentary

People who commit evil actions are unaware of their consequences at the moment of performance. Therefore, they tend to repent on seeing the consequences of what they did. This creates grief. This does not mean that a man must always suffer the consequences of his deeds, without any hope. If that is the case, there is no benefit in leading a religious life, nor is there any opportunity to work for one's emancipation.

In this pair of verses, suffering and happiness in the next world are also indicated. Buddhists do not believe that this life on earth is the only life and that human beings are the only kind of being. Planes of existence are numerous and beings are innumerable. After death one may be born as a human being, in a subhuman state or in a celestial plane according to one's actions. The so-called being in the subsequent life is neither the same as its predecessor (as it has changed) nor absolutely different (as it is the identical stream of life). Buddhism denies the identity of a being but affirms an identity of process.

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Seeing the purity of one's own action the doer of good continues to rejoice in both worlds.

16. *Idha mōdati pecca mōdati*
katapuññō ubhayattha mōdati
sō mōdati sō pamōdati
disvā kammavisuddhimattanō (1:16)

Here one joys, one joys hereafter,
in both wise does the merit-maker joy;
one joys and one rejoices,
one's own pure kammas seeing.

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GOOD DEEDS BRING HAPPINESS

1 (11) The Story of Dhammika Upāsaka (Verse 16)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Dhammika, a lay disciple.

Once there lived in Sāvatthi, a lay disciple by the name of Dhammika, who was virtuous and very fond of giving charity. He generously offered food and other requisites to the monks regularly and also on special occasions. He was, in fact, the leader of five hundred virtuous lay disciples of the Buddha who lived in Sāvatthi. Dhammika had seven sons and seven daughters and all of them, like their father, were virtuous and devoted to charity. When Dhammika was very ill and was on his death-bed he made a request to the Sangha to come to his bedside and recite the sacred texts. While the monks were reciting the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, six decorated chariots from six celestial worlds arrived to invite him to their respective worlds. Dhammika told them to wait for a while for fear of interrupting the recitation of the Sutta. The monks, thinking that they were being asked to stop, stopped and left the place.

A little while later, Dhammika told his children about the six decorated chariots waiting for him. Then and there he decided to choose the chariot from the Tusita world and asked one of his children to throw a garland on to it. Accordingly the children of the layman threw the wreath of flowers, and it clung to the pole of the chariot and hung suspended in the air. The populace saw the wreath of flowers suspended in the air, but did not see the chariot. Said Dhammika, "Do you see this wreath of flowers?" "Yes, we see it." "This wreath hangs suspended from the chariot which came from the World of the Tusita gods. I am going to the World of the Tusita gods; do not be disturbed. If you desire to be reborn with me, do works of merit even as I have done." Then he passed away and was reborn in the Tusita world. Thus, the virtuous man rejoices in this world as well as in the next. When those monks reached the Monastery, the Buddha asked them, "Monks, did the lay disciple hear the Dhamma?" "Yes, Venerable. But in the midst of the recitation he cried out, 'Wait! Wait!' and stopped us. Then his sons and daughters began to weep, whereupon we departed." "Monks, he was not talking to you. From the Six Worlds of the Gods six deities approached in six magnificently adorned chariots, and they summoned that lay disciple to go with them; but the lay disciple, unwilling that the Dhamma should be interrupted, spoke to them." "Is that true, Venerable?" "That is true, monks." "Venerable, where was he reborn just now?" "In the World of the Tusita gods, monks."

"Venerable, but recently he lived here among his kinsfolk rejoicing, and just now he went again to a place of rejoicing and was there reborn." "Yes, monks. They that are heedful, be they laymen or monks, rejoice in both places equally."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 16)

katapuññō idha mōdati pecca mōdati ubhayattha mōdati sō attanō kamma visuddhiṁ disvā mōdati sō pamōdati

katapuññō: he who has done good deeds; *idha:* in this world itself; *mōdati:* rejoices; *pecca:* in the life after; *mōdati:* rejoices; *ubhayattha:* in both worlds; *mōdati:* (he) rejoices; *so:* he; *attanō:* his own; *kamma visuddhiṁ:* purity of actions; *disvā:* having seen; *mōdati:* rejoices; *sō:* he; *pamōdati:* is thoroughly joyous.

A wise person does good deeds. Having done those good deeds he rejoices here in this world. He rejoices in the life after as well. Seeing the purity of his virtuous actions, he rejoices. He is thoroughly joyous seeing the goodness of his deeds.

Commentary

katapuññō: Dhammika was in great joy in his death bed because he had accumulated a great amount of good deeds during his lifetime. An individual who can look upon a lifetime of virtuous conduct and, in consequence, can look forward to a birth after death in a pleasant state can be described as a *Katapuññō*.

mōdati: rejoices. This is a state of mind of a person who has accumulated a lifetime of good conduct. He can feel a sense of joy at the end of his life as Lay Disciple Dhammika in this stanza.

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The evil doer suffers here and hereafter and more so when he is born in realms of woe.

17. *Idha tappati pecca tappati*
pāpakārī ubhayattha tappati
pāpaṁ mē katan'ti tappati
bhiyyō tappati duggatiṁ gatō (1:17)

Here one burns, one burns hereafter,
in both wise does the evil-doer burn;
Evil I've done, remorsefully one burns,
and more one burns passed to realms of woe.

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EVIL ACTION LEADS TO TORMENT

1 (12) The Story of Dēvadatta (Verse 17)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Dēvadatta.

Dēvadatta was at one time residing with the Buddha in Kōsambi. While staying there he realized that the Buddha was receiving much respect and honour as well as offerings. He envied the Buddha and aspired to head the Order of the monks. One day, while the Buddha was preaching at the Vēluvana Monastery in Rājagaha, he approached the Buddha and on the ground that the Buddha was getting old, he suggested that the Order be entrusted to his care. The Buddha rejected his offer and rebuked him, saying that he was not worthy of holding this responsibility. The Buddha next asked the Sangha to carry out an act of proclamation (Pakāsaniya kamma) regarding Dēvadatta.

Dēvadatta felt aggrieved and vowed vengeance against the Buddha. Three times, he attempted to kill the Buddha: first, by employing some archers; secondly, by climbing up the Gijjhakūta hill and rolling down a big piece of rock on to the Buddha; and thirdly, by causing the elephant Nālāgiri to attack the Buddha. The hired assassins instead of attacking the Buddha, became his disciples. The big piece of rock rolled down by Dēvadatta hurt the big toe of the Buddha just a little, and when the Nālāgiri elephant rushed at the Buddha, it was made docile by the Buddha. Thus Dēvadatta failed to kill the Buddha, and he tried another tactic. He tried to break up the Order of the monks by taking away some newly admitted monks with him to Gayāsīsa; however most of them were brought back by Chief Disciples Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna.

Dēvadatta fell ill. Dēvadatta's sickness continued for nine months; at last, desiring to see the Buddha, he said to his own disciples, "I desire to see the Buddha; make it possible for me to see him." They replied, "When you enjoyed good health, you walked in enmity with the Buddha; we will not lead you to him." Said Dēvadatta, "Do not destroy me; I have indeed conceived hatred towards the Buddha, but the Buddha has not cherished so much as the tip of a hair's hatred towards me." And in very truth towards the murderer Dēvadatta, towards the robber Angulimāla, towards Dhanapāla and Rāhula, to each and all he manifested an even temper. At last, Dēvadatta wanted to see the Buddha. But when Dēvadatta alighted from his litter his feet sank into the earth. He was this way swallowed up by the earth and was taken to Avīci Hell.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 17)

pāpakārī idha tappati pecca tappati ubhayattha tappati mē pāpaṁ kataṁ iti tappati duggatiṁ gatō bhiyyō tappati

pāpakārī: the evil doer; *idha:* in this world; *tappati:* repents; *pecca:* in the next world; *tappati:* repents; *ubhayattha:* in both places; *tappati:* repents; *me:* by me; *pāpaṁ:* wrongs; *kataṁ iti:* have been done; *tappati:* repents; *duggatiṁ gatō:* having gone to a woeful state in the life after; *bhiyyō:* exceedingly; *tappati:* repents.

Those who do evil, those given to wrong doings, are tortured in mind both here and hereafter. Being born in a state of woe after death the doer of evil keeps on torturing himself more with the thought "I have done evil deeds."

Commentary

duggati: those people who are given to evil ways are born in woeful states after their death. Since, those states make the victims suffer they are described as Duggati. Opposed to these places of woe are Sugati states of bliss. Those who conduct themselves in virtuous ways are eventually reborn in such states.

idha tappati: the repentance of those who remember with mental torture the evil deeds they have done is referred to here. Tappati could be translated as burning. The memory of the evil action brings about self torture which is a kind of burning. This is the situation Dēvadatta found himself in.

pecca: in the worlds beyond: once a person dies he is born in another state which is the hereafter. He continues his activities in terms of the good or evil he had garnered while on earth. Therefore, *pecca* implies what happens to him hereafter.

Special note: Many are the questions that are raised about the future existences of Dēvadatta. Traditional commentaries state thus: There is a tradition that when the Buddha saw that matters had gone thus far, he made a monk of Dēvadatta. And this he did because he became aware of the following, "If he shall remain a layman and not be received into the Order as a monk, inasmuch as he has been guilty of grievous crimes, it will be impossible for him to look forward with confidence to future existence; but if he shall become a monk, no matter how grievous the crimes he has committed, it will be possible for him to look forward with confidence to future existence." In the far future, according to this tradition, he will become a solitary Buddha *(Paccēka Buddha)* named Aṭṭissara.

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The doer of good is happy here and hereafter and happier when born in a blissful state.

18. *Idha nandati, pecca nandati*
katapuññō ubhayattha nandati
puññaṁ mē katan ti nandati
bhiyyō nandati suggatiṁ gatō (1:18)

Here one's glad, one's glad hereafter,
in both wise is the merit-maker glad;
'Merit I've made', serenely one is glad,
and more one's glad passed to blissful states.

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VIRTUOUS DEEDS MAKE ONE REJOICE

1 (13) The Story of Sumanādevi (Verse 18)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sumanādēvi, the youngest daughter of Anāthapindika.

Every day, two thousand monks took their meal in the house of Anāthapindika at Sāvatthi, and a like number in the house of the eminent female lay disciple Visākhā. Anāthapindika appointed his oldest daughter Mahā Subhadda; the latter showed the monks the customary attentions, hearkened to the Law, and as a result obtained the Fruit of Conversion; afterwards she married and went to live with her husband's family. Then he appointed Culla Subhaddā, who followed her older sister's example, obtaining the Fruit of Conversion, and afterwards marrying and going to live with the family of her husband. Finally he appointed his youngest daughter Sumanā. Sumanā obtained the Fruit of the Second Path, but remained unmarried. Anāthapindika was in the refectory when he received his daughter's message, but immediately went to her and said, "What is it, dear daughter Sumanā?" Sumanā said to him, "What say you, dear youngest brother?" "You talk incoherently, dear daughter." "I am not talking incoherently, youngest brother." "Are you afraid, dear daughter?" "I am not afraid, youngest brother." She said no more, but died immediately.

Although the treasurer had obtained the Fruit of Conversion, he was unable to bear the grief that arose within him. Accordingly, when he had performed the funeral rites over his daughter's body, he went weeping to the Buddha. Said the Buddha, "Householder, how is it that you come to me sad and sorrowful, with tears in your eyes, weeping?" "Venerable, my daughter Sumanā is dead." "Well, why do you weep? Is it not death certain for all?" "I know that, Venerable. But my daughter was so modest and so conscientious. What grieves me so much is the thought that when she died, she was not in her right senses."

"But what did your youngest daughter say, great treasurer?" "Venerable, I addressed her as 'dear Sumanā,' and she replied, 'What say you, dear youngest brother?' Then I said to her, 'You talk incoherently, dear daughter.' 'I am not talking incoherently, youngest brother.' 'Are you afraid, dear daughter?' 'I am not afraid, youngest brother.' She said no more, but died immediately." Said the Exalted One to Anāthapindika, "Great treasurer, your daughter did not talk incoherently." "But why did she speak thus?" "Solely because you were her youngest brother. Householder, your daughter was old in the Paths and the Fruits, for while you have attained but the Fruit of Conversion, your daughter had attained Paths and the Fruits, that she spoke thus." "Was that the reason, Venerable?" "That was the reason, householder."

"Where has she now been reborn, Venerable?" "In the World of the Tusita gods, householder." "Venerable, while my daughter remained here among her kinsfolk, she went about rejoicing, and when she went hence, she was reborn in the Dēva world." Then the Buddha said to him, "It is even so householder. They that are heedful, be they lay folk or religious, rejoice both in this world and in the world beyond."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 18)

katapuññō idha nandati pecca nandati ubhayattha nandati mē puññaṁ kataṁ iti nandati suggatiṁ gatō bhiyyō nandati

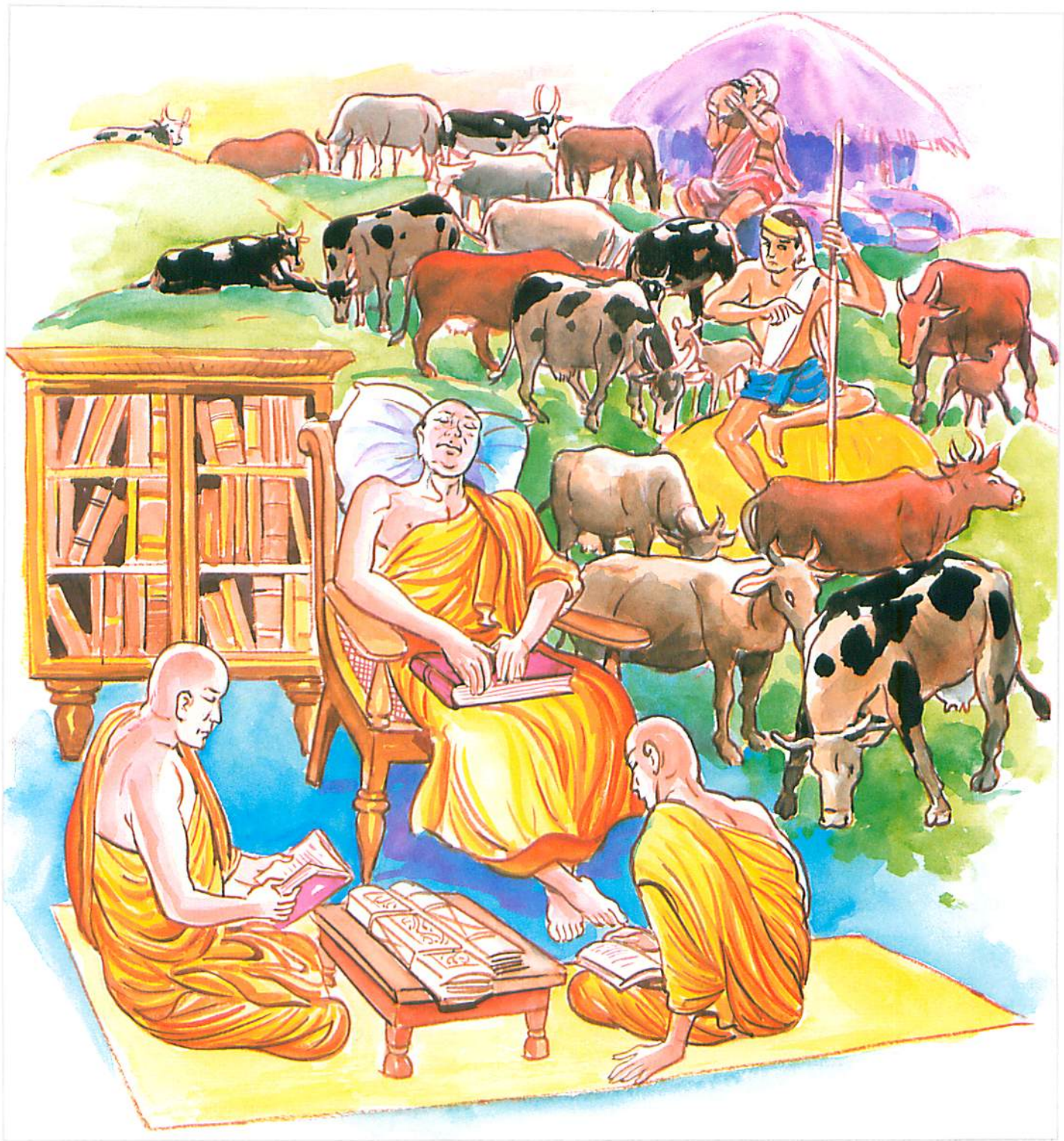
katapuññō: he who has done virtuous deeds; *idha:* in this world; *nandati:* rejoices; *pecca:* in the next world; *nandati:* rejoices; *ubhayattha:* in both worlds; *nandati:* rejoices; *mē:* by me; *puññam. kataṁ:* good deeds have been done; *iti:* this way; *nandati:* (he) rejoices; *suggatiṁ gatō:* having gone to happy state; *bhiyyō:* exceedingly; *nandati:* rejoices.

The person who has done good and virtuous deeds rejoices in this world. Gone to a pleasant state of existence after death, he rejoices exceedingly. This way he rejoices here and in the next world. In both worlds he rejoices realising that he has done virtuous deeds.

Commentary

bhiyyō: greatly. The virtuous rejoice in this life but even more in the next life in heaven. They rejoice also remembering the good they have done.

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Reciting Dhamma, without practice of it, is fruitless like a cowherd's count of another's cattle.

19. *Bahuṁpi cē sahitaṁ bhāsamānō*
na takkarō hōti narō pamattō
gōpō'va gāvō gaṇayaṁ parēsaṁ
na bhāgavā sāmaññassa hōti (1:19)

Though many sacred texts he chant
the heedless man's no practicer,
as cowherd counting others' kine
in samanaship he has no share.

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FRUITS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE THROUGH PRACTICE

1 (14) The Story of Two Friends (Verses 19 & 20)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to two monks who were friends.

For at Sāvatthi lived two young men of noble family who were inseparable friends. On a certain occasion they went to the Monastery, heard the Teacher preach the Law, renounced the pleasures of the world, yielded the mind to the Religion of the Buddha, and became monks. When they had kept residence for five years with preceptors and teachers, they approached the Teacher and asked about the Duties in his Religion. After listening to a detailed description of the Duty of Meditation and of the Duty of Study, one of them said, "Venerable, since I became a monk in old age, I shall not be able to fulfill the Duty of Study, but I can fulfill the Duty of Meditation." So he had the Teacher instruct him in the Duty of Meditation as far as Arahatship, and after striving and struggling attained Arahatship, together with the Supernatural Faculties. But the other said, "I will fulfill the Duty of Study," acquired by degrees the *Tipitaka*, the Word of the Buddha, and wherever he went, preached the Law and intoned it. He went from place to place reciting the Law to five hundred monks, and was preceptor of eighteen large communities of monks.

Now a company of monks, having obtained a Formula of Meditation from the Teacher, went to the place of residence of the older monk, and by faithful observance of his admonitions attained Arahatship. Thereupon, they paid obeisance to the Venerable and said, "We desire to see the Teacher." Said the Venerable, "Go, brethren, greet in my name the Buddha, and likewise greet the eighty Chief Venerables, and greet my fellow-elder, saying, 'Our teacher greets you.'" So those monks went to the Monastery and greeted the Buddha and the Venerables, saying, "Venerable, our teacher greets you." When they greeted their teacher's fellow-elder, he replied, "Who is he?" Said the monks, "He is your fellow-monk, Venerable."

Said the younger monk, "But what have you learned from him? Of the Dīgha Nikāya and the other Nikāyas, have you learned a single Nikāya? Of the Three Pitakas, have you learned a single Pitaka?" And he thought to himself, "This monk does not know a single stanza containing four verses. As soon as he became a monk, he took rags from a dust-heap, entered the forest, and gathered a great many pupils about him. When he returns, it behoves me to ask him some question." Now somewhat later the older monk came to see the Buddha, and leaving his bowl and robe with his fellow-elder, went and greeted the Buddha and the eighty Chief Venerables, afterwards returning to the place of residence of his fellow-elder. The younger monk showed him the customary attentions, provided him with a seat of the same size as his own, and then sat down, thinking to himself, "I will ask him a question."

At that moment the Buddha thought to Himself, "Should this monk annoy this my son, he is likely to be reborn in Hell." So out of compassion for him, pretending to be going the rounds of the monastery, He went to the place where the two monks were sitting and sat down on the Seat of the Buddha already prepared. (For wherever the monks sit down, they first prepare the Seat of the Buddha, and not until they have so done do they themselves sit down).

Therefore, the Buddha sat down on a seat already prepared for Him. And when He had sat down, He asked the monk who had taken upon himself the Duty of Study a question on the First Trance. When the younger monk had answered this question correctly, the Teacher, beginning with the Second Trance, asked him questions about the Eight Attainments and about Form and the Formless World, all of which he answered correctly. Then the Teacher asked him a question about the Path of Conversion; he was unable to answer it. Thereupon, the Buddha asked the monk who was an Arahat, and the latter immediately gave the correct answer.

"Well done, well done, monk!" said the Teacher, greatly pleased. The Teacher then asked questions about the remaining Paths in order. The monk who had taken upon himself the Duty of Study was unable to answer a single question, while the monk who had attained unto Arahatship answered every question He asked. On each of four occasions the Buddha bestowed applause on him. Hearing this, all the deities, from the gods of earth to the gods of the World of Brahma, including Nāgas and Garudās, shouted their applause.

(cont'd on page 41)

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Practice of Dhamma, with less of recital, totally unattached, qualifies one for recluseship.

20. *Appaṁ pi cē sahitaṁ bhāsamānō*
dhammassa hōti anudhammacārī
rāgañ ca dōsañ ca pahāya mōhaṁ
sammappajānō suvimuttacittō
anupādiyānō idha vā huraṁ vā
sa bhāgavā sāmaññassa hōti (1:20)

Though few the sacred texts he chant
in Dhamma does his practice run,
clear of delusion, lust and hate,
wisdom perfected, with heart well-freed,

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PRACTICE ENSURES FULFILMENT

1 (14) The Story of Two Friends (Verses 19 & 20) (cont'd)

Hearing this applause, the pupils and fellow-residents of the younger monk were offended at the Buddha and said, "Why did the Buddha do this? He bestowed applause on each of four occasions on the old monk who knows nothing at all. But to our own teacher, who knows all the Sacred Word by heart and is at the head of five hundred monks, he gave no praise at all." The Teacher asked them, "Monks, what is it you are talking about?" When they told Him, He said, "Monks, your own teacher is in my Religion like a man who tends cows for hire. But my son is like a master who enjoys the five products of the cow at his own good pleasure."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 19)

pamattō narō sahitaṁ bahuṁ bhāsamānō api cē takkarō na hōti parēsaṁ gāvō ganayaṁ gōpō iva sāmaññassa bhāgavā na hōti.

pamattō: slothful; *narō:* person; *sahitaṁ:* the Buddha's word; *bahuṁ:* extensively; *bhāsamānō:* recites; *api:* though; *cē:* yet; *takkarō:* behaving accordingly; *na hōti:* does not become; *parēsaṁ:* of others; *gāvō:* cattle; *ganayaṁ:* protecting; *gōpō iva:* cowherd like; *sāmaññassa:* the renounced life; *bhāgavā na hōti:* does not partake of.

Some persons may know the word of the Buddha extensively and can repeat it all. But through utter neglect they live not up to it. In consequence they do not reach any religious attainments. He enjoys not the fruits of recluse life. This is exactly like the way of life of a cowherd who looks after another's cattle. The cowherd takes the cattle to the pasture in the morning, and in the evening he brings them back to the owner's house. He gets only the wages.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 20)

sahitaṁ appaṁ api bhāsamānō cē dhammassa anudhammacārī hōti rāgaṁ ca dōsaṁ ca mōhaṁ ca pahāya sō sammappajānō suvimuttacittō idha vā huraṁ vā anupādiyānō sāmaññssa bhāgavā hōti.

sahitaṁ: the word of the Buddha; *appaṁ api:* even a little; *bhāsamānō:* repeating; *cē:* if; *dhammassa:* of the teaching; *anudhammacārī hōti:* lives in accordance with the teaching; *rāgaṁ ca:* passion; *dōsaṁ ca:* ill-will; *mōhaṁ ca:* delusion; *pahāya:* giving up; *sō:* he; *sammappajānō:* possessing penetrative understanding; *suvimuttacittō:* freed from emotions; *idha vā:* either here; *huraṁ vā:* or the next world; *anupādiyānō:* not clinging to; *sāmaññassa:* of the renounced life; *bhāgavā hōti:* does partake of.

A true seeker of truth though he may speak only little of the Buddha's word. He may not be able to recite extensively from religious texts. But, if he belongs to the teaching of the Buddha assiduously, lives in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha, if he has got rid of passion, ill-will and delusion, he has well penetrated experience and is free from clinging to worldly things, he is a partaker of the life of a renunciate.

Commentary

sahitam: literally this means any literature. But in this instance, the reference is specifically to the Buddhist literature. The Word of the Buddha is enshrined in the Three Baskets (pitakas). This stanza emphasizes the fact that the mere reciting of the word of the Buddha is not going to make much of a difference in the religious life of a person if the truth-seeker is not prepared to practice what is being recited. The fulfillment of religious life is ensured only if the person who organizes his life according to what has been said by the Buddha. The effort of the person who merely recites the word of the Buddha is as futile as the activity of the cowherd who takes the trouble to count others' cattle while the dairy products are enjoyed by someone else — the owner. The stanza refers to a person who was very much learned in the literature of Buddhism but had not practiced what was said in it.

suvimutta cittō: freed from emotions. An individual who has freed himself from clinging and grasping attains the total emotional freedom.

anupādiyānō: An individual who has ended the habit of clinging and grasping to this world and the next.

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Buddha's Message

The Buddha has been something greater than all doctrine and dogma, and his eternal message has thrilled humanity through the ages. Perhaps at no time in past history was his message of peace more needed for a suffering and distracted humanity than it is today.

Sri Nehru - Former Prime Minister of India

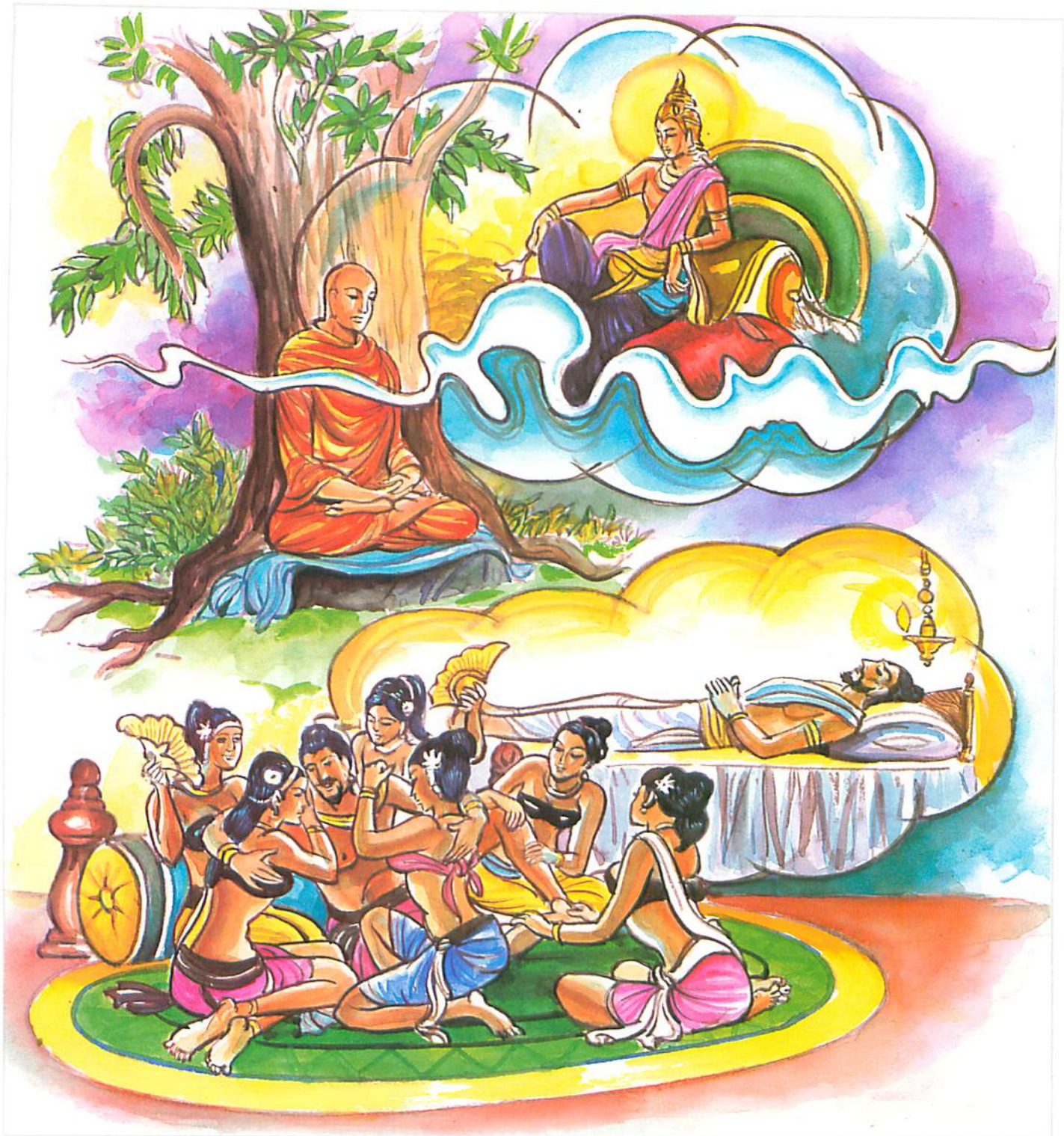
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Chapter 2

APPAMĀDA VAGGA

Heedfulness

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Heedfulness and diligence are the way to Nibbāna. The heedless are like unto the dead.

21. *Appmādō amatapadaṁ*
pamādō maccunō padaṁ
appamattā na mīyanti
yē pamattā yathā matā. (2:1)

Heedfulness is the Deathless path,
heedlessness, the path to death.
Those who are heedful do not die,
heedless ones are like the dead.

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APPAMĀDA VAGGA (HEEDFULNESS)
FREEDOM IS DIFFICULT

2 (1) The Story of Sāmāvati (Verses 21 22 & 23)

While residing at the Ghosita Monastery near Kōsambi, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Sāmāvati, one of the chief queens of Udena, king of Kōsamby.

There lived in the city of Bhaddāvati a treasurer named Bhaddavatiya, and he was a friend of the treasurer Ghōsaka, although Ghōsaka had never seen him. For the treasurer Ghōsaka heard, from traders who came from the city of Bhaddavati, of the wealth and age of the treasurer Bhaddavatiya, and desiring to be friends with him, sent him a present. Thus, although neither had seen the other, they dwelt as friends.

After a time, an intestinal disease broke out in the house of the treasurer Bhaddavatiya. When this disease broke out, the first to die are flies; afterwards, in regular order, insects, mice, domestic fouls, swine, cattle, slaves both female and male, and last of all the members of the household. Only those that break down the wall and flee, saved their lives. Now at that time the treasurer Bhaddavatiya and his wife and daughter fled in this manner, and intending to seek the treasurer Ghosaka, set out on the road to Kōsambi. While they were still on their way, their provisions for the journey gave out, and their bodies became exhausted from exposure to wind and sun, and from hunger and thirst. Reaching Kōsambi with difficulty, they bathed in a pool of water in a pleasant place and then entered a certain rest house at the gate of the city.

Then the treasurer said to his wife, "Wife, those who travel this way are not courteous even to a mother who has borne a child. Now I have a friend who, they say, dispenses a thousand pieces of money daily in alms to the blind, the poor, and other unfortunate persons. We will send our daughter there, have her bring us food, remain right here for a day or two and refresh our bodies, and then we will go and see my friend." "Very well, husband," she replied, and they took up their residence right there in the rest house.

On the following day, when meal-time was announced and the blind, the poor, and other unfortunate persons went to obtain food, the mother and father sent forth their daughter, saying, "Daughter, go bring us food." So the daughter of a wealthy house, pride overcome with misfortune, hid her shame, took a bowl, and went to the poor folk to procure food. "How many portions will you have?" she was asked. "Three," she replied. So they gave her three portions. She carried the food back to her parents, and the three sat down to eat together. The mother and daughter said to the treasurer, "Master, misfortune comes even to prominent families. Eat without regarding us and do not worry." After a good deal of urging, they prevailed upon him to eat. But after he had eaten, he was unable to digest his food, and when the sun rose, he died. The mother and daughter wept, wailed, and lamented.

On the following day the young girl went the second time for food. "How many portions will you have?" "Two." She carried the food back to her mother, and after a good deal of urging, prevailed upon her to eat. The mother yielded to her pleading and consented to eat, but died on that very day. The young girl, left alone to herself, wept, wailed and lamented over the misfortune that had come upon her. On the following day, suffering the pangs of hunger keenly, she went weeping in the company of beggars to procure food. "How many portions will you have, daughter?" "One," was her reply.

A householder named Mittā, remembering that she had received food for three days, said to her, "Perish, vile woman. Today, at last, you have come to know the capacity of your belly." This daughter of a respectable family, modest and timid, felt as though she had received a sword-thrust in her bosom, or as though salt water had been sprinkled on a sore. She immediately replied, "What do you mean, sir?" "The day before yesterday you took three portions, yesterday two, today you take but one. Today, then, you know the capacity of your belly." "Sir, do not think that I took these for myself." "Why then did you take them?" "Sir, the day before yesterday we were three, yesterday we were two, today I am left alone." "How is that?" he inquired.

She then told him the whole story from the beginning. As he listened to her story, he was unable to control his tears, but was overcome by the power of the grief that arose within him. Finally he said to her, "My dear girl, if this is the case, do not worry. Hitherto you have been the daughter of the treasurer Bhaddavatiya, but from this day forth you shall be my very own daughter." And he kissed her on the head, conducted her to his own house, and adopted her as his own oldest daughter.

(cont'd on page 47)

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The wise, delighting in the way of the Noble Ones, rejoice in heedfulness.

22. *Ētaṁ visēsatō ñatvā*
appamādamhi paṇḍitā
appamādē pamōdanti
ariyānaṁ gōcarē ratā. (2:2)

The wise then, recognizing this
as the distinction of heedfulness,
pleased with the spheres of Noble Ones,
in heedfulness rejoice.

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FREEDOM IS DIFFICULT

2 (1) The Story of Sāmāvatī (Verses 21, 22 & 23) (cont'd)

One day she heard loud and piercing screams in the refectory, whereupon she said to her foster-father, "Father, why do you not keep these people quiet when you dispense alms?" "It is impossible to do it, dear daughter." "Father, it is quite possible." "How would you do it, dear daughter?" "Father, put a fence around the refectory and hang two gates through which the people may pass in and out, allowing only sufficient space for one person to pass through at a time. Then direct the people to pass in through one gate and out through the other. If you do this, they will receive their alms peaceably and quietly." When the householder had heard her plan he remarked, "A happy device, dear daughter," and did as she suggested. Now up to that time her name had been Sāmā, but through her construction of a fence she received the name Sāmāvati. From that time on there was no more tumult in the refectory.

Now the treasurer Ghōsaka had long been accustomed to hear this noise in the refectory and rather liked to hear it; for it always made him think, "That is the noise in my refectory." But after hearing no noise at all for two or three days, he asked the householder Mitta, who came one day to wait upon him, "Are alms being given to the blind, the poor, and other unfortunate persons?" "Yes sir." "How then does it happen that for two or three days past I have not heard a sound?" "I have arranged matters so that the people now received alms without making any noise." "Why didn't you do so before?" "I didn't know how, sir." "How did you happen to find a way just now?" "My daughter told me how to do it, sir." "Have you a daughter whom I have never seen?" Then the householder told him the whole story of the treasurer Bhaddavatiya, beginning with the outbreak of the plague and ending with his adoption of the young girl as his own oldest daughter.

Then said the treasurer to him, "If this is the case, why did you not tell me? My friend's daughter is my own daughter." So he sent for her and asked her, "Dear girl, are you the daughter of the treasurer?" "Yes, sir, I am." "Well then, do not worry; you are my own daughter." Then he kissed her on the head, gave her five hundred women for her retinue, and adopted her as his own oldest daughter.

One day a festival was proclaimed in this city. Now at this festival daughters of respectable families, who do not ordinarily go out, go on foot with their own retinue and bathe in the river. Accordingly on that day Sāmāvati also, accompanied her five hundred women, went right through the palace court to bathe in the river. King Udēna stood at his window and saw her. "Whose are those playful girls?" he inquired. "Nobody's playful girls, your majesty." "Then whose daughters are they?" "Your majesty, that is the daughter of the treasurer Bhaddavatiya, and her name is Sāmāvati." Then the king conducted Sāmāvati and her retinue to the royal palace and elevated her to the dignity of Queen Consort.

Still another maiden gained the dignity of chief consort of the king. She was Māgandiya who had once been rejected by the Buddha when her father sort the Buddha as husband for her. After she became chief consort she found that the other chief consort Sāmāvati was an ardent follower of the Buddha. She planned to take her revenge on the Buddha and to harm Sāmāvati and her maids. Māgandiyā told the king that Sāmāvati and her maids had made holes in the walls of their living quarters and were being unfaithful to him. King Udēna saw the holes in the walls, but when the matter was explained to him he did not get angry.

Māgandiyā kept on trying to make the king believe that Sāmāvati was trying to kill him. Once, Māgandiyā inserted a snake into the lute and covered the hole with a bunch of flowers. The snake came out hissing. The king was furious. He commanded Sāmāvati to stand and all her ladies to line up behind her. Then he fitted his bow with an arrow dipped in poison and shot the arrow. But Sāmāvati and her ladies bore no ill towards the king and through the power of goodwill, the arrow did not hit the target. The king realised the innocence of Sāmāvati and he gave her permission to invite the Buddha and his disciples to the palace for almsgiving and religious discourses.

Māgandiyā, realising that none of her plots had materialised, made a final, infallible plan. She sent a message to her uncle with full instructions to go to Sāmāvati's palace and burn down the building with all the women inside. Sāmāvati and her maids-of-honor, being advanced in spiritual attainment, continued to meditate in spite of the danger. All perished in the fire.

(cont'd on page 49)

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The steady and constant meditator wins the supreme security and bliss of Nibbāna.

23. *tē jhāyinō sātatikā*
niccaṁ dalhaparakkamā
phusanti dhīrā nibbāṇaṁ
yōgakkhēmaṁ anuttaraṁ. (2:3)

They meditate persistently,
constantly they firmly strive,
the steadfast to Nibbāna reach,
the Unexcelled Secure from bonds.

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FREEDOM IS DIFFICULT

2 (1) The Story of Sāmāvatī (Verses 21, 22 & 23) (cont'd)

The king suspected that it was done at the instigation of Māgandiyā but he did not show that he was suspicious. Instead, the king pretended to be very pleased with her and said that he would grant her a great favour, and honour all her relatives. So, the relatives were sent for and they came gladly. On arrival at the palace, all of them, including Māgandiyā, were seized and put to death in the palace courtyard.

When the Buddha was told about these two incidents, he said that those who are mindful do not die; but those who are negligent are as dead even while living.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 21)

appamādō amatapadaṁ pamādō maccunō padaṁ
appamattā na mīyanti yē pamattā yathā matā

appamādō: sanity; *amatapadaṁ:* is the path to deathlessness; *pamādō:* insanity; *maccunō padaṁ:* is the path to death; *appamattā:* those who are sane; *na mīyanti:* do not die; *yē:* those who; *pamattā:* are insane; *matā yathā:* (they are) like the dead.

The path to the Deathless is the perpetual awareness of experience. The deathless does not imply a physical state where the body does not die. When an individual becomes totally aware of the processes of experiencing, he is freed from the continuity of existence. Those who do not have that awareness are like the dead, even if they are physically alive.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 22)

ētaṁ visēsatō ñatvā appamādaṁ hi paṅditā
appamādē pamōdanti. ariyānaṁ gōcare ratā

ētaṁ: this; *visēsatō:* especially; *ñatvā:* recognizing; *appamādaṁ hi:* established in mindfulness; *paṅditā:* the wise ones; *appamādē:* in mindfulness; *pamōdanti:* take delight; *ariyānaṁ:* of noble ones; *gōcarē:* fit way of behaviour; *ratā:* delighting in.

Those who are truly wise are especially aware of the need for sanity. They take delight in sanity. They take pleasure in the pursuit of sanity because it is the region of the supernormal.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 23)

jhāyinō sātatikā niccaṁ dalhaparakkamā tē dīhrā
yōgakkhēmaṁ anuttaraṁ nibbānaṁ phusanti

jhāyinō: the meditative; *sātatikā:* unceasing in effort; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *dalhaparakkamā:* steadfast; *tē dīhrā:* those wise individuals; *yōgakkhēmaṁ:* free of bonds; *anuttaraṁ:* unsurpassable; *nibbānaṁ:* stillness; *phusanti:* touch.

Those wise individuals who steadfastly practice meditation, reach a level of understanding that enables them to experience Nibbāna. Those wise individuals who unceasingly continue in their meditation, firmly and steadfastly, experience Nibbāna, which is the supreme release from all bonds.

Commentary

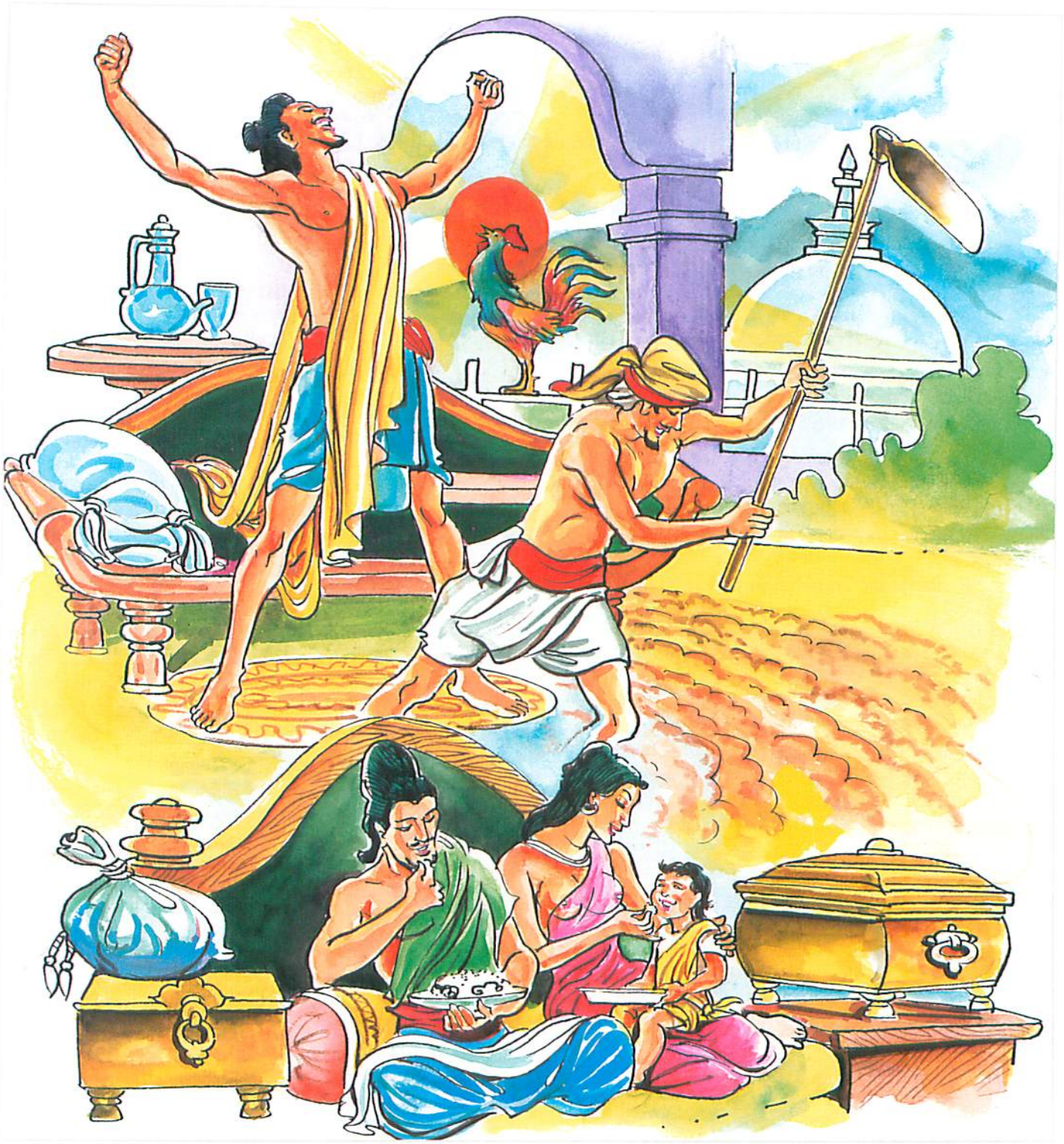
Appamāda: this is an expression found in numerous contexts in the Teachings of the Buddha. Even in his last words this occurs. The exact significance of *appamāda* is "sanity" absence of madness which, according to Buddhism, is not a normal (*puthujjana*) state but a supernormal (*Ariya*) state. The Buddha meant by this term constant alertness and keen awareness of the process of experiencing. The trainees were advised to be constantly aware of the experience within to avoid involvement with existence (*bhava*). Therefore this alertness is a constant state of mind of the advanced trainee and an Awakened One.

***Amata*:** Nibbāna, the ultimate goal of Buddhists. As this positive term clearly indicates, Nibbāna is not annihilation or a state of nothingness as some are apt to believe. It is the permanent, immortal, supramundane state which cannot be expressed by mundane terms.

Na mīyanti: do not die. This should not be understood to mean that they are immortal. No being is immortal, not even Buddhas or Arahants. The idea implied herein is that the heedful, who realize Nibbāna, are not reborn, and so do not die. The heedless are regarded as dead because they are not intent on doing good, and are subject to repeated births and deaths.

Nibbāna: *ni* + *vāna*, lit., departure from craving. It is a supramundane state that can be attained in this life itself. It is also explained as extinction of passions, but not a state of nothingness. It is an eternal blissful state of relief that results from the complete eradication of the passions.

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Mindful and striving, pure, restrained and righteous, man advances to fame and prosperity.

24. *Uṭṭhānavatō satimatō*
sucikammassa nisammakārinō
saññatassa ca dhammajīvinō
appamattassa yaso'bhivaḍḍhati (2:4)

Assiduous and mindful,
pure kamma making, considerate,
restrained, by Dhamma heedful living,
for one such spreads renown.

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GLORY OF THE MINDFUL INCREASES

2 (2) The Story of Kumbhaghōsaka, the Banker (Verse 24)

Residing at Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Kumbhaghōsaka, the banker. At one time, a plague epidemic broke out in the city of Rājagaha. In the house of the city banker, the servants died on account of this disease; the banker and his wife were also attacked by the disease. When they were both infected with the disease they told their young son Kumbhaghōsaka to leave them and flee from the house and to return only after a long time. Also, they told him that at such and such a place they had buried a treasure of great worth. The son left the city and stayed in a forest for twelve years and then came back to the city. By that time, he was quite a grown up youth and nobody in the city recognized him. He went to the place where the treasure was hidden and found it was intact. But he reasoned and realized that there was no one who could identify him and that if he were to unearth the buried treasure and make use of it people might think a young poor man had accidentally come upon buried treasure and they might report it to the king. In this case, his property would be confiscated and he himself might be manhandled or put in captivity. So he concluded it was not yet time to unearth the treasure and that meanwhile he must find work for his living. Dressed in old clothes Kumbhaghōsaka looked for work. He was given the work of waking up and rousing the people to get up early in the morning and of going round announcing that it was time to prepare food, and time to fetch carts and yoke the bullocks.

One morning, King Bimbisāra heard him. The king who was a keen judge of voices commented, "This is the voice of a man of great wealth." A maid, hearing the king's remark sent someone to investigate. He reported that the youth was only a hireling of the labourers. In spite of this report the king repeated the same remark on two subsequent days. Again, enquiries were made but with the same result. The maid thought that this was very strange, so she asked the king to give her permission to go and personally investigate. Disguised as ordinary folk, the maid and her daughter set out to the place of the laborers. Saying that they were travellers, they asked for shelter and were given accommodation in the house of Kumbhaghōsaka just for one night. However, they managed to prolong their stay there. During that period, twice the king proclaimed that a certain ceremony must be performed in the locality of the laborers, and that every household must make contributions. Kumbhaghōsaka had no ready cash for such an occasion. So he was forced to get some gold coins from his treasure. As these coins were handed over to the maid, she substituted them with her money and sent the coins to the king. After some time, she sent a message to the king asking him to send some men and summon Kumbhaghōsaka to the court. Kumbhaghōsaka, reluctantly, went along with the men. The maid and her daughter also went to the palace, ahead of them.

At the palace, the king told Kumbhaghōsaka to speak out the truth and gave him assurance that he would not be harmed on this account. Kumbhaghōsaka then admitted that those Kahāpanas (gold coins) were his and also that he was the son of the city banker of Rājagaha, who died in the plague epidemic twelve years ago. He further revealed the place where the treasure was hidden. Subsequently, all the buried treasure was brought to the palace; the king made him a banker and gave his daughter in marriage to him. Afterwards, taking Kumbhaghōsaka along with him, the king went to the Buddha at the Vēluvana Monastery and told him how the youth, though rich, was earning his living as a hireling of the laborers, and how he had appointed the youth a banker.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 24)

uṭṭhānavatō satimatō sucikammassa nisammakārinō saññatassa ca dhammajīvinō appamattassa yasō abhivaḍḍhati

uṭṭhānavatō: steadfast; *satimatō:* attentive; *sucikammassa:* pure in action and behaviour; *nisammakārinō:* careful in all activities; *saññatassa:* well restrained; *ca:* and; *dhammajīvinō:* leading a righteous life; *appamattassa:* mindful person; *yasō:* glory; *abhivaḍḍhati:* increases greatly.

If a person is persevering, attention focussed within, if his physical and spiritual actions are unblemished, if he is restrained and if he is living in accordance with the Teaching and is sane, his glory will grow.

Commentary

uṭṭhānavatō: an individual, who is alert and energetic, and is not lethargic. He continues on the path of truth-seeking without flagging and with steadfast endurance.

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Striving, diligent and restrained, let every wise man make for himself an unassailable island.

25. *Uṭṭhānēn 'appamādēna*
saññamēna damēna ca
dīpaṁ kayirātha medhāvī
yaṁ ōghō nābhikīrati. (2:5)

By energy and heedfulness,
by taming and by self-control,
the one who's wise should make an isle
no flood can overwhelm.

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ISLAND AGAINST FLOODS

2 (3) The Story of Cūlapanthaka (Verse 25)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Cūlapanthaka, a grandson of a banker of Rājagaha.The banker had two grandsons, named Mahāpanthaka and Cūlapanthaka. Mahāpanthaka, being the elder, used to accompany his grandfather to listen to religious discourses. Later, Mahāpanthaka joined the Buddhist religious order and soon after became an arahat. Cūlapanthaka too followed his brother and became a monk, but could not even memorize one verse in four months. About that time, Jīvaka came to the monastery to invite the Buddha and the resident monks to his house for a meal. Mahāpanthaka, who was then in charge of assigning the monks to meal invitations, left out Cūlapanthaka from the list. When Cūlapanthaka learnt about this he felt very much frustrated and decided that he would return to the life of a householder. Knowing his intention, the Buddha took him along and made him sit in front of the Gandhakuti hall. He then gave a clean white piece of cloth to Cūlapanthaka and told him to sit there facing east and rub the piece of cloth with his hand. At the same time, he was to repeat the word "Rajōharanam", which means "taking off impurity." The Buddha then went to the residence of Jīvaka, accompanied by the monks.

Meanwhile, Cūlapanthaka went on rubbing the piece of cloth, all the time muttering the word "Rajōharanam". Very soon, the cloth became soiled. Seeing this change in the condition of the cloth, Cūlapanthaka came to realize the impermanent nature of all conditioned things. From the house of Jīvaka, the Buddha through supernormal power learnt about the progress of Cūlapanthaka. He sent forth his radiance so that the Buddha appeared to Cūlapanthaka to be sitting in front of him, saying: "It is not the piece of cloth alone that is made dirty by the dust; within oneself also there exist dusts. Only by removing the dirt could one achieve one's goal and attain arahatship". Cūlapanthaka got the message and attained arahatship. At the house of Jīvaka, they were about to offer water before serving food, as it was customary, but the Buddha covered the bowl with his hand and asked if there were any monks left at the monastery. On being answered that there were none, the Buddha replied that there was one, and directed them to fetch Cūlapanthaka from the monastery. When the messenger from the house of Jīvaka arrived at the monastery he found not only one monk, but a thousand identical monks. They all have been created by Cūlapanthaka, who by now possessed supernormal powers. The messenger was baffled and he turned back and reported the matter to Jīvaka. The messenger was sent to the monastery for the second time and was instructed to say that the Buddha summoned the monk by the name of Cūlapanthaka. But when he delivered the message, a thousand voices responded, "I am Cūlapanthaka." Again baffled, he turned back for the second time. Then he was sent to the monastery, for the third time. This time, he was instructed to get hold of the monk who first said that he was Cūlapanthaka. As soon as he got hold of that monk all the rest disappeared, and Cūlapanthaka accompanied the messenger to the house of Jīvaka. After the meal, as directed by the Buddha, Cūlapanthaka delivered a religious discourse confidently and bravely, roaring like a young lion.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 25)

uṭṭhānēna appamādēna saññamēna damēna ca
mēdhāvī dīpaṁ kayirātha yaṁ ōghō na abhikīrati

uṭṭhānēna: (endowed) with steadfastness; *appamādēna:* with mindfulness; *saññamēna:* with restraint; *damēna:* with control of the senses; *ca:* and; *mēdhāvī:* the wise person; *dīpaṁ:* an island; *kayirātha:* builds; *yaṁ:* which; *ōghō:* the floods; *na abhikīrati:* will not overwhelm.

Note: It is lamentable that most English translations render the word *dīpa* in these contexts like the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of Dīgha Nikāya as 'lamp'. *dīpa:* this term has two meanings: 1) lamp; 2) island. Here, in the above verse, "island" is the preferable meaning.

The whole world is full of defilements. The sensualities of life are a vast and forceful flood. But the wise person builds steadfastly for himself an Island that cannot be washed away by those vast floods. The Island is built of steadfastness, mindfulness, restraint and discipline. Once steadily established on that island, the flood cannot overwhelm the wise.

Commentary

medhāvī: the wise ones are people in whom the right insights are present.

dīpaṁ: An island situated on a higher level cannot be flooded although the surrounding low lying land may be inundated. Such an island becomes a refuge to all. In the same way the wise man who develops insight should make an island of himself by attaining Arahanthood so that he may not be drowned by the four floods of sense-desires (*kāma*), false beliefs (*diṭṭhi*), craving for existence (*bhava*) and ignorance (*avijjā*).

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While the ignorant are heedless, the wise guard heedfulness like a valued treasure.

26. *Pamādamanuyuñjanti*
bālā dummedhinō janā
appamādañca mēdhāvī
dhanaṁ seṭṭhaṁ'va rakkhati. (2:6)

Foolish folk of little wit
in heedlessness indulge,
the one who's wise guards heedfulness
kin to the greatest wealth.

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TREASURED MINDFULNESS

2 (4) The Story of Bāla Nakkhatta Festival (Verses 26 & 27)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, in connection with the Bāla Nakkhatta festival — the festival of simpletons.

On a certain date there was a simpletons' festival celebrated in Sāvatthi, and on the occasion of this foolish holiday, folk used to smear their bodies with ashes and cow-dung and for a period of seven days go about uttering all manner of coarse talk.

At this time people showed no respect for kinsfolk or friends or monks when they met them, but stood in the doorways and insulted them with coarse talk. Those who could not endure the coarse talk would pay the holiday-makers a half or a quarter or a penny, according to their means, and the holiday-makers would take the money and depart from their houses.

Now at this time there were in Sāvatthi five million Noble Disciples, and they sent word to the teacher, "venerable , let the Buddha refrain for a period of seven days from entering the city with the congregation of monks; let him instead remain at the monastery." And, for a period of seven days the noble disciples caused food to be prepared for the congregation of monks at the monastery and sent it to them, but did not themselves leave their houses.

On the eighth day, however, when the festival was at an end, they invited the congregation of monks to be their guests, escorted them into the city, and gave abundant offerings. And having seated themselves respectfully on one side, they said to the Buddha, "venerable, we have spent the past seven days unpleasantly. Our ears were about to burst from hearing the coarse talk of foolish folk. No one showed any respect for anybody else, and for this reason we did not permit you to enter the city. We ourselves did not go out of the house."

The Buddha listened to what they said, and then replied, "In this manner unintelligent men conduct themselves. But they who are intelligent preserve heedfulness as their greatest treasure, and by so doing at last attain the attainment of the great Nibbāna."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 26)

bālā dummēdhinō janā pamādaṁ anuyuñjanti
mēdhāvī ca appamādaṁ seṭṭhaṁ dhanaṁ iva
rakkhati

bālā: those unaware of real values; *dummedhinō janā:* foolish people; *pamādaṁ anuyuñjanti:* indulge in unmindfulness; *mēdhāvī ca:* as for wise men; *appamādaṁ:* mindfulness; *seṭṭhaṁ dhanaṁ iva:* like a great treasure; *rakkhati:* cherish.

Those who are foolish and indiscriminating indulge in heedlessness. But the wise cherish mindfulness as a great treasure. The foolish people live a life of sensual pleasure. They indulge in pursuits that are not at all conducive to spiritual advancement. To obtain worldly acquisitions, people need wealth. In the same way, to obtain high spiritual acquisitions we need some wealth, and that wealth is mindfulness.

Commentary

bālā: this is a categorization that occurs in most areas of Buddha's teachings. The person referred to by this expression is generally thought of as an ignorant person, or as a foolish individual. But it does not mean that such a person is not adept in arts and crafts. What is meant is that the person so referred to is not sufficiently alert to reality — he is not capable of understanding the true nature of things. Such an individual's behaviour is, at times, considered childish or immature, in terms of spiritual evolution. He is given to excessive self-indulgence and to the pursuit of sensual pleasures. He does not strive to become righteous, virtuous or to lead a life of good conduct. He does not know what is beneficial to him for this world and for the next. In modern psychological jargon, it means "an emotionally immature person".

pamādaṁ anuyuñjanti: The term *"pamāda"* literally means the "basic insanity" that all unenlightened people suffer from. It is being carried away by emotions and losing awareness of reality. It is lack of emotional control. It is the same thing as emotional immaturity. It may be also called "neurosis". We translate it here as mindlessness or unmindfulness as opposed to mindfulness.

seṭṭhaṁ dhanaṁ iva: The expression concerns the mindful. They protect their mindfulness as one would protect a great treasure. Those people who are sensuous, think in terms of wealth as a means of enjoying worldly pleasures. Therefore, to them worldly wealth is the only treasure that matters. In the old commentaries, worldly treasures are considered to be seven in number. They are gold, silver, pearls, gems, lapis lazuli, conch and the shila gem. But to the truth-seekers the treasures are mindfulness and steadfastness. These ensure the means of obtaining the highest Fruits of Spiritual Realization.

(cont'd on page 57)

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Delight not in sensuality or heedlessness. Diligently contemplative, one wins immense bliss.

27. *Mā pamādamanuyuñjētha*
mā kāmaratisanthavaṁ
appamattō hi jhāyantō
pappōti vipulaṁ sukhaṁ (2:7)

Don't indulge in heedlessness!
Don't come near to sexual joys!
The heedful and contemplative
attains abundant bliss.

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MEDITATION LEADS TO BLISS

2 (4) The Story of Bāla Nakkhatta Festival (Verses 26 & 27) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 27)

pamādaṁ mā anuyuñjētha kāmaratisanthavaṁ
mā (anuyuñjētha) appamattō hi jhāyantō vipulaṁ
sukhaṁ pappōti

pamādaṁ: heedlessness; *mā:* do not; *anuyuñjētha:* indulge in; *kāmaratisanthavaṁ:* sensual pleasures; *mā:* avoid; *appamattō hi:* the mindful person; *jhāyantō:* meditatively engaged; *vipulaṁ sukhaṁ:* high-bliss; *pappōti:* reaches.

Do not indulge in heedlessness. Avoid craving for sensual pleasures, whatever their nature. The mindful person is tranquil in mind. He will attain the great bliss.

Commentary

kāmarati santhavaṁ: the expression implies indulgence in sensual pleasures. The stanza stresses the fact that such indulgence leads to the relaxation of mindfulness and the flagging of enthusiasm for truth-seeking. The implication here is that one should not give in to attachments, whatever their nature. Therefore, the main emphasis is on the need to avoid tanhā which is literally translated as "thirst". It is this "thirst", desire, greed, craving, manifesting itself in various ways, that gives rise to all forms of suffering and the continuity of being *(bhava)*. But it should not be taken as the first cause, for there is no first cause possible, according to Buddhism, because everything must have a cause. So "thirst" is not the first or the only condition for the arising of sorrow. But it is an essential condition for the arising of sorrow. The term "thirst" includes not only desire for, and attachment to, sense-pleasures, wealth and power, but also desire for, and attachment to, ideas and ideals, views, opinions, theories, conceptions and beliefs. According to the Buddha's analysis, all the troubles and strife in the world, from little personal quarrels in families to great wars between nations and countries, arise out of this "thirst", from this point of view, all economic, political and social problems are rooted in this selfish 'thirst'. Great statesmen who try to settle international disputes and talk of war and peace only in economic and political terms touch the superficialities, and never go deep into the real root of the problem. As the Buddha told Raṭṭapāla: "The world lacks and hankers, and is enslaved to 'thirst'."

Kāmarati can also be described as the sensual urge. In modern language, it may be called "the impulsive urge." The Buddha said, "What, O monk, is the origin of suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to ever fresh rebirth and, bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight." The sensual urge is accompanied by the urge for existence or the urge for non-existence. Of this urge or Craving for Existence it is said: "No first beginning of the Craving for Existence can be perceived, O monks, before which it was not and after which it came to be. But it can be perceived that Craving for Existence has its specific condition. I say, O monks, that also Craving for Existence has its conditions that feed it and are not without it. And what is it? 'Ignorance', one has to reply — Craving for Existences and Ignorance are called "the outstanding causes that lead to happy and unhappy destinies (courses of existence)." *Kāmacchanda* means sensual desires or attachment to pleasurable sense-objects such as form, sound, odour, taste, and contact. This is regarded as one of the fetters, too that bind one to Saṁsāra. An average person is bound to get tempted by these alluring objects of sense. Lack of self-control results in the inevitable arising of passions. This Hindrance is inhibited by One-pointedness, which is one of the five characteristics of Jhānas. it is attenuated on attaining Sakadāgāmi and is completely eradicated on attaining Anāgāmi. Subtle forms of attachment such as Rūpa Rāga and Arūpa Rāga (Attachment to Realms of Form and Formless Realms) are eradicated only on attaining Arahatship. The following six conditions tend to the eradication of sense-desires. (i) perceiving the loathsomeness of the object, (ii) constant meditation on loathsomeness, (ii) sense-restraint, (iv) moderation in food, (v) good friendship, and (vi) profitable talk.

Another comment is as follows:

Dependent on feeling arises craving which, like ignorance, is the other most important factor in the "Dependent origination." Attachment, thirst, clinging are some renderings for this Pāli term. This is an aspect of the 2nd Noble Truth - Craving is threefold — namely, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for sensual pleasures associated with the view of eternalism, i.e., enjoying pleasures thinking that they are imperishable, and craving for sensual pleasures with the view of nihilism i.e., enjoying pleasures thinking that everything perishes after death. The last is the materialistic standpoint. These are also interpreted as attachment to Realms of Form and Formless Realms respectively. Usually these two terms are rendered by craving for existence and non-existence. There are six kinds of craving corresponding to the six sense objects such as form, sound and so on. They become twelve when they are treated as internal and external. They are reckoned as thirty-six when viewed as past, present and future. When multiplied by the foregoing three kinds of craving, they amount to one hundred and eight. It is natural for a worldling to develop a craving for the pleasures of sense. To overcome sense-desires is extremely difficult. The most powerful factors in the wheel of life are ignorance and craving, the two main causes of the Dependent Origination. Ignorance is shown as the past cause that conditions the present; and craving, the present cause that conditions the future. Dependent on craving is grasping which is intense craving. Craving is like groping in the dark to steal an object. Grasping corresponds to the actual stealing of the object. Grasping is caused by both attachment and error. It gives rise to the false notions, of "I" and "mine". Grasping is four-fold — namely, Sensuality, False Views, Adherence to rites and ceremonies, and the Theory of a soul.

mā pamādaṁ anuyuñjētha: this is an admonition to those who quest for truth. If they need to succeed in reaching their goal they must never relax their mindfulness. They must not engage in activities that are likely to bring about worldliness and are likely to emphasize worldly pleasures. The non-engagement in mindfulness is a bar to proper meditation.

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The wise and worthy, griefless and diligent, ascend high to view the grieving folk below.

28. *Pamādaṁ appamādēna*
yadā nudati paṇḍitō
paññāpāsādamaruyha
asōkō sōkiniṁ pajaṁ
pabbataṭṭhō'va bhummaṭṭhē
dhīrō bālē avekkhati. (2:8)

When one who's wise does drive away
heedlessness by heedfulness,
having ascended wisdom's tower
steadfast, one surveys the fools,
griefless, views the grieving folk,
as mountaineer does those below.

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THE SORROWLESS VIEW THE WORLD

2 (5) The Story of Monk Mahākassapa (Verse 28)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Monk Mahākassapa.

On a certain day, while the Buddha was in residence at the Pipphali Cave, he made his round of Rājagaha for alms and after he had returned from his round for alms and had eaten his breakfast, he sat down and using psychic powers surveyed with Supernormal Vision all living beings, both heedless and heedful, in the water, on the earth, in the mountains, and elsewhere, both coming into existence and passing out of existence.

The Buddha, seated at Jētavana, exercised supernormal vision and pondered within himself, "With what is my son Kassapa occupied today?" Straightaway he became aware of the following, "He is contemplating the rising and falling of living beings." And he said, "Knowledge of the rising and falling of living beings cannot be fully understood by you. Living beings pass from one existence to another and obtain a new conception in a mother's womb without the knowledge of mother or father, and this knowledge cannot be fully understood. To know them is beyond your range, Kassapa, for your range is very slight. It comes within the range of the Buddhas alone, to know and to see in their totality, the rising and falling of living beings." So saying, he sent forth a radiant image of himself, as it were, sitting down face to face with Kassapa.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 28)

paṇḍitō yadā appamādēna pamādaṁ nudati dhīrō paññāpāsādaṁ āruyha asōkō sokiniṁ pajaṁ pabbataṭṭhō bhummaṭṭhē iva bālē avekkhati

paṇḍitō: the wise individual; *yadā:* when; *appa mādēna:* through mindfulness; *pamādaṁ:* sloth; *nudati:* dispels; *dhīrō:* the wise person; *paññāpāsādaṁ:* the tower of wisdom; *āruyha:* ascending; *asōkō:* unsorrowing; *sokiniṁ:* the sorrowing; *pajaṁ:* masses; *avekkhati:* surveys; *pabbataṭṭhō iva:* like a man on top of a mountain; *bhummaṭṭhē:* those on the ground; *bāle:* the ignorant: *avekkhati:* surveys.

The wise person is always mindful. Through this alertness he discards the ways of the slothful. The wise person ascends the tower of wisdom. Once he has attained that height he is capable of surveying the sorrowing masses with sorrowless eyes. Detached and dispassionate he sees these masses like a person atop a mountain peak, surveying the ground below.

Commentary

sokiniṁ pajaṁ: this establishes a characteristic of the ordinary masses — the worldly men and women. They are all described as 'sorrowing'. Sorrow, suffering, is an inescapable condition of ordinary life. Only the most advanced men of wisdom can rise above this condition of life. Sorrow, or suffering, has been described by the Buddha as a universal truth. Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering. The Buddha does not deny happiness in life when he says there is suffering. On the contrary he admits different forms of happiness, both material and spiritual, for laymen as well as for monks. In the Buddha's Teachings, there is a list of happinesses, such as the happiness of family life and the happiness of the life of a recluse, the happiness of sense pleasures and the happiness of renunciation, the happiness of attachment and the happiness of detachment, physical happiness and mental happiness etc. But all these are included in suffering. Even the very pure spiritual states of trance attained by the practice of higher meditation are included in suffering.

The conception of suffering may be viewed from three aspects: (i) suffering as ordinary suffering, (ii) suffering as produced by change and (iii) suffering as conditioned states. All kinds of suffering in life like birth, old age, sickness, death, association with unpleasant persons and conditions, separation from beloved ones and pleasant conditions, not getting what one desires, grief, lamentation, distress — all such forms of physical and mental suffering, which are universally accepted as suffering or pain, are included in suffering as ordinary suffering. A happy feeling, a happy condition in life, is not permanent, not everlasting. It changes sooner or later. When it changes, it produces pain, suffering, unhappiness. This vicissitude is included in suffering as suffering produced by change. It is easy to understand the two forms of suffering mentioned above. No one will dispute them. This aspect of the First Noble Truth is more popularly known because it is easy to understand. it is common experience in our daily life. But the third form of suffering as conditioned states is the most important philosophical aspect of the First Noble Truth, and it requires some analytical explanation of what we consider as a 'being', as an 'individual' or as 'I'. What we call a 'being', or an 'individual', or 'I', according to Buddhist philosophy, is only a combination of ever-changing physical and mental forces or energies, which may be divided into five groups or aggregates.

dhīrō bālē avekkhati: The sorrowless Arahants look compassionately with their Divine Eye upon the ignorant folk, who, being subject to repeated births, are not free from sorrow.

When an understanding one discards heedlessness by heedfulness, he, free from sorrow, ascends to the palace of wisdom and surveys the sorrowing folk as a wise mountaineer surveys the ignorant groundlings.

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Diligent and awake, the wise outrun the heedless, like a swift horse a weak one.

29. *Appamattō pamattēsu*
suttēsu bahujāgarō
abalassaṁ'va sīghassō
hitvā yāti sumēdhasō (2:9)

Among the heedless, heedful,
among the sleepy, wide awake.
As the swift horse outruns a hack
so one of good wisdom wins.

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THE MINDFUL ONE IS WAY AHEAD OF OTHERS

2 (6) The Story of the Two Companion Monks (Verse 29)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to two monks, who were friends.

It appears that these two monks obtained a Meditation topic from the Buddha and retired to a forest hermitage. Early in the morning one of them brought firewood, prepared the charcoal-dish, and during the first watch sat and chatted with the probationers and novices. The other, a heedful monk, engaged in meditation, thus admonished his friend, "Brother, do not act thus. For a monk that is heedless stand ready four states of suffering, as if they were his own house. The favour of the Buddhas may not be won by double-dealing." When the lazy monk paid no attention to his admonition, the zealous monk said, "This monk cannot endure to be spoken to." Having failed to spur his comrade to greater effort, the zealous monk, abiding in heedfulness, resumed his meditations.

The slothful Venerable, having warmed himself during the first watch, entered the monastery just as his friend, having finished his walk, entered his cell. Said the slothful monk to the zealous monk, "Slothful one, you entered the forest for the purpose of lying down and sleeping. Seeing that you obtained a Meditation topic from the buddhas, ought you not rather to rise and devote yourself to the practice of meditation?" So saying, he entered his own place of residence, lay down, and went to sleep. But his friend, after walking up and down during the first watch and resting during the second watch, rose in the last watch and devoted himself to the practice of meditation. Living thus the life of heedfulness, in no long time he attained Arahatship, together with the Supernatural Faculties. The other monk, however, spent his time in utter heedlessness.

When the two monks had completed residence, they went to the Buddha, paid obeisance to him, and sat down respectfully on one side. The Buddha exchanged friendly greetings with them and queried, "I trust that you have lived the life of heedfulness and that you have devoted yourselves earnestly to the practice of meditation. I trust that you have reached the goal of the Religious Life." The heedless monk replied, "venerable, how can this monk be said to be heedful? From the time he left you he has done nothing but lie and sleep." "But you, monk?" "I Venerable, early in the morning brought firewood and prepared the charcoal-dish, and during the first watch I sat and warmed myself, but I did not spend my time sleeping." Then said the Buddha to the slothful monk, "You who have spent your time in heedlessness say, 'I am heedful.' You mistake heedlessness for heedfulness. Compared with my son, you are like a weak and slow horse; but he, compared with you, is like a fleet-footed horse."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 29)

pamattēsu appamattō suttēsu bahujāgarō sumēdhasō sīghassō abalassaṁ iva hitvā yāti.

pamattēsu: among the unmindful; *appamattō:* the mindful one; *suttēsu:* among those who are asleep; *bahujāgarō:* the wide awake; *sumēdhasō:* the blemishless one of deep wisdom; *sīghassō:* a fast horse; *abalassaṁ iva:* as a weak horse; *hitvā:* leaving behind; *yāti:* forges well ahead.

The extremely wise individual of deep wisdom is always alert and mindful. He is therefore like a wide-awake individual among those who are deep in sleep. That wise person, who possesses supreme insight overtakes in spirituality all those ordinary masses, just as a fast horse easily overtakes a weak one.

Commentary

hitvā yāti: leaves behind; defeats; overtakes. These are the central ideas of this stanza. The concept enshrined in this stanza is that those who are alert and mindful overtake others who are lethargic and unalert. To emphasize this notion several analogies are shown. The sleepless person is wide awake while others are sleeping away their time. The disabled horse is overtaken by the fleet-footed. In that manner the alert person overtakes those others who are heedless and flagging in spirit. This way the wise ones very easily overtake the less intelligent, foolish individuals who are not their equals. Among the truth-seekers those who are steadfast in their search overtake others in spiritual attainments. They also discard the work-a-day world.

Heedful amongst the heedless, wide awake amongst the slumbering, the wise man advances as does a swift horse, leaving a weak jade behind.

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Heedfulness made Magha the king of dēvas. Heedfulness is forever praised.

30. *Appamādēna Maghavā*
dēvānaṁ seṭṭhataṁ gatō
appamādaṁ pasaṁsanti
pamādō garahitō sadā. (2:10)

Heedfulness is always praised,
heedlessness is ever blamed.
By heedfulness did Magha go
to lordship of the gods.

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MINDFULNESS MADE HIM CHIEF OF GODS

2 (7) The Story of Magha (Verse 30)

While residing at the Kūtāgāra Monastery near Vēsāli, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sakka, king of the dēvas.A Licchavi prince named Mahāli, who lived at Vēsāli, hearing the Buddha recite the Suttanta entitled Sakka's Question, thought to himself, "The Supremely Enlightened has described the great glory of Sakka. Has the Buddha seen Sakka? Or has he not seen Sakka? Is the Buddha acquainted with Sakka? Or is he not acquainted with Sakka? I will ask him." So the Licchavi prince Mahāli drew near to where the Exalted One was, and having drawn near, saluted the Exalted One and sat down on one side. And having sat down on one side, the Licchavi prince Mahāli spoke thus to the Exalted One, "Venerable, has the Exalted One seen Sakka king of gods?" "Yes, Mahāli, I have indeed seen Sakka king of gods." "Venerable, it must certainly have been a counterfeit of Sakka; for, Venerable, it is a difficult matter to see Sakka king of gods." "Nevertheless, Mahāli, I know Sakka; I know what qualities made him Sakka; I know by the cultivation of what qualities Sakka attained Sakkaship.

"Mahāli, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being, a prince named Magha; therefore is he called Maghavā. Mahāli, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who in a previous state of existence gave gifts; therefore is he called Purindada. Mahāli, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being, who gave alms assiduously; therefore is he called Sakka. Mahāli, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who gave a dwelling-place; therefore is he called Vāsavā. Mahāli in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who could think of as many as thousand things in an instant; therefore is he called Sahassakkha. Mahāli, Sakka king of gods has an Asura maiden named Sujata to wife; therefore is he called Sujampati. Mahāli, Sakka king of gods bears sway as lord and master over the Gods of the Thirty-three; therefore is he called King of Gods. Mahāli, Sakka king of gods in a previous state of existence as a human being took upon himself and fulfilled seven vows. Because he took upon himself and fulfilled these seven vows, Sakka attained Sakkaship.

"Now what were the seven? 'So long as I live, may I be the support of my mother and father. So long as I live, may I honour my elders. So long as I live, may I speak gentle words. So long as I live, may I never give way to backbiting. So long as I live, may I live the life of a householder with heart free from taint of avarice, generous in renunciation of what is mine, with open hand, delighting in liberality, attentive to petitions, delighting in the distribution of alms. So long as I live, may I speak the truth. So long as I live, may I be free from anger. Should anger spring up within me, may I quickly suppress it.' Mahāli, Sakka king of gods in a previous state of existence took upon himself and fulfilled seven vows. Because he took upon himself and fulfilled these seven vows, Sakka attained Sakkaship." The Buddha said, "That, in a previous birth, Sakka was born as Magha. During that birth with thirty companions he built roads and resting places for the benefit of the masses. His unflagging effort brought him into the exalted position of king of gods, and recited this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 30)

Maghavā appamādēna dēvānaṁ seṭṭhataṁ gatō
appamādaṁ pasaṁsanti pamādō sadā garahitō.

Maghavā: Magha (Mānavaka); *appamādēna:* through mindfulness; *dēvānaṁ:* of gods; *seṭṭhataṁ:* leadership; *gatō:* reached; *appamādaṁ:* mindfulness; *pasaṁsanti:* the wise praise; *pamādō:* slothfulness; *sadā:* always; *garahitō:* is condemned.

The brahamin youth Magha, through his mindfulness, was born as the Chief of Gods. Therefore mindfulness is always praised, and sloth and unmindfulness are always condemned.

Commentary

pamādō garahitō sadā: those who lag behind are condemned because the lethargic cannot achieve their goals — worldly or spiritual. Unawareness is of course always censured, deprecated by those noble ones. Why? Because it is the root condition for all calamities. Every calamity, whether human adversity or birth in a state of woe, is, indeed, based on unawareness.

Maghavā: Maghavā is synonymous with Sakka, king of the gods. The Maghamānavaka Jātaka relates that in the remote past a public-spirited person, who had spent his whole lifetime in welfare work with the cooperation of his friends, was born as Sakka as the result of his good actions.

Dēvās: lit., sporting or shining ones, are a class of beings with subtle physical bodies invisible to the naked eye. They live in the celestial planes. There are also earth-bound deities.

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Like a burning fire, the heedful monk moves forward, destroying all bonds big and small.

31. *Appamādaratō bhikkhū*
pamādē bhayadassi vā
saññōjanaṁ aṇuṁ thūlaṁ
ḍahaṁ aggī va gacchati. (2:11)

The bhikkhu liking heedfulness,
seeing fear in heedlessness,
advances as a conflagration
burning fetters great and small.

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THE HEEDFUL ADVANCE

2 (8) The Story of a Certain Monk (Verse 31)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a certain monk.

The story goes that this monk obtained from the teacher a meditation topic leading to arahatship and retired to the forest. Although he strove and struggled with might and main, he was unable to attain arahatship. Thereupon he said to himself, "I will ask the Buddha to give me a meditation topic better suited to my needs." So he departed from his place of residence and set out to return to the Buddha. On the way he saw a great forest fire raging. Accordingly he climbed up to the top of a bald mountain and sat down. As he watched the fire consume the forest, he concentrated his mind on the following thought, "Even as this fire advances, consuming all obstacles both great and small, so also ought I to advance, consuming all obstacles both great and small by the fire of knowledge of the noble path."

The Buddha, even as he sat in his Perfumed Chamber, became aware of the course of his thoughts and spoke as follows, "Monk, this is precisely true. Even as fire consumes all obstacles both great and small, so also is it necessary with the fire of knowledge to consume and utterly destroy all attachments both small and great which arise within these living beings." And sending forth a luminous image of himself, present, as it were, sitting face to face with that monk, he gave a stanza.

At the conclusion of the stanza that monk, even as he sat there, consumed all the attachments and attained Arahatship, together with the Supernormal Faculties. And straightway, soaring through the air, he approached the Buddha, praising and glorifying the golden body of the Buddha. And when he had done him homage, he departed.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 31)

appamādaratō pamādē bhayadassi vā bhikkhu aṇuṁ thūlaṁ saññōjanaṁ aggī iva dahaṁ gacchati.

appamādaratō: taking delight in mindfulness; *pamāde:* in mindlessness; *bhayadassi vā:* seeing fear; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *aṇuṁ thūlaṁ:* minute and large; *saññōjanaṁ:* the bonds; *aggī iva:* like a fire; *dahaṁ:* burns away; *gacchati:* makes his way (Nibbāna).

The monk, as the seeker after truth, is frightened of mindlessness because he knows that if one is unmindful, one will be caught up in the unending sufferings of samsāra. Therefore, he forges ahead diligently, and mindfully burning away those bonds that fetter people to worldliness.

Commentary

saññōjanaṁ: fetters. There are ten fetters tying beings to the wheel of existence, namely: (i) personality perspective, (ii) uncertainty or split mind, (iii) alienated discipline, (iv) sensual passion, (v) hate, (vi) passion for form, (vii) passion for the formless, (viii) judgement, (ix) anxiety, (x) unawareness. The first five of these are called 'lower fetters', as they tie to the sensual world. The latter five are called 'higher fetters', as they tie to the higher worlds, i.e. the form and formless world.

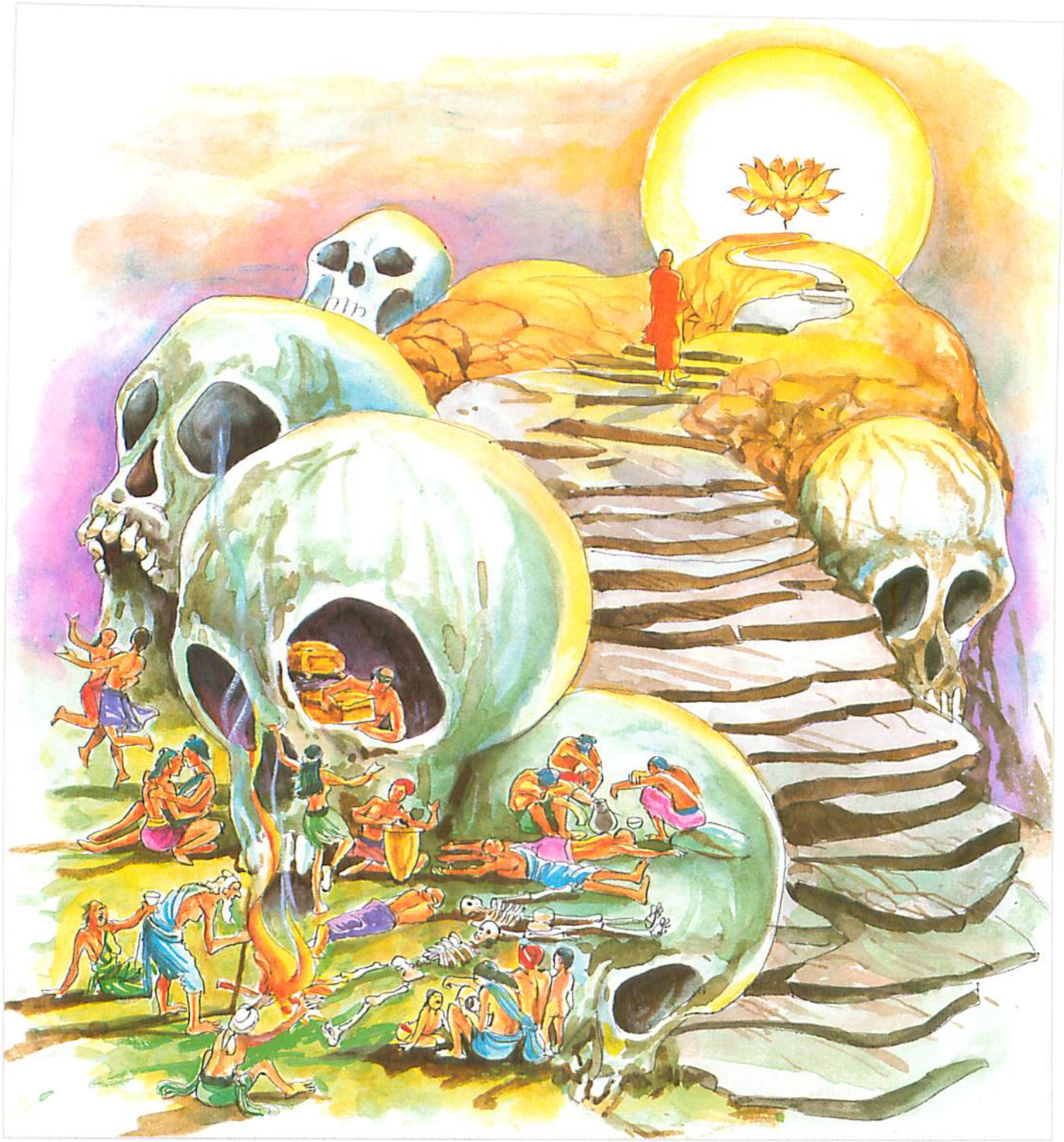
He who is free from (i) to (iii) is a *Sōtāpanna*, or Streamwinner, i.e., one who has entered the stream to Nibbāna, as it were. He who, besides these three fetters, has overcome (iv) and (v) in their grosser form, is called a *Sakādāgami*, a 'Once-Returner' (to this sensual world). He who is fully freed from (i) to (v) is an *Anāgāmi*, or 'Non-Returner' (to the sensual worlds). He who is freed from all the ten fetters is called an Arahat, i.e., a perfectly Holy One.

pamādē bhayadassī vā: he sees being unaware as conducive to fear. The fear that is seen has to do with the recurring cycle of existence. He is aware that if he relaxes in his effort to improve himself in his spiritual progress he will endlessly face births and deaths. Therefore he considers unmindfulness as the root cause of all these sufferings. This is the reason why he sees fear in lack of mindfulness.

appamāda ratō: delighting in mindfulness. The truth-seeker can achieve success in his quest if he pursues it with happiness. If his delight in the deathless ceases, he will not be able to continue in his path towards Nibbāna. Therefore the monk — seeker after truth — is described as an individual who takes delight in the alertness of the mind.

Bhikkhu: A fully ordained disciple of the Buddha is called a Bhikkhu. "Mendicant monk" may be suggested as the closest equivalent for "*Bhikkhu*." He is not a priest as he is no mediator between God and man. He has no vows for life, but he is bound by his rules which he takes of his own accord. He leads a life of voluntary poverty and celibacy. If he is unable to live the Holy Life, he can discard the robe at any time.

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The monk who delights in heedfulness never fails to win the Deathless.

32. *Appamādaratō bhikkhu*
pamādē bhayadassi vā
abhabbō parihāṇāya
nibbāṇass'ēva santikē. (2:12)

The bhikkhu liking heedfulness,
seeing fear in heedlessness,
never will he fall away,
near is he to Nibbāna.

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THE HEEDFUL ADVANCES TO NIBBĀNA

2 (9) The Story of Monk Nigāma Vāsi Tissa (Verse 32)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the monk Nigāma Vāsi Tissa.

A youth of high station, born and reared in a certain market-town not far from Sāvatthi, retired from the world and became a monk in the religion of the Buddha. On making his full profession, he became known as Tissa of the Market-town, or Nigāma Tissa. He acquired the reputation of being frugal, content, pure, resolute. He always made his rounds for alms in the village where his relatives resided. Although, in the neighbouring city of Sāvatthi, Anāthapindika and other disciples were bestowing abundant offerings and Pasēnadi Kōsala was bestowing gifts beyond compare, he never went to Sāvatthi.

One day the monks began to talk about him and said to the teacher, "This monk Nigāma Tissa, busy and active, lives in intimate association with his kinsfolk. Although Anāthapindika and other disciples are bestowing abundant offerings and Pasēnadi Kōsala is bestowing gifts beyond compare, he never comes to Sāvatthi." The Buddha had Nigāma Tissa summoned and asked him, "Monk, is the report true that you are doing thus and so?" "Venerable," replied Tissa, "It is not true that I live in intimate association with my relatives. I receive from these folk only so much food as I can eat. But after receiving so much food, whether coarse or fine, as is necessary to support me, I do not return to the monastery, thinking, 'Why seek food?' I do not live in intimate association with my relatives, venerable." The Buddha, knowing the disposition of the monk, applauded him, saying, "Well done, well done, monk!" and then addressed him as follows, "It is not at all strange, monk, that after obtaining such a teacher as I, you should be frugal. For frugality is my disposition and my habit." And in response to a request of the monks he related the following.

Once upon a time several thousand parrots lived in a certain grove of fig-trees in the Himālayan country on the bank of the Ganges. One of them, the king-parrot, when the fruits of the tree in which he lived had withered away, ate whatever he found remaining, whether shoot or leaf or bark, drank water from the Ganges, and being very happy and contented, remained where he was. In fact he was so very happy and contented that the abode of sakka began to quake.

Sakka, observing how happy and contented the parrot was, visited him and turned the whole forest into a green and flourishing place. The Buddha pointed out that even in the past birth he was contented and happy and that such a monk will never slip back from the vicinity of Nibbāna.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 32)

appamādaratō pamādē bhayadassi vā bhikkhu abhabbō parihānāya nibbānassa santikē ēva

appamādaratō: taking delight in mindfulness; *pamādē:* in slothfulness; *bhayadassi vā:* seeing fear; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *abhabbō parihānāya:* unable to slip back: *nibbānassa:* of Nibbāna; *santikē ēva:* is indeed in the vicinity.

The monk as the seeker after truth, sees fear in lack of mindfulness. He will certainly not fall back from any spiritual heights he has already reached. He is invariably in the proximity of Nibbāna.

Commentary

Nibbāna: referring to Nibbāna the Buddha says, "O monks, there is the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned. Were there not the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned, there would be no escape for the born, grown, and conditioned, so there is escape for the born, grown, and conditioned." "Here the four elements of solidity, fluidity, heat and motion have no place; the notions of length and breadth, the subtle and the gross, good and evil, name and form are altogether destroyed; neither this world nor the other, nor coming, going or standing, neither death nor birth, nor sense-objects are to be found." Because Nibbāna is thus expressed in negative terms, there are many who have got a wrong notion that it is negative, and expresses self-annihilation. Nibbāna is definitely no annihilation of self, because there is no self to annihilate. If at all, it is the annihilation of the very process of being, of the conditional continuous in samsāra, with the illusion or delusion of permanency and identity, with a staggering ego of I and mine.

abhabbō parihānāya: not liable to suffer fall. A monk who is so (mindful) is not liable to fall either from the contemplative processes of *samatha and vipassanā* or from the path and Fruits - that is, does not fall away from what has been reached, and will attain what has not yet been reached.

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Wisdom is the sword and ignorance is the enemy

Not a single page of Buddhist history has ever been lurid with the light of inquisitorial fires, or darkened with the smoke of heretic or heathen cities ablaze, or red with blood of the guiltless victims of religious hatred. Buddhism wields only one sword, the sword of Wisdom, and recognizes only one enemy - Ignorance. This is the testimony of history, and is not to be gainsaid.

Prof. Bapat "2500 years of Buddhism"

Mind Training

We hear much nowadays of thought-power, but Buddhism is the most complete and effective system of mind-training yet placed before the world.

Dudley Wright

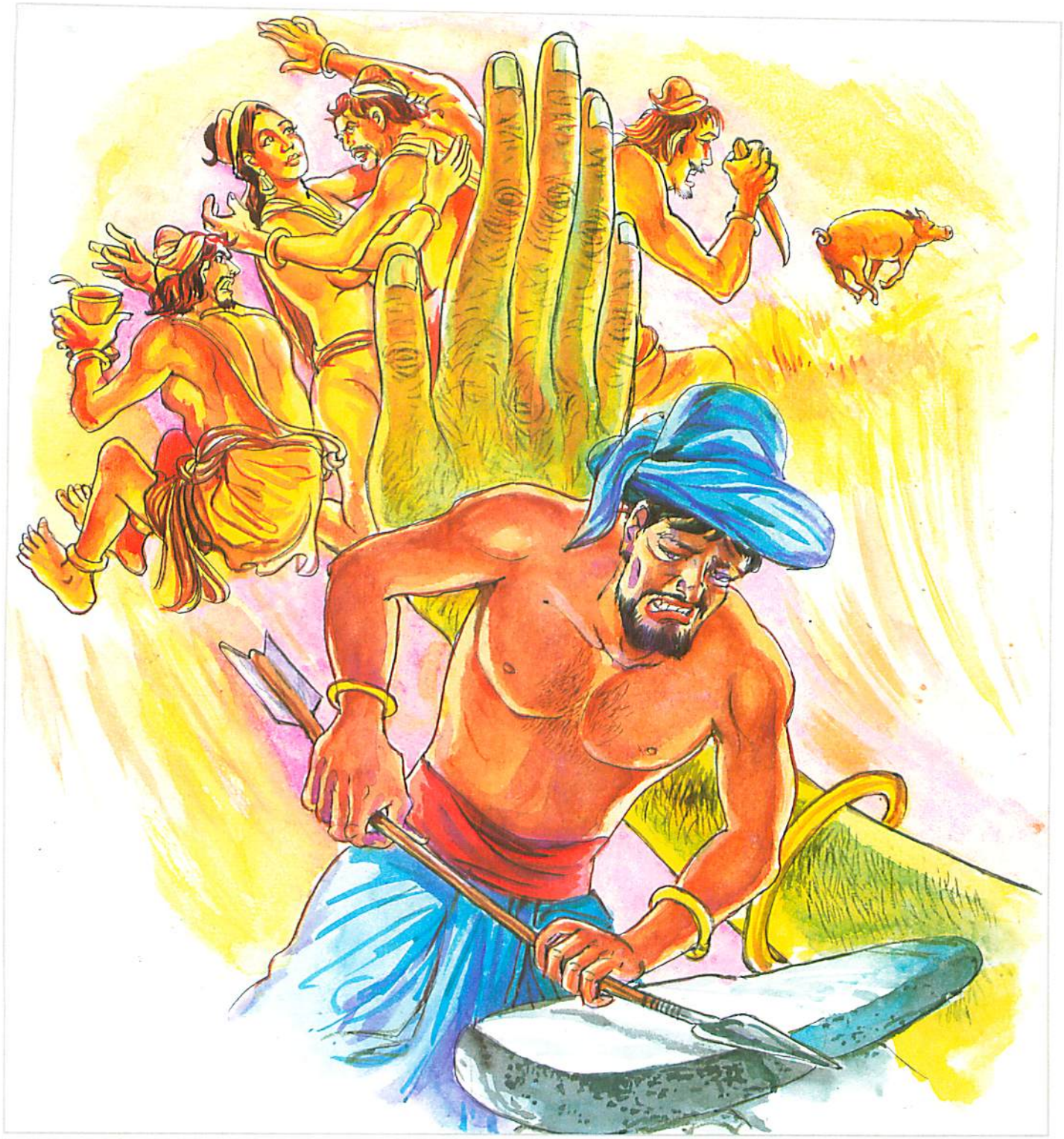
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Chapter 3

CITTA VAGGA

Mind

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Like the fletcher the arrow the wise one straightens the fickle mind.

33. *Phandanaṁ capalaṁ cittaṁ*
durakkhaṁ dunnivārayaṁ
ujuṁ karōti mēdhāvī
usukārō'va tējanaṁ. (3:1)

Mind agitated, wavering,
hard to guard and hard to check,
one of wisdom renders straight
as arrow-maker with a shaft.

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CITTA VAGGA (Mind)
THE WISE PERSON STRAIGHTENS THE MIND

3 (1) The Story of Venerable Mēghiya (Verses 33 & 34)

While residing on the Cālikā Mountain, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Mēghiya.

Once, by reason of attachment to the three evil thoughts, lust, hatred, delusion, Venerable Mēghiya was unable to practice Exertion in this mango-grove and returned to the Buddha. The Buddha said to him, "Mēghiya, you committed a grievous fault. I asked you to remain, saying to you, 'I am now alone, Mēghiya. Just wait until some other monk appears.' But despite my request, you went your way. A monk should never leave me alone and go his way when I ask him to remain. A monk should never be controlled thus by his thoughts. As for thoughts, they are flighty, and a man ought always to keep them under his own control."

At the conclusion of the stanzas Mēghiya was established in the fruit of conversion and many other monks in the fruits of the second and third paths.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 33)

phandanaṁ capalaṁ durakkhaṁ dunnivārayaṁ
cittaṁ mēdhāvī ujuṁ karōti. usukārō tējanaṁ iva

phandanaṁ: pulsating, throbbing; *capalaṁ:* fickle, unsteady; *durakkhaṁ:* difficult to guard; *dunnivārayaṁ:* hard to restrain; *cittaṁ:* the mind; *mēdhāvī:* the wise one; *ujuṁ karōti:* straightens; *usukārō iva:* like a fletcher; *tējanaṁ:* an arrow-shaft

In the Dhammapada there are several references to the craftsmanship of the fletcher. The Buddha seems to have observed the process through which a fletcher transforms an ordinary stick into an efficient arrow-shaft. The disciplining of the mind is seen as being a parallel process. In this stanza the Buddha says that the wise one straightens and steadies the vacillating mind that is difficult to guard, like a fletcher straightening an arrow-shaft.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 34)

ōkamōkata ubbhatō thalē khittō vārijō iva idaṁ
cittaṁ pariphandati māradheyyaṁ pahātavē

ōkamōkata: from its watery abode; *ubbhatō:* taken out; *thalē:* on dry land; *khittō:* thrown; *vārijō iva:* like a fish; *idaṁ cittaṁ:* this mind; *pariphandati:* trembles; *māradheyyaṁ:* death's realm; *pahātavē:* to abandon; *pariphandati:* flutters and trembles

When making an effort to abandon the realm of Māra (evil), the mind begins to quiver like a fish taken out of the water and thrown on land.

Commentary

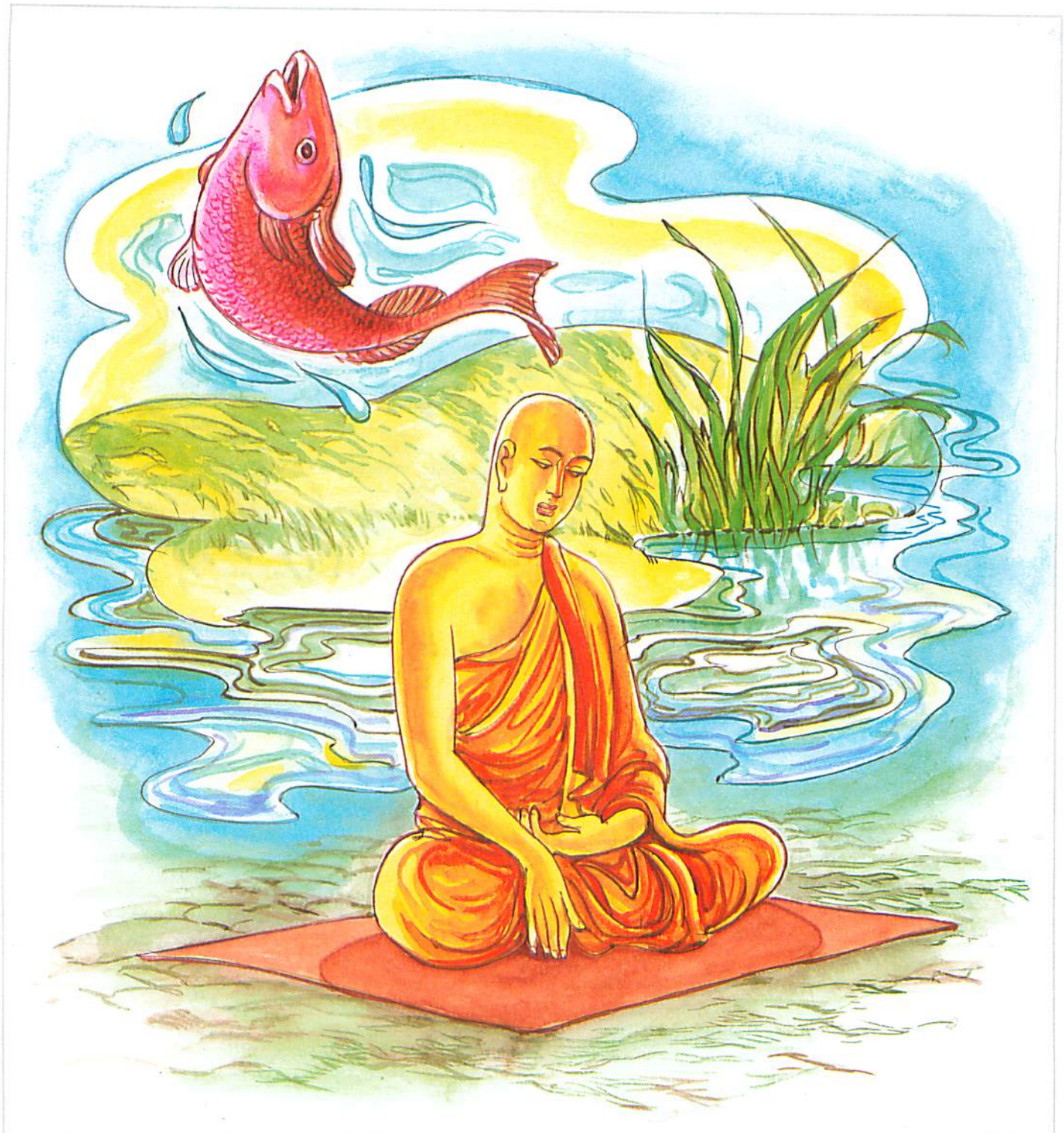
cittaṁ: This term is commonly translated as mind or consciousness and seen as the essence of the so-called being which plays the most important part in the complex machinery of man. It is more appropriately translated as a 'mental state' or, even better, an 'emotional state'. It is this *citta* that is either defiled or purified, and is the bitterest enemy and the greatest friend of oneself. This *citta* seems to be the equivalent of 'soul' in Western thought. In Buddhism, however, the 'soul' as a permanent entity is not recognized. *Citta* which takes its place refers to the emotional state of a person which is not an entity but a fluctuating activity like a flame. Sometimes emotions are excited and sometimes the *citta* is calm (emotions are absent). We might even translate it as the 'temperament' or 'temper'. Writers on Buddhism mistakenly call it 'mind' or 'consciousness'. But what is meant is the 'affective' rather than the cognitive aspects of the mental process. When a person is fast asleep and is in a dreamless state, he experiences a kind of mental state which is more or less passive than active. It is similar to the mental state one experiences at the moment of conception and at the moment of death. The Buddhist philosophical term for this type of mental state is *Bhavanga citta* which means the mental state natural to one's condition of existence. Arising and perishing every moment, it flows on like a stream not remaining the same for two consecutive moments. We do experience this type of mental state not only in a dreamless state but also in our waking state. In the course of our life we experience *Bhavanga* mental states more than any other type of mental state. Hence *Bhavanga* becomes the natural state of mind.

Some scholars identify *Bhavanga* with sub-consciousness. According to the Dictionary of Philosophy sub-consciousness is 'a compartment of the mind alleged by certain psychologists and philosophers to exist below the threshold of consciousness.' In the opinion of some Western psychologists, sub-consciousness and consciousness co-exist.

But *Bhavanga* is not a sub-plane. It does not correspond to F. W. Myer's subliminal consciousness either.

(cont'd on page 73)

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Like a fish out of its watery abode, this mind trembles at having to abandon Māra's realm.

34. *Vārijō'va thalē khittō*
ōkamōkata ubbhatō
paripḥandat'idaṁ cittaṁ
māradheyyaṁ pahātavē. (3:2)

As fish from watery home
is drawn and cast upon the land,
even so flounders this mind
while Māra's Realm abandoning.

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THE FLUTTERING MIND

3 (2) The Story of Monk Mēghiya (Verses 33 & 34) (cont'd)

Bhavanga is so called because it is the resting state of mind that is natural to an individual's life-continuum. That is why life-continuum has been suggested as the English equivalent for *Bhavanga*. But a better translation could be 'Resting mental state'.

This Bhavanga state of mind which one always experiences as long as it is uninterrupted by external stimuli, vibrates for a thought-moment and passes away when a stimulus activates the senses. Suppose, for instance, the eye is stimulated. Then the *Bhavanga* stream of consciousness is arrested and sensedoor consciousness (whose function is to turn the attention towards the object) arises and passes away . Immediately after this, there arises a visual perception which sees the object, but yet knows no more about it. This sense operation is followed by a moment of the reception of the object so seen. Next arises the investigating thought-moment which momentarily examines the object so seen. This is followed by the determining thought-moment. On this depends the subsequent psychologically important stage Javana. It is at this stage that an action is judged, whether it be moral or immoral when discrimination is exercised and will play its part. *Kamma* is performed at this stage.

If decided correctly, it becomes moral; if wrongly, immoral. Irrespective of the desirability or the undesirability of the object presented to the mind, it is possible for one to make the Javana process moral or immoral. If, for instance, one meets an enemy, anger will arise automatically. A wise person might, on the contrary, with self-control, radiate a thought of love towards him. This is the reason why the Buddha stated:

By self is evil done,
By self is one defiled,
By self is no evil done,
By self is one purified.
Both defilement and purity depend on oneself.
No one is purified by another.

It is an admitted fact that environment, circumstances, habitual tendencies and the like condition our thoughts. On such occasions will is subordinated. There exists however the possibility for us to overcome those external forces and produce moral and immoral thoughts exercising our own freewill. An extraneous element may be a causative factor, but we ourselves are directly responsible for the actions that finally follow.

It is extremely difficult to suggest a suitable rendering for *Javana*.

A perception is suggested by some. Impulse is suggested as an alternative rendering, which seems to be less satisfactory than a perception. Here, the Pāli term is retained.

Javana, literally, means running. It is so called because, in the course of a thought-process, it runs consequently for seven thought-moments, or, at times of death, for five thought-moments with an identical object. The mental states occurring in all these thought-moments are similar, but the potential force differs.

This entire thought-process which takes place in an infinitesimal part of time ends with the registering consciousness lasting for two thought-moments. Thus one thought-process is completed at the expiration of seventeen thought-moments.This is the analysis of a thought process involved in the experience of an object.

In the Buddhist system an essential element in the quest for higher spiritual achievement is the reflection upon the real nature of the mind - *cittānupassanā.*

'Cittānupassanā' means reflection of mind. The mind is so complex and subtle that even modern science has not been able to grasp its real nature. But the Buddha was able to comprehend the real nature of the mind by developing his own mind. Development of mind leads to concentration. The mind thus developed could be easily diverted to transcendental knowledge. However, such a state cannot be attained easily. The mind does not rest in one object, it always strays away. When one attempts to control the mind, it wriggles like a fish taken out of water. Therefore the controlling of the mind should be done with great effort.

According to the *Abhidhamma* there are 121 types of the mind. In this meditation *(Cittānupassanā)* 16 aspects of the mind are described. They are: 1. *Sarāga*, 2. *Vitarāga*, 3. *Sadōsa*, 4.*Vitadōsa*, 5. *Samōha*, 6. *Vītamōha*, 7. *Saṁkhitta*, 8. *Vikkhitta*, 9. *Mahaggata*, 10. *Amahaggata*, 11. *Sauttara*, 12. *Anuttara*, 13. *Samāhita*, 14. *Asamāhita*, 15. *Vimutta*, 16. *Avimutta*.

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It is well indeed restraining this fleeting, wandering mind. Such restraint brings happiness.

35. *Dunniggahassa lahunō*
yatthakāmanipātinō
cittassa damathō sādhu
cittaṁ dantaṁ sukhāvahaṁ. (3:3)

The mind is very hard to check
and swift, it falls on what it wants.
The training of the mind is good,
a mind so tamed brings happiness.

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RESTRAINED MIND LEADS TO HAPPINESS

3 (2) The Story of a Certain Monk (Verse 35)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a certain monk.

On one occasion, sixty monks, after obtaining a meditation topic from the Buddha, went to Mātika village, at the foot of a mountain. There, Mātikamātā, mother of the village headman, offered them alms-food; she also built a monastery for them, so that they could stay in the village during the rainy season. One day she asked the group of monks to teach her the practice of meditation. They taught her how to meditate on the thirty-two constituents of the body leading to the awareness of the decay and dissolution of the body. Mātikamātā practiced with diligence and attained the three maggas (paths) and phalas (fruits) together with analytical insight and mundane supernormal powers, even before the monks did.

Rising from the bliss of the magga and phala she looked with the divine power of sight *(dibbacakkhu)* and saw that the monks had not attained any of the Maggas yet. She also learnt that those monks had enough potentiality for the attainment of arahatship, but they needed proper food. So, she prepared good, choice food for them. With proper food and right effort, the monks developed right concentration and eventually attained arahatship.

At the end of the rainy season, the monks returned to the Jētavana Monastery, where the Buddha was in residence. They reported to the Buddha that all of them were in good health and in comfortable circumstances and that they did not have to worry about food. They also mentioned about Mātikamātā who was aware of their thought and prepared and offered them the very food they wished for.

A certain monk, hearing them talking about Mātikamātā, decided that he, too, would go to that village. So, taking one meditation topic from the Buddha he arrived at the village monastery. There, he found that everything he wished for was sent to him by Mātikamātā, the lay-devotee. When he wished her to come she personally came to the monastery, bringing along choice food with her. After taking the food, he asked her if she knew the thoughts of others, but she evaded his question and replied, "People who can read the thoughts of others behave in such and such a way." Then, the monk thought, "Should I, like an ordinary worldling, entertain any impure thoughts, she is sure to find out." He therefore got scared of the lay-devotee and decided to return to the Jētavana Monastery. He told the Buddha that he could not stay in Mātika village because he was afraid that the lay-devotee might detect impure thoughts in him. The Buddha then asked him to observe just one thing; that is, to control his mind. The Buddha also told the monk to return to Mātika village monastery, and not to think of anything else, but the object of his meditation only. The monk went back. The lay-devotee offered him good food as she had done to others before, so that he might be able to practice meditation without worry. Within a short time, he, too, attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 35)

dunniggahassa lahunō yattha kāmanipātinō cittassa damathō sādhu; dantaṁ cittaṁ sukhāvahaṁ

dunniggahassa: difficult to be controlled; *lahunō:* swift; *yattha kāmanipātinō:* focusing on whatever target it wishes; *cittassa:* of the mind; *damathō:* taming; *sādhu:* (is) good; *dantaṁ:* tamed; *cittaṁ:* mind; *sukhāvahaṁ:* brings bliss.

The mind is exceedingly subtle and is difficult to be seen. It attaches on whatever target it wishes. The wise guard the mind. the guarded mind brings bliss.

Commentary

duññiggahassa; yatthakāmanipātinō: hard to control; focussing upon wherever it likes and on whatever it wishes. These two are given as characteristics of the mind. The mind is so quick and swift it is so difficult to get hold of it. Because it is nimble no one could restrain it unless the person is exceptionally disciplined. The other quality of the mind referred to in this stanza is its capacity to alight on anything it wishes. This is also a characteristic of the mind making it extremely difficult to keep in check. Our emotions are impersonal processes. They are not what we do. That is why they are difficult to control. It is only by not identifying with them that they can be stopped. By identifying with them, we give them strength. By calm observation as they come and go, they cease. They cannot be stopped by fighting with them.

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The subtle and secretive mind, when well guarded, will yield happiness.

36. *Sududdasaṁ sunipuṇaṁ*
yatthakāmanipātinaṁ
cittaṁ rakkhētha mēdhāvī
cittaṁ guttaṁ sukhāvahaṁ. (3:4)

The mind is very hard to see
and fine, it falls on what it wants.
One who's wise should guard the mind,
a guarded mind brings happiness.

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PROTECTED MIND LEADS TO HAPPINESS

3 (3) The Story of a Certain Disgruntled Monk (Verse 36)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a young disgruntled monk who was the son of a banker.

While the Buddha was in residence at Sāvatthi, a certain banker's son approached an elder who resorted to his house for alms and said to him, "Venerable, I desire to obtain release from suffering. Tell me some way by which I can obtain release from suffering." The elder replied, "Peace be unto you, brother. If you desire release from suffering, give alms-food, give fortnightly food, give lodging during the season of the rains, give bowls and robes and the other requisites. Divide your possessions into three parts: with one portion carry on your business; with another portion support son and wife; dispense the third portion in alms in the religion of the Buddha."

"Very well, Venerable," said the banker's son, and did all in the prescribed order. Having done it, he returned to the elder and asked him, "Venerable, is there anything else I ought to do?" "Brother, take upon yourself the three refuges and the five precepts." The banker's son did so, and then asked whether there was anything else he ought to do. "Yes," replied the elder, "Take upon yourself the ten precepts." "Very well, Venerable," said the banker's son, and took upon himself the ten precepts. Because the banker's son had in this manner performed works of merit, one after another, he came to be called Anupubba. Again he asked the elder, "Venerable , is there anything else I ought to do?" The elder replied, "Yes, become a monk." The banker's son immediately retired from the world and became a monk.

Now he had a teacher who was versed in the Abhidhamma and a preceptor who was versed in the Vinaya. After he had made a full profession, whenever he approached his teacher, the latter repeated questions found in the Abhidhamma, "In the religion of the Buddha it is lawful to do this, it is unlawful to do that." And whenever he approached his preceptor, the latter repeated questions found in the Vinaya, "In the Religion of the Buddha it is lawful to do this, it is unlawful to do that; this is proper, this is improper." After a time he thought to himself, "Oh what a wearisome task this is! I became a monk in order to obtain release from suffering, but here there is not even room for me to stretch out my hands. It is possible, however, to obtain release from suffering, even if one lives the householder's. I should become a householder once more."

The Buddha said, "Monk, are you discontented?" "Yes, Venerable, I became a monk in order to obtain release from suffering. But here there is not even room for me to stretch my hands. It is possible for me to obtain release from suffering as a householder." The Buddha said, "Monk, if you can guard one thing, it will not be necessary for you to guard the rest." "What is that, Venerable?" "Can you guard your thoughts?" "I can, Venerable." "Then guard your thoughts alone."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 36)

sududdasaṁ sunipunaṁ yattha kāmanipātinaṁ cittaṁ mēdhāvī rakkhētha cittaṁ guttaṁ sukhāvahaṁ

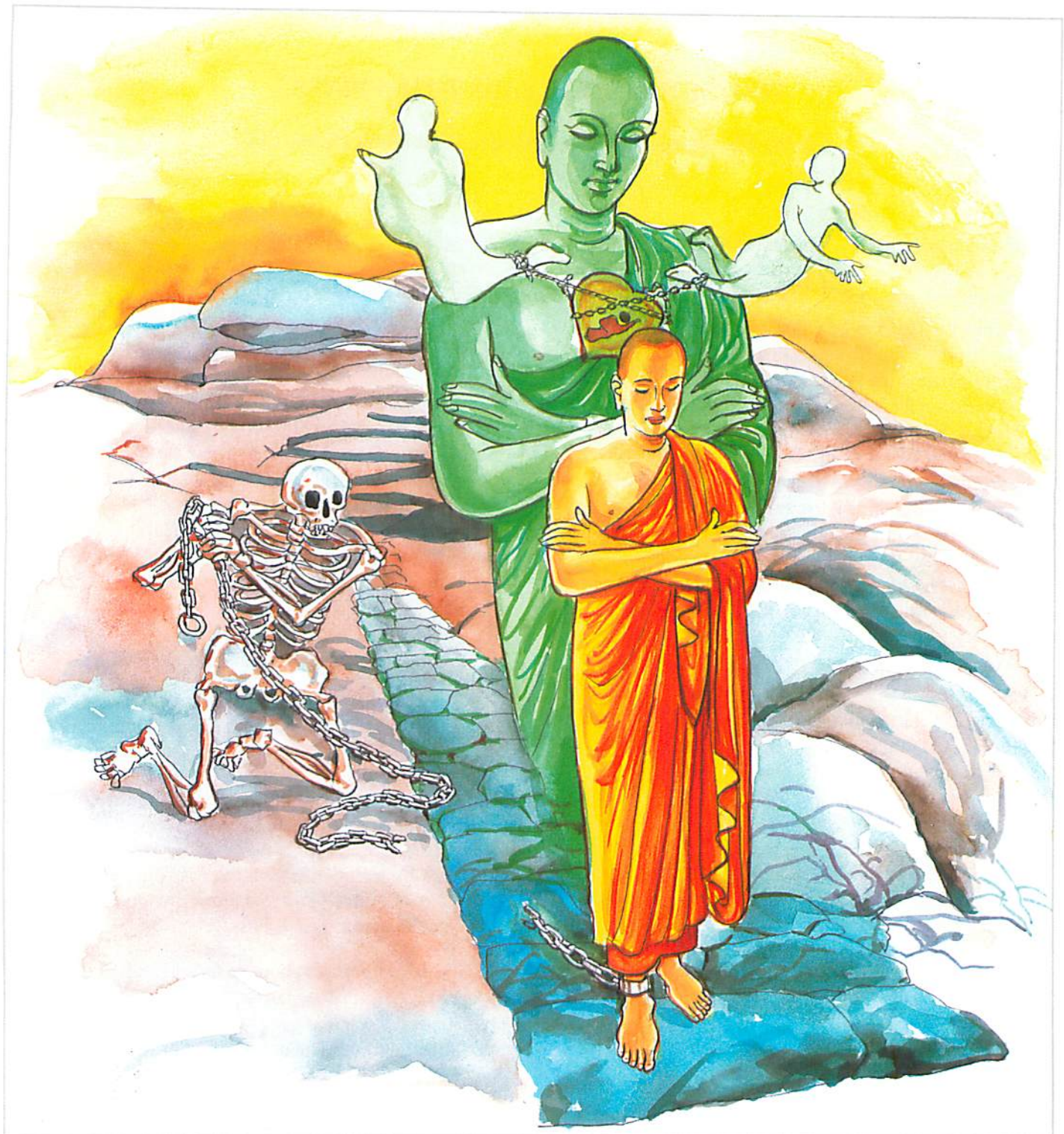
sududdasaṁ: extremely difficult to be seen; *sunipunaṁ:* exceedingly subtle; *yattha kāmanipātinaṁ:* focusing on whatever target it wishes; *cittaṁ:* mind; *mēdhāvī:* the wise one; *rakkhētha:* should protect; *guttaṁ cittaṁ:* the guarded mind; *sukhāvahaṁ:* brings bliss

The mind moves about so fast it is difficult to get hold of it fully. It is swift. It has a way of focussing upon whatever it likes. It is good and of immense advantage to tame the mind. The tamed mind brings bliss.

Commentary

sududdasaṁ sunipunaṁ: two characteristics of the mind. One outstanding quality of the mind is that it is extremely difficult to be seen. Although it is capable of a vast variety of activities, it cannot be seen at all. It moves about unseen. It forces, persuades, motivates, all without being seen. The other quality of the mind referred to in this stanza is that it is very subtle. It is because of this that the mind cannot be seen or captured in any way. The stanza stresses the fact that happiness comes to him who is capable of guarding this imperceptible and subtle entity — the mind.

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Restraining the wandering, bodiless, cave-dwelling mind, one is freed from death's shackle.

37. *Dūraṅgamaṁ ēkacaraṁ*
asarīraṁ guhāsayaṁ
yē cittaṁ saññamessanti
mokkhanti Mārabandhanā. (3:5)

Drifting far, straying all alone,
formless, recumbent in a cave.
They will be free from Māra's bonds
who do restrain this mind.

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DEATH'S SNARE CAN BE BROKEN BY TAMED MIND

3 (4) The Story of Monk Saṅgharakkhita (Verse 37)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the nephew of the monk Saṅgharakkhita.

Once there lived in Sāvatthi a senior monk by the name of Saṅgharakkhita. When his sister gave birth to a son, she named the child after the monk and he came to be known as Saṅgharakkhita Bhāgineyya. The nephew Saṅgharakkhita, in due course, was admitted into the Sangha. While the young monk was staying in a village monastery he was offered two sets of robes, and he intended to offer one to his uncle, monk Saṅgharakkhita. At the end of the rainy season he went to his uncle to pay respect to him and offered the robe to the monk. But, the uncle declined to accept the robe, saying that he had enough. Although he repeated his request, the monk would not accept it. The young monk felt disheartened and thought that since his uncle was so unwilling to share the requisites with him, it would be better for him to leave the Saṅgha and live the life of a layman.

From that point, his mind wandered and a train of thoughts followed. He thought that after leaving the Sangha he would sell the robe and buy a she-goat; that the she-goat would breed quickly and soon he would make enough money to enable him to marry; his wife would give birth to a son. He would take his wife and child in a small cart to visit his uncle at the monastery. On the way, he would say that he would carry the child; she would tell him to drive the cart and not to bother about the child. He would insist and grab the child from her; between them the child would fell on the cart-track and the wheel would pass over the child. He would get so furious with his wife that he would strike her with the goading-stick.

At that time he was fanning the monk with a palmyrah fan and he absent-mindedly struck the head of the monk with the fan. The monk, knowing the thoughts of the young monk, said, "You were unable to beat your wife; why have you beaten an old monk?" Young Saṅgharakkhita was very much surprised and embarrassed at the words of the old monk; he also became extremely frightened. So he fled. Young monks and novices of the monastery chased after him, caught him, and finally brought him to the presence of the Buddha.

When told about the experience, the Buddha said that the mind has the ability to think of an object even though it might be far away, and that one should strive hard for liberation from the bondage of passion, ill will and ignorance. After the Buddha recited the stanza near the end of the discourse, the young monk attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 37)

dūraṅgamaṁ ēkacaraṁ asarīraṁ guhāsayaṁ cittaṁ yē saññamessanti (tē) Mārabandhanā mokkhanti

dūraṅgamaṁ: travelling vast distances; *ēkacaraṁ:* moving all alone; *asarīraṁ:* body-less; *guhāsayaṁ:* dwelling concealed; *cittaṁ:* the mind; *yē:* if someone; *saññamessanti:* (were to) restrain; *(tē) Mārabandhanā:* they from the bonds of death; *mokkhanti:* are released

The mind is capable of travelling vast distances — up or down, north or south, east or west — in any direction. It can travel to the past or to the future. It roams about all alone. It is without any perceptible forms. If an individual were to restrain the mind fully, he will achieve freedom from the bonds of death.

Commentary

dūrangamaṁ ēkacaraṁ asarīraṁ guhāsayaṁ: traveling far, living alone, without body, lying hidden. These are four more attributes of the mind mentioned in this verse. Travelling far means that it can stray far away from the starting subject of thought. Living alone means that it can think only of one thing at a time. Without body means it is not an entity that occupies space, because it is only an activity which may be seen as physical or mental. Lying hidden means that it is intangible.

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A fickle mind, a shallow faith and ignorance of Dhamma lead not one to total wisdom.

38. *Anavaṭṭhitacittassa*
saddhammaṁ avijānatō
pariplavapasādassa
paññā na paripūrati. (3:6)

One of unsteady mind,
who doesn't know True Dhamma,
who is of wavering confidence
wisdom fails to win.

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WISDOM DOES NOT GROW IF MIND WAVERS

3 (5) The Story of Monk Cittahattha (Verses 38 & 39)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the monk Cittahattha. A certain youth of a respectable family, a herdsman, living at Sāvatthi, went into the forest to look for an ox that was lost. During midday, he saw the ox and released the herds, and being oppressed by hunger and thirst, he thought to himself, "I can surely get something to eat from the noble monks." So he entered the monastery, went to the monks, bowed to them, and stood respectfully on one side. Now at that time the food which remained over and above to the monks who had eaten lay in the vessel used for refuse. When the monks saw that youth, exhausted by hunger as he was, they said to him, "Here is food; take and eat it." (When a Buddha is living in the world, there is always a plentiful supply of rice-porridge, together with various sauces). So the youth took and ate as much food as he needed drank water, washed his hands, and then bowed to the monks and asked them, "Venerable, did you go to some house by invitation today?" "No, lay disciple; monks always receive food in this way."

The youth thought to himself, "No matter how busy and active we may be, though we work continually both by night and by day, we never get rice-porridge so deliciously seasoned. But these monks, according to their own statement, eat it continually. Why should I remain a layman any longer? I will become a monk." Accordingly he approached the monks and asked to be received into the Sangha. The monks said to him, "Very well, lay disciple," and received him into the Sangha. After making his full profession, he performed all the various major and minor duties; and in but a few days, sharing in the rich offerings which accrue in the Buddha's Dispensation, he became fat and comfortable.

Then he thought to himself, "Why should I live on food obtained by making the alms-round? I will become a layman once more." So back he went and entered his house. After working in his house for only a few days, his body became thin and weak. Thereupon he said to himself, "Why should I endure this suffering any longer? I will become a monk." So back he went and reordained. But after spending a few days as a monk, becoming discontented again went back to lay-life.

"Why should I live the life of a layman any longer? I will become a monk." So saying, he went to the monks, bowed, and asked to be received into the Sangha. Because he had been with them, the monks received him into the Sangha once more. In this manner he entered the Sangha and left it again six times in succession. The monks said to themselves, "This man lives under the sway of his thoughts." So they gave him the name Thought-Controlled, elder Cittahattha.

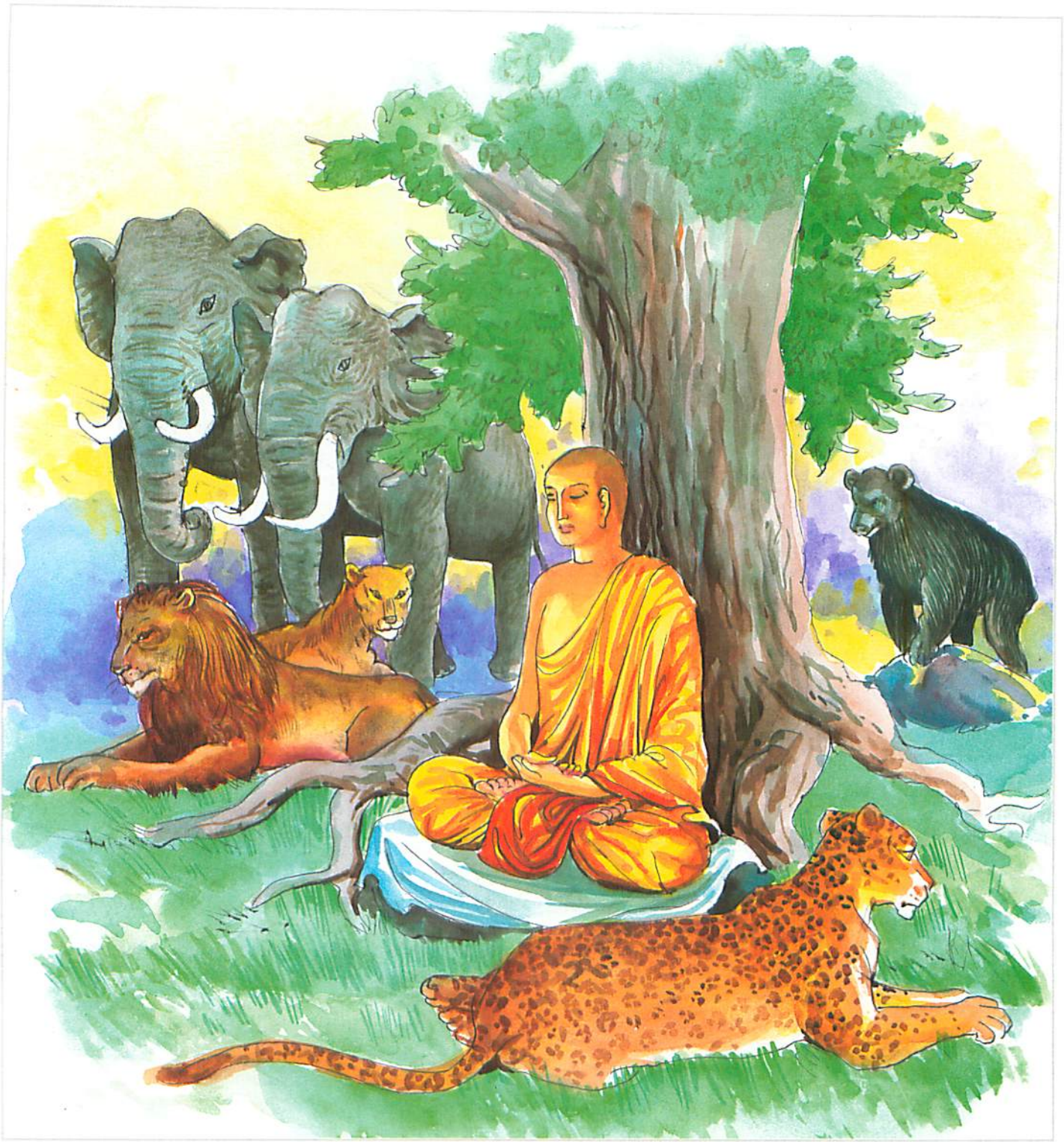
As he was thus going back and forth, his wife became pregnant. The seventh time he returned from the forest with his farming implements he went to the house, put his implements away, and entered his own room, saying to himself, "I will put on my yellow robe again." Now his wife happened to be in bed and asleep at the time. Her undergarment had fallen off, saliva was flowing from her mouth, she was snoring, her mouth was wide open; she appeared to him like a swollen corpse. Grasping the thought, "All that is in this world is transitory, is involved in suffering," he said to himself, "To think that because of her, all the time I have been a monk, I have been unable to continue steadfast in the monastic life!" Straightaway, taking his yellow robe, he ran out of the house, binding the robe about his belly as he ran.

Now his mother-in-law lived in the same house with him. When she saw him departing in this way, she said to herself, "This renegade, who but this moment returned from the forest, is running from the house, binding his yellow robe about him as he runs, and is making for the monastery. What is the meaning of this?" Entering the house and seeing her daughter asleep, she knew at once, "It was because he saw her sleeping that he became disgusted, and went away." So she shook her daughter and said to her, "Rise, your husband saw you asleep, became disgusted, and went away. He will not be your husband henceforth." "Begone, mother. What does it matter whether he has gone or not? He will be back again in but a few days."

As Cittahattha proceeded on his way, repeating the words, "All that is in this world is transitory, is involved in suffering," he obtained the fruit of conversion *(sotapatti phala)*. Continuing his journey, he went to the monks, bowed to them, and asked to be received into the Sangha. "No," said the monks, "we cannot receive you into the Sangha. Why should you become a monk? Your head is like a grindstone." "Venerable, receive me into the Sangha just this once." Because he had helped them, they received him into the Sangha. After a few days he attained arahatship, together with the supernatural faculties.

(cont'd on page 83)

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A vigilant, lustless, hateless mind which transcends good and evil, knows no fear.

39. *Anavassuta cittassa*
ananvāhatacētasō
puññapāpa pahīnassa
natthi jāgaratō bhayaṁ. (3:7)

One of unflooded mind,
a mind that is not battered,
abandoning evil, merit too,
no fear for One Awake.

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THE WIDE-AWAKE IS UNFRIGHTENED

3 (5) The Story of Monk Cittahatta (Verses 38 & 39) (cont'd)

Thereupon they said to him, "Brother Cittahattha, doubtless you alone will decide when it is time for you to go away again; you have remained here a long while this time." "Venerables, when I was attached to the world, I went away; but now I have put away attachment to the world; I have no longer any desire to go away." The monks went to the Buddha and said, "Venerable, we said such and such to this monk, and he said such and such to us in reply. He utters falsehood, says what is not true." The Buddha replied, "Yes, monks, when my son's mind was unsteady, when he knew not the good law, then he went and came. But now he has renounced both good and evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 38)

anavaṭṭhitacittassa saddhammaṁ avijānatō
pariplavapasādassa paññā na paripūrati

anavaṭṭhitacittassa: of wavering mind; *saddhammaṁ:* the true doctrine; *avijānatō:* ignorant of; *pariplava pasādassa:* of flagging enthusiasm; *paññā:* wisdom; *na paripūrati:* does not grow

If the mind of a person keeps on wavering, and if a person does not know the doctrine, if one's enthusiasm keeps on fluctuating or flagging, the wisdom of such a person does not grow.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 39)

anavassutacittassa ananvāhatacētasō puññapāpa-
pahīnassa jāgaratō bhayam natthi

anavassuta cittassa: (to the one) with mind undampened by passion; *ananvāhatacētasō:* mind unaffected by hatred; *puññapāpapahīnassa:* gone beyond both good and evil; *jāgaratō:* wide awake; *bhayam natthi:* fear exists not

For the person whose mind is not dampened by passion, unaffected by ill-will and who has risen above both good and evil, there is no fear because he is wide-awake.

Commentary

anavatthitacittassa: for a person with an unsteady or unstabilised mind. The ordinary people all have minds that are unsteady. Their minds are not constant and consequently lack one-pointedness. A person possessing such a mind will find it difficult to progress in the Path to Liberation.

saddhammaṁ avijānatō: a person who is not aware of the well-articulated Teaching of the Buddha.

pariplava pasādassa: with fluctuating devotion. An individual whose devotion and confidence are fluctuating will not be able to make steady progress.

anavassuta cittassa: this is a positive quality. The person whose mind is not dampened by lust is referred to here. This implies the contaminating inflow of defilements via sensory reactions (i.e. responding to sights, sounds, smells etc.).

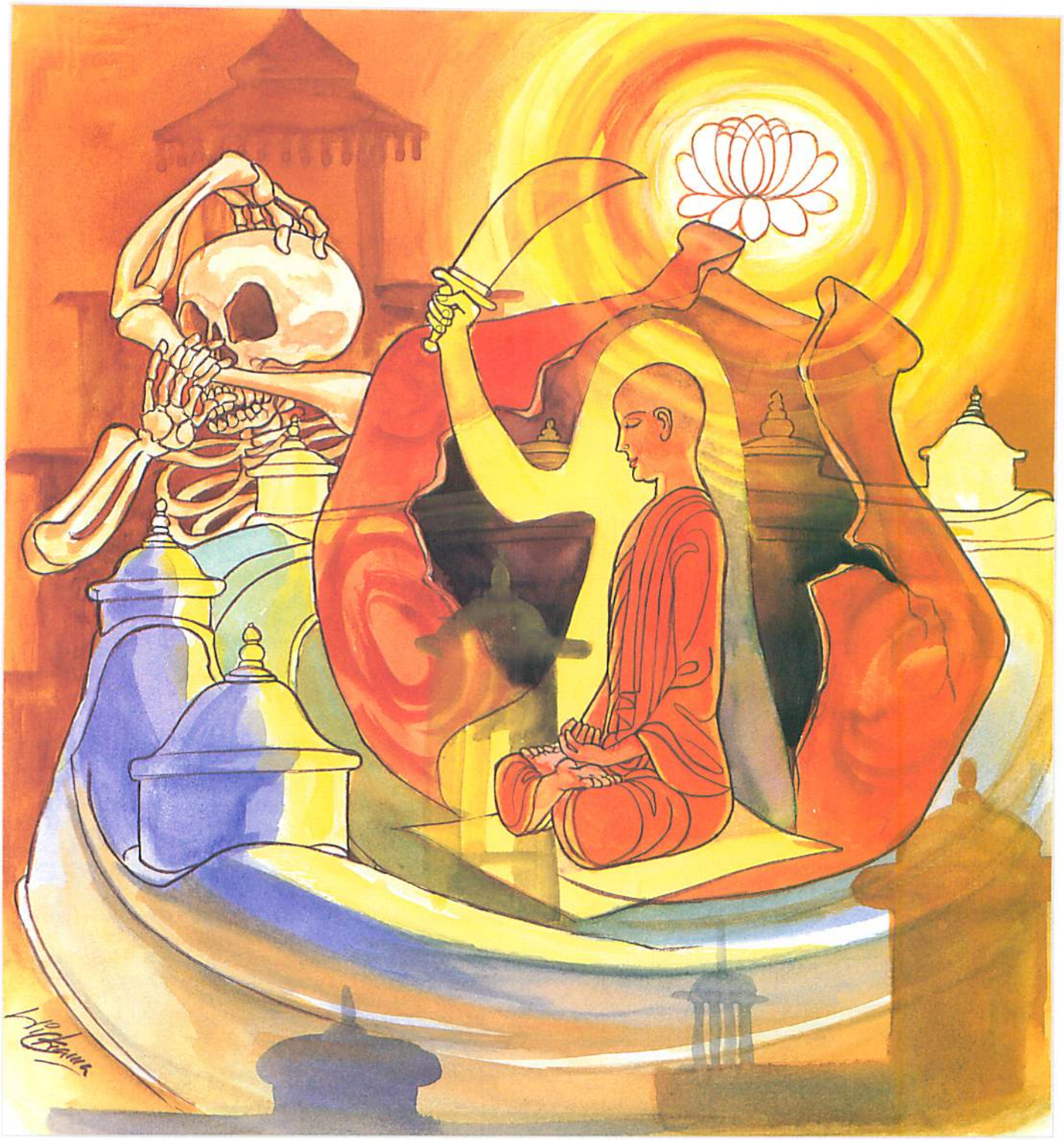
ananvāhatacētasō: the person whose mind remains unassailed (by greed, hatred etc.). As the mind is perfectly intact, he can utilize it for his spiritual progress.

natthi jāgaratō bhayam: for the wide-awake there is no fear. He is always alert, observing defilements that are likely to affect his mind. Because of this alertness the wide-awake person is not at all afraid. It should not erroneously be understood that Arahants do not sleep. Whether asleep or awake they are regarded as sleepless or vigilant ones, since the five stimulating virtues - namely, confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*) are ever present in them.

puññapāpapahīnassa: one who transcends the notions of good and bad deeds with no particular attachment to the rewards. This implies a very high degree of moral equanimity, as it indicates egoless detachment. There is no attachment to the act of giving, to the one who receives, or to the gift. The Arahats, however, having transcended all life — affirming and rebirth — producing actions, are said to be 'beyond merit and demerit.'

The deeds of an Arahant: a perfect Saint, are neither good nor bad because he has gone beyond both good and evil. This does not mean that he is passive. He is active but his activity is selfless and is directed to help others to tread the path he has trod himself. His deeds, ordinarily accepted as good, lack creative power as regards himself in producing Kammic effects. He is not however exempt from the effects of his past actions. He accumulates no fresh kammic activities. Whatever actions he does, as an Arahant, are termed "inoperative" (*kiriya*), and are not regarded as Kamma. They are ethically ineffective. Understanding things as they truly are, he has finally shattered the cosmic chain of cause and effect.

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Win over the forces of evil with wisdom, fortifying your mind as a guarded city.

40. *Kumbhūpamaṁ kāyamimaṁ viditvā*
nagarūpamaṁ cittaṁidaṁ thapetvā
yōdhētha Māraṁ paññāyudhēna
jitañca rakkhē anivēsanō siyā. (3:8)

Having known this urn-like body,
made firm this mind as fortress town,
with wisdom-weapon one fights Māra
while guarding booty, unattached.

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WEAPONS TO DEFEAT DEATH

3 (6) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verse 40)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to five hundred monks.

Five hundred monks from Sāvatthi, after obtaining a meditation topic from the Buddha, travelled for a distance of one hundred leagues away from Sāvatthi and came to a large forest grove, a suitable place for meditation practice. The guardian spirits of the trees dwelling in that forest thought that if those monks were staying in the forest, it would not be proper for them to live with their families. So, they descended from the trees, thinking that the monks would stop there only for one night. But the monks were still there at the end of a fortnight; then it occurred to them that the monks might be staying there till the end of the vassa. In that case, they and their families would have to be living on the ground for a long time. So, they decided to frighten away the monks, by making ghostly sounds and frightful apparitions. They showed up with bodies without heads, and with heads without bodies. The monks were very upset and left the place and returned to the Buddha, to whom they related everything. On hearing their account, the Buddha told them that this had happened because previously they went without any protection and that they should go back there armed with suitable protection. So saying, the Buddha taught them the protective discourse Metta Sutta at length (Loving-Kindness) beginning with the following stanza:

Karanīyamattha kusalēna — yaṁ taṁ santaṁ padaṁ abhisamecca
sakkō ujū ca sūjū ca — suvacō c'assa mudu anatimāni.

"He who is skilled in (acquiring) what is good and beneficial,
(mundane as well as supra-mundane),
aspiring to attain perfect peace (Nibbāna) should act (thus):
He should be efficient, upright, perfectly upright, compliant, gentle and free from conceit."

The monks were instructed to recite the sutta from the time they came to the outskirts of the forest grove and to enter the monastery reciting it. The monks returned to the forest grove and did as they were told. The guardian spirits of the trees receiving loving-kindness from the monks reciprocated by welcoming them and not harming them. There were no more ghostly sounds and frightening sights. Thus left in peace, the monks meditated on the body and came to realize its fragile and impermanent nature. From the Jētavana monastery, the Buddha, by his supernormal power, learned about the progress of the monks and sent forth his radiance making them feel his presence. To them he said, "Monks just as you have realized, the body is, indeed, impermanent and fragile like an earthen jar."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 40)

imaṁ kāyaṁ kumbhūpamaṁ viditvā, idaṁ cittaṁ nagarūpamaṁ ṭhapetvā paññāyudhēna Māraṁ yōdhētha jitaṁ ca rakkhē anivēsanō siyā

imaṁ kāyaṁ: this body; *kumbhūpamaṁ viditvā:* viewing as a clay pot; *idaṁ cittaṁ:* this mind; *nagarūpamaṁ:* as a protected city; *ṭhapetvā:* considering; *paññāyudhēna:* with the weapon of wisdom; *Māraṁ:* forces of evil; *yōdhētha:* attack; *jitaṁ:* what has been conquered; *rakkhē:* protect too; *anivēsanō:* no seeker of an abode; *siyā:* be

It is realistic to think of the body as vulnerable, fragile, frail and easily disintegrated. In fact, one must consider it a clay vessel. The mind should be thought of as a city. One has to be perpetually mindful to protect the city. Forces of evil have to be fought with the weapon of wisdom. After the battle, once you have achieved victory, live without being attached to the mortal self.

Commentary

kumbhūpamaṁ: compared to an earthen pot. The monks are asked to think of the human body as an earthen pot — fragile, very vulnerable.

cittaṁ nagarūpamaṁ: think of the mind as a guarded citadel. The special quality of the citadel is within it all valuable treasures are stored and guarded. Any outsider can enter and plunder if this is unguarded it, too, could be attacked by blemishes.

yōdhētha Māraṁ paññāyudhēna: oppose Māra (evil) with the weapon of wisdom. When forces of evil attack the mind — the city to be guarded — the only weapon for a counter offensive is wisdom, which is a perfect awareness of the nature of things in the real sense.

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Soon this body will lie lifeless, bereft of consciousness, like a worthless log of burnt wood.

41. *Aciraṁ vat'ayaṁ kāyō*
paṭhaviṁ adhisessati
chuddhō apētaviññāṇō
niratthaṁ va kaliṅgaraṁ. (3:9)

Not long alas, and it will lie
this body, here upon the earth.
Discarded, void of consciousness,
useless as a rotten log.

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WITHOUT THE MIND BODY IS WORTHLESS

3 (7) The Story of Tissa, the Monk with a Stinking Body (Verse 41)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the monk Tissa.

After taking a meditation topic from the Buddha, monk Tissa was diligently practicing meditation when he was afflicted with a disease. Small boils appeared all over his body and these developed into big sores. When these sores burst, his upper and lower robes became sticky and stained with body fluids,and his body was stinking. For this reason, he was known as Pūtigatta-tissa, Tissa the thera with a stinking body.

Now the Buddhas never failed to survey the world twice a day. At dawn he surveys the world, looking from the rim of the world towards the perfumed chamber. Now at this time the Venerable Pūtigatta Tissa appeared within the net of the Buddha's sight.

The Buddha, knowing that the monk Tissa was ripe for arahatship, thought to himself, "This monk has been abandoned by his associates; at the present time he has no other refuge than me." Accordingly the Buddha departed from the perfumed chamber, and pretending to be making the rounds of the monastery, went to the hall where the fire was kept. He washed the boiler, placed it on the brazier, waited in the fire-room for the water to boil, and when he knew it was hot, went and took hold of the end of the bed where that monk was lying.

At that time the monks said to the Buddha, "Pray depart, Venerable; we will carry him out for you." So saying, they took up the bed and carried Tissa into the fire-room. The Buddha caused the monks to take Tissa's upper garment, wash it thoroughly in hot water, and lay it in the sunshine to dry. Then he went, and taking his stand near Tissa, moistened his body with warm water and bathed him.

At the end of his bath his upper garment was dry. The Buddha caused him to be clothed in his upper garment and washed thoroughly his under garment in hot water and laid in the sun to dry. As soon as the water had evaporated from his body, his under garment was dry. Thereupon Tissa put on his under garment and, with body refreshed and mind tranquil, lay down on the bed. The Buddha took his stand at Tissa's pillow and said to him, "Monk, consciousness will depart from you, your body will become useless and, like a log, will lie on the ground." At the end of the discourse monk Tissa attained arahatship together with analytical insight, and soon passed away.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 41)

ayaṁ kāyō vata aciraṁ apētaviññāṇō chuddhō niratthaṁ kaliṅgaraṁ iva paṭhaviṁ adhisessati

ayaṁ kāyō: this body; *vata:* certainly; *aciraṁ:* soon; *apēta viññāṇō:* will be bereft of consciousness; *chuddhō:* discarded; *iva:* like; *niratthaṁ:* worthless; *kaliṅgaraṁ:* a decayed log; *paṭhaviṁ:* on the ground; *adhi sessati:* lies

Soon, this body, without consciousness, discarded like a decayed worthless log, will lie on the earth.

Commentary

aciraṁ vata: very soon, without any doubt. The stanza explains the condition of the human body. Soon it will certainly decay.

chuddhō: will be thrown aside. However much friends and relations love a person, when he is alive, when he dies the body will be thrown away.

niratthaṁ kaliṅgaraṁ: the discarded body will lie like a rotten log. It will be of no use to anyone. Once consciousness is gone, without life, our body is useless. It is worse than a log of wood, because the body cannot be put to any use, though a log of wood could be made use of, in some way.

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A misdirected, misguided mind does to a person far greater harm than a bitter enemy.

42. *Disō disaṁ yaṁ taṁ kayirā*
vērī vā pana vērinaṁ
micchāpaṇihitaṁ cittaṁ
pāpiyō naṁ tatō karē. (3:10)

Whatever foe may do to foe,
or haters those they hate
the ill-directed mind indeed
can do one greater harm.

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ALL WRONGS ISSUE OUT OF EVIL MINDS

3 (8) The Story of Nanda, the Herdsman (Verse 42)

While on a visit to a village in the kingdom of Kōsala, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Nanda, the herdsman.

Nanda was a herdsman who looked after the cows of Anāthapindika. Although only a herdsman, he had some means of his own. Occasionally, he would go to the house of Anāthapindika and there he sometimes met the Buddha and listened to his discourses. Nanda requested the Buddha to pay a visit to his house. But the Buddha did not go to Nanda's house immediately, saying that it was not yet time.

After some time, while travelling with his followers, the Buddha went off his route to visit Nanda, knowing that the time had come for Nanda to receive his teaching properly. Nanda respectfully received the Buddha and his followers; he served them milk and milk products and other choice foods for seven days. On the last day, after hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, Nanda attained sōtāpatti fruition. As the Buddha was leaving that day, Nanda carrying the bowl of the Buddha, followed him for some distance, paid obeisance and turned back to go home.

At that instant, a stray arrow shot by a hunter, killed him. Later the monks, who were following the Buddha, saw Nanda lying dead. They reported the matter to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable, because you came here, Nanda who made great offerings to you and accompanied you on your return was killed as he was turning back to go home." To them, the Buddha replied, "Monks, whether I came here or not, there was no escape from death for him because of his previous kamma."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 42)

disō disaṁ yaṁ taṁ kayirā verī vā pana vērinaṁ micchā paṇihitaṁ cittaṁ naṁ tatō pāpiyō karē

disō: a robber; *disaṁ:* to a similar bandit; *taṁ:* to him whatever harm; *kayirā:* inflicts; *verī vā pana:* a hater; *vērinaṁ:* to a hated person (inflicts some harm); *micchā paṇihitaṁ:* misdirected; *cittaṁ:* mind; *naṁ:* to him; *tatō pāpiyō:* a worse crime than that; *karē:* does

When one bandit sees another, he attacks the second bandit. In the same way, one person sees someone he hates, he also does harm to the hated person. But what the badly deployed mind does to the possessor of the mind is far worse than what a bandit would do to another bandit or what one hater will do to another hater.

Commentary

disō disaṁ: what one bandit does to another bandit. Similarly, the hater may do harm to another hater. The total implication of the verse is the harm that is done to a person by his own badly-managed mind is worse than what a bandit could do to another rival bandit, or two enemies do to each other. The undeveloped mind is one's worst enemy.

micchā paṇihitaṁ: wrongly directed. One's mind can be directed in the right manner. In such a situation the outcome is wholesome. When that happens, the mind well-directed proves to be one's best friend. But, when the direction given to the mind is wrong, it can do greater harm to a person than even an enemy could.

micchāpaṇihitaṁ cittaṁ: What is implied by this is one's mind can do greater harm than one enemy could do to another. This way, a badly established mind is one's own enemy — far worse than an outside enemy.

an ill-directed mind: That is, the mind directed towards the ten kinds of evil - namely, 1. killing, 2. stealing, 3. sexual misconduct, 4. lying, 5. slandering, 6. harsh speech, 7. vain talk, 8. covetousness, 9. ill-will, and 10. false belief.

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A well-directed mind does to a person far greater good than one's parents or one's kinsmen.

43. *Na taṁ mātā pitā kayirā*
aññē vāpi ca ñātakā
sammāpaṇihitaṁ cittaṁ
seyyasō naṁ tatō karē. (3:11)

What one's mother, what one's father,
whatever other kin may do,
the well-directed mind indeed
can do one greater good.

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WELL-TRAINED MIND EXCELS PEOPLE

3 (9) The Story of Sōreyya (Verse 43)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sōreyya, the son of a rich man of the city of Sōreyya. On one occasion, Sōreyya accompanied by a friend and some attendants was going out in a carriage for a bath. At that moment, monk Mahākaccāyana was adjusting his robes outside the city, as he was going into the city of Sōreyya for alms-food. The youth Sōreyya, seeing the youthful complexion of the monk, thought, "How I wish the monk were my wife, so that the complexion of my wife would be like his." As the wish arose in him, his sex changed and he became a woman. Very much ashamed, he got down from the carriage and ran away, taking the road to Taxila. His companions looked for him, but they could not find him. Sōreyya, now a woman, offered her signet ring to some people going to Taxila, to allow her to go with them in their carriage. Upon arrival at Taxila, her companions told a young rich man of Taxila about the lady who came along with them. The young rich man, finding her to be very beautiful and of a suitable age for him, married her. As a result of this marriage two sons were born; there were also two sons from the previous marriage of Sōreyya as a man.

One day, a rich man's son from the city of Sōreyya came to Taxila with a caravan of five hundred carts. Lady Sōreyya, recognizing him to be an old friend, sent for him. The man from Sōreyya was surprised that he was invited, because he did not know the lady who invited him. He told the Lady Sōreyya that he did not know her, and asked her whether she knew him. She answered that she knew him and also enquired after the health of her family and other people in the city of Sōreyya. The man from Sōreyya next told her about the rich man's son who disappeared mysteriously while going for a bath. Then the Lady Sōreyya revealed her identity and related all that had happened, about the wrongful thoughts with regard to monk Mahākaccāyana, about the change of sex, and her marriage to the young rich man of Taxila. The man from the city of Sōreyya then advised the Lady Sōreyya to ask pardon from the monk. Monk Mahākaccāyana was accordingly invited to the home of Sōreyya and alms-food was offered to him. After the meal, the Lady Sōreyya was brought to the presence of the monk, and the man from Sōreyya told the monk that the lady was at one time the son of a rich man from Sōreyya. He then explained to the monk how Sōreyya was turned into a female on account of his wrongful thoughts towards the respected monk. Lady Sōreyya then respectfully asked pardon of Monk Mahākaccāyana. The monk then said, "Get up, I forgive you." As soon as these words were spoken, the woman was changed back to a man. Sōreyya then pondered how within a single existence and with a single body he had undergone change of sex and how sons were born to him. And feeling very weary and repulsive of all these things, he decided to leave the householder's life and joined the sangha under the monk.

After that, he was often asked, "Whom do you love more, the two sons you had as a man or the other two you had as a woman?" To those, he would answer that his love for those bore as a woman was greater. This question was put to him so often, he felt very much annoyed and ashamed. So he stayed by himself and, with diligence, contemplated the decay and dissolution of the body. He soon attained arahatship together with the analytical insight. When the old question was next put to him he replied that he had no affection for any one in particular. Other monks hearing him thought he must be telling a lie. When it was reported about Sōreyya giving a different answer, the Buddha said, "My son is not telling lies, he is speaking the truth."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 43)

taṁ mātā na kayirā, pitā api ca aññe ñātakā vā
sammā paṇihitaṁ cittaṁ naṁ tatō seyyasō karē

taṁ: that favour; *mātā:* one's mother; *na kayirā:* will not do; *pitā:* one's father too (will not do); *api ca:* besides; *aññē:* other; *ñātakā vā:* or relations; *sammā paṇihitaṁ:* well disciplined; *cittaṁ:* mind; *naṁ:* to that person; *tatō seyyasō:* something much better than that; *karē:* will do unto one.

Well directed thoughts can help a person even better than one's father or one's mother.

Commentary

sammā paṇihitaṁ cittaṁ: the well-established mind. One's parents love one immensely. They can give one all the worldly things lavishly. But, when it comes to the fruits of higher life — liberation and the winning of the 'deathless' — only the well-established mind can help. This is because one has to experience the 'deathless' solely by one's own self. The developed mind is one's best friend.

well-directed mind: That is, the mind directed towards the ten kinds of meritorious deeds (*kusala*) - namely, 1. generosity, 2. morality, 3. meditation, 4. reverence, 5. service, 6. transference of merit, 7. rejoicing in others' merit, 8. hearing the doctrine, 9. expounding the doctrine, and 10. straightening one's right views.

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Negative Answer of The Buddha

If we ask, for instance, whether the position of the electron remains the same, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron's position changes with time, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether it is in motion, we must say 'no'. The Buddha has given such answers when interrogated as to the conditions of a man's self after his death; but they are not familiar answers for the tradition of seventeenth and eighteenth century science.

J. Robert Oppenheimer

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Chapter 4

PUPPHA VAGGA

Flowers



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Who will comprehend this well-taught Dhamma as a garland-maker selects his flowers?

44. *Kō imaṁ paṭhaviṁ vijessati*
yamalōkañca imaṁ sadēvakaṁ?
Kō dhammapadaṁ sudēsitaṁ
kusalō puppham' iva pacessati? (4:1)

Who will comprehend this earth,
the world of Yama, and the gods?
Who discern the well-taught Dhamma
as one who's skilled selects a flower?

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PUPPHA VAGGA (Flowers)
THE GARLAND-MAKER

4 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 44 & 45)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to five hundred monks.

Five hundred monks, after accompanying the Buddha to a village, returned to the Jētavana Monastery. In the evening, while the monks were talking about the trip, especially the condition of the land, whether it was level or hilly, or whether the ground was of clay or sand, red or black, the Buddha came to them. Knowing the subject of their talk, he said to them, "Monks, the earth you are talking about is external to the body; it is better, indeed, to examine your own body and make preparations for meditation practice."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 44)

kō imaṁ paṭhaviṁ vijessati imaṁ sadēvakaṁ
Yamalōkaṁ ca kō sudēsitaṁ dhammapadaṁ
kusalō pupphaṁ iva pacessati

kō: who; *imaṁ paṭhaviṁ:* this earth; *vijessati:* perceives, comprehends; *imaṁ Yamalōkaṁ ca:* and this world of Yama; *sadēvakaṁ:* along with the heavenly worlds; *kō:* who; *sudēsitaṁ:* well proclaimed; *dhammapadaṁ:* content of the dhamma; *kusalō pupphaṁ iva:* like a deft garland-maker the flowers; *kō:* who; *pacessati:* gathers, handles

An expert in making garlands will select, pluck and arrange flowers into garlands. In the same way who will examine the nature of life penetratingly? Who will perceive the real nature of life in the world, along with the realms of the underworld and heavenly beings? Who will understand and penentratively perceive the well-articulated doctrine, like an expert maker of garlands, deftly plucking and arranging flowers?

Explanatory Translation (Verse 45)

sēkhō paṭhaviṁ vijessati imaṁ sadēvakaṁ
Yamalōkaṁ ca sēkhō sudēsitaṁ dhammapadaṁ
kusalō pupphaṁ iva pacessati

sēkhō: the learner; *paṭhaviṁ vijessati:* perceives the earth; *Yamalōkaṁ ca:* the world of Yama too; *sadēvakaṁ imaṁ:* along with the realm of gods; *sēkhō:* the learner; *sudēsitaṁ:* the well-articulated; *dhammapadaṁ:* areas of the doctrine (understands); *kusalō:* like a deft maker of garlands; *pupphaṁ iva:* selecting flowers; *pacessati:* sees

In the previous stanza the question was raised as to who will penetrate the well-articulated doctrine? The present stanza provides the answer: the student, the learner, the seeker, the apprentice, the person who is being disciplined. He will perceive the doctrine, like the expert garland-maker who recognizes and arranges flowers. It is the learner, the seeker, the student who will perceive the world of Yama, the realm of heavenly beings and existence on earth. He will discard and determine the various areas of the doctrine, like a deft garland-maker who plucks and arranges the flowers into garlands.

Commentary

sēkhō: a 'noble learner', a disciple in higher training, i.e., one who pursues the three kinds of training, is one of those seven kinds of noble disciples who have reached one of the four supermundane paths or the three lower fruitions, while the one possessed of the fourth fruition, or arahatta-phala, is called 'one beyond training'. The worldling is called 'neither a noble learner, nor perfected in learning'.

lōka: 'world', denotes the three spheres of existence comprising the whole universe, i.e., (i) the sensual world, or the world of the five senses; (ii) the form world, corresponding to the four form absorptions; (iii) the formless world, corresponding to the four formless absorptions. *Vijessati = attanō ñāṇēna vijānissati* = who will know by one's own wisdom? (Commentary).

self: That is, one who will understand oneself as one really is.

sugati: Namely, the human plane and the six celestial planes. These seven are regarded as blissful states.

Dēvas: literally, sporting or shining ones. They are also a class of beings who enjoy themselves, experiencing the effects of their past good actions. They too are subject to death.

The sensual world comprises the hells, the animal kingdom, the ghost realm, the demon world, the human world and the six lower celestial worlds. In the form world there still exists the faculties of seeing and hearing, which, together with the other sense faculties, are temporarily suspended in the four Absorptions. In the formless world there is no corporeality whatsoever; only four aggregates *(khanda)* exist there.

Though the term lōka is not applied in the Suttas to those three worlds, but only the term *bhava*, 'existence', there is no doubt that the teaching about the three worlds belongs to the earliest, i.e., Sutta-period of the Buddhist scriptures as many relevant passages show.

(cont'd on page 97)

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Like a garland-maker, a Learner on the Path will comprehend this well-taught Dhamma.

45. *sēkhō paṭhaviṁ vijessati*
Yamalōkañca imaṁ sadēvakaṁ
sēkhō dhammapadaṁ sudēsitaṁ
kusalō puppham'iva pacessati. (4:2)

One Trained will comprehend this earth,
the world of Yama, and the gods,
One Trained discern the well-taught Dhamma
as one who's skilled selects a flower.

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THE SEEKER UNDERSTANDS

4 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 44 & 45) (cont'd)

Yamalōka: the World of Yama. Yama is death - Yama is almost synonymous with Māra.

Māra: the Buddhist 'Tempter'-figure. He is often called 'Māra the Evil One' or Namuci ('the non-liberator', the opponent of liberation). He appears in the texts both as a real person (as a deity) and as personification of evil and passions, of the worldly existence and of death. Later Pali literature often speaks of a 'five-fold Māra': (i) Māra as a deity; (ii) the Māra of defilements; (iii) the Māra of the Aggregates; (iv) the Māra of Karma-formations; and (v) Māra as Death. Māra is equated with Death in most instances. 'Death', in ordinary usage, means 'the disappearance of the vital faculty confined to a single life-time, and therewith of the psycho-physical life-process conventionally called 'Man, Animal, Personality, Ego' etc. Strictly speaking, however, death is the momentary arising dissolution and vanishing of each physical-mental combination. About this momentary nature of existence, it is said:

"In the absolute sense, beings have only a very short moment to live, life lasting as long as a single moment that consciousness lasts. Just as a cart-wheel, whether rolling or whether at a standstill, at all times is only resting on a single point of its periphery: even so the life of a living being lasts only for the duration of a single moment of consciousness. As soon as that moment ceases, the being also ceases. For it is said: 'The being of the past moment of consciousness has lived, but does not live now, nor will it live in future. The being of the future moment has not yet lived, nor does it live now, but it will live in the future. The being of the present moment has not lived, it does live just now, but it will not live in the future."

In another sense, the coming to an end of the psycho-physical life-process of the Arahat, or perfectly Holy One, at the moment of his passing away, may be called the final and ultimate death, as up to that moment the psycho-physical life-process was still going on.

Death, in the ordinary sense, combined with old age, forms the twelfth link in the formula of Dependent Origination.

Death, according to Buddhism, is the cessation of the psycho-physical life of any individual existence. It is the passing away of vitality, i.e., psychic and physical life, heat and consciousness. Death is not the complete annihilation of a being, for though a particular life-span ends, the force which hitherto actuated it is not destroyed.

Just as an electric light is the outward visible manifestation of invisible electric energy, so we are the outward manifestations of invisible karmic energy. The bulb may break, and the light may be extinguished, but the current remains and the light may be reproduced in another bulb. In the same way, the karmic force remains undisturbed by the disintegration of the physical body, and the passing away of the present consciousness leads to the arising of a fresh one in another birth. But nothing unchangeable or permanent 'passes' from the present to the future.

In the foregoing case, the thought experienced before death being a moral one, the resultant re-birth-consciousness takes as its material an appropriate sperm and ovum cell of human parents. The rebirth-consciousness then lapses into the Bhavaṅga state. The continuity of the flux, at death, is unbroken in point of time, and there is no breach in the stream of consciousness.

sadēvakaṁ: the world of the celestial beings. They are referred to as the Radiant Ones. Heavenly Beings, deities; beings who live in happy worlds, and who, as a rule, are invisible to the human eye. They are subject however, just as all human and other beings, to repeated rebirth, old age and death, and thus not freed from the cycle of existence, and not freed from misery. There are many classes of heavenly beings.

kusalō: in this context this expression refers to expertise. But, in Buddhist literature, Kusala is imbued with many significance. Kusala means 'karmically wholesome' or 'profitable', salutary, and morally good, (skilful). Connotations of the term, according to commentaries are: of good health, blameless, productive of favourable karma-result, skilful. It should be noted that commentary excludes the meaning 'skilful', when the term is applied to states of consciousness. In psychological terms: 'karmically wholesome' are all those karmical volitions and the consciousness and mental factors associated therewith, which are accompanied by two or three wholesome Roots, i.e., by greedlessness and hatelessness, and in some cases also by non-delusion. Such states of consciousness are regarded as 'karmically wholesome' as they are causes of favourable karma results and contain the seeds of a happy destiny or rebirth. From this explanation, two facts should be noted: (i) it is volition that makes a state of consciousness, or an act, 'good' or 'bad'; (ii) the moral criterion in Buddhism is the presence or absence of the three Wholesome or Moral Roots. The above explanations refer to mundane wholesome consciousness. Supermundane wholesome states, i.e., the four Paths of Sanctity, have as results only the corresponding four Fruitions; they do not constitute Karma, nor do they lead to rebirth, and this applies also to the good actions of an Arahat and his meditative states which are all karmically inoperative.

Dhammapada: the commentary states that this term is applied to the thirty-seven Factors of Enlightenment. They are: (i) the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness** — namely, 1. contemplation of the body, 2. contemplation of the feelings, 3. contemplation of states of mind, and 4. contemplation of dhammas; (ii) the **Four Supreme Efforts** — namely, 1. the effort to prevent evil that has not arisen, 2. the effort to discard evil that has already arisen, 3. the effort to cultivate unarisen good, and 4. the effort to promote good that has already arisen; (iii) the **Four Means of Accomplishment** — namely, will, energy, thought, and wisdom; (iv) the **Five Faculties** — namely, confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom; (v) the **Five Forces**, having the same names as the Indriyas; (vi) the **Seven Constituents of Enlightenment** — namely, mindfulness, investigation of Reality, energy, joy, serenity, concentration, and equanimity; (vi) **Eight-fold Path** — namely, right views, right thoughts, right speech, right actions, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness and right concentration.

yama lōka: the realms of Yama. By the realms of Yama are meant the four woeful states — namely, hell, the animal kingdom, the pēta realm, and the *asura* realm. Hell is not permanent according to Buddhism. It is a state of misery as are the other planes where beings suffer for their past evil actions.

vijessati (attanō ñāṇēna vijānissati): who will know by one's own wisdom.

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Viewing this body as foam and a mirage, one avoids the shafts of death and goes beyond him.

46. *Phēṇūpamaṁ kāyam'imaṁ viditvā*
marīcidhammaṁ abhisambudhānō
chetvāna mārassa papupphakāni
aḍassanaṁ maccurājassa gacchē. (4:3)

Having-known this froth-like body
and wakening to its mirage-nature,
smashing Māra's flowered shafts
unseen beyond the Death-king go.

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WHO CONQUERS DEATH?

4 (2) The Story of the Monk who Contemplates The Body as a Mirage (Verse 46)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to a certain monk.

A monk obtained a meditation topic from the Buddha and entered the forest for the purpose of practising meditation. But when, after striving and struggling with might and main, he was unable to attain arahatship, he said to himself, "I will ask the Buddha to give me a meditation topic that better suits my needs." With this thought in mind he set out to return to the Buddha.

On the way he saw a mirage. He said to himself, "Even as this mirage, as seen in the season of the heat, appears substantial to those that are far off, but vanishes on nearer approach, so also is this existence unsubstantial by reason of birth and decay." Upon fixing his mind on the mirage, he meditated on the mirage. On his return, wearied with the journey, he bathed in the Aciravati River and seated himself in the shade of a tree on the river bank near a waterfall. As he sat there watching the white water bursting from the force of the water striking against the rocks, he said to himself, "Just as this existence produced and just so does it burst." And this he took for his meditation topic.

The Buddha, seated in his perfumed chamber, saw the elder and said, "Monk, it is even so. Like a bubble of foam or a mirage is this existence. Precisely thus is it produced and precisely thus does it pass away." And when He had thus spoken the Buddha pronounced the stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 46)

imaṁ kāyaṁ phēṇūpamaṁ viditvā marīci dhammaṁ abhisambudhānō Mārassa papupphakāni chetvāna maccurājassa adassanaṁ gacchē

imaṁ: this; *kāyaṁ:* body; *phēṇūpamaṁ:* is like

froth; *viditvā:* knowing; *marīci dhammaṁ:* is also like a mirage; *abhisambudhānō:* understanding fully; *Mārassa:* belonging to Death; *papupphakāni:* the flower arrows; *chetvāna:* destroying; *curājassa:* of king-death; *adassanaṁ:* beyond the vision; *gacchē:* make your way.

This body of ours is like froth, a bubble, or foam. It disintegrates quickly. The nature of life is like a mirage, an illusion. Therefore, one must give up these unrealities. To achieve that one must destroy Māra's flower-arrows by which he tempts men and women. It is necessary that the truth-seeker should go beyond Māra's region, to areas unseen by him. Māra knows only the realm of death. The truth seeker goes beyond that region to the 'deathless' (Nibbāna) — a domain Māra has never seen.

Commentary

phēṇūpamaṁ: like froth. The body is compared to froth and bubble, because the body too disintegrates quickly like froth and bubble. In many instances, the transience of the human body is equated to the disintegration of a bubble.

marīci dhammaṁ abhisambudhānō: becoming deeply aware of the mirage-like insubstantiality and the illusory nature of life. The bubble and the mirage, together emphasize the evanescence and the illusory nature of life.

kāya: literally means 'Group', 'Body'. It may either refer to the physical body or to the mental body. In the latter case it is either a collective name for the four mental groups (feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness) or merely for feeling, perception and a few of the mental formations. Kāya has this same meaning in the stereotype description of the third absorption "and he feels joy in his mind or his mental constitution, and of the attainment of the eight deliverance; "having attained the eight deliverance in his mind, or his person". Kāya is also the fifth sense-organ, the body-organ.

marīci Dhammaṁ: the nature of a Mirage. Dhamma has many connotations. It literally means the 'Bearer', Constitution (or Nature of a thing) Norm, Law, Doctrine; Justice, Righteousness; Quality; Thing, Object of Mind; 'Phenomenon'. In all these meanings the word 'dhamma' is to be met with in the texts. The Comment to Dhammapada gives four applications of this term: quality, virtue, instruction, text, soullessness, e.g. "all dhamma, phenomena, are impersonal etc.'. The traditional Comment has *hētu* (condition) instead of *dēsanā*. Thus, the analytical knowledge of the Law is explained as knowledge of the condition. The Dhamma, as the liberating law, discovered and proclaimed by the Buddha, is summed up in the Four Noble Truths. It forms one of the three Gems and one of the ten Recollections.

Dhamma, as object of mind, may be anything past, present or future, corporeal or mental, conditioned or not, real or imaginary.

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As a flood sweeps away a sleeping village, death carries away the heedlessly sensuous.

47. *Pupphāni h'ēva pacinantaṁ*
byāsattamanasaṁ naraṁ
suttaṁ gāmaṁ mahōghō'va
maccu ādāya gacchati. (4:4)

For one who has a clinging mind
and gathers only pleasure-flowers,
Death does seize and carry away
as great flood a sleeping village.

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PLEASURE SEEKER IS SWEPT AWAY

4 (3) The Story of Viḍūḍabha (Verse 47)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Viḍūḍabha, son of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala.

King Pasēnadi of Kōsala, wishing to marry into the clan of the Sākyans, sent some emissaries to Kapilavatthu with a request for the hand of one of the Sākyan princesses. Not wishing to offend King Pasēnadi, the Sākyan princes replied that they would comply with his request, but instead of a Sākyan princess they sent a very beautiful girl, born of King Mahānāma, by a slave woman. King Pasēnadi made that girl one of his chief queens and subsequently she gave birth to a son. This son was named Viḍūḍabha. When the prince was sixteen years old, he was sent on a visit to King Mahānāma and the Sākyan princes. There he was received with some hospitality but all the Sākyan princes who were younger than Viḍūḍabha had been sent away to a village, so that they would not have to pay respect to Viḍūḍabha. After staying a few days in Kapilavatthu, Viḍūḍabha and his people left for home. Soon after they left, a slave girl was washing with milk at the place where Viḍūḍabha had sat; she was also cursing him, shouting, "This is the place where that son of a slave woman had sat,..." . At that moment, a member of Viḍūḍabha's entourage returned to fetch something which he had left at the place and heard what the slave girl said. The slave girl also told him that Viḍūḍabha's mother, Vāsabhakhattiyā, was the daughter of a slave girl belonging to Mahānāma.

When Viḍūḍabha was told about the above incident, he became wild with rage and declared that one day he would wipe out the whole clan of the Sākyans. True to his word, when Viḍūḍabha became king, he marched on the Sākyan clan and massacred them all, with the exception of a few who were with Mahānāma and some others. On their way home, Viḍūḍabha and his army encamped on the sandbank in the Aciravati River. As heavy rain fell in the upper parts of the country on that very night, the river swelled and rushed down with great force carrying away Viḍūḍabha and his whole army.

On hearing about these two tragic incidents, the Buddha explained to the monks that his relatives, the Sākyan princes, had in one of their previous existences, put poison into the river killing fish. It was a result of that particular action, the Sākyan princes had died. Then, referring to the incident about Viḍūḍabha and his army, the Buddha recited the stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 47)

iha pupphāni pacinantaṁ iva byāsatta manasaṁ naraṁ suttaṁ gāmaṁ mahōghō iva maccu ādāya gacchati

iha: here; *pupphāni:* flowers in a garden; *pacinantaṁ iva:* like one who plucks; *byāsatta manasaṁ:* with mind glued to the pleasures of the senses; *naraṁ:* man; *suttaṁ gāmaṁ:* like a village deep asleep; *mahōghō iva:* by a great flood; *maccu:* Death; *ādāya gacchati:* sweeps away

Those men and women, fascinated by worldly things, go about selecting pleasures, like a garland-maker picking the flowers of his choice in a garden. But, gradually and silently, death overcomes them like a flood in the night sweeping away a village asleep.

Commentary

pupphāni'hēva pacinantaṁ: gathering the flowers. The image of the garland-maker is continued here. The ardent garland-maker is absorbed in the selection of the flowers he needs, in a garden. His main and foremost preoccupation is the gathering of flowers. This he does to the exclusion of all other thoughts. In the same way, those who seek sensual pleasures also concentrate on their pleasure, to the exclusion of everything else.

suttaṁ gāmaṁ: a sleeping village. Those who are exclusively preoccupied with sensual pleasures are like those in a sleeping village. They are unaware of the external threats to them.

mahōghō iva maccu ādāya gacchati: Death comes and sweeps them away, like a great flood. The sleeping village is unaware that a flood is coming, and all the villagers are subsequently swept away to death by flood waters. Those who are indulging their senses, are also unaware of the external threats to them. Those who indulge in sensual pleasures are swept away by death.

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Death grabs the pursuer of sensual pleasures at will before reaching the point of satiety.

48. *Pupphāni h'ēva pacinantaṁ*
byāsattamanasaṁ naraṁ
atittaṁ yēva kāmēsu
antakō kurutē vasaṁ. (4:5)

For one of desires insatiate
who gathers only pleasure-flowers,
for one who has a clinging mind
Death the sovereign overpowers.

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ATTACHMENT TO SENSES IS FOLLY

4 (4) The Story of Patipūjikā Kumāri (Verse 48)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Patipūjikā Kumāri.

Patipūjikā Kumāri was a lady from Sāvatthi. She married at the age of sixteen and had four sons. She was a virtuous as well as a generous lady, who loved to make offerings of food and other requisites to the monks. She would often go to the monastery and clean up the premises, fill the pots and jars with water and perform other services. Patipūjikā also possessed Jātissara Knowledge (remembrance of past births) through which she remembered that in her previous existence she was one of the numerous wives of Mālābhārī, in the dēva world of Tāvatiṁsa. She also remembered that she had passed away from there when all of them were out in the garden enjoying themselves, picking flowers. So, every time she made offerings to the monks or performed any other meritorious act, she would pray that she might be reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa realm as a wife of Mālā

bhārī, her previous husband.

One day, Patipūjikā fell ill and passed away that same evening. As she had so ardently wished, she was reborn in Tāvatimsa dēva world as a wife of Mālābhārī. As one hundred years in the human world is equivalent to just one day in Tāvatiṁsa world, Mālābhārī and his other wives were still in the garden enjoying themselves and Patipūjikā was barely missed by them. So, when she rejoined them, Mālābhārī asked her where she had been the whole morning. She then told him about her passing away from Tāvatiṁsa, her rebirth in the human world, her marriage to a man and also about how she had given birth to four sons, her passing away from there and finally her return to Tāvatiṁsa.

When the monks learned about the death of Patipūjikā, they were stricken with grief. They went to the Buddha and reported that Patipūjikā, who was offering alms-food to them early in the morning, had passed away in the evening. To them the Buddha replied that the life of beings was very brief; and that before they have satisfied their desires for sensual pleasures, they were overpowered by death.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 48)

iha pupphāni pacinantaṁ iva byāsatta manasaṁ
naraṁ kāmēsu atittaṁ ēva antakō vasaṁ kurutē

iha: here; *pupphāni:* flowers (in a garden); *pacinantaṁ iva:* like one who plucks; *byāsatta manasaṁ:* mind glued to the pleasures of the senses; *naraṁ:* man; *kāmēsu:* in the sensual pleasures; *atittaṁ ēva:* while one is still insatiate; *antakō:* Death (Ender); *vasaṁ kurutē:* brings under his spell

Those who pursue worldly pleasures are like garland-makers who pick flowers here and there in the garden according to their preference. Those given to pleasures of the senses are not satisfied. They seek still more. In consequence of their endless pleasure-seeking they come under the spell of Antaka, or 'ender of all', i.e. death.

Commentary

antakō: literally the end-maker. This is another epithet for Māra — death. In this stanza, the end-maker is said to bring under his spell those who are glued to sensual pleasures to the exclusion of all else.

kāma: may denote: 1) subjective sensuality, sense-desire; 2) objective sensuality; the five sense-objects.

Subjective sensuality or sense-desire is directed to all five sense-objects, and is synonymous with 'sensuous desire', one of the five hindrances; 'sensuous lust', one of the ten Fetters; 'sensuous craving', one of the three cravings; 'sensuous thought', one of the three wrong thoughts. Sense-desire is also one of the cankers and clingings.

"There are five cords of sensuality; the visible objects, cognizable by eye-consciousness, that are desirable, cherished, pleasant, lovely, sensuous and alluring; the sounds...smells...tastes...bodily impressions cognizable by body-consciousness, that are desirable..."

These two kinds of *kāma* are also called: *kāma* as a mental defilement, as the object-base of sensuality. Sense-desire is finally eliminated at the stage of the non-returner. The peril and misery of sense-desire are often described in the texts which often stress the fact that what fetters man to the world of the senses are not the sense-organs nor the sense-objects but desire.

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The mendicant must sojourn the village for his needs gently like a bee on a flower.

49. *Yathā pi bhamarō pupphaṁ*
vaṇṇagandhaṁ ahēṭhayaṁ
palēti rasamādāya
ēvaṁ gāmē munī carē. (4:6)

Just as the bee in a flower
harming neither hue nor scent
gathers nectar, flies away,
so in towns a Wise One fares.

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THE MONK IN THE VILLAGE

4 (5) The Story of Kōsiya, the Miserly Rich Man (Verse 49)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to the chief disciple Mahā Moggallāna and the miserly rich man, Kōsiya.

In the village of Sakkara, near Rājagaha, there lived a miserly rich man by the name of Kōsiya, who was very reluctant to give away even the tiniest part of anything belonging to him. One day, to avoid sharing with others, the rich man and his wife were making pancakes in the uppermost story of their house, where no one would see them.

Early in the morning, on that day, the Buddha through his supernormal power, saw the rich man and his wife in his vision, and knew that both of them would soon attain sōtāpatti fruition. So he sent Mahā Moggallāna to the house of the rich man, with instructions to bring the couple to the Jētavana Monastery in time for the midday meal. By supernormal power, he reached Kōsiya's house in an instant and stood at the window.

The rich man saw him and asked him to leave. He just stood there without saying anything. In the end, Kōsiya said to his wife, "Make a very small pancake and give it to the monk." So she took just a little amount of dough and put it in the pan, and the cake filled up the whole pan. Kōsiya thought his wife must have put in too much, so he took just a pinch of dough and put it into the pan; his pancake also swelled into a big one. It so happened that however little dough they put in, they were unable to make small pancakes. At last, Kōsiya asked his wife to offer one from the basket to the monk.

When she tried to take out one from the basket it would not come off because all the pancakes were sticking together and could not be separated. By this time Kōsiya has lost all appetite for pancakes and offered the whole basket of pancakes to Mahā Moggallāna. The chief disciple then delivered a discourse on charity to the rich man and his wife. He also told the couple about how the Buddha was waiting with five hundred monks at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, forty-five yōjanas away from Rājagaha. Mahā Moggallāna, by his supernormal power, then took both Kōsiya and his wife together with their basket of pancakes, to the presence of the Buddha. There, they offered the pancakes to the Buddha and the five hundred monks. At the end of the meal, the Buddha delivered a discourse on charity, and both Kōsiya and his wife attained sōtāpatti fruition.

The next evening, while the monks were talking in praise of Mahā Moggallāna, the Buddha came to them and said, "Monks, you should also dwell and act in the village like Mahā Moggallāna, receiving the offerings of the villagers without affecting their faith and generosity or their wealth."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 49)

yathā api bhamarō pupphaṁ vaṇṇagandhaṁ ahēṭhayaṁ rasaṁ ādāya palēti evaṁ munī gāmē carē

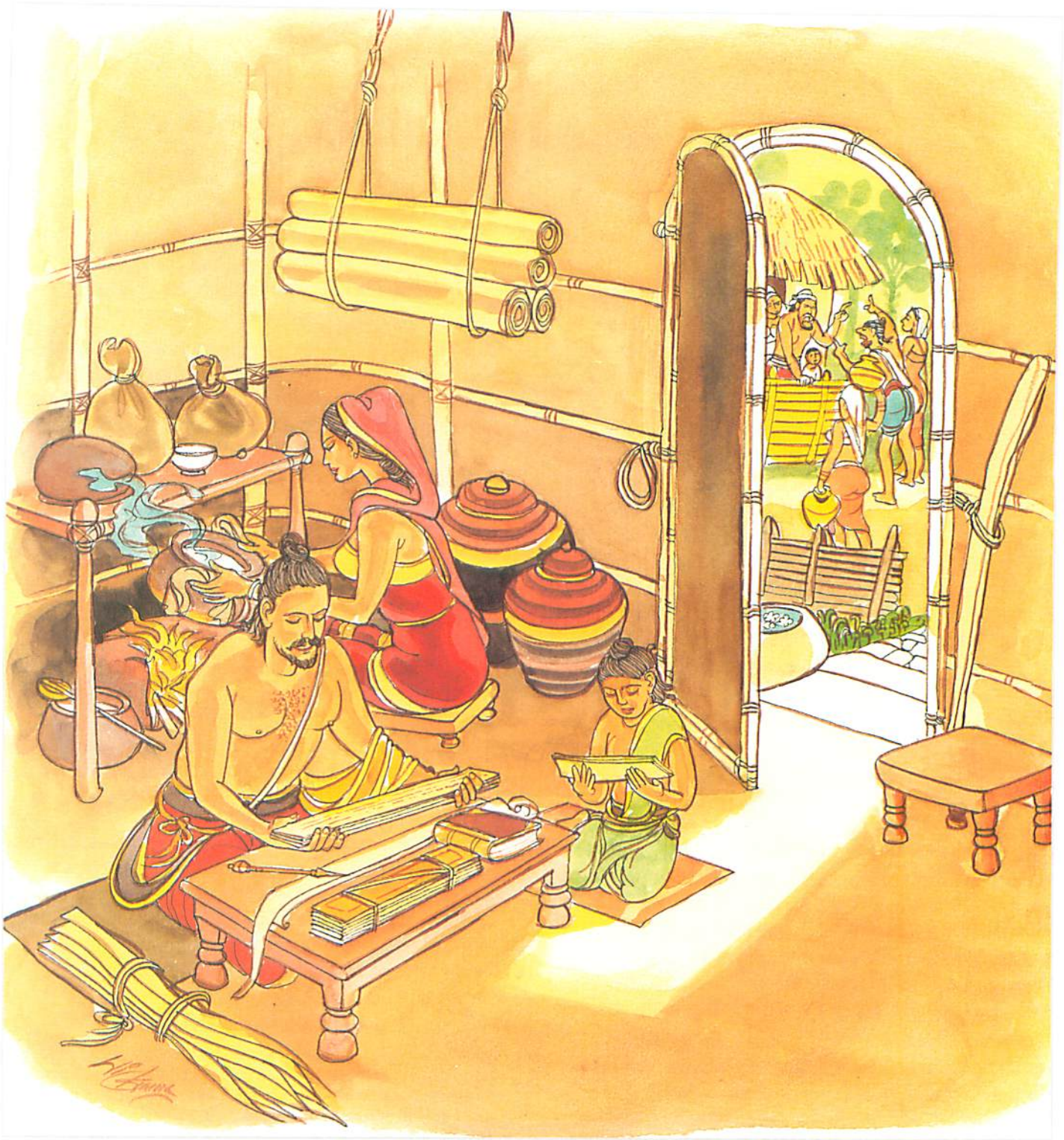
yathā api: just as; *bhamarō:* the bee; *pupphaṁ:* flower; *vaṇṇagandhaṁ:* colour and the fragrance; *ahēṭhayaṁ:* without harming; *rasaṁ:* the nectar; *ādāya:* taking; *palēti:* makes bear fruit; *ēvaṁ munī:* this way the silent sage; *gāmē carē:* should go about in the village

The bee extracts honey from flowers without damaging either the colour or the fragrance of the flower and in so doing helps the tree bear much fruit. Similarly, the silent sage goes about in the village collecting alms without harming anyone even minutely, and in so doing helps people gain much merit and happiness.

Commentary

gāmē munī carē: the silent sage goes on his alms round in the village, from house to house, taking only a handful from each house, and only what is willingly and respectfully given. The wandering ascetics, and all other religious mendicants, are dependent on the village for their requisites. But, the virtuous silent sage sees to it that the village is not exploited in any way. The bee, while extracting honey from flowers, pollinates them, without harming them in the least. While seeking alms, the silent sage is also doing a favour to the people spiritually. The merit that he earns through his practice is shared with the people who support his survival. The donors gain much merit which brings them happiness here and hereafter. A Buddhist monk, even though he is withdrawn from society, is not working only for his own benefit, as some think. He is working for the sake of all. This verse reminds us of this fact.

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Consider only your own commissions and omissions and not those of others.

50. *Na parēsaṁ vilōmāni*
na parēsaṁ katākataṁ
attanō va avekkheyya
katāni akatāni ca. (4:7)

Not others' opposition
nor what they did or failed to do,
but in oneself should be sought
things done, things left undone.

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LOOK INWARD AND NOT AT OTHERS

4 (6) The Story of the Ascetic Pāveyya (Verse 50)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the ascetic Pāveyya and a rich lady.

One of her nearest neighbours, who went to hear the Buddha preach the Dhamma returned praising the virtues of the Buddhas in manifold ways, saying, "Oh, how wonderful is the preaching of Dhamma!" When the woman heard her neighbours thus praise the Buddha, she desired to go to the Monastery and hear the Dhamma. So she put the matter to the naked ascetic, saying, "Noble sir, I desire to go and hear the Buddha." But as often as she made her request, the naked ascetic dissuaded her from going, saying, "Do not go." The woman thought to herself, "Since this Naked Ascetic will not permit me to go to the monastery and hear the Dhamma, I will invite the Buddha to my own house and hear the discourse right here."

Accordingly, when it was evening, she summoned her own son and sent him to the Buddha, saying to him, "Go, invite the Buddha to accept my hospitality for tomorrow." The boy started out, but went first to the place of residence of the naked ascetic, greeted him, and sat down.

The boy listened to the instructions of the naked ascetic and then went to the Buddha and delivered the invitation. When he had done everything according to the instructions of the naked ascetic, he returned to the latter. The naked ascetic asked, "What did you do?" The boy replied, "Everything you told me to do, sir." "You have done very well. Now we shall both of us eat the good things prepared for him." On the following day, very early in the morning, the naked ascetic went to that house, taking the boy with him, and the two sat down together in the back room.

The neighbours smeared that house with cow-dung, decked it with the five kinds of flowers, including the Lājā flower, and prepared a seat of great price, that the Buddha might sit therein.

The Buddha, very early in the morning, took the bowl and robe and went straight to the house of the great female lay disciple. When the Buddha had finished his meal, the female lay disciple listened to the Dhamma and applauded the Buddha, saying, "Well said! Well said!"

The naked ascetic said to the lay disciple, "You are lost for applauding this man thus." And he reviled both the female lay disciple and the Buddha in all manner of ways, and then ran off. The Buddha asked her, "Lay disciple, are you unable to fix your mind on my discourse?" "Good and Revered Sir," she replied, "My mind is completely distraught by the insulting words of this naked ascetic." Said the Buddha, "One should not consider the talk of such a heretic; one should regard only one's own sins of commission and omission."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 50)

parēsaṁ vilōmāni na, parēsaṁ katākataṁ na, attanō ēva katāni akatāni ca avekkheyya

paresaṁ: of others; *vilōmāni:* fault-findings; *na:* do not (regard); *parēsaṁ:* of others; *katākataṁ:* things done and not done; *na:* do not regard; *attanō ēva:* only one's own; *katāni akatāni ca:* omissions and commissions; *avekkheyya:* examine carefully (scrutinize)

Do not find fault with others. Do not worry about what others do or not do. Rather, look within yourself to find out what you yourself have done or left undone. Stop doing evil; do good.

Commentary

parēsaṁ katākataṁ: commissions and omissions of others. This Stanza examines a weakness of a majority of human beings. They keenly observe the faults of others, but not their own. This is not limited to lay-men. Even monks practice this habit of observing the faults of others. This attitude of looking at others is a hindrance to spiritual development as it prevents introspection which is essential for one's spiritual progress.

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Mere sweet words which one never practises, are like flowers without fragrance.

51. *Yathāpi ruciraṁ pupphaṁ*
vaṇṇavantaṁ agandhakaṁ
ēvaṁ subhāsitā vācā
aphalā hōti akubbatō. (4:8)

Just as a gorgeous blossom
brilliant but unscented,
so fruitless the well-spoken words
of one who does not act.

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GOOD WORDS ATTRACT ONLY THOSE WHO PRACTISE

4 (7) The Story of Chattapāni, a Lay Disciple (Verses 51 & 52)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to the lay disciple Chattapāni and the two queens of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala. At Sāvatthi lived a lay disciple named Chattapāni, versed in the Tripitaka, enjoying the fruit of the second path. Early one morning, in observance of fasting, he went to pay his respects to the Buddha. For those who enjoy the fruition of the second path and those who are noble disciples, by reason of their previous undertaking, they do not take upon themselves the obligations of fast-day. Such persons, solely by virtue of the Path, lead the holy life and eat but one meal a day. Therefore said the Buddha, "Great king, Ghaṭīkāra the potter eats but one meal a day, leads the holy life, is virtuous and upright." Thus, as a matter of course, those who enjoy the fruition of the second path eat but one meal a day and lead the holy life.

Chattapāni also, thus observing the fast, approached the Buddha, paid obeisance to him, and sat down and listened to the Dhamma. Now at this time King Pasēnadi Kōsala also came to pay his respects to the Buddha. When Chattapāni saw him coming, he reflected, "Shall I rise to meet him or not?" He came to the following conclusion, "Since I am seated in the presence of the Buddha, I am not called upon to rise on seeing the king of one of his provinces. Even if he becomes angry, I will not rise. For if I rise on seeing the king, the king will be honoured, and not the Buddha. Therefore I will not rise." Therefore Chattapāni did not rise. (Wise men never become angry when they see a man remain seated, instead of rising, in the presence of those of higher rank.)

But when King Pasēnadi saw that Chattapāni did not rise, his heart was filled with anger. However, he paid obeisance to the Buddha and sat down respectfully on one side. The Buddha, observing that he was angry, said to him, "Great king, this lay disciple Chattapāni is a wise man, knows the Dhamma, is versed in the Tripitaka, is contented both in prosperity and adversity." Thus did the Buddha extol the lay disciple's good qualities. As the king listened to the Buddha's praise of the lay disciple, his heart softened.

Now one day after breakfast, as the king stood on the upper floor of his palace, he saw the lay disciple Chattapāni pass through the courtyard of the royal palace with a parasol in his hand and sandals on his feet. Straightaway he caused him to be summoned before him. Chattapāni laid aside his parasol and sandals, approached the king, paid obeisance to him, and took his stand respectfully on one side. Said the king to Chattapāni, "Lay disciple, why did you lay aside your parasol and sandals?" "When I heard the words, 'The king summons you,' I laid aside my parasol and sandals before coming into his presence." "Evidently, then, you have today learned that I am king." "I always knew that you were king." "If that be true, then why was it that the other day, when you were seated in the presence of the Buddha and saw me, did you not rise?"

"Great king, as I was seated in the presence of the Buddha, to have risen on seeing a king of one of his provinces, I should have shown disrespect for the Buddha. Therefore did I not rise." "Very well, let bygones be bygones. I am told that you are well versed in matters pertaining to the present world and the world to come; that you are versed in the Tipitaka. Recite the Dhamma in our women's quarters." "I cannot, your majesty." "Why not?" "A king's house is subject to severe censure. Improper and proper alike are grave matters in this case, your majesty." "Say not so. The other day, when you saw me, you saw fit not to rise. Do not add insult to injury." "Your majesty, it is a censurable act for householders to go about performing the functions of monks. Send for someone who is a monk and ask him to recite the Dhamma."

The king dismissed him, saying, "Very well, sir, you may go." Having so done, he sent a messenger to the Buddha with the following request, "Venerable, my consorts Mallikā and Vāsabhakhattiyā say, 'We desire to master the Dhamma.' Therefore come to my house regularly with five hundred monks and preach the Dhamma." The Buddha sent the following reply, "Great king, it is impossible for me to go regularly to any one place." "In that case, Venerable, send some monk." The Buddha assigned the duty to the Venerable Ānanda. And the Venerable came regularly and recited the Dhamma to those queens. Of the two queens, Mallikā learned thoroughly, rehearsed faithfully, and heeded her teacher's instruction. But Vāsabhakhattiyā did not learn thoroughly, nor did she rehearse faithfully, nor was she able to master the instruction she received.

(cont'd on page 111)

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Sweet words which are put into practice are like flowers, beautiful, colourful and fragrant.

52. *Yathāpi ruciraṁ pupphaṁ*
vaṇṇavantaṁ sagandhakaṁ
ēvaṁ subhāsitā vācā
saphalā hōti sakubbatō. (4:9)

Just as a gorgeous blossom
brilliant and sweet-scented,
so fruitful the well-spoken words
of one who acts as well.

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GOOD WORDS PROFIT ONLY THOSE WHO PRACTISE

4 (7) The Story of Chattapāni, a Lay Disciple (Verses 51 & 52) (cont'd)

One day the Buddha asked the Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, are your female lay disciples mastering the Law?" "Yes, Venerable." "Which one learns thoroughly?" "Mallikā learns thoroughly, rehearses faithfully, and can understand thoroughly the instruction she receives. But your kins woman does not learn thoroughly, nor does she rehearse faithfully, nor can she understand thoroughly the instruction she receives." When the Buddha heard the monk's reply, he said, "Ānanda, as for the Dhamma I have preached, to one who is not faithful in hearing, learning, rehearsing, and preaching it, it is profitless, like a flower that possesses colour but lacks perfume. But to one who is faithful in hearing, learning, rehearsing, and preaching the law, it returns abundant fruit and manifold blessings."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 51)

ruciraṁ vaṇṇavantaṁ agandhakaṁ pupphaṁ
yathā api ēvaṁ subhāsitā vācā akubbatō aphalā
hōti

ruciraṁ: attractive, alluring; *vaṇṇavantaṁ:* of brilliant colour; *agandhakaṁ:* devoid of fragrance; *pupphaṁ:* flower; *yathā api ēvaṁ:* and similarly; *subhāsitā vācā:* the well articulated words; *akubbatō:* of the non-practitioner; *aphalā hōti:* are of no use

A flower may be quite attractive, alluring. It may possess a brilliant hue. But, if it is devoid of fragrance, and has no scent, it is of no use. So is the well spoken word of him who does not practice it. It turns out to be useless.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 52)

ruciraṁ vaṇṇavantaṁ sagandhakaṁ pupphaṁ
yathā api, ēvaṁ subhāsitā vācā sakubbatō saphalā
hōti

ruciraṁ: attractive, alluring; *vaṇṇavantaṁ:* of brilliant colour; *sagandhakaṁ:* full of fragrance (sweet-smelling); *pupphaṁ:* flower; *yathā api ēvaṁ:* just like that; *subhāsitā vācā:* well spoken word; *sakubbatō:* to the practitioner; *saphalā hōti:* benefit accrues

A flower may be quite attractive, alluring and possessing a brilliant hue. In addition, it may also be full of fragrance. So is the person who is well spoken and practises what he preaches. His words are effective and they are honoured.

Commentary

agandhakaṁ: lacking in fragrance. The essence of a flower is its sweet- smell. A flower may appeal to the eye. It may be colourful and brilliant. But, if it has no fragrance, it fails as a flower. The analogy here is to the Buddha — words spoken by someone who does not practice it. The word is brilliant, and full of colour. But its sweet-smell comes only when it is practiced.

sagandhakaṁ: sweet smelling. If a flower is colourful, beautiful to look at and has an alluring fragrance, it has fulfilled its duty as a flower. It is the same with the word of the Buddha. It acquires its sweet smell when practiced.

akubbatō, sakubbatō: these two words stress the true character of Buddhism. The way of the Buddha is not a religion of mere faith. If it were, one has only to depend on external deities or saviours for one's liberation. But in the instance of the Buddha's word, the most essential thing is practice. The 'beauty' or the 'sweet-smell' of the Buddha word comes through practice. If a person merely speaks out the word of the Buddha but does not practice it — if he is an *akubbatō* — he is like a brilliant hued flower lacking fragrance. But, if he is a *sakubbatō* — a person who practises the word of the Buddha — he becomes an ideal flower — beautiful in colour and appearance, and in its sweet-smell.

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All mortals must do plentiful good deeds like making garlands out of a mass of flowers.

53. *Yathāpi puppharāsimhā*
kayirā mālāguṇē bahū
ēvaṁ jātēna maccēna
kattabbaṁ kusalaṁ bahuṁ. (4:10)

As from a mass of flowers
many a garland may be made,
so by one born mortal
should many good deeds be done.

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THOSE BORN INTO THIS WORLD MUST ACQUIRE MUCH MERIT

4 (8) The Story of Visākhā (Verse 53)

While residing at the Pubbārāma Monastery in Sāvatthi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Visākhā, the famous donor of the Pubbārāma Monastery. Visākhā was the daughter of a rich man of Bhaddiya, named Dhananjaya, and his wife Sumanādēvi, and the granddaughter of Meṇḍaka, one of the five extremely wealthy men of King Bimbisāra's dominions. When Visākhā was seven years old, the Buddha came to Bhaddiya. On that occasion, the rich man Meṇḍaka took Visākhā and her five hundred companions with him to pay homage to the Buddha. After hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, Visākhā, her grandfather and all her five hundred companions attained sōtāpatti fruition. When Visākhā came of age, she married Puṇṇavaḍḍhana, son of Migāra, a fairly rich man from Sāvatthi. One day, while Migāra was having his meal, a monk stopped for alms at his house; but Migāra completely ignored the monk. Visākhā, seeing this, said to the monk. "I am sorry, your reverence, my father-in-law only eats left-overs." On hearing this, Migāra flew into a rage and told her to leave his house. But Visākhā said she was not going away, and that she would send for the eight elderly rich men who were sent by her father to accompany her and to ạdvise her. It was for them to decide whether she was guilty or not. When the elders came, Migāra told them the story. The elders decided that Visākhā was not guilty. Visākhā then said that she was one who had absolute and unshakable faith in the Teaching of the Buddha and so could not stay where the monks were not welcome; and also, that if she was not given permission to invite the monks to the house to offer alms-food and make other offerings, she would leave the house. So permission was granted her to invite the Buddha and his monks to the house.

The next day, the Buddha and his disciples were invited to the house of Visākhā. When alms-food was about to be offered, she sent word to her father-in-law to join her in offering food; but he did not come. When the meal was over, again, she sent a message, this time requesting her father-in-law to join her in hearing the discourse that would soon be given by the Buddha. Her father-in-law felt that he should not refuse for a second time. But his ascetic teachers, the Niganṭhas, would not let him go; however, they conceded that he could listen from behind a curtain. After hearing the Buddha's discourse Migāra attained sōtāpatti fruition. He felt very thankful to the Buddha and also to his daughter-in-law. Being so thankful, he declared that henceforth Visākhā would be like a mother to him, and Visākhā came to be known as Migāramātā. Visākhā gave birth to ten sons and ten daughters, and ten sons and ten daughters each were born to everyone of her children and grandchildren. Visākhā possessed an immensely valuable gem-encrusted ornament given by her father as a wedding present. One day, Visākhā went to the Jētavana Monastery with her entourage. On arrival at the Monastery, she found that her bejewelled ornament too heavy. So, she took it off, wrapped it up in her shawl, and gave it to the maid to hold. The maid absent-mindedly left it at the Monastery. It was the custom for the Venerable Ānanda to look after the things left by any one of the lay disciples. Visākhā sent the maid back to the Monastery saying, "Go and look for the bejewelled ornament, but if the Venerable Ānanda had already found it and kept it in a place do not bring it back; I donate the bejewelled ornament to the Venerable Ānanda." But the Venerable Ānanda did not accept her donation. So Visākhā decided to sell it and donate the sale proceeds. But there was no one who could afford to buy that ornament. So Visākhā bought it back for nine billion and one lakh. With this money, she built a monastery on the eastern side of the city; this monastery came to be known as Pubbārāma.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 53)

yathā api puppharāsimhā bahū mālāguṇē kayirā,
ēvaṁ jātēna maccēna bahuṁ kusalaṁ kattabbaṁ

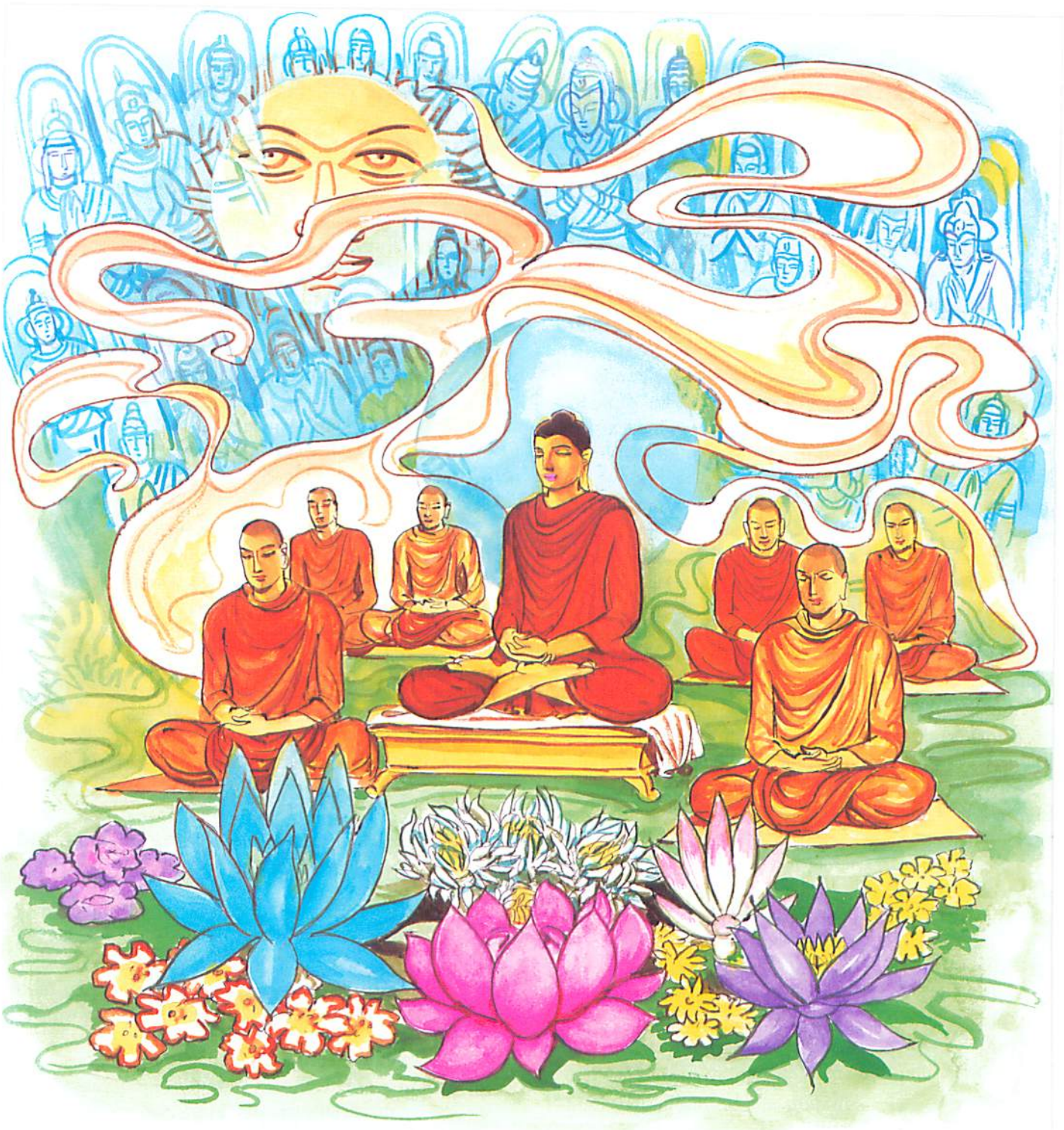
yathā api: just as; *puppharāsimhā:* out of many flowers; *bahū:* many; *mālāguṇē:* garlands; *kayirā:* creates; *ēvaṁ:* similarly; *jātena maccena:* by a man born into this world; *bahuṁ:* many; *kusalaṁ:* virtuous deeds; *kattabbaṁ:* should be performed

The deft maker of garlands takes a variety of flowers. Out of these he creates garlands of different strands and variegated arrangements. In the same way, those who are born into this world should, out of their lives, create good, wholesome, meritorious actions of a vast variety.

Commentary

In this Verse, the craftsmanship of the garland-maker is compared to those who lead a virtuous life. One's life activity is compared to a mass of flowers. It is the duty of every person to arrange these flowers into garlands of wholesome actions. This verse reminds us that life is not a bed of roses to sleep on, but a flower bed that grows beautiful flowers. The purpose of life is to make beautiful garlands out of these flowers that beautify the world. The best use of our temporal, mortal life is to do good deeds that bring happiness to everyone. This verse makes it clear that Buddhists are not pessimists who constantly lament about the thorns in the roses. They make the best use of what is good in the world, to make it even better.

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Scent of flower or sandal goes not against the wind. But fragrance of virtue blows everywhere.

54. *Na pupphagandhō paṭivātamēti*
na candanaṁ tagaramallikā vā
satañca gandhō paṭivātamēti
sabbā disā sappurisō pavāti. (4:11)

The fragrance of flowers drifts with the wind
as sandalwood, jasmine or lavender.
The fragrance of virtue o'ersweeps the wind,
all pervasive is virtue of the good.

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FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE SPREADS EVERYWHERE

4 (9) The Story of the Question Raised by the Venerable Ānanda (Verses 54 & 55)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a question raised by the Venerable Ānanda.

One evening, absorbed in meditation, Venerable Ānanda pondered the following thought: "The Buddha possesses the three perfumes of excellence; namely, the perfume of sandal, the perfume of roots, and the perfume of flowers. However, each of these perfumes goes only with the wind. Is there possibly a substance whose perfume goes against the wind, or is there possibly a substance whose perfume goes both with the wind and against the wind?" Then the following thought occurred to him: "What is the use of my trying to determine this question all by myself? I will ask the Buddha, and the Buddha alone." Accordingly he would approach the Buddha and put the question to him. The story goes:

Now one evening the Venerable Ānanda arose from profound meditation and drew near to the place where sat the Buddha, and when he had drawn near, he addressed the Buddha as follows, "Venerable, there are these three substances whose perfume goes only with the wind and not against the wind. What are the three? The perfume of roots, the perfume of sandal, and the perfume of flowers. These are the three substances whose perfume goes only with the wind and not against the wind. But, Venerable, is there possibly a substance whose perfume goes both with the wind and against the wind?"

Said the Buddha in answer to the question, "Ānanda, there is a substance whose perfume goes with the wind, a substance whose perfume goes both with the wind and against the wind." "But, Venerable, what is that substance whose perfume goes with the wind, that substance whose perfume goes both with the wind and against the wind?" "Ānanda, if in any village or market-town in this world any person seeks refuge in the Buddha, seeks refuge in the Dhamma, seeks refuge in the Sangha; if he refrains from taking life, from taking that which is not given, from indulgence in the sins of the flesh and from lying, and avoids occasions of heedlessness through the use of liquor or spirits or other intoxicants; if he is virtuous; if he lives the life of a householder in righteousness, with a heart free from the stain of avarice; if he is liberal and generous, if he is open-handed, if he takes delight in giving, if he is attentive to petitions, if he takes delight in the distribution of alms, in all parts of the world monks utter his praise. If in such and such a village or market-town either a man or a woman seeks refuge in the Buddha,... if he takes delight in the distribution of alms, deities and spirits speak his praise. If in such and such a village or market-town either a man or a woman seeks refuge in the Buddha,... if he takes delight in the distribution of alms, such acts as these, Ānanda, are the substance whose perfume goes both with and against the wind."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 54)

pupphagandhō paṭivātaṁ na ēti candanaṁ tagaramallikā vā na paṭivātaṁ ēti sataṁ gandhō ca paṭivātaṁ ēti sappurisō sabbādisā pavāti

pupphagandhō: the fragrance of the flowers; *paṭivātaṁ:* against the wind; *na ēti:* does not waft; *candanaṁ:* sandal wood; *tagara:* lavender; *mallikā vā:* or jasmine: *na:* does not (waft against the wind); *sataṁ:* (but of such noble individuals as the) Buddha; *gandhō:* the sweet smell (of virtue); *ca paṭivātaṁ ēti:* wafts against the wind; *sappurisō:* the virtuous person; *sabbādisā pavāti:* blows in all directions

The world knows, many a sweet smelling flower and fragrant object. But, the fragrance of all these moves only leeward. None of these, however strong their fragrance may be, spread their sweet smell against the wind. But, in contrast, the sweet smell of virtue of a spiritually evolved individual spreads in all directions and is universally experienced.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 55)

candanaṁ tagaraṁ vā api uppalaṁ atha vassikī ētēsaṁ gandhajātānaṁ sīlagandhō anuttarō

candanaṁ: sandal wood; *tagaraṁ:* lavender; *vā api:* also; *uppalaṁ:* water lily; *atha:* and again; *vassikī:* jasmine; *ētēsaṁ gandhajātānaṁ:* of all these fragrances; *sīlagandhō:* the sweet smell of virtue; *anuttarō:* is supreme

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Of all fragrances like that of sandal, lavender and jasmine, fragrance of virtue is supreme.

55. *Candanaṁ tagaraṁ vā'pi*
uppalaṁ atha vassikī
ētēsaṁ gandhajātānaṁ
sīlagandhō anuttarō. (4:12)

Sandalwood or lavender,
lotus or the jasmine great,
of these many fragrances
virtue's fragrance is supreme.

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FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE IS THE SWEETEST SMELL

4 (9) The Story of the Question Raised by the Venerable Ānanda (Verses 54 & 55) (cont'd)

Sandalwood, lavender, water-lily and the jasmine exude fragrance. Of all these varieties of fragrances the sweet-smell of virtue is the most supreme. This is because the fragrance of virtue is universally favoured. Besides, the fragrance of virtue spreads in all directions, even against the wind.

Commentary

On Ānanda, a note:

The two verses (54 & 55) were spoken by the Buddha in response to a question put to him by Venerable Ānanda. In the history of Buddhism, Venerable Ānanda occupies a crucial place. Most of the discourses spoken by the Buddha were recorded by Venerable Ānanda. It was he who recounted these discourses to the assembly of monks who gathered at the First Council to confirm the word of the Buddha. The recurring phrase *'ēvaṁ mē Sutaṁ.'* (Thus have I heard) which prefaces most of the discourses in the Buddhist scripture, is indicative of the fact that the discourse was recounted by Venerable Ānanda, just as he had heard it when the Buddha first spoke.

Venerable Ānanda was the personal attendant of the Buddha. The body of teaching that is presently characterized as Buddhism is largely the teachings gathered by Venerable Ānanda as the constant companion of the Buddha. Venerable Ānanda is, at times, referred to as the 'Treasurer of the Buddha Word'. How Venerable Ānanda came to assume this exalted position has also been extensively recorded in Buddhist literature. The Buddha had no regular attendant during the first twenty years of His ministry. There were several monks who used to attend on the Buddha and accompany Him on the rounds for alms carrying his extra robes and the bowl. The monks who served thus were Nāgasamāla, Nāgita, Upavāna, Sunakkhatta, Cunda, Sāgata, Rādha, and Mēghiya.

One day, as the Buddha went on a long journey accompanied by the Venerable Nāgasamāla, and came up to a junction, the monk suggested to take one road, whereas the Buddha suggested the other. The monk did not accept the words of the Buddha, and was about to put the bowl and the robes of the Buddha on the ground before taking the road of his choice. The Buddha asked for the bowl and the robes before they were put on the ground, and took the other road. The monk who went along the road of his choice was robbed of his bowl and robes and was struck on the head by highway robbers. He came back to the Buddha with a bleeding head, to be reminded of his disobedience and consoled by the Buddha.

On another day, as the Buddha was on his way to the village of Jantu in the company of the Venerable Mēghiya, the latter chose to go to a mango grove and practice meditation, and handed over to the Buddha His bowl and the robes. The Buddha thrice advised him against taking that step, but he went his way. He returned to the Buddha and confessed how he failed in his meditation. When the Buddha came to Sāvatthi, and was in the Jētavana Monastery, he expressed to the assembly of monks His dissatisfaction with the conduct of these monks, and suggested to have a regular attendant as He was advancing in years. The Buddha was over fifty-five years in age at this time.

The Venerable Sāriputta stood up immediately, saluted the Buddha, and volunteered to be the regular personal attendant of the Buddha. The Buddha declined his offer as his services as the foremost disciple of the Buddha was needed elsewhere. Other leading disciples too offered their services. However, they too were not accepted by the Buddha. Then the monks induced the Venerable Ānanda, who was so far silent, to offer to serve as the personal attendant of the Buddha. However, he waited to be nominated by the Buddha Himself. The Buddha said: "It is not necessary for Ānanda to be induced by others. He will serve me on his own accord."

The Venerable Ānanda agreed to serve the Buddha regularly, subject to eight conditions. They were: (1) He should not be given the fine robes received by the Buddha; (2) He should not be given the delicious food received by the Buddha; (3) He should not be accommodated in the fragrant chamber of the Buddha; (4) He should not be asked to go with the Buddha to accept alms on invitations; (5) The Buddha would consent to invitations accepted by him; (6) Visitors from far off places who came to see the Buddha should be allowed in with him; (7) He should be allowed to consult the Buddha whenever he had any doubt for clarification; and that (8) He should be told the discourses the Buddha preached in his absence.

After the Buddha consented to these eight conditions, the Venerable Ānanda became the regular attendant of the Buddha. Thenceforth, he began to attend on the Buddha and serve hot and cold water and three kinds of dental tools. He used to massage the body of the Buddha, and be awakened the whole night, holding a wooden torch, so that he could be summoned by the Buddha at any time. He used to walk nine times round the fragrant chamber every night. He also did the sweeping and cleaning of the fragrant chamber himself. He served and followed the Buddha like His shadow until His passing away,

However, the Venerable Ānanda did not attain arahathood during the lifetime of the Buddha. He became an arahant a few weeks after the passing away of the Buddha, and was a key figure in the First Council of the five hundred arahants who recited the teachings of the Buddha, at the invitation of the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, at Rājagaha. Thus, many Suttas start with *'ēvaṁ mē Sutaṁ.'*

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The fragrance of the virtuous wafts even among the gods. All others fall short of that.

56. *Appamattō ayaṁ gandhō*
yāyaṁ tagaracandanī
yō ca sīlavataṁ gandhō
vāti dēvēsu uttamō. (4:13)

Faint is this fragrance
of lavender and sandalwood,
but fragrance of the virtuous
soars sublime amongst the gods.

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FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE WAFTS TO HEAVEN

4 (10) The Story of Monk Mahākassapa (Verse 56)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery in Rājagaha, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to Monk Mahākassapa.

One day Venerable Kassapa arose from a meditation which had lasted seven days and started out with the intention of making an unbroken round for alms in Rājagaha. At the same time five hundred pink-footed nymphs who were the wives of Sakka king of gods roused themselves and prepared five hundred portions of alms, intending to give those alms to the Venerable. Taking their alms, they halted on the road and said to the Venerable, "Venerable, accept these alms; do us a favour." The Venerable replied, "Go away, all of you. I intend to favour the poor."

Sakka himself desired to give alms to the Venerable. So he disguised himself as an old weaver worn out by old age, an old man with broken teeth, grey hair, and a bent and broken body. And transforming Wellborn the celestial nymph into just such an old woman, and creating by supernatural power a weavers' lane, he sat spinning out thread. The Venerable went towards the city, thinking to himself, "I will bestow favour on poor folk." And seeing this street outside of the city, he looked all about and noticed those two persons. At that moment Sakka was spinning out the thread and Wellborn was feeding a shuttle. When Monk Mahākassapa came to the door, Sakka took the Venerable's bowl, saying, "Venerable, consider not whether the food be coarse or fine, but be gracious to us."

Straightaway that portion of alms, richly flavoured with all manner of sauces and curries, filled the whole city of Rājagaha with its fragrance. The Venerable thought to himself, "This man is weak, but his alms are as powerful as the food of Sakka. Who can he be?" Perceiving that it was Sakka, he said, "You have done a grievous wrong in depriving poor folk of the opportunity to acquire merit. By bestowing alms on me today, any poor man whosoever might obtain the post of commander-in-chief or the post of treasurer." "Is there any man poorer than I, Venerable?" "How do you come to be poor, enjoying as you do the splendour in the world of the gods?"

"Venerable, this is the explanation. Before the Buddha appeared in the world I performed works of merit. When the Buddha appeared in the world, three deities of equal rank were reborn who, by the performance of works of merit, possessed greater glory than I. When these deities say in my presence, 'Let us make holiday,' and take female slaves and go down into the street, I take to my heels and enter my house. The glory from their persons overpowers my person, but the glory from my person does not overpower their persons. Who, Venerable, is poorer than I?" "If this be true, henceforth do not attempt to deceive me by giving alms to me." "Have I acquired merit, or have I not acquired merit, by giving alms to you through deception?" "You have acquired merit, brother." "If this be true, Venerable, it is my bounden duty to perform works of merit." So saying, Sakka saluted the Venerable, and accompanied by Sujātā, circumbulated the Venerable.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 56)

yō ayaṁ tagaracandanī ayaṁ gandhō appamattō,
sīlavataṁ yō ca gandhō uttamō dēvēsu vāti

yō ayaṁ: whatever this; *tagara candanī:* fragrance associated with lavender and sandal wood; *ayaṁ:* that (fragrance); *appamattō:* is only a little; *sīlavataṁ:* of the virtuous; *yō ca gandhō:* if there is a sweet smell; *uttamō:* that is supreme; *dēvēsu:* in the midst of the dēvas or heavenly worlds; *vāti:* (it) spreads

The fragrance of *tagara* and sandalwood is quite slight. Why? Because it is limited to this world. Such a fragrance can spread only on earth. This way it is a very slight fragrance. But, the sweet smell of virtue is, in contrast, supreme, because it spreads not only throughout the earth, it rises even to the highest heavens.

Commentary

gandhō: perfume; fragrance. In a series of Stanzas the Buddha sets the fragrance of virtue, against such conventional fragrances as sandalwood, lavender and jasmine. In comparison with the sweet-smell of virtue, the sweet-smell of such conventional fragrances is only very slight. This analogy has been carried into the devotional ceremony of Buddhists, where incense is offered before the altar of the Buddha in honour of His virtue.

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Of the diligent and the virtuous totally freed through wisdom, death never tracks the path.

57. *Tēsaṁ sampannasīlānaṁ*
appamādavihārinaṁ
sammadaññā vimuttānaṁ
Mārō maggaṁ na vindati. (4:14)

Of those with perfect virtue
who dwell in heedfulness,
freed by Final Knowledge:
Māra cannot know their path.

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DEATH CANNOT TRACE THE PATH OF ARAHATS

4 (11) The Story of Venerable Gōdhika (Verse 57)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to Venerable Gōdhika.

While Venerable Gōdhika was in residence at Black Rock on Mount Isigili, heedful, ardent, resolute, having attained 'release of mind' through the practice of meditation, he was attacked by a certain disease brought on by diligent application to duty, and fell away from the mental repose of 'disknowing'. A second time and a third time, and unto six times, did he enter into a state of mental repose and fell away therefrom. As he entered into a state of mental repose for the seventh time, he thought to himself, "Six times I have fallen away from a state of mental repose. Doubtful is the future state of him who falls away from a state of mental repose. Now is the time for me to use the razor."

Accordingly, he took the razor with which he shaved his hair, and lay down on his bed, intending to end his life. Māra perceived his intention and thought to himself, "This monk intends to use the razor. Those who use the razor in this way are indifferent to life. Such men, having attained penetration, win Arahatship. But if I try to prevent him from carrying out his intention, he will pay no attention to my words. I will therefore induce the Buddha to prevent him."At that moment the Venerable drew his knife. The Buddha, perceiving Māra, said, "Thus do those who are steadfast, nor do they yearn for life. Gōdhika has uprooted craving and has attained Nibbāna." Now the Buddha, accompanied by a large number of monks, entered the place where the Venerable had lain down and used his knife. At that moment Māra, the Evil One, like a pillar of smoke or a mass of darkness, was searching in all directions for the Venerable's consciousness. Thought he, "Where has his rebirth-consciousness fixed itself?" The Buddha pointed out to the monks the pillar of smoke and the mass of darkness and said to them, "Monks, that is Māra, the Evil One, searching for the consciousness of the goodly youth Gōdhika. Thinks he, 'Where has the consciousness of the goodly youth Gōdhika fixed itself?' But, monks, the consciousness of the goodly youth Gōdhika has not fixed itself. For, monks, the goodly youth Gōdhika has passed into Nibbāna. Māra, being unable to find the place where the consciousness of the Venerable had fixed itself, approached the Buddha and asked him, "Where has Gōdhika gone?"

Said the Buddha to Māra, "Gōdhika has uprooted craving and has attained Nibbāna." Then said the Buddha, "Evil One, what have you to do with the place where the consciousness of the goodly youth Gōdhika has fixed itself? A hundred or a thousand like you could never find it."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 57)

sampannasīlānaṁ appamādavihārinaṁ sammadaññā vimuttānaṁ tēsaṁ maggaṁ Mārō na vindati

sampannasīlānaṁ: perfect in behaviour; *appamādavihārinaṁ:* living alert; *sammadaññā:* fully knowing; *vimuttānaṁ:* freed of blemishes; *tēsaṁ:* (of) those noble ones; *maggaṁ:* traces, the path they took; *Mārō:* the evil one (the Devil); *na vindati:* (does not) discover or find

Of those noble ones, who are perfect in behaviour, living constantly alert, fully aware of the experience within, Māra, the evil one, does not know their destiny. Māra can trace only the slothful dead. He cannot trace those who have reached the Deathless.

Commentary

sammadaññāvimuttānaṁ: having achieved release through 'disknowing'. This refers to one who gains 'release' (*vimutti*) by becoming fully aware of the experience within. Such a person attains release through a fivefold release. They are: Release through Elimination; Release through the Cultivation of Opposites; Release through Cutting Off; Release through Subsidence and Release through Moving Away.

aññā: really means 'disknowing'. Though it is commonly translated as knowledge, it is not the grasping of concepts. It is the freedom from concepts. It is the cessation of object vision and involvement with objects of knowledge. It is awareness of the process of knowing rather than of the object known which leads to craving. It is mental repose. This is called the 'cessation of cognition' (*viññassa nirodha*). It is also called 'unmanifest cognition' (*anidassana viññāna*). All object knowledge range falls within the ken of Māra. This freedom from object knowledge, Māra does not know.

Mārō: There are five concepts of *'Māra'* in Buddhism: (1) Death itself (*maccu māra*); (2) The five aggregates (*khanda māra*); (3) Defilements (*kilēsa māra*); (4) Mental constructs (*sankhāra māra*); (5) A deity called Māra who always tries to obstruct spiritual progress in the world (*dēvaputta māra*). In this particular verse and story, the term *Māra* stands for this evil entity called Māra.

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Just as a fragrant and lovely lotus may blossom forth out of a garbage-heap on the roadside...

58. *Yathā saṅkāradhānasmiṁ*
ujjhitasmiṁ mahāpathē
padumaṁ tattha jāyētha
sucigandhaṁ manōramaṁ. (4:15)

As beside the highroad
where rubbish in a pit is flung
there flourishes the lotus bloom
fragrant and the mind's delight.

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LOTUS IS ATTRACTIVE THOUGH IN A GARBAGE HEAP

4 (12) The Story of Garahadinna (Verses 58 & 59)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a rich man named Garahadinna and the miracle of the lotus flowers. At Sāvatthi there once lived two friends, Sirigutta and Garahadinna. The former was a lay disciple of the Buddha, the latter an adherent of the Naked Ascetics, the Niganṭhas. The naked ascetics used to say repeatedly to Garahadinna, "Go to your friend Sirigutta and say 'Why do you visit the monk Gōtama? What do you expect to get from him?' Why not admonish him thus, that he may visit us and give us alms?" Garahadinna listened to what they said, went repeatedly to Sirigutta, and wherever he found him, standing or sitting, spoke thus to him, "Friend, of what use to you is the monk Gōtama? What do you expect to get by visiting him? Should you not visit my own noble teachers instead and give alms to them?"

Sirigutta listened to his friend's talk and despite it kept silence for several days. One day, however, he lost his patience and said to Garahadinna, "Friend, you constantly come to me, and wherever you find me, standing or sitting, speak thus to me, 'What do you expect to gain by visiting the monk Gōtama? Visit my noble teachers instead and give alms to them.' Now just answer me this question, 'What do your noble teachers know?'" "Oh, sir, do not speak thus! There is nothing my noble teachers do not know. They know all about the past, the present, and the future. They know everybody's thoughts, words, and actions. They know everything that can happen and everything that cannot happen." "You don't say so." "Indeed, I do." "If this be true, you have committed a grievous fault in allowing me to remain ignorant of it all this time. Not until today did I learn of the supernatural power of knowledge possessed by your noble teachers. Go, sir, and invite your noble teachers in my name."

Garahadinna went to the naked ascetics, paid obeisance to them, and said, "My friend Sirigutta invites you for tomorrow." "Did Sirigutta speak to you of himself?" "Yes, noble sirs." They were pleased and delighted. Said they, "Our work is done. What gain will not accrue to us from the moment Sirigutta has complete faith in us?"

Now Sirigutta's place of residence was a large one, and in one place there was a long empty space between two houses. Here, therefore, he caused a long ditch to be dug, and this ditch he caused to be filled with dung and slime. Beyond the ditch, at both ends, he caused posts to be driven into the ground, and to these posts he caused ropes to be attached. He caused the seats to be so placed, with the front legs resting on the ground and the back legs resting on the ropes, that the instant the heretics sat down they would be tipped over backwards and flung head first into the ditch. In order that no sign of a ditch might be visible, he had coverlets spread over the seats. He caused several large earthenware vessels to be washed clean, and their mouths to be covered with banana leaves and pieces of cloth. And these vessels, empty though they were, he caused to be placed behind the house, smeared on the outside with rice-porridge, lumps of boiled rice, ghee, palm sugar and cake-crumbs.

Early in the morning Garahadinna went quickly to the house of Sirigutta and asked him, "Has food been prepared for my noble teachers?" "Yes, friend, food has been prepared." "But where is it?" "In all these earthenware vessels is rice-porridge, in all these is boiled rice, in all these are ghee, palm sugar, cakes, and other kinds of food. Likewise have seats been prepared." "Very well," said Garahadinna, and went his way.

As soon as Garahadinna had departed, five hundred naked ascetics arrived. Sirigutta came forth from the house, paid obeisance to the naked ascetics, and taking his stand before them, and raising his clasped hands in an attitude of reverent salutation, thought to himself, "So you know all about the past, the present, and the future! So at least your supporter tells me. If you really do know all this, do not enter my house. For even if you enter my house, there is no rice-porridge prepared for you, nor boiled rice, nor any other kind of food. If you do not know all this and still enter my house, I will cause you to be flung into a ditch filled with dung, and will then cause you to be beaten with sticks." Having thus reflected, he gave the following order to his men, "When you observe that they are about to sit down, take your places in the rear and pull the coverlets which are spread over the seats out from under, lest the coverlets be smeared with filth." As Sirigutta thought, the naked ascetics were unaware of what had been planned. They fell into the ditch and were disgraced.

(cont'd on page 125)

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Likewise in this worldly mess, the disciple outshines the blinded worldlings by his wisdom.

59. *Ēvaṁ saṅkārabhūtēsu*
andhabhūtē puthujjanē
atirōcati paññāya
Sammāsambuddhasāvakō. (4:16)

So among rubbish-beings,
common humans blind-become,
the Perfect Buddha's pupil
Outshines with wisdom bright.

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ARAHATS SHINE WHEREVER THEY ARE

4 (12) The Story of Garahadinna (Verses 58 & 59) (cont'd)

Garahadinna, planning to take revenge, invited the Buddha. The Buddha, accompanied by five hundred monks, went to the house of Garahadinna and stood before the door. Garahadinna came forth from the house, paid obeisance to the monks with the five rests, and taking his stand before them and raising his clasped hands in an attitude of reverent salutation, thought to himself, "So, Venerable, you know all about the past, the present, and the future! In sixteen different ways you comprehend the thoughts of all living beings! So at least your supporter tells me. If you really do know all this, do not enter my house. For even if you enter my house, you will find no rice-porridge or boiled rice or any other kind of food. Instead I will cause you to be flung into a charcoal-pit and will bring humiliation upon you."

But, contrary to his thought, a miracle happened. Lotus flowers as big as cart wheels sprang up, rending the charcoal-pit asunder. "What am I to do?" Garahadinna asked Sirigutta. "Did you not just now point out to me certain earthenware vessels and say, 'All these vessels are filled with rice-porridge; all these are filled with boiled rice,' and so forth?" "What I said was false, master. The vessels are empty." "Never mind. Go look at the rice-porridge and other kinds of food in those vessels." At that instant the vessels over which he spoke the word "rice-porridge" were filled with rice-porridge, the vessels over which he spoke the words "boiled rice" were filled with boiled rice, and so it happened likewise with the other vessels.

When Garahadinna saw this miracle, he was filled with joy and happiness and his heart was filled with faith. With profound reverence he waited on the congregation of Monks presided over by the Buddha. The meal over, Garahadinna, indicating that he wished the Buddha to speak the words of thanksgiving, took his bowl. Thus Garahadinna was converted into a faithful disciple of the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 58)

yathā saṅkāradhānasmiṁ mahāpathē ujjhitasmiṁ tattha sucigandhaṁ manōramaṁ padumaṁ jāyētha

yathā: just as; *saṅkāradhānasmiṁ:* in a heap of garbage; *mahāpathē ujjhitasmiṁ:* dumped beside a highway; *tattha:* there; *sucigandhaṁ:* sweet smelling; *manōramaṁ:* attractive; *padumaṁ:* a lotus; *jāyētha:* may grow

Someone is likely to dump refuse on a high road. In that heap of refuse, a sweet-smelling lotus is likely to grow.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 59)

ēvaṁ saṅkārabhūtēsu sammā sambuddhasāvakō andhabhūtē puthujjanē paññāya atirōcati

ēvaṁ: similarly; *saṅkārabhūtēsu:* among those who have become garbage; *sammā sambuddhasāvakō:* a disciple of the Buddha; *andhabhūtē puthujjanē:* among the blinded worldlings; *paññāya:* through wisdom; *atirōcati:* shines greatly

In the same way, in the heap of rubbish made up of various types of foolish people, the disciple of the Buddha shines above all others.

Commentary

padumaṁ tattha jāyētha: a lotus is quite likely to arise. The emergence of the exceptional out of the lowly and the depraved, is a recurrent theme in the Buddha's discourses. The wise person who has overcome the worldly, though arisen out of the ordinary folk, is likened to a lotus. Though sprung out of the mud, the lotus is uncontaminated by the mud. In these verses, the wise truth-seeker is compared to a lotus springing out of the wayside dump. Though risen out of the mud, the lotus is beautiful and fragrant, very much like the saintly person who has emerged out of corrupt people.

Atirōcati paññāya: through wisdom one shines greatly. Nobody is condemned in Buddhism, for greatness is latent even in the seemingly lowliest just as lotuses spring from muddy ponds.

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We are impressed by His spirit of reason

When we read Buddha's discourses, we are impressed by his spirit of reason. His ethical path has for its first step right views, a rational outlook. He endeavours to brush aside all cobwebs that interfere with mankind's vision of itself and its destiny.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "Gautama The Buddha"

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Chapter 5

BĀLA VAGGA

Fools

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To the sleepless, night is long; to the weary, the league; to the ignorant the cycle of existence.

60. *Dīghā jāgaratō ratti*
dīghaṁ santassa yōjanaṁ
dīghō bālānaṁ saṁsārō
saddhammaṁ avijānataṁ. (5.1)

Long is the night for the sleepless,
long the league for the weary one,
saṁsāra's way is long for fools
who know not Dhamma True.

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BĀLA VAGGA (FOOLS)
SAṀSĀRA IS LONG TO THE IGNORANT

5 (1) The Story of a Certain Person (Verse 60)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a certain young man and King Pasēnadī of Kōsala.

One day King Pasēnadi, while going out in the city, happened to see a beautiful young woman standing at the window of her house and he instantly fell in love with her. So the king tried to find ways and means of getting her. Finding that she was a married woman, he sent for her husband and made him serve at the palace. Later, the husband was sent on an impossible errand by the king. The young man was to go to a place, a yōjana (twelve miles) away from Sāvatthi, bring back some Kumudu (lotus) flowers and some red earth called 'arunavatī' from the land of the serpents (nāgas) and arrive at Sāvatthi the same evening, in time for the king's bath. The king's intention was to kill the husband if he failed to arrive back in time, and to take the wife for himself. Hurriedly taking a food packet from his wife, the young man set out on his errand. On the way, he shared his food with a traveller and he threw some rice into the water and said loudly, "O guardian spirits and nāgas inhabiting this river! King Pasēnadī has commanded me to get some Kumudu flowers and arunavatī (red earth) for him. I have today shared my food with a traveller; I have also fed the fish in the river; I now share with you the benefits of the good deeds I have done today. Please get the Kumudu lotus and arunavatī red earth for me." The king of the nāgas, upon hearing him, took the appearance of an old man and brought the lotus and the red earth.

On that evening, King Pasēnadi, fearing that the young husband might arrive in time, had the city-gates closed early. the young man, finding the city-gates closed, placed the red earth on the city-wall and stuck the flowers on the earth. Then he declared loudly,"O citizens! I have today accomplished my errand in time as instructed by the king. King Pasēnadī, without any justification, plans to kill me." After that, the young man left for the Jētavana Monastery to take shelter and find solace in the peaceful atmosphere of the Monastery.

Meanwhile, King Pasēnadī, obsessed with sexual desire, could not sleep, and kept thinking out how he would get rid of the husband in the morning and take his wife. At about midnight, he heard some eerie sounds; actually, these were the mournful voices of four persons suffering in Lōhakumbhi Niraya. Hearing those voices, the king was terrified. Early in the morning, he went to Jētavana Monastery to consult the Buddha, as advised by Queen Mallikā. When the Buddha was told about the four voices the king heard in the night, he explained to the king that those were the voices of four beings, who were the sons of rich men during the time of Kassapa Buddha, and that now they were suffering in Lōhakumbhi Niraya because they had committed sexual misconduct with other peoples's wives. Then, the king came to realize the wickedness of the deed and the severity of the punishment. So, he decided then and there that he would no longer covet another man's wife. "After all, it was on account of my intense desire for another man's wife that I was tormented and could not sleep," he reflected. Then King Pasēnadi said to the Buddha, "Venerable, now I know how long the night is for one who cannot sleep." The young man who was close at hand came forward to say, "Venerable, because I had travelled the full distance of a yōjana yesterday, I, too, know how long the journey of a yōjana is to one who is weary."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 60)

jāgaratō ratti dīghā santassa yōjanaṁ dīghaṁ
saddhammaṁ avijānataṁ bālānaṁ saṁsārō dīghō

jāgaratō: to the sleepless; *ratti dīghā:* the night is long; *santassa:* to the fatigued; *yōjanaṁ dīghaṁ:* mile is long; *saddhammaṁ:* the doctrine; *avijānataṁ:* ignorant; *bālānaṁ:* to the immature persons; *saṁsārō:* the cycle of existence; *dīghō:* is long

To a sleepless person the night is very long. To the weary the league seems quite long. To the ignorant, bereft of an awareness of the dhamma, the cycle of existence is very long, as he is not aware how to shorten it.

Commentary

Saṁsāra: The perpetual tour of beings from life to life, the vicious cycle of birth, death and rebirth, which the Buddhists yearn to put an end to. Rebirth is not seen by Buddhists as a continuation of life, but as a perpetuation of death. We are reborn only to die again. 'Eternal life' is an illusion. Life is but birth, ageing and death. Its continuity is not welcomed by a Buddhist. The Buddhist goal is 'immortality' or 'deathlessness' which is the only possible reality, which is quite distinct from 'eternal life'. Immortality, which is Nibbāna, is not achieved through rebirth, but through its stopping. This is not the annihilation of existence or being; because, being or 'existence' is only an illusion. It is dispelling the illusion of being and giving up the attachment to it.

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If one finds no equal or superior for company, a solitary career is commendable.

61. *Carañcē nādhigaccheyya*
seyyaṁ sadisamattanō
ēkacariyaṁ daḷhaṁ kayirā
natthi bālē sahāyatā. (5:2)

If a wayfarer fails to find
one better or one equal,
steadfast he should fare alone
for with a fool's no fellowship.

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DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH THE IGNORANT

5 (2) The Story of a Resident Pupil of Venerable Mahākassapa (Verse 61)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a resident pupil of Venerable Mahākassapa.

While Venerable Kassapa was in residence at Pipphali Cave, he had two pupils learning under him. One of these performed his duties faithfully, but the other frequently shirked his duties and sought to take credit for work done by the other. For example, the faithful pupil would set out water for washing the face, and a tooth-stick. Knowing this, the faithless pupil would go to the Venerable and say, "Venerable, water for washing the face is set out, and a tooth-stick. Go wash your face." When it was time to prepare water for bathing the feet and for the bath, he would pursue the same tactics.

The faithful pupil thought to himself, "This fellow is constantly shirking his work and is seeking to take credit for my work. Very well! I will do something about this. So one day, while the faithless pupil was asleep after a meal, he heated water for the bath, poured it into a water-jar, and set it in the back room, leaving only a pint-pot of water steaming in the boiler. In the evening the faithless pupil woke up and saw steam pouring out. "He must have heated water and put it in the bathroom," he thought. So he went quickly to the Venerable, bowed, and said, "Venerable, water has been placed in the bathroom; go and bathe." So saying, he accompanied the Venerable to the bathroom. But when the Venerable saw no water, he said, "Brother, where is the water?" The youth went to the room where the fire was kept, and lowering a ladle into the boiler, and perceived that it was empty. "See what the rascal has done!" he exclaimed. "He has set an empty boiler on the brazier, and then went — who knows where? Of course I thought there was water in the bathroom and went and told the Venerable so." Disappointed, he took a water-jar and went to the bathing-place at the river.

Venerable Kassapa thought, "All this time this young fellow has been shirking from his duties and has sought to take credit for work really done by his brother-pupil." On the following day he refused to accompany the Venerable on his rounds. The Venerable therefore took his other pupil with him to a certain place.

While he was away, the faithless pupil went to the house of a layman who was a supporter of the Venerable. The layman asked him, "Where is the monk?" The Venerable doesn't feel well, and therefore remained at the Monastery." "What then should he have, Venerable?" "Give him such and such food," said the youth, pretending that the monk had told him to ask for it. Accordingly they prepared food such as he asked for, and gave it to him. He took the food, ate it on the way back, and returned to the Monastery.

Now the Venerable had received from his supporter five robes, and these he presented to the youth who accompanied him. The novice dyed them and converted them into under and upper garments for himself. The Venerable admonished the pupil on his behaviour. He resented this advice. The next day, he set fire to the Monastery and ran away. When he died, he was reborn in the Great Hell of Avīci.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 61)

caraṁ attanō seyyaṁ sadisaṁ cē nā adhigaccheyya ēkacariyaṁ daḷhaṁ kayirā bālē sahāyatā natthi

caraṁ: as companion; *attanō:* for oneself; *seyyaṁ:* a greater; *sadisaṁ:* on an equal; *cē nā adhigaccheyya:* is not found; ēkacariyaṁ: being alone; *daḷham kayirā:* should be done; *bālē sahāyatā:* companionship with fools; *natthi:* there is not

People need companions. But if one does not find a person who is better than, or at least equal to oneself, it is better to be alone rather than keep company with foolish people. There is no profitable companionship with fools.

Commentary

sahāyatā: association; companionship. This verse insists that one should not keep company with immature people. Association with the immature is not at all conducive even to worldly progress; not to speak of spiritual progress.

According to the commentary this term connotes higher morality, insight, Paths, and Fruits of Sainthood. No such virtues are found in the foolish.

Out of compassion, to work for their betterment, one may associate with the foolish but not be contaminated by them.

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The unwise man prides over his children and his wealth. But he has not even himself.

62. *Puttā m'atthi dhanaṁm'atthi*
iti bālō vihaññati
attā hi attanō natthi
kutō puttā kutō dhanaṁ? (5:3)

"Sons have I, wealth have I",
thus the fool is fretful.
He himself is not his own,
how then are sons, how wealth?

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IGNORANCE BRINGS SUFFERING

5 (3) The Story of Ānanda, the Rich Man (Verse 62)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a miserly rich man, named Ānanda.

There was once a very wealthy man named Ānanda in Sāvatthi. Although he possessed eighty billion, he was very reluctant to give anything in charity. To his son, Mūlasiri, he used to say, "Don't think the wealth we have now is very much. Do not give away anything from what you have, for you must make it grow. Otherwise, your wealth will dwindle." This rich man had five pots of gold buried in his house and he died without revealing their location to his son.

Ānanda, the rich man, was reborn in a village of beggars, not far from Sāvatthi. From the time his mother was pregnant, the income of the beggars decreased; the villagers thought there must be a wicked and unlucky one amongst them. By dividing themselves up into groups and by the process of elimination, they came to the conclusion that the pregnant beggar woman must be the unfortunate one. Thus, she was driven out of the village. When her son was born, the son proved to be extremely ugly and repulsive. His hands and feet and eyes and ears and nose and mouth were not where they should have been. Terrible looking that he was, he looked like a mud spirit. In spite of this, however, his mother did not abandon him, for great is the love of a mother for the child she has carried in her womb. If she went out begging by herself, she would get alms as before, but if she went out with her son she would get nothing. So, when the boy could go out by himself, his mother placed a plate in his hand and left him, saying, "Dear son, because of you we have been brought to great distress. Now we can support you no longer. In this city meals are provided for poor folk and travellers. Get your living by begging for alms in this town." As he wandered about in Sāvatthi, he remembered his old house and his past existence. So he went into the house. When the sons of his son Mūlasiri saw him, they were frightened by his ugly looks and began to cry. The servants then beat him and threw him out of the house.

The Buddha who was on his alms-round saw the incident and asked Venerable Ānanda to fetch Mūlasiri. When Mūlasiri came, the Buddha told him that the young beggar was his own father in his previous existence. But Mūlasiri could not believe it. So, the Buddha directed the beggar boy to show where he had buried his five pots of gold. Then only, Mūlasiri accepted the truth and from that time he became a devoted lay-disciple of the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 62)

mē puttā atthi mē dhanaṁ atthi iti bālō vihaññati
attā hi attanō natthi puttā kutō dhanaṁ kutō

mē: I; *puttā atthi:* have sons; *mē:* I; *dhanaṁ atthi:* have wealth; *iti:* this way; *bālō:* the fool; *vihaññati:* worries; *attā hi:* one's own self; *attanō natthi:* one does not have; *puttā:* sons; *kutō:* how can that be; *dhanaṁ:* wealth; *kutō:* how can that be.

The fool worries "I have sons," "I have wealth." When his self is not his own, then how can he claim, "I have sons" or "I have wealth"?

Commentary

attā hi attanō natthi: the fools tax themselves, thinking that they have sons, they have wealth. But, in reality, their selves are not their own. If their 'self' were their own, they could control it as they wished. But they grow old; they decay; they fall ill; unexpected things happen to them, so how can they think that they possess themselves?

Grains, wealth, silver, gold and whatever property there is; slaves, craftsmen, hired menials and all the dependant ones -

All these have to be abandoned when leaving. But whatever one does through deed, word or thought -

That alone belongs to him; that alone he takes with him and that alone follows him like the inseparable shadow.

All beings die. Life ends in death. Beings fare according to their deeds, experiencing the results of their meritorious and sinful deeds. Those who do sinful deeds go to the woeful states and those who do meritorious deeds, attain blissful states. Therefore, let one always do good deeds, which serve as a store for life elsewhere. Meritorious deeds are a great support to beings in the future world.

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An unwise man who knows he's a fool is a wise man thereby. Knowing it not he's truly a fool.

63. *Yō bālō maññati bālyaṁ*
paṇḍitō vāpi tēna sō
bālō ca paṇḍitamānī
sa vē bālō'ti vuccati. (5:4)

Conceiving so his foolishness
the fool is thereby wise,
while 'fool' is called that fool
conceited that he's wise.

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KNOW REALITY. BE WISE.

5 (4) The Story of Two Pick-pockets (Verse 63)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to two pick-pockets.

The story goes that these two men, who were lucky companions, accompanied a great throng to Jētavana to hear the Buddha. One of them listened to the Teaching, the other watched for a chance to steal something. The first, through listening to the Teaching 'Entered the Stream'; the second found five coins tied to the belt of a certain man and stole the money. The thief had food cooked as usual in his house, but there was no cooking done in the house of his companion. His comrade the thief, and likewise the thief's wife, ridiculed him, saying, "You are so excessively wise that you cannot obtain money enough to have regular meals cooked in your own house." He who entered the stream thought to himself, "This man, just because he is a fool, does not think that he is a fool." And going to Jētavana with his kinsfolk, he told the Buddha of the incident.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 63)

bālō yō bālyaṁ maññati tēna sō paṇḍitō vā api,
bālō ca paṇḍitamānī sō vē bālō iti vuccati

bālō: a fool; *yō bālyaṁ:* one's foolishness; *maññati:* knows; *tēna:* by virtue of that knowledge; *sō:* he; *paṇḍitō vā api:* is also a wise person ; *bālō ca:* if an ignorant person; *paṇḍitamānī:* thinks he is wise; *sō:* he; *vē:* in truth; *bālō iti vuccati:* is called a foolish person

If a foolish individual were to become aware that he is foolish, by virtue of that awareness, he could be described as a wise person. On the other hand, if a foolish person were to think that he is wise, he could be described as a foolish person.

Commentary

yō bālō maññati bālyaṁ: if a foolish person knows he is foolish. The implication of this stanza is that the true wisdom is found in the awareness of reality. If one is aware of one's own foolishness, that awareness makes him wise. The basis of true wisdom is the right knowledge of things as they really are. Those who are foolish but are given to believe that they are wise are truly foolish because, that basically false awareness colours the totality of their thinking.

bālō: the foolish person. Foolishness is the result of confusion *(mōha)* and unawareness *(avijjā)*. Unawareness is the primary root of all evil and suffering in the world, veiling man's mental eyes and preventing him from seeing his own true nature. It carries with it the delusion which tricks beings by making life appear to them as permanent, happy, personal and desirable. It prevents them from seeing that everything in reality is impermanent, liable to suffering, void of 'I' and 'Mine,' and basically undesirable. Unawareness *(avijjā)* is defined as "not knowing the four Truths; namely, suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way to its cessation".

As *avijjā* is the foundation of all evil and suffering, it stands first in the formula of Dependent Origination. *Avijjā* should not be regarded as 'the causeless cause of all things. It has a cause too. The cause of it is stated thus: 'With the arising of *āsava* there is the arising of *avijjā*. The Buddha said, "No first beginning of *avijjā* can be perceived, before which *avijjā* was not, and after which it came to be. But it can be perceived that *avijjā* has its specific condition."

As unawareness *(avijjā)* still exists, even in a very subtle way, until the attainment of Arahatship or perfection, it is counted as the last of the ten Fetters which bind beings to the cycle of rebirths. As the first two Roots of Evil, greed and hate are on their part rooted in unawareness and consequently all unwholesome states of mind are inseparably bound up with it, confusion *(mōha)* is the most obstinate of the three Roots of Evil.

Avijjā is one of the *āsavas* (influences) that motivate behaviour. It is often called an obscurant ***but does not appear together with the usual list of five obscurant.***

Unawareness (*avijja*) of the truth of suffering, its cause, its end, and the way to its end, is the chief cause that sets the cycle of life *(saṁsāra)* in motion. In other words, it is the not-knowingness of things as they truly are, or of oneself as one really is. It clouds all right understanding.

"*Avijjā* is the blinding obscurant that keeps us trapped in this cycle of rebirth" says the Buddha. When unawareness is destroyed and turned into awareness, the "chain of causation" is shattered as in the case of the Buddhas and Arahats. In the *Itivuttaka* the Buddha states "Those who have destroyed *avijjā* and have broken through the dense darkness of *avijjā*, will tour no more in saṁsāra.

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The unwise misses the Dhamma though close to the wise, like a spoon misses flavour of food.

64. *Yāvajīvam pi cē bālō*
paṇḍitaṁ payirupāsati
na sō dhammaṁ vijānāti
dabbī sūparasaṁ yathā. (5:5)

Though all through life the fool
might wait upon the wise,
no more the Dhamma can he sense
than spoon the taste of soup.

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THE IGNORANT CANNOT BENEFIT FROM THE WISE

5 (5) The Story of Venerable Udāyi (Verse 64)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Udayi, a pretentious monk. The story goes that when the monks left the Hall of Truth, Venerable Udāyi used to go in and sit in the Seat of the Dhamma. Now one day some visiting monks saw him there, and thinking to themselves, "This must be the Buddha," asked him some questions about the aggregates of being and other matters. Discovering that he knew nothing about any of these things, they said in scorn, "Who is this monk that he should live in the same monastery with the Buddha? He does not even know about the aggregates of being, the elements of being, and the organs and objects of sense." So they reported the matter to the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 64)

bālō cē yāvajīvaṁ api paṇḍitaṁ payirupāsati, sō dhammaṁ na vijānāti yathā dabbī sūparasaṁ.

bālō: an ignorant person; *cē:* if; *yāvajīvaṁ api:* even life long; *paṇḍitaṁ:* a wise person; *payirupāsati:* associates intimately; *sō:* he; *dhammaṁ:* the way of existence; *na vijānāti:* will not learn; *yathā:* just as; *dabbī:* the spoon: *sūparasaṁ:* the taste of soup (will not know)

The fool, even if he kept the company of a wise person intimately over a life-time, will not become aware of the nature of experience, just as a spoon will not know the taste of soup.

Commentary

dabbī: the spoon. The Buddha has presented in this stanza a very vivid image of what is being said by him. *Dabbī* — the spoon, stirs dishes. In the course of its work the spoon comes into intimate contact with all forms of foodstuff. The spoon turns left and right, up and down, turning the food this way and that. The spoon continues to do this for all forms of dishes — sweet, sour, astringent, etc. The spoon goes on for ages until it decays. But the point made by the Buddha is that, after that, the spoon does not know the taste of food. This is a very apt image to show what happens to a foolish person who associates with the wise over a lifetime. He does not derive even an iota of profit for all that association.

Dhamma: the term Dhamma (meaning "experience") takes on numerous meanings. The meaning which is foremost in popular Buddhism is 'the Word of the Buddha'. The Buddha taught the world what he 'experienced'. The process through which the world came to know about this 'experience' was the Word of the Buddha, which is called Buddhadhamma, which has been recounted extensively in Buddhist scriptures. Immediately on Enlightenment, he was absorbed in solitary meditation. At that time, the following thought occurred to him, "This 'experience', which I have realized, is indeed profound, difficult to perceive, difficult to comprehend, tranquil, exalted, not within the sphere of logic, subtle, and is to be understood by the wise. These beings are attached to material pleasures. This causally connected 'Dependent Arising' is a subject which is difficult to comprehend. And this Nibbāna — the cessation of the conditioned, the abandoning of all passions, the destruction of craving, the non-attachment, and the cessation — is also a matter not easily comprehensible. If I were to teach this 'experience' (Dhamma), others would not understand me. That will be only weariness to me, that will be tiredness to me." Then these wonderful verses unheard of before occurred to the Buddha: "With difficulty have I comprehended the Dhamma. There is no need to proclaim it now. This Dhamma is not easily understood by those who are dominated by lust and hatred. The lust-ridden masses, shrouded in darkness, do not see this Dhamma, which goes against the stream, which is not easy to understand, profound, difficult to perceive and subtle." As the Buddha reflected thus, he was not disposed to expound the Dhamma. Thereupon Brahma Sahampati (believed by Brahmins to be the creator of the world) read the thoughts of the Buddha, and, fearing that the world might perish through not hearing the dhamma, approached Him and invited Him to teach the Dhamma thus: "O Lord, may the Buddha expound the Dhamma! May the Buddha expound the Dhamma! There are beings with little dust in their eyes, who, not hearing the Dhamma, fall away. There will be those who understand the Dhamma." Furthermore, he remarked, "In ancient times there arose in Magadha a Dhamma, impure, thought out by the corrupted. Open this door to the Deathless State. May they hear the Dhamma understood by the Stainless One! Just as one standing on the summit of a rocky mountain would behold the people around, even so may the All-Seeing, Wise One who has ascended this palace of Dhamma, may the Sorrowless One, look upon the people who are plunged in grief and are overcome by birth and decay! "Rise, O Hero, victor in battle, caravan leader, debt-free One, and go out into the World! May the Buddha teach the Dhamma! There will be those who will understand the Dhamma." When the brahma said so, the Exalted One spoke to him thus: "The following thought, O Brahma, occurred to me — 'This Dhamma which I have comprehended is not easily understood by those who are dominated by lust and hatred. The lust-ridden masses, shrouded in darkness, do not see this Dhamma, which goes against the stream, which is abstruse, profound, difficult to perceive, and subtle'. As I reflected thus, my mind turned to inaction and to not teaching the Dhamma." Brahma Sahampati appealed to the Buddha for the second time and He made the same reply. When he appealed to the Buddha for the third time, the Buddha, out of compassion for beings, surveyed the world with His Buddha-Vision. As he surveyed thus, He saw beings with little and much dust in their eyes, with keen and dull intellect, with good and bad characteristics, beings who are easy and beings who are difficult to be taught, and few others who view evil with fear, and believe in a life beyond. As in the case of a blue, red or white lotus pond, some lotuses are born in the water, grow in the water, remain immersed in the water, and thrive plunged in the water; some are born in the water, grow in the water and remain on the surface of the water; some others are born in the water, grow in the water and emerging out of the water, stand uncontaminated by the water. Even so, as the Buddha surveyed the world with His Buddha-Vision, He saw beings with little and much dust in their eyes, with keen and dull intellect, with good and bad characteristics, beings who are easy and difficult to be taught, and few others who view evil with fear, and believe in a life beyond. Having seen this, he set out to preach his gospel, out of compassion for all suffering beings. Buddha's doctrine was initiated this way. The Dhamma signifies, in the first instance, the truth about experience which He revealed for the benefit of all beings.

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The wise speedily gathers the Dhamma from the wise like the tongue the flavour of food.

65. *Muhuttamapi cē viññū*
paṇḍitaṁ payirupāsati
khippaṁ dhammaṁ vijānāti
jivhā sūparasaṁ yathā. (5:6)

Though briefly one intelligent
might wait upon the wise,
quickly Dhamma he can sense
as tongue the taste of soup.

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PROFIT FROM THE WISE

5 (6) The Story of Thirty Monks from Pāṭheyyaka (Verse 65)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to thirty monks from Pāṭheyyaka.

Thirty monks were taught the Dhamma by the Buddha in the Kappāsika Grove. Thirty youths from Pāṭheyyaka were, on one occasion, enjoying themselves with a prostitute in a forest. Then the prostitute stole some of their valuable ornaments and ran away. While searching for her in the forest, they met the Buddha. At that time all of them obeyed the command of the Buddha, "Come, monks!" and they received bowls and robes created by supernatural power. Taking upon themselves the thirteen pure practices, they returned after a long time to the Buddha, hearkened to his discourse on the beginningless, and before leaving their seats, attained arahatship.

The monks began a discussion in the Hall of Truth: "On how short a time did these monks perceive the Dhamma!" The Buddha, hearing this, said to them, "Monks, this is not the first time these thirty companions committed sin. They did the same thing in a previous state of existence. But hearing the religious instruction of Venerable Tuṇḍila in the Tuṇḍila Jātaka, they perceived the Dhamma very quickly and took upon themselves the five precepts. It was solely through the merit acquired by this act that they attained arahatship immediately, even as they sat in their seats."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 65)

viññū cē muhuttaṁ api paṇḍitaṁ payirupāsati
khippaṁ dhammaṁ vijānāti yathā jivhā
sūparasaṁ

viññū: the wise; *cē muhuttaṁ api:* even for a moment; *paṇḍitaṁ:* the man of mature wisdom; *payirupāsati:* associates; *khippaṁ:* instantly; *dhammaṁ:* the doctrine; *vijānāti:* learns; *yathā:* just as; *jivhā:* the tongue; *sūparasaṁ:* (relishes) the taste of various dishes

If wise person were to associate with a wise person, even for one moment, he will quickly understand the Teaching. This is very much like the tongue being able to discern the subtle flavours of soup. This stanza could be further appreciated when you contrast it with the previous one. In the previous one the image used is the spoon. Though it serves tasty food endlessly, it just cannot appreciate how food tastes, very much like a foolish individual being unable to appreciate the teaching even when he keeps company with the wise. An intelligent man, even though he is associated with a wise man only for a moment, quickly understands the Dhamma, just as the tongue knows the taste of the soup.

Commentary

jivhā sūparasaṁ yathā: like the tongue knows the flavour of food. The image of food-flavour is continued here as well. Food-flavour is a universal human experience. Therefore an image that is associated with the taste of food can be appreciated universally. In this stanza the Buddha compares the wise person to the tongue. The tongue keeps the company of much food. But, with alacrity it can discuss various flavours, in total contrast to the spoon that does not know how the food tastes, in spite of the fact that it spends its whole lifetime in food. Just like the tongue, the wise person knows the 'flavour' of the virtuous person instantly he comes into contact with one.

viññū: one who possesses *viññāna* (cognition). Here *viññāna* implies intelligence. Cognition is one of the five aggregates; one of the four nutriments; the third link of the dependent origination; the fifth in a sixfold division of elements. Viewed as one of the five groups, it is inseparably linked with the three other mental groups (feeling, perception and formations) and furnishes the bare cognition of the object, while the other three contribute more specific functions. Its ethical and karmic character, and its greater or lesser degree of intensity and clarity, are chiefly determined by the mental formations associated with it. Just as the other groups of existence, consciousness is a flux and does not constitute an abiding mind-substance; nor is it a transmigrating entity or soul. The three characteristics, impermanence, suffering and not-self, are frequently applied to it in the texts. The Buddha often stressed that "apart from conditions, there is no arising of consciousness": and all these statements about its nature hold good for the entire range of consciousness, be it past, future or presently arisen, gross or subtle, in one-self or external, inferior or lofty, far or near.

According to the six senses it divides into six kinds, viz. eye-(or visual)consciousness, etc. About the dependent arising of these six kinds of consciousness, "Conditioned through the eye, the visible object, light and attention, eye-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the ear, the audible object, the ear-passage and attention, ear-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the nose, the olfactive object, air and attention, nose-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the tongue, the gustative object, humidity and attention, tongue-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the body, bodily impression, the earth-element and attention, body-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the subconscious mind, the mind-object, and attention, mind-consciousness arises." The *Abhidhamma* literature distinguishes eighty-nine classes of consciousness, being either karmically wholesome, unwholesome or neutral, and belonging either to the sense-sphere, the fine-material or the immaterial sphere, or to supermundane consciousness.

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The unwise committing crimes of evil consequences live as enemies to themselves.

66. *Caranti bālā dummēdhā*
amittēn'ēva attanā
karontā pāpakaṁ kammaṁ
yaṁ hōti kaṭukapphalaṁ. (5:7)

Fools of feeble wisdom fare
enemies to themselves,
making evil kamma
which is of bitter fruit.

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A SINNER IS ONE'S OWN FOE

5 (7) The Story of Suppabuddha, the Leper (Verse 66)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to Suppabuddha, a leper.

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to the leper Suppabuddha. The story of the leper Suppabuddha is found in the Udāna.

For at that time the leper Suppabuddha, seated in the outer circle of the congregation, heard the Buddha preach the Dhamma and attained the fruit of conversion. Desiring to inform the Buddha of the blessing he had received, but not daring to force his way into the midst of the congregation, he waited until the populace had paid obeisance to the Buddha, had accompanied him a little way, and had turned back. Then he went to the Monastery.

At that moment the Sakka king of gods thought to himself, "Yonder leper Suppabuddha desires to make known the blessing he has received in the Religion of the Buddha. I will test him." So he went to him, poised in the air, and spoke thus to him, "Suppabuddha, you are a poor man, a man afflicted with misery. I will give you limitless wealth if you will say, 'The Buddha is not the Buddha, the Teaching is not the Dhamma, the Sangha is not the Sangha. I have had enough of the Buddha, I have had enough of the Law, I have had enough of the Order.'" The leper said to him, "Who are you?" "I am Sakka." "Fool, shameless one, you are not fit to talk to me. You say that I am poor and afflicted. On the contrary, I have attained happiness and great wealth: the seven stores of honourable wealth. They that possess these stores of wealth are not called poor by Buddhas or solitary mendicants. When Sakka heard him speak thus, he left him by the way, went to the Buddha, and told him all the questions and answers. The Buddha said to him, "Sakka, it is not possible, even with a hundred pieces of gold, even with a thousand, to prevail upon the leper Suppabuddha to say, 'The Buddha is not the Buddha, the Dhamma is not the Dhamma, the Sangha is not the Sangha.'"

So Suppabuddha the leper went to the Buddha, and the Buddha received him. And having informed the Buddha of the blessing he had received, he arose from his seat and went his way. Before he had gone very far, he was killed by a young heifer. We are told that this heifer was a female evil spirit who had been a cow in each of a hundred existences, and that as a cow she had killed four youths: Pukkūsāti, a young man of high station; Bāhiya Dārucīriya; Tambadāṭhika, the robber outlaw; and Suppabuddha the leper.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 66)

bālā dummēdhā yaṁ kaṭukapphalaṁ hōti (taṁ) pāpakaṁ kammaṁ karontā amittēna iva attanā caranti

bālā: the immature people; *dummēdhā:* unwise men; *yaṁ kaṭukapphalaṁ hōti:* which brings evil results; *pāpakaṁ kammaṁ:* (that) evil act; *karontā:* doing; *amittēna iva:* like an enemy; *attanā:* to oneself; *caranti:* live.

Those unwise foolish people behave in a manner that is harmful to themselves. Their sinful actions yield bitter fruit. They are their own enemy.

Commentary

bālā dummēdhā: the foolish people lacking wisdom. The two words are more or less synonymous. But the lacking in a sense of discrimination, intensifies the meaning of ignorant. The sense of discrimination is compared, in some texts, to lightning in a mountain peak. That bolt of lightning destroys everything on the top of the mountain. In the same way, the wise is capable of destroying all the defilements. But the ignorant person and the person who is incapable of discrimination do not have that capacity to uproot blemishes. The foolish people who lack intelligence commit evil actions that bring him harmful results. They are being enemies to themselves.

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That action which is likely to make one repent later, is not good action at all.

67. *Na taṁ kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu*
yaṁ katvā anutappati
yassa assumukhō rōdaṁ
vipākaṁ paṭisēvati. (5:8)

That kamma's not well-made
from which there is remorse,
of which one senses the result
with weeping and a tear-stained face.

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DO WHAT BRINGS HAPPINESS

5 (8) The Story of a Farmer (Verse 67)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a farmer who handled poison.

A farmer tilled a field not far from Sāvatthi. One day some thieves robbed the house of a rich man. One of the thieves outwitted his companions and secretly put away a purse containing a thousand pieces of money in a fold of his garment. As the thief departed with his share, the purse dropped out of the fold of his garment, but he did not notice his loss.

That day, early in the morning, the Buddha surveyed the world, and seeing that a certain farmer had entered his net of vision, he considered within himself what would happen.

Early in the morning the farmer went to till his field. The Buddha was also there with the Venerable Ānanda. Seeing the Buddha, the farmer went and paid obeisance to the Buddha, and then resumed tilling his field. The Buddha said nothing to him. Going to the place where the purse had fallen and seeing it, he said to the Venerable Ānanda, "See, Ānanda, a poisonous snake!" "I see, Venerable, a deadly, poisonous snake!" The farmer heard their conversation and said to himself, "I will kill the snake." So saying, he took a goad-stick, went to the spot, and discovered the purse. "The Buddha must have referred to this purse," thought he. Not knowing exactly what to do about it, he laid the purse aside, covered it with dust, and resumed his plowing.

Later men discovered the theft, and trailed the thieves to the field, and coming to the spot where they had divided their spoils, saw the foot-prints of the farmer. Following his footsteps to the spot where the purse was buried, they removed the earth and picked up the purse. Thereupon they reviled him, saying, "So you robbed the house, and here you are plowing the field!" And having given him a good beating, they took him and censured him before the king.

When the king heard what had happened, he ordered the farmer to be put to death. As the farmer walked along and the king's men lashed him with whips, he kept repeating the words, "See, Ānanda, a poisonous snake!" "I see, Venerable, a deadly, poisonous snake!" Not another word did he utter. The king's men asked him, "You are repeating words of the Buddha and of the Venerable Ānanda. What does this mean?" The farmer replied, "I will say, if I am permitted to see the king."

He told the king, "I am not a thief, your majesty." The farmer told him the whole story. The king took the farmer to the Buddha, and asked him about this. The Buddha said, "Yes, your majesty, I said just that when I went there. A wise man should not do a deed of which he must afterwards repent."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 67)

yaṁ katvā anutappati yassa vipākaṁ assumukhō rōdaṁ paṭisēvati, taṁ kammaṁ kataṁ na sādhu

yaṁ: some actions; *katvā:* having done; *anutappati:* one regrets; *yassa:* of some actions; *vipākaṁ:* results; *assumukhō:* with tear-smeared face; *rōdaṁ:* and weeping; *paṭisēvati:* one has to suffer; *taṁ kammaṁ:* that kind of action; *kataṁ na sādhu:* is not good to be done

It is good if one were to avoid committing such actions which would later lead to regret. When one regrets one weeps.

Commentary

assumukhō rōdaṁ: weeping with tear smeared face. This has been indicated as the result of action, having done which one repents. The admonition here is to avoid those actions which lead to remorse later.

anutappati: repents. Repentance is thought of as the result of action which had been committed with no idea at all about later repercussions.

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Deeds whose results one faces with glee, without remorse, are good deeds indeed.

68. *Tañca kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu*
yaṁ katvā nānutappati
yassa patītō sumanō
vipākaṁ paṭisēvati. (5:9)

But well-made is that kamma
which done brings no remorse,
of which one senses the result
with glad mind and with joy.

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HAPPINESS RESULTS FROM GOOD DEEDS

5 (9) The Story of Sumana, the Florist (Verse 68)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sumana the florist.

A florist, named Sumana, had to supply King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha with jasmine flowers every morning. One day, as he was going to the king's palace he saw the Buddha, with a radiating halo of light-rays, coming into town for alms-food accompanied by many monks. Seeing the Buddha in his resplendent glory, the florist Sumana felt a strong desire to offer his flowers to the Buddha. Then and there, he decided that even if the king were to drive him out of the country or to kill him, he would not offer the flowers to the king for that day. Thus, he threw up the flowers to the sides, to the back and over and above the head of the Buddha. The flowers remained hanging in the air; those over the head formed a canopy of flowers and those at the back and the sides formed walls of flowers. These flowers followed the Buddha in this position as he moved on, and stopped when the Buddha stopped. As the Buddha proceeded, surrounded by walls of flowers, and a canopy of flowers, with the six-coloured rays radiating from his body, followed by a large entourage, thousands of people inside and outside of Rājagaha came out of their houses to pay obeisance to the Buddha. As for Sumana, his entire body was suffused with delightful satisfaction (patti).

The wife of the florist Sumana then went to the king and said that she had nothing to do with her husband failing to supply the king with flowers for that day. The king, being a sōtāpanna himself, felt quite happy about the flowers. He came out to see the wonderful sight and paid obeisance to the Buddha. The king also took the opportunity to offer alms-food to the Buddha and his disciples. The king served the congregation of monks with choice food. At the conclusion of the meal the Buddha returned thanks, and surrounded as before by four sides of flowers and accompanied by a great multitude of people shouting in exultation, proceeded to the Monastery.

The king accompanied the Buddha a little way and turned back. Then he sent for the florist and asked him, "What did you say when you honoured the Buddha?" The florist replied, "Your majesty, I surrendered my life to him and honoured him, saying, 'The king may kill me or banish me from his kingdom.'" The king said, "You are a great man." So saying, he presented him with eight elephants, eight horses, eight male slaves, eight female slaves, eight magnificent sets of jewels, eight thousand pieces of money, eight women taken from the royal harem, adorned with all the adornments, and eight choice villages. These eight-fold gifts did the king give him.

Venerable Ānanda thought to himself, "Shouts of exultation and acclamation have continued all during the day since early morning. What will be the reward of the florist?" The Buddha replied "Ānanda, he surrendered his life to me and rendered honour to me. Therefore, because he has immense faith in me, he will not enter a state of suffering but will receive the fruits of his good deed in the world of the gods and in the world of men. One day he will become the solitary Buddha Sumana."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 68)

yaṁ katvā na anutappati yassa vipākaṁ patītō sumanō paṭisēvati taṁ ca kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu

yaṁ: some act; *katvā:* having done; *nā anutappati:* one does not regret; *yassa:* of which action; *vipākaṁ:* the result; *patītō:* happily; *sumanō:* with pleasant mind; *paṭisēvati:* one enjoys; *taṁ:* that kind of action; *ca kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu:* is certainly good to be done

It is good if one were to do such actions that would not bring repentance later. One should do things that bring pleasant consequences.

Commentary

patītō sumanō: happily and with pleasant mind. In this instance, what is described is the result of good actions, which does not cause repentance. The doer of the action has had forethought about what would result from his actions. With that forethought he had done only those actions that will not lead to remorse.

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The unwise thinks evil deeds are sweet till they ripen not. As they ripen he's plunged in grief.

69. *Madhū'va maññati bālō*
yāva pāpaṁ na paccati
yadā ca paccatī pāpaṁ
atha bālō dukkhaṁ nigacchati. (5:10)

When evil kamma's immature
the fool thinks it is honeyed,
but when the evil has matured
then to the fool comes dukkha.

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SIN YIELDS BITTER RESULTS

5 (10) The Story of Nun Uppalavaṇṇā (Verse 69)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Nun Uppalavaṇṇā.

Once there was a young daughter of a rich man in Sāvatthi. Because she was so beautiful, with looks so tender and sweet, like a blue lotus flower, she was called "Uppalavaṇṇā", the blue lotus. The fame of her beauty spread far and wide and there were many suitors: princes, rich men and many others. Thereupon, the merchant, her father, thought to himself, "I shall not be able to satisfy the wishes of all, but I must find some way out of the difficulty." Now she was, in her last existence, before attaining Nibbāna and therefore her father's words were, to her, like oil a hundred times refined sprinkled on her head. Therefore she replied, "Dear father, I'll become a nun." So he prepared rich gifts in her honour, and conducted her to the community of nuns where she was admitted.

One day, her turn came to unlock and lock the hall of compassion. After she had lighted the lamp and swept the hall, her attention was attracted to the flame of the lamp. She concentrated on the flame. Her attention on the element of fire, entered into a state of trance. She attained arahatship.

Some time later, she moved to the Dark Forest (Andhavana) and lived in solitude. While Nun Uppalavaṅṅā was out on her alms-round, Nanda, the son of her uncle, came to her monastery and hid himself underneath her sofa. Nanda had fallen in love with Uppalavaṇṇā before she became a nun; his intention obviously was to take her by force.

On her return Nun Uppalavannā entered the hut, closed the door, and sat down on the bed, unable to see in the dark, because she had just come in out of the sunlight. Hardly had she seated herself on the bed when the youth crawled out from under the sofa and climbed on top. The nun cried out, "Fool, do not ruin me!" But the youth overcame her resistance, worked out his will over her, and went his way. As if unable to endure his wickedness, the great earth burst asunder, and he was swallowed up and reborn in the great Hell of Avīci.

The nun told the other nuns what had happened, and the nuns told the monks, and the monks told the Buddha. Having heard this, the Buddha addressed the monks as follows, "Monks, the simpleton, whoever he may be, whether monk or nun, or lay disciple male or female, who commits an act of sin, acts with as much joy and happiness, with as much pleasure and delight, as though he were eating honey or sugar or some other sweet-tasting substance." Then he said, "Monks, they, that have rid themselves of the corruptions, neither like the pleasures of love nor gratified their passions. For, even as a drop of water which has fallen upon a lotus-leaf, does not cling thereto or remain thereon, but crawls over and falls off, precisely so love does not cling to the heart of one who has rid himself of the corruptions.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 69)

pāpaṁ yāva na paccati bālō madhū iva maññati
yadā ca pāpaṁ paccati atha bālō dukkhaṁ nigacchati

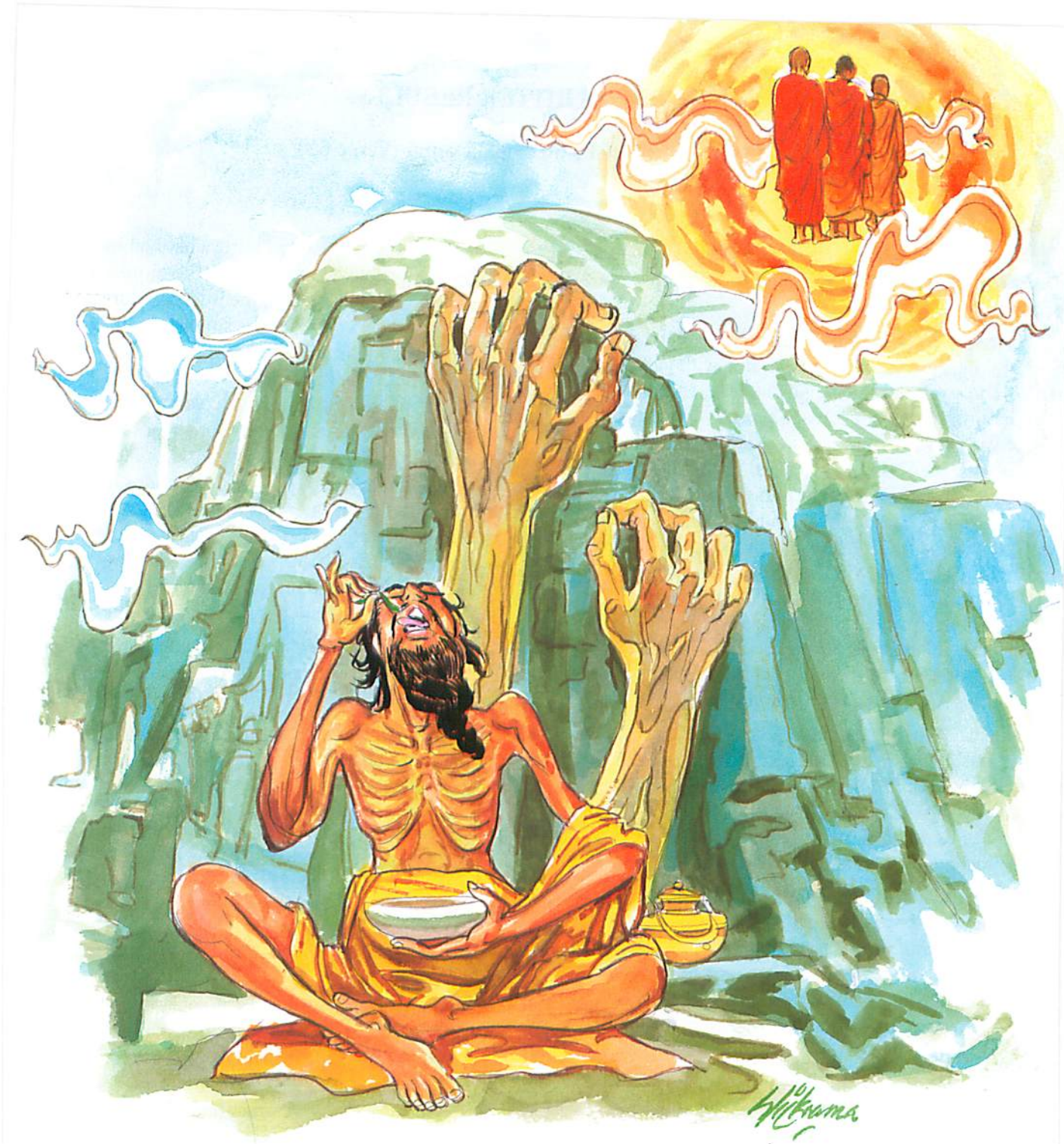
pāpaṁ: evil; *yāva na paccati:* as long as it does not begin to yield results; *bālō:* the ignorant; *madhu iva:* like honey; *maññati:* considers; *yadā ca:* when; *pāpaṁ:* the evil; *paccati:* matures; *atha:* at that time; *bālō:* the ignorant; *dukkhaṁ:* to suffering; *nigacchati:* comes

When a sinful act is being done, the ignorant person enjoys it as if it were honey. But the suffering comes when it begins to yield its evil results.

Commentary

pāpaṁ: unwholesome action. At times this kind of action is characterized as akusala. Akusala implies unwholesomeness. They are those karmical volitions and the consciousness and mental concomitants associated therewith, which are accompanied either by greed or hate or merely delusion; and all these phenomena are causes of unfavourable Karma-results and contain the seeds of unhappy destiny or rebirth.

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Senseless austerities of reduced eating are not worth a fragment of grasping the Dhamma.

70. *Māsē māsē kusaggēna*
bālō bhuñjētha bhōjanaṁ
na sō saṅkhatadhammānaṁ
kalaṁ agghati sōḷasiṁ. (5:11)

Month after month with blady-grass tip
the fool may take his food;
he's not worth the slightest bit
of one who Dhamma knows.

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THE UNCONDITIONED IS THE HIGHEST ACHIEVEMENT

5 (11) The Story of Monk Jambuka (Verse 70)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Jambuka.

Jambuka was the son of a rich man in Sāvatthi. Due to his past evil deeds he was born with very peculiar habits. As a child, he wanted to sleep on the floor with no proper bed, and take his own excrement for food instead of rice. When he grew older, his parents sent him to the ājivakas, the naked ascetics. When those ascetics found out about his peculiar food habits they drove him away. In the nights he ate human excrement and in the day time stood still on one leg and kept his mouth open. he used to say that he kept his mouth open because he only lived on air and that he stood on one leg because it would otherwise be too heavy for the earth to bear him. "I never sit down, I never go to sleep," he boasted and on account of this, he was known as Jambuka, a jackal.

Many people believed him and some would come to him with offerings of choice food. Then Jambuka would refuse and say, "I do not take any food except air." When pressed, he would take just a little of the food with the tip of a blade of grass and say, "Now go, this little food will give you enough merit." In this way, Jambuka lived for fifty-five years, naked and taking only excreta.

One day, the Buddha saw in his vision that Jambuka was due to attain arahatship within a short time. So, in the evening, the Buddha went to where Jambuka was staying and asked for some place to spend the night. Jambuka pointed out to him a mountain-cave not far from the stone slab on which he himself was staying. During the first, second and third watches of the night, the Cātummahārājikā dēvās, Sakka and Mahābrahma came to pay homage to the Buddha in turn. On all the three occasions, the forest was lit up and Jambuka saw the light three times. In the morning, he walked over to the Buddha and enquired about the lights.

When told about the dēvās, Sakka and Mahābrahma coming to pay homage to the Buddha, Jambuka was very much impressed, and said to the Buddha, "You must, indeed, be a wonderful person for the dēvās, Sakka and Mahā

brahma to come and pay homage to you. As for me, even though I have practiced austerely for fifty-five years, living only on air and standing only on one leg, none of the dēvās, nor Sakka, nor Mahabrahma has ever came to me." To him, the Buddha replied "O Jambuka! You have been deceiving other people, but you cannot deceive me. I know that for fifty-five years you have been eating excrement and sleeping on the ground."

Hearing that, Jambuka was horrified and terror-stricken, and repented for having done evil and for having deceived other people. He went down on his knees and the Buddha gave him a piece of cloth to put on. The Buddha then proceeded to deliver a discourse; at the end of which Jambuka attained arahatship and joined the Buddhist Sangha.

Soon after this, Jambuka's pupils from Anga and Magadha arrived and they were surprised to see their teacher with the Buddha. Venerable Jambuka then explained to his pupils that he had joined the Buddhist Order and that he was now only a disciple of the Buddha. To them, the Buddha said that although their teacher had lived austerely by taking food very sparingly, it was not worth even one-sixteenth part of his present practice and achievement.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 70)

bālō māsē māsē kusaggēna bhōjanaṁ bhuñjētha sō saṅkhatadhammānaṁ sōḷasiṁ kalaṁ na agghati

bālō: the ignorant person; *māsē māsē:* once a month; *kusaggēna:* with the tip of a grass blade; *bhōjanaṁ:* food; *bhuñjētha:* eats; *sō:* (but) he; *saṅkhatadhammānaṁ:* of the attainment of the unconditioned; *sōlasiṁ kalaṁ:* at least one-sixteenth; *na agghati:* is not worth

A foolish person sets out to attain the highest reward of spiritual life. As an austere ascetic, he eats a mere morsel of food with the tip of a blade of grass. And, that too, once a month. Still that kind of misguided ascetic will not at all be nearer liberation than when he started. With all that, he is not worth even one-sixteenth part of an Arahant who has achieved the Unconditioned.

Commentary

kusaggēna bhōjanaṁ: even if a tiny morsel of food is taken with the tip of a blade of grass. This verse refers to those who practice extreme austerities and self-mortification. The Buddha, quite early in his Teachings, discounted austerities as a means of realizing the truth.

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Results of evil acts ripen not as swiftly as curdling milk. They smoulder like sparks under ash.

71. *Na hi pāpaṁ kataṁ kammaṁ*
sajju khīraṁ'va muccati
ḍahantaṁ bālamanvēti
bhasmacchannō'va pāvakō. (5:12)

As milk, is evil kamma done,
so slowly does it sour.
Smouldering does it follow the fool
like fire with ashes covered.

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SIN IS LIKE SPARKS OF FIRE HIDDEN IN ASHES

5 (12) The Story of Snake-Ghost (Verse 71)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a snake-ghost.

One day, in the midst of a thousand ascetics wearing matted hair, the Venerable Lakkhana and the Venerable Moggallāna the great descended from Vulture Peak with the intention of making an alms-pilgrimage in Rājagaha. The Venerable Moggallāna, seeing a snake-ghost, smiled. Thereupon Venerable Lakkhana asked him the reason for his smile, saying, "Brother, it is not the proper time for you to ask that question. Wait until we are in the presence of the Buddha and then ask me." When they had completed their rounds for alms in Rājagaha and had come into the presence of the Buddha and had sat down, Venerable Lakkhana asked Venerable Moggallāna, "Brother Moggallāna, as you were descending from Vulture Peak, you smiled; and when I asked you the reason for your smile, you said, 'Wait until we are in the presence of the Buddha and then ask me.' Now tell me the reason."

Said the monk, "Brother, I smiled because I saw a snake-ghost. This is what he looked like: his head was like the head of a man, and the rest of his body was like that of a snake. He was what is called a snake-ghost. He was twenty-five leagues in length. Flames started from his head and went as far as his tail; flames started from his tail and went as far as his head. Flames of fire starting from his head played on both sides of his body; flames of fire starting from his sides descended on his body. There are two ghosts, they say, whose length is twenty-five leagues, the length of the rest being three-quarters of a league. But the length of this snake-ghost and of this crow-ghost was twenty-five leagues."

Moggallāna saw a crow-ghost and he asked the ghost about his former deed. The ghost said, "In a former state of existence I took three mouthfuls of food meant for venerables. As a result of that misdeed, when I died, I suffered torment in the Avīci Hell and thereafter, because the result of my evil deed was not yet exhausted, I was reborn on Vulture Peak as a crow-ghost. Now, because of my deed, I endure this suffering."

The story of the snake-ghost also was related. Now a certain resident of Benares was plowing a field near the wayside, and the people who passed through his field to see the solitary Buddha, trampled his field. The farmer tried to prevent them from doing this. But he was unable to prevent them. Finally, after the solitary Buddha had entered the city for alms, the farmer broke all his vessels for eating and drinking and set fire to his grass and leaf shelter. Then the people cried out, "Seize him!" They killed him. He was born in the Avīci Hell and later, he was reborn on Vulture Peak as a snake-ghost.

At this point, then, the monk said, "I smiled because I saw a snake-ghost." Straightaway the Buddha arose and witnessed to the truth of Moggallāna's statement, saying, "Monks, what Moggallāna says is the truth. I myself saw this very ghost on the day I attained enlightenment. But out of compassion for others, I did not say, 'As for those who will not believe my words, may it be to their disadvantage.'"

Explanatory Translation (Verse 71)

khīraṁ iva kataṁ pāpaṁ kammaṁ sajju na hi muccati. bhasmacchannō pāvakō iva ḍahaṁ taṁ bālaṁ anvēti

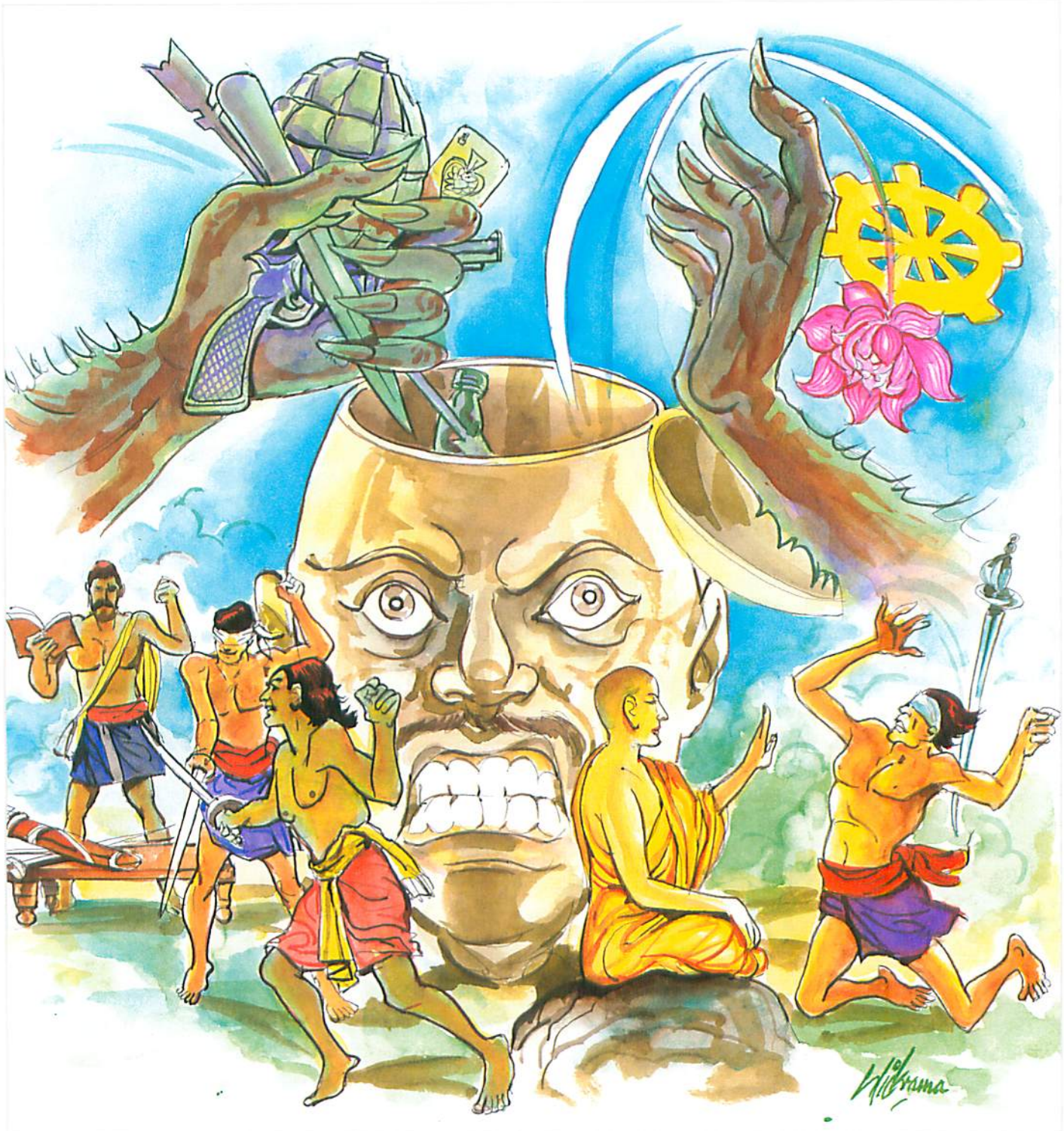
khīraṁ iva: like milk; *kataṁ pāpaṁ kammaṁ:* the evil acts committed; *sajju:* immediately on being extracted; *na hi muccati:* certainly does not curdle; *bhasmacchannō pāvakō iva:* like sparks of fire concealed by ashes; *ḍahaṁ:* burning; *taṁ bālaṁ:* that evil doer; *anvēti:* pursues

When an ignorant person commits an act of sin, it does not immediately yield bad results. This is just like the freshly extracted milk, which does not curdle immediately on being extracted from the cow's udder. The sin that has been committed remains concealed like the sparks covered with ashes, and continues to follow and burn the doer of sins.

Commentary

sajju khīraṁ iva muccati: the milk does not curdle immediately on being extracted. The milk has to undergo certain processes before it curdles. It is the same thing with the sinful act. It does not begin to show its evil results until later. Because the process is long-drawn, the sinner cannot immediately see the evil effect of his action. This makes him commit evil without seeing the harmful results it will bring in the future.

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Learning of the unwise leads to his destruction. Blasting his goodness it ruins him totally.

72. *Yāvadēva anatthāya*
ñattaṁ bālassa jāyati
hanti bālassa sukkaṁsaṁ
muddhamassa vipātayaṁ. (5:13)

Truly to his detriment
skill is born to the fool;
ruined is his better nature
and scattered are his wits.

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THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WICKED SPLITS HIS HEAD

5 (13) The Story of Saṭṭhikūṭa-Pēta (Verse 72)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a snake-ghost named Saṭṭhikūṭa.

Once upon a time, there lived in Benares a cripple who was an adept at the art of slinging stones. He used to sit at the city-gate under a certain banyan-tree, sling stones, and cut the leaves of the tree. The boys of the city would say to him, "Make an elephant for us, make a horse for us;" and he would make every animal they asked him to. As a reward he received from them food both hard and soft. One day, as the king was on his way to the pleasure-garden, he came to this place. The boys left the cripple within the shoots of the banyan-tree and ran away. Now it was noon when the king stopped and went in among the roots of the tree, and his body was overspread with the chequered shade.

"What does this mean?" said he, looking up. Seeing leaves cut in the forms of elephants and horses, he asked, "Whose work is this?" On being informed that it was the work of the cripple, he sent for him. Happy with the cripple's service the king gave him the eightfold gifts, and four fine large villages, north, east, south, and west of the city.

Now a certain man, observing the worldly prosperity won by the cripple, thought to himself, "This man, born a cripple, has won great prosperity through this art. I also ought to learn this art." He learnt it.

Now at that time a solitary Buddha named Sunetta resided in a shelter of leaves and grass near the city. When the man saw him enter the city through the gate for the purpose of receiving alms, he thought to himself, "This man has neither mother nor father. If I hit him, I shall have no penalty to pay; I will try my skill by hitting him." So aiming a stone at the right ear of the solitary Buddha, he let fly. The stone entered the solitary Buddha's right ear and came out of his left ear. The solitary Buddha suffered intense pain, was unable to continue his alms-round, and returning to his shelter of leaves through the air, passed into Nibbāna.

The people said, "This wicked fellow says that he hit the Private Buddha. Catch him!" And straightaway they beat him and then and there killed him. He was reborn in the Avīci Hell. Until this great earth was elevated a league, during all that time he suffered torment. Thereafter, because the fruit of his evil deed was not yet exhausted, he was reborn on the summit of Vulture Peak as a sledge-hammer ghost.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 72)

bālāssa ñattaṁ anatthāya yāva ēva jāyati, bālassa muddhaṁ vipātayaṁ assa sukkaṁsaṁ hanti

bālāssa: by the ignorant; *ñattaṁ:* what is learned; *anatthāya yāva ēva:* only to his harm; *jāyati:* (is) conducive; *bālassa:* of the ignorant person; *muddhaṁ:* head; *vipātayaṁ:* cuts off; *assa sukkaṁsaṁ:* what ever good is in him; *hanti:* destroys

Whatever is learned by the ignorant is conducive to harm. It brings about his own downfall. Misplaced learning destroys whatever potential learner possesses and renders him useless in terms of real knowledge.

Commentary

ñattaṁ: knowledge. This stanza emphasizes that even the knowledge of the foolish person brings about his destruction. Knowledge needs such other refinements as capacity to use it so that no harm is done to oneself and others. The foolish people though they may acquire some skill are devoid of the wisdom to use it properly.

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Unwisely he wishes for undeserved honour, privileges, and attention in the midst of laymen.

73. *Asataṁ bhāvanamiccheyya*
Purekkhārañca bhikkhusu
āvāsēsu ca issariyaṁ
pūjā parakulēsu ca. (5:14)

For position a fool may wish:
among the bhikkhus precedence,
in monasteries authority,
from other families honour.

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DESIRE FOR PRE-EMINENCE

5 (14) The Story of Citta the Householder (Verses 73 & 74)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to Venerable Sudhamma and Citta the householder.

A householder named Citta, residing in the city of Macchikāsaṇḍa, observed the Venerable Mahānāma, one of the band of five, making his round for alms; and pleased with his deportment, took his bowl, invited him into his house, provided him with food, and at the conclusion of the meal listened to the law and obtained the fruit of conversion. Now Citta, possessed of immovable faith, desiring to make his own pleasure-garden Ambaṭṭhaka Grove a place of residence for the Sangha, poured water into the right hand of the Venerable and made the grove move to the Sangha. The moment he uttered the words, "The Religion of the Buddha is firmly established," the earth shook to its ocean boundary. The great treasurer caused a splendid monastery to be erected in the grove, and thereafter the door stood open to monks who came from all four quarters. At Macchikāsaṇḍa also resided the Venerable Sudhamma.

Some time afterwards, the two Chief Disciples, hearing the rumour of Citta's good qualities, decided to pay their respects to him and therefore went to Macchikāsaṇḍa. Citta the householder, hearing that they were coming, proceeded forth half a league to meet them, escorted them to the monastery, invited them, performed the usual duties for visitors, and then made the following request of the Buddha, "Venerable, we desire to listen to a short discourse on the Dhamma." The Venerable replied, "Lay disciple, we are weary with the journey; nevertheless listen for a short while." Citta, merely by listening to the Buddha's discourse on the Dhamma, obtained the fruit of the second path. Then he bowed to the two chief disciples and invited them to be his guests, saying, "Venerables, pray take a meal in my house tomorrow with your thousand monks." Then he turned to the resident monk, the Venerable Sudhamma, and invited him, saying to him, "Venerable, you also come tomorrow with the Venerables." Angry at the thought, "He invited me last," Sudhamma refused the invitation; and although Citta repeated the invitation again and again, he still refused. The lay disciple said, "Pray be present, Venerable," and went out. On the following day he prepared splendid offerings in his own residence. Very early in the morning the Venerable Suddhamma thought to himself, "What manner of food has the householder prepared for the chief disciples? I will go see." So very early in the morning he took bowl and robe and went to his house.

"Pray sit down, Venerable," said the householder. "I will not sit down," replied Sudhamma; "I am about to set out on my alms-round." The Venerable surveyed the offerings prepared for the chief disciples, and seeking to annoy the householder about the varieties of food provided, said, "Householder, your food is most excellent, but there is one thing you have omitted." "What is that, Reverend sir?" "Sesame-cake, householder." Thereupon the householder rebuked him, comparing him to a crow. Angered at this, the Venerable said, "This is your residence, householder; I will depart." Three times the householder strove to prevail upon the Venerable to remain, but each time the latter refused. Finally he left the house, went to the Buddha, and related the words that had passed between Citta and himself. The Buddha said, "You, an inferior, have insulted a faithful, believing disciple." Having thus put the blame solely on the monk, the Buddha sent him back to beg pardon of the disciple. The Venerable went to Citta and said, "Householder, it was all my fault; please pardon me." But the householder refused to pardon him and said, "I will not pardon you."

Provoked at his failure to obtain pardon, he returned to the Buddha. The Buddha, although he knew that the householder would pardon Sudhamma, thought, "This Venerable is stubborn in his pride; now let him go thirty leagues and come back." And so, without telling him how he might gain pardon, he just dismissed him. The Venerable returned with pride humbled. The Buddha then gave the Venerable a companion and said to the Venerable, "Go with this companion and ask pardon of the householder." Said the Buddha, "A religious person ought not to give way to pride or ill-will, thinking, 'This residence is mine, this male lay disciple is mine, this female lay disciple is mine.' For if he so did, ill-will and pride and the other depravities increase."

After listening to this admonition Venerable Sudhamma bowed to the Buddha, rose from his seat, circum-ambulated the Buddha, and then, accompanied by his companion-monk, went within sight of the lay disciple, atoned for his fault, and begged the disciple's pardon. The lay disciple both pardoned him and in turn asked his pardon, saying, "I pardon you, Venerable; if I am to blame, pray pardon me also." The Venerable held steadfast in the admonition given by the Buddha, and in but a few days attained arahatship together with the supernatural faculties.

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As the untutored disciple claims for recognition by monk and layman, his pride increases.

74. *Mam ēva kata maññantu*
gihī pabbajitā ubhō
Mamē'va ativasā assu
kiccākiccēsu kismici
Iti bālassa saṇkappō
icchā mānō ca vaḍḍhati. (5:15)

Both monks and laymen, let them think
'This was done by me,
whatever the works, both great and small,
let them depend on me'.
Such the intention of a fool,
swollen his greed and conceit.

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THE IGNORANT ARE EGO-CENTRED

5 (14) The Story of Citta the Householder (Verses 73 & 74) (cont'd)

The lay disciple thought to himself, "Even without seeing the Buddha I have attained the fruit of conversion; even without seeing him I have attained the Fruit of the second path. I ought to see the Buddha." So he ordered yoked five hundred carts full of sesame, rice, ghee, sugar, garments, coverlets, and other offerings, whether of food or aught else." He visited the Buddha, and spent one month giving alms to the Buddha and the monks. After a month, Venerable Ānanda asked the Buddha, "Venerable, was it because he saw you that he received all these honour?" Said the Buddha, "Ānanda, no matter what place such a man resorts to, he receives gain and honour."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 73)

asataṁ bhāvanaṁ iccheyya, bhikkhūsu purekkhārañca āvāsēsu ca issariyaṁ parakulēsu pūjā ca

asataṁ bhāvanaṁ iccheyya: fond of being recognized for virtues he does not possess; *bhikkhūsu:* among the monks; *purekkhārañca:* leadership; *āvāsēsu ca:* residences; *issariyaṁ:* pre-eminence; *parakulēsu:* by other families; *pūjā ca:* acceptance, recognition and propitiation (desires)

He is fond of being recognized for what he, in reality, is not. Yearns for pre-eminence among peers. He craves for preference in matters relating to residences. He is enamoured of the idea of receiving gifts and requisites from other families as well.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 74)

gihī pabbajitā ubhō mama ēva kataṁ aññantu, kismici kiccākiccēsu mama ēva ativasā assu "iti bālassa saṅkappō icchā mānō ca vaḍḍhati

gihī: laymen; *pabbajitā:* monks; *ubhō:* both these groups; *mama ēva:* by me alone; *kataṁ aññantu:* should know as done; *kismici:* whatever; *kiccākiccēsu:* activities small or big; *mama ēva:* me alone; *ativasā assu:* should be followed; *iti:* this way; *bālassa:* of the ignorant; *saṅkappō:* is the thinking; *icchā:* craving; *mānō ca:* and pride (sense of superiority); *vaḍḍhati:* increase

The ignorant one has this attitude of mind: "Let both the lay people and the clergy know that this was done by me alone. In whatever activity small or big my leadership alone should prevail. Everybody must follow me." This conceit of the ignorant leads to craving, uncontrolled desire and to groundless pride, to a false sense of superiority. These begin to grow.

Commentary

asataṁ bhāvanaṁ iccheyya purekkhārañca: glory and pre-eminence. These two stanzas are entirely on various forms of egoism, experienced in monastic life. These forms affect largely those monks and ascetics who are not much advanced in spiritual progress. Since they have not begun to cherish the real values of monastic life, they are enamoured of tinsel-dazzle gifts, offerings, prestige leadership, etc. These egotistic pursuits are petty activities of those who are still in the foothills of spiritual ascent. These ignorant ones tend to acquire these assets of lay-life they left behind. Being surrounded by retinues, being sought out to be given special presents are all important to them. They are hurt if they felt that they are neglected. They begin to yearn for requisites from other families than their own, to enable them to widen their circle of admirers. These attitudes mar their spiritual achievements.

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The true disciple should know the path to worldly gain as one and that to Nibbāna as another.

75. *Aññā hi lābhūpanisā*
aññā nibbānagāminī
ēvamētaṁ abhiññāya
bhikkhu Buddhassa sāvakō
sakkāraṁ nābhinandeyya
vivēkamanubrūhayē. (5:16)

One is the way to worldly gain,
another to Nibbāna goes.
Clearly comprehending this
the bhikkhu, Buddha's follower
should wallow not in proffered gifts,
surrendering instead to solitude.

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PATH TO LIBERATION

5 (15) The Story of Novice Monk Tissa of the Forest Monastery (Verse 75)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Tissa, a novice monk, who dwelt in a forest monastery.

Tissa was the son of a rich man from Sāvatthi. His father used to offer alms-food to the chief disciple Sāriputta in their house and so Tissa even as a child had met the chief disciple on many occasions. At the age of seven he became a novice under the chief disciple Sāriputta. While he was staying at the Jētavana Monastery, many of his friends and relatives came to see him, bringing presents and offerings. The novice monk found these visits to be very tiresome; so after taking a subject of meditation from the Buddha, he left for a forest monastery. Whenever a villager offered him anything, Tissa would just say 'May you be happy, may you be liberated from the ills of life,' ("Sukhitā hōtha, dukkhā muccatha"), and would go on his own way. While he stayed at the forest monastery, he ardently and diligently practiced meditation, and at the end of three months he attained arahatship.

After the vassa (the rainy season), the Venerable Sāriputta, accompanied by the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna and other senior disciples, paid a visit to novice monk Tissa, with the permission of the Buddha. All the villagers came out to welcome the Venerable Sāriputta and his company of many monks. They also requested the Venerable Sāriputta to favour them with a discourse, but the chief disciple declined; instead, he directed his pupil Tissa to deliver a discourse to the villagers. The villagers, however, said that their teacher Tissa could only say "May you be happy, may you be liberated from the ills of life," and asked the chief disciple to assign another monk in his place. But the Venerable Sāriputta insisted that Tissa should deliver a discourse on the Dhamma, and said to Tissa, "Tissa, talk to them about the Dhamma and show them how to gain happiness and how to be liberated from the ills of life."

Thus, in obedience to his teacher, Novice Monk Tissa went up the platform to deliver his discourse. He explained to the audience the meaning of the aggregates (khandhās), sense bases and sense objects (āyatanas), elements of the perpetuation of the Teaching (Bōdhipakkhiya), the path leading to arahatship and Nibbāna, etc. Finally he concluded, "And thus, those who attain arahatship are liberated from all the ills of life and have perfect peace; all the rest will still wander about in the round of rebirths.

The Venerable Sāriputta praised Tissa for having expounded the Dhamma so well. Dawn was approaching when he finished his exposition, and all the villagers were very much impressed. Some of them were surprised that novice monk Tissa knew the Dhamma so well, but formerly he had talked so little about the Dhamma to them; the others were happy and contented to find the novice monk to be so learned and felt that they were very lucky to have him amongst them.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 75)

lābhūpanisā aññā hi nibbānagāminī aññā hi ēvaṁ Buddhassa sāvakō bhikkhu ētaṁ abhiññāya sakkāraṁ na abhinandeyya vivēkaṁ anubrūhayē

lābhūpanisā: the strategy to earn worldly profit; *aññā hi:* is one; *nibbānagāminī:* the path to liberation; *aññā hi:* (is) certainly yet another; *ēvaṁ Buddhassa sāvakō:* thus Buddha's disciple; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *ētaṁ:* this matter; *abhiññāya:* appreciating well; *sakkāraṁ:* undue adoration and offers of gifts; *na abhinandeyya:* should not entertain; *vivēkaṁ:* tranquility; *anubrūhayē:* should be pursued

There is one way to worldly and material progress and profit. But the way to Nibbāna is quite different from that. The monk, who is the Buddha's disciple, should be clearly aware of this difference. He must not take delight in the worldly gifts with which he is being enticed. He must on the other hand seek solitude.

Commentary

vivēkē: detachment, seclusion. According to Niddēsa, it is of three kinds: 1) bodily detachment, i.e., abiding in solitude free from alluring sensuous objects; 2) mental detachment, i.e., the inner detachment from sensuous things; 3) detachment from the substrata of existence. In the description of the first absorption, the words "detached from sensuous things refer to 'bodily detachment', the words 'detached from karmically unwholesome things' refer to 'mental detachment'; the words born of 'detachment', refer to the absence of the five hindrances.

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Knowledge is the key to higher path

Without sensuous pleasure would life be endurable? Without belief in immortality can man be moral? Without worship of a God can man advance towards righteousness? Yes, replies the Buddha, these ends can be attained by knowledge; knowledge alone is the key to the higher path, the one worth pursuing in life; knowledge is that which brings calmness and peace to life, which renders man indifferent to the storms of the phenomenal world.

Prof. Karl Pearson

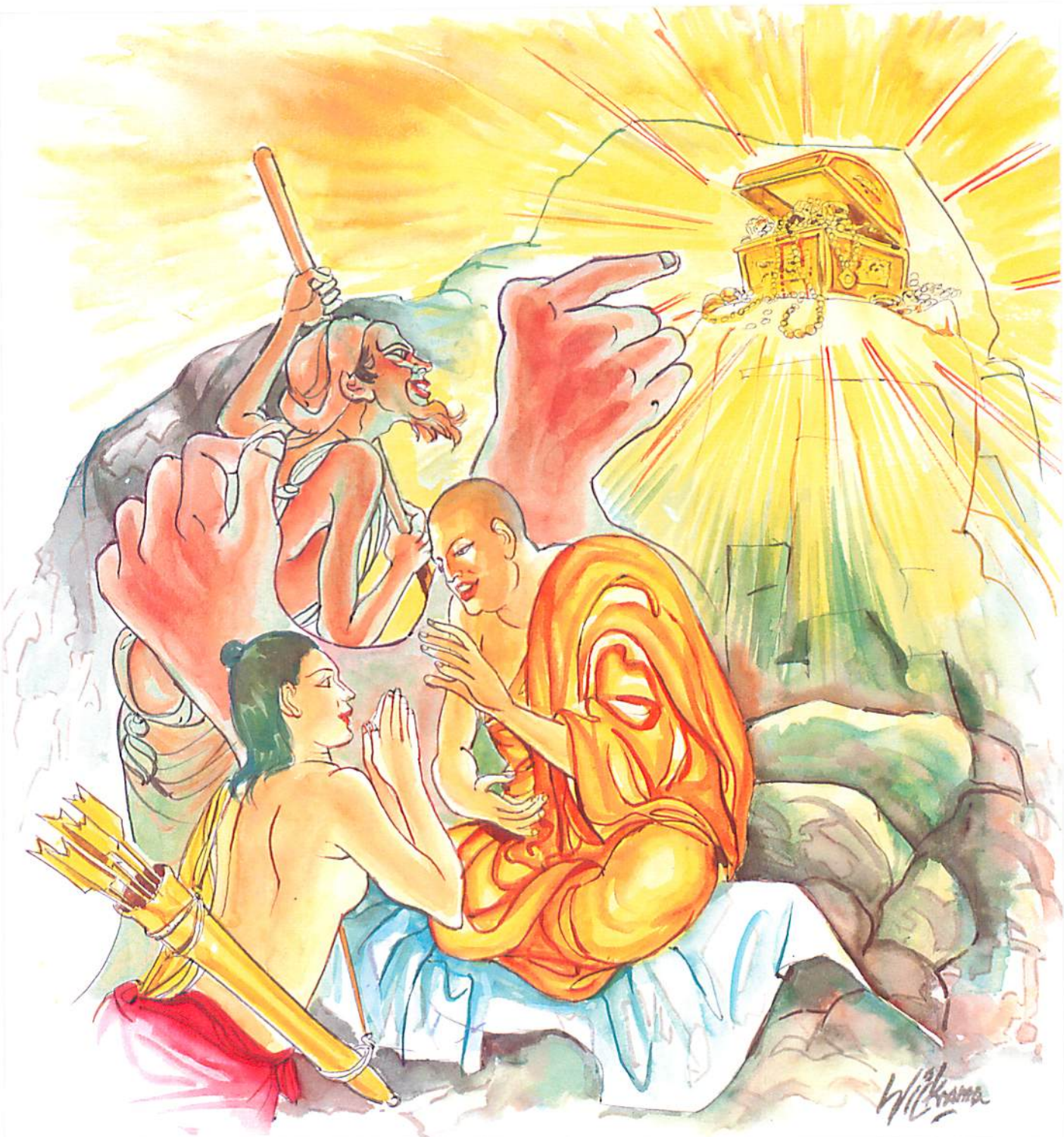
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Chapter 6

PAṆḌITA VAGGA

The Wise

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Associate with wise persons who like treasure-revealers show your faults constructively.

76. *Nidhīnaṁ'va pavattāraṁ*
yaṁ passē vajjadassinaṁ
niggayha vādiṁ mēdhāviṁ
tādisaṁ paṇḍitaṁ bhajē
tādisaṁ bhajamānassa
seyyō hōti na pāpiyō. (6:1)

Should one a man of wisdom meet
who points out faults and gives reproof,
who lays a hidden treasure bare,
with such a sage should one consort.
Consorting so is one enriched
and never in decline.

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PAṆḌITA VAGGA (The Wise)
TREASURE THE ADVICE OF THE WISE

6 (1) The Story of Venerable Rādha (Verse 76)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Monk Rādha, who was at one time a poor old brahmin.

Rādha was a poor brahmin who stayed in the monastery doing small services for the monks. For his services he was provided with food and clothing and other needs, but was not encouraged to join the Sangha, although he had a strong desire to become a monk.

One day, early in the morning, when the Buddha surveyed the world with his supernormal power, he saw the poor brahmin in his vision and knew that he was due for arahatship. So the Buddha went to the old man, and learned from him that the monks of the monastery did not want him to join the Sangha. The Buddha therefore called all the monks to him and asked them, "Is there any monk here who recollects any good turn done to him by this old man?" To this question, Venerable Sāriputta replied, "Venerable, I do recollect an instance when this old man offered me a spoonful of rice." "If that be so," the Buddha said, "shouldn't you help your benefactor to get liberated from the ills of life?" Then Venerable Sāriputta agreed to make the old man a monk and he was duly admitted to the Sangha. Venerable Sāriputta guided the old monk and he strictly followed his guidance. Within a few days, the old monk attained arahatship.

When the Buddha next came to see the monks, they reported to him how strictly the old monk followed the guidance of Venerable Sāriputta. To them, the Buddha replied that a monk should be amenable to guidance like Rādha and should not resent when rebuked for any fault or failing.

Said the Buddha, "Venerable Sāriputta was, in a pervious life, the solitary elephant which presented the pure white elephant his son to the carpenters, in recognition of the service they did him in healing his foot." Having said thus about Venerable Sāriputta, he said, with reference to Venerable Rādha, "Monks, when a fault is pointed out to a monk, he ought to be amenable to discipline like Rādha and when he is admonished, he should not take offence."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 76)

vajjadassinaṁ niggayhavādiṁ mēdhāviṁ yaṁ
nidhīnaṁ pavattāraṁ iva passē tādisaṁ paṇḍitaṁ
bhajē tādisaṁ bhajamānassa seyyō hōti pāpiyō na

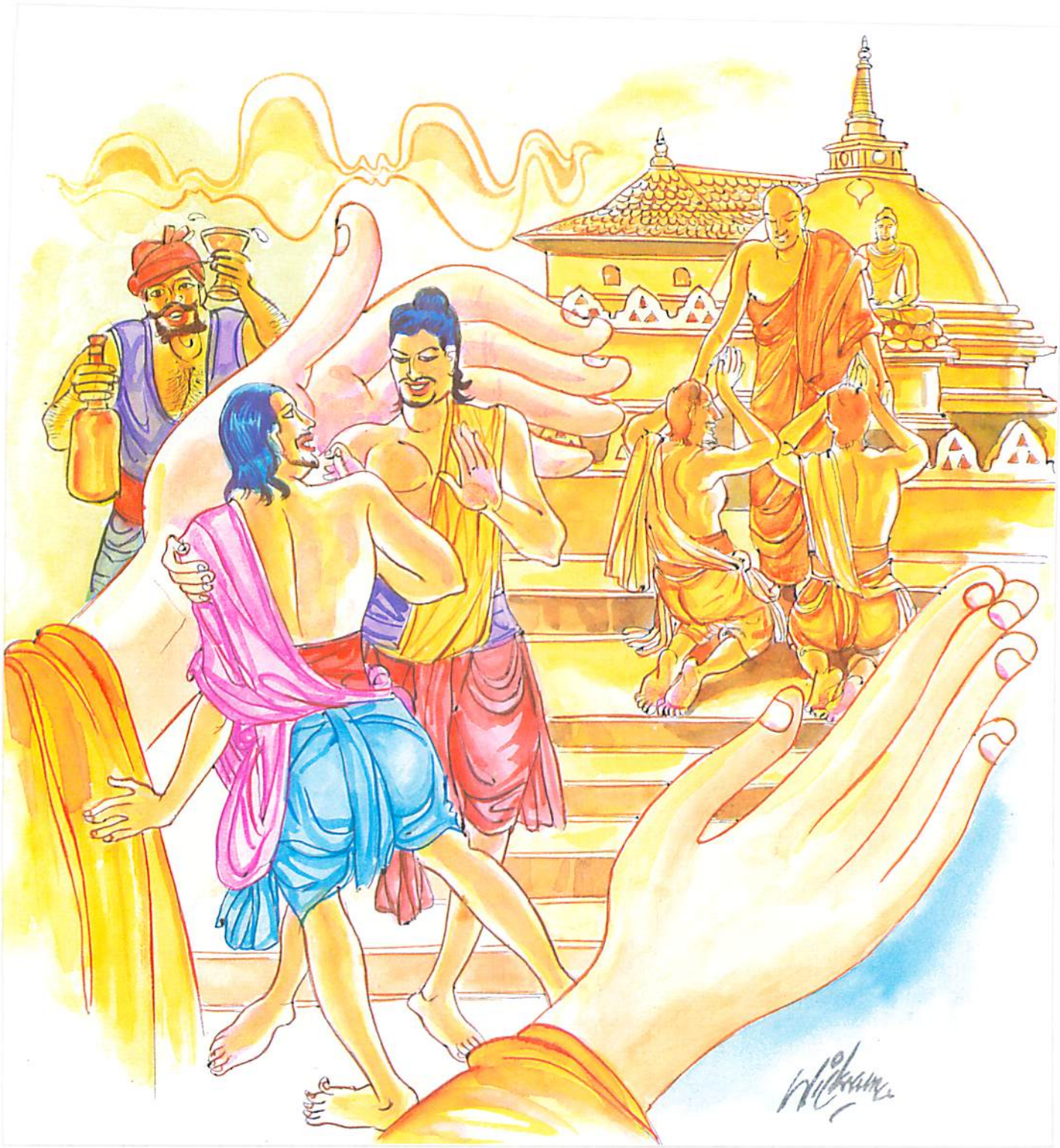
vajjadassinaṁ: who indicates errors; *niggayhavādiṁ:* who admonishes but constructively; *mēdhāviṁ:* wise; *yaṁ:* who; *nidhīnaṁ pavattāraṁ iva:* like a treasure-revealer; *passē:* discovers; *tādisaṁ:* such; *paṇḍitaṁ:* a wise person; *bhajē:* one should associate; *tādisaṁ:* such a person; *bhajamānassa:* to an individual who associates; *seyyō:* good; *hōti:* will happen; *pāpiyō:* evil; *na:* will not happen

If one discovers a wise person who points one's errors and sternly corrects one, he should be looked upon as a benign revealer of a treasure. His company should be sought. Such association would make better persons of men.

Commentary

vajjadassinaṁ niggayhavādiṁ: one who picks out faults; one who reproves. These two qualities are offered as the characteristics of a person who criticizes constructively. There are those who point out faults and reprove, with the intention of insulting a person. But in this stanza the constructive critics are meant. They of course highlight faults and reprove, but their intention is different. They go about these activities like 'revealers of treasures.' Who could describe a 'treasure-revealer' as a person who insults? That kind of guide will enable the learner to realize for himself the inner personality treasures he possesses, and will make him an adept in proper conduct, so that he can progress satisfactorily along the path to realization.

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Advice of wise persons pleases the virtuous and displeases the evil ones.

77. *Ōvadeyyānusāseyya,*
asabbhā ca nivārayē,
sataṁ hi sō piyō hōti,
asataṁ hōti appiyō. (6:2)

Let him exhort, let him instruct,
and check one from abasement.
Dear indeed is he to the true,
not dear is he to the false.

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THE VIRTUOUS CHERISH GOOD ADVICE

6 (2) The Story of Venerables Assaji and Punabbasuka (Verse 77)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerables Assaji and Punabbasuka.

These monks, we are told, were two pupils of the chief disciples, but in spite of that fact were shameless and wicked. While they were in residence at Kītāgiri with their retinues of many monks, they planted and caused to be planted flowering trees and were guilty of all manner of misconduct besides. They violated homes and procured thence the monastic requisites on which they lived. They rendered the monastery uninhabitable for the amiable monks.

Hearing of their doings, the Buddha was determined to expel them from the Sangha. For this purpose he summoned the two chief disciples, together with their retinues, and said to them, "Expel those who will not obey your commands, but admonish and instruct those who will obey. He who admonishes and instructs is hated by those that lack wisdom, but is loved and cherished by the wise." And joining the connection and instructed them in the Dhamma.

Sāriputta and Moggallāna went there and admonished and instructed those monks. Some of them received the admonitions of the Venerables and corrected their behaviour, others returned to the house-life while still others were expelled from the Sangha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 77)

Ōvadeyya anusāseyya asabbhā ca nivārayē sō hi satarh piyō hōti asatarh appiyō hōti

Ōvadeyya: (if a good friend) reproaches; *anusāseyya:* warns; *asabbhā ca:* from anti-social actions; *nivārayē:* safeguards; *sō hi:* that good friend; *satarh:* for the virtuous; *piyō hōti:* is appealing; *asatarh:* to evil people; *appiyō hōti:* is repulsive

The wise and good person who reproaches and warns, and prevents a person from getting into anti-social behaviour, is liked by virtuous individuals — and disliked by those who are evil.

Commentary

Ôvadeyya, anusāseyya: Reproaches and warns. In some commentaries, the distinction between *ōvāda* and *anusāsanā* is carefully established. 'Reproach' *(ōvāda)* is described as telling a person about what is good and what is bad, in terms of what has already been done. Telling a person about what is likely to ensue, if one did either this or that, in the future, is referred to as *"anusāsanā"* (warning). 'Reproach' *(ōvāda)* is made when one is physically present before the reproacher. But, if the two persons are not physically present together, and one's communications are conveyed to the other, that is described as 'warning' *(anusāsanā)*. Again, telling once only is *'ōvāda'* (reproach). Repeated telling is *"anusāsanā"* (warning).

asabbhā ca nivārayē: prevents one from resorting to anti-social action: makes him abstain from anti-social actions. It is abstinence from the wrong actions: killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. It inculcates compassion to all living beings; the taking only of things that are given; and living a pure and chaste life. By such moral conduct one gives others fearlessness, security and peace. All morality, or the good life, is founded on love and compassion, *mettā* and *karunā*. A person without these two salient qualities cannot be called a man of morals. Verbal and physical acts not tinged with love and compassion cannot be regarded as good and wholesome. Surely, one cannot kill, steal and so forth with thoughts of love and a good conscience, but it can be done only when one is driven by thoughts of cruelty, greed and ignorance.

It is necessary to cultivate a certain measure of mental discipline, because the untamed mind always finds excuses to commit evil in word or deed. 'When the thought is unguarded, bodily action also is unguarded; so are speech and mental action'.

Conduct builds character. No one can bestow the gift of a good character on another. Each one has to build it up by thought, reflection, care, effort, mindfulness and introspection. Just as in the mastery of an art one has to labour hard, so to master the art of noble conduct on which a good and strong character depends, one must be diligent and on the alert.

In the training of character the first thing necessary is to practice self control. If, instead, a man gives himself up to sense pleasures, his good social conduct and character will fall away — on this all teachers of religion and psychology agree. Those who are intoxicated with pleasures and are driven by the urge to enjoy themselves, cannot be properly educated until they have learned to admit their faults.

Regarding high moral conduct the Buddha advised thus:

"Evil can be abandoned. If it were not possible to give up evil, I would not say so. Since it can be done, I say unto you: 'Give up evil.'"

The Buddha continues, "Good can be cultivated. If it were not possible to cultivate good, I would not say so. Since it can be done, I say unto you: 'Cultivate the good.'"

This is the kind of guidance that a good advisor should provide to make a person abstain from unacceptable, immoral and anti-social *(asabbhā)* behaviour.

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Associate not with the wicked and the evil. Seek the company of noble and virtuous friends.

78. *Na bhajē pāpakē mittē*
na bhajē purisādhamē
bhajētha mittē kalyāṇē
bhajētha purisuttamē. (6:3)

Don't go around with evil friends,
with rogues do not resort.
Spend your time with noble friends,
with worthy ones consort.

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IN THE COMPANY OF THE VIRTUOUS

6 (3) The Story of Venerable Channa (Verse 78)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Channa.

Channa was the attendant who accompanied Prince Siddhattha when he renounced the world and left the palace on horseback. When the prince attained Buddhahood, Channa also became a monk. As a monk, he was very arrogant and overbearing because of his close connection with the Buddha. Channa used to say, "I came along with my master when he left the palace for the forest. At that time, I was the only companion of my master and there was no one else. But now, Sāriputta and Moggallāna are saying, 'We are the chief disciples,' and are strutting about the place."

When the Buddha sent for him and admonished him for his behaviour, he kept silent but continued to abuse and taunt the two chief disciples. Thus the Buddha sent for him and admonished him three times; still, he did not change. And again, the Buddha sent for Channa and said, "Channa, these two noble monks are good friends to you; you should associate with them and be on good terms with them."

In spite of repeated admonitions and advice given by the Buddha, Channa did as he pleased and continued to scold and abuse the monks. The Buddha, knowing this, said that Channa would not change during the Buddha's lifetime but after his demise *(parinibbāna)* Channa would surely change. On the eve of his *parinibbāna*, the Buddha called Venerable Ānanda to his bedside and instructed him to impose the brahma-punishment *(Brahmadaṇḍa)* to Channa; i.e., for the monks to simply ignore him and to have nothing to do with him. After the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha, Channa learning about the punishment from monks, felt a deep and bitter remorse for having done wrong and he fainted three times. Then he owned up his guilt to the monks and asked for pardon. From that moment, he changed his ways and outlook. He also obeyed their instructions in his meditation practice and soon attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 78)

pāpakē mittē na bhajē. purisādhamē na bhajē.
kalāynē mittē bhajētha. purisuttamē bhajētha

pāpakē mittē: bad friends; *na bhajē:* do not associate; *purisādhamē:* wicked evil people; *na bhajē:* do not keep company with; *kalāynē mittē:* worthy friends; *bhajētha:* associate; *purisuttamē:* noble superior people; *bhajētha:* keep company with

Do not associate with people who have evil ways. Avoid the company of wicked, evil people who are mean and bad. Associate with worthy friends. Keep the company of noble persons who are superior in quality and virtue and who will be able to elevate you.

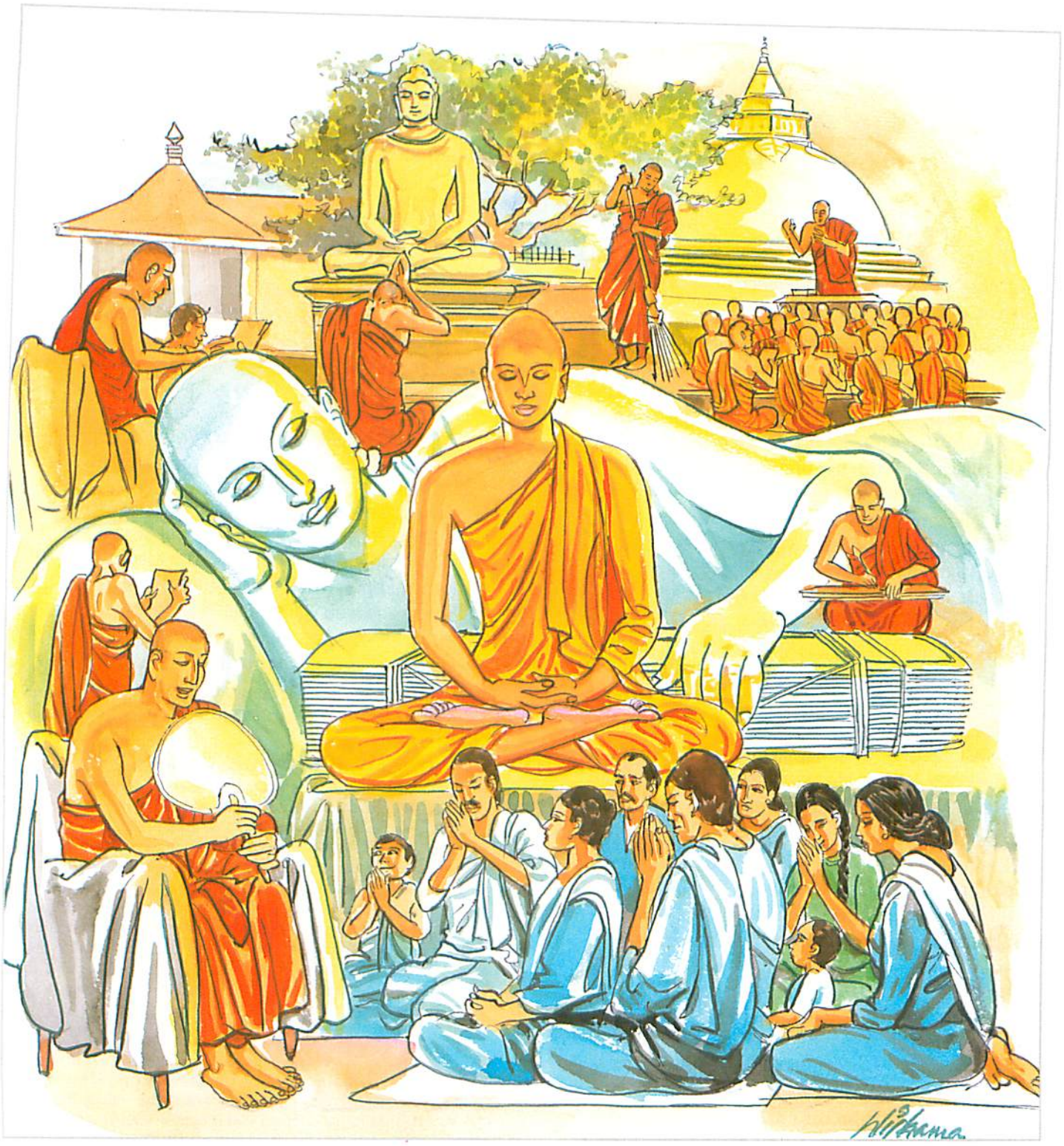
Commentary

Mitta: friend. In Buddhist literature the concept of friend is extensively analysed. In the commentary seven types of friends are indicated. They are:

(1) *pāṇa sakhā:* those who are friendly only at drinking bars; (2) *sammiya sammiyo:* those who are friendly only when you meet them; (3) *atthēsu jātēsu:* those who are friendly only when there is some task at hand; (4) *upakāraka:* those friends who are really friends in need; (5) *samāna sukha dukkha:* those who are always with you at all times whether you are ill or well; (6) *atthakkāyī:* those good friends who lead you along the path to progress, dissuading one from evil; (7) *anukampaka:* they are good friends who are unhappy when you are in misery but are very happy when you are all right. He prevents others when they find fault with you and praises those who praise you. A good friend is a *'kalyāṇa mitta'* (benign friend). *Pāpa mitta* (malign friend) is one who leads you to evil.

In Sigālōvāda Sutta (advice to Householder Sigāla) eight (8) types of friends are described. Of these four (4) are good friends. They are (1) Upakāraka mitta - a friend who helps you in need; (2) Samāna Sukha Dukkha mitta - a friend who is ready even to give his life for you; (3) Atthakkhāyī mitta - a friend who protects you against evil; (4) Anukampaka mitta - a friend who is happy when you make progress and praises those who speak well of you. There are four (4) bad friends too. They are (1) Aññadatthuhara - a friend who is keen to profit from you; (2) Vacīparama - a friend who helps only in words (3) Anuppiyabhāṇī - a friend who approves both the good things and the bad things you do (4) Apāya Sahāya - a friend who leads you to such evil acts as taking intoxicating drinks.

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A Dhamma-lover dwells in peace and comfort, delighting in the noble teachings.

79. *Dhammapīti sukhaṁ sēti*
vippasannēna cētasā
ariyappavēditē dhammē
sadā ramati paṇḍitō. (6:4)

Happy is he who Dhamma drinks
with heart that's clear and cool.
One so wise e'er delights
in Dhamma declared by the Noble.

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LIVING HAPPILY IN THE DHAMMA

6 (4) The Story of Venerable Mahākappina (Verse 79)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Mahākappina.

Mahākappina was king of Kukkutavati. He had a queen named Anōjā; he also had one thousand ministers to help him rule the country. One day, the king accompanied by his ministers, was out in the park. There, they met some merchants from Sāvatthi. On learning about the Triple Gem from these merchants the king and his ministers immediately set out for Sāvatthi.

On that day, when the Buddha surveyed the world with his supernormal power, he saw in his vision, Mahākappina and his ministers coming towards Sāvatthi. He also knew that they were due for arahatship. The Buddha went to a place one hundred and twenty yōjanas (leagues) away from Sāvatthi to meet them. There, he waited for them under a banyan tree on the bank of the Candabhāga River. King Mahākappina and his ministers came to the place where the Buddha was waiting for them. When they saw the Buddha, with six-coloured rays radiating from his body, they approached the Buddha and paid homage to him. The Buddha then delivered a discourse to them. After listening to the discourse the king and all his ministers attained sōtāpatti fruition, and they asked the Buddha to permit them to join the Sangha. The Buddha, reflecting on their past and finding that they had made offerings of yellow robes in a past existence said to them, "Ēhi monk" (which means "Come here monk"), and they all became monks.

Meanwhile, Queen Anōjā, learning about the king's departure for Sāvatthi, sent for the wives of the one thousand ministers, and together with them followed the king's trail. They too came to the place where the Buddha was and seeing the Buddha with a halo of six colours, paid homage to him. All this time, the Buddha by exercising his supernormal power had made the king and his ministers invisible so that their wives did not see them. The queen therefore enquired where the king and his ministers were. The Buddha told the queen and her party to wait for a while and that the king would soon come with his ministers. The Buddha then delivered another discourse at the end of which the king and his ministers attained arahatship and the queen and the wives of the ministers attained sōtāpatti fruition. At that instant, the queen and her party saw the newly admitted monks and recognized them as their former husbands. The ladies also asked permission from the Buddha to enter the Sangha, So they were directed to go ahead to Sāvatthi. There they entered the Sangha and very soon they also attained arahatship. The Buddha then returned to the Jētavana Monastery accompanied by one thousand monks.

At the Jētavana Monastery, Monk Mahākappina while resting during the night or during the day would often say, "Oh, what happiness!" *("Ahō Sukham!")*. The monks, hearing him saying this so many times a day, told the Buddha about it. To them the Buddha replied, "My son Kappina, having had the taste of the Dhamma, lives happily with a serene mind; he is saying these words of exultation repeatedly with reference to Nibbāna.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 79)

dhammapīti vippasannēna cētasā sukhaṁ sēti.
paṇḍitō ariyappavēditē dhammē sadā ramati

dhammapīti: those who truly delight in "the Teaching"; *vippasannēna cētasā:* with clarity of mind; *sukhaṁ sēti:* live happily; *paṇḍitō:* the wise person; *ariyappavēditē:* experienced by the "Sublime Ones"; *dhammē:* in the reality; *sadā ramati:* always takes delight

One who delights in "The Teaching" lives happily with a pure mind. The experience of the "Sublime Ones" *(ariyā)* the wise always enjoy.

Commentary

dhammapīti sukhaṁ sēti: he who imbibes the essence of Dhamma lives happily. What is meant here is that those who follow the teaching of the Buddha and follow it in practical terms will live happily. The expression *pīti* implies drinking. But the drinking meant here is absorbing the Teaching into one's life.

Ariya: which menas 'one who is far removed from passions', was originally a racial term. In Buddhism it indicates nobility of character, and is invariably applied to the Buddhas and the Arahants.

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The wise discipline themselves as irrigators water, fletchers arrows, and carpenters wood.

80. *Udakaṁ hi nayanti nettikā*
usukārā namayanti tējanaṁ
dāruṁ namayanti tacchakā
attānaṁ damayanti paṇḍitā. (6:5)

Irrigators govern waters,
fletchers fashion shafts,
as joiners shape their timber
those who are wise tame themselves.

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THE WISE CONTROL THEMSELVES

6 (5) The Story of Novice Monk Paṇḍita (Verse 80)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the novice monk Paṇḍita.

Paṇḍita was a young son of a rich man of Sāvatthi. He became a novice monk at the age of seven. On the eighth day after becoming a novice monk, as he was following Venerable Sāriputta on an alms-round, he saw some farmers channeling water into their fields and asked the Venerable, "Can water which has no consciousness be guided to wherever one wishes?" The Venerable replied, "Yes, it can be guided to wherever one wishes." As they continued on their way, the novice monk next saw some fletchers heating their arrows with fire and straightening them. Further on, he came across some carpenters cutting, sawing and planing timber to make it into things like cart-wheels. Then he pondered, "If water which is without consciousness can be guided to wherever one desires, if a crooked bamboo which is without consciousness can be straightened, and if timber which is without consciousness can be made into useful things, why should I, having consciousness, be unable to tame my mind and practice tranquillity and insight meditation.?"

Then and there he asked permission from the Venerable and returned to his own room in the monastery. There he ardently and diligently practiced meditation, contemplating the body. Sakka and the dēvas also helped him in his meditation by keeping the monastery and its precincts very quiet and still. Before the noon meal novice monk Paṇḍita attained anāgāmi fruition.

At that time Venerable Sāriputta was bringing food to the novice monk. The Buddha saw with his supernormal power that novice monk Paṇḍita had attained anāgāmi fruition and also that if he continued to practice meditation he would soon attain arahatship. So the Buddha decided to stop Sāriputta from entering the room, where the novice monk was. The Buddha went to the door and kept Sāriputta engaged by putting some questions to him. While the conversation was taking place, the novice monk attained arahatship. Thus, the novice monk attained arahatship on the eighth day after becoming a novice.

In this connection, the Buddha said to the monks of the monastery. "When one is earnestly practicing the Dhamma, even Sakka and the dēvas give protection and keep guard; I myself have kept Venerable Sāriputta engaged at the door so that novice monk Pandita should not be disturbed. The novice monk, having seen the farmers irrigating their fields, the fletchers straightening their arrows, and carpenters making cart-wheels and other things, tames his mind and practises the Dhamma; he has now become an arahat."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 80)

nettikā hi udakaṁ nayanti usukārā tējanaṁ namayanti tacchakā dāruṁ namayanti paṇḍitā attānaṁ damayanti

nettikā: irrigators; *hi:* certainly; *udakaṁ:* water; *nayanti:* lead (to whatever place they like); *usukārā:* fletchers; *tējanaṁ:* arrow-shafts; *namayanti:* shape and bend; *tacchakā:* carpenters; *dāruṁ:* wood; *namayanti:* shape and form; *paṇḍitā:* the wise ones; *attānaṁ:* their own minds (themselves); *damayanti:* tame and restrain

The irrigator who manages water is skilled in directing water to whatever place he wants. The fletcher skillfully shapes a very straight arrow shaft out of a piece of wood by working skillfully on it. The carpenter selects a block of wood and constructs whatever he wants out of it, depending on his need. In the same way, the wise persons work upon their mind, restraining it the way they desire.

Commentary

nettikā, usukārā, tacchakā: the irrigators, the arrow-makers, the carpenters. In this stanza, a whole series of experts is noted. They are all skilled in various activities. All these three categories of craftsmen control and tame inanimate things: one leads water to wherever he pleases; the fletcher shapes the stick into a fast-flying arrow and the carpenter forms whatever timber he likes into objects he wants made. But the truth-seeker shapes his own mind, which is much more difficult than the above three.

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Both in praise and blame the wise are unshaken like the rock in the wind.

81. *Sēlō yathā ēkaghanō*
vātēna na samīrati
ēvaṁ nindāpasaṁsāsu
na samiñjanti paṇḍitā. (6:6)

Just as a mighty boulder
stirs not with the wind,
so the wise are never moved
either by praise or blame.

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THE WISE ARE STEADFAST

6 (6) The Story of Venerable Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya (Verse 81)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Bhaddiya.

Bhaddiya was one of the monks staying at the Jētavana Monastery. Because of his short stature he was known as Lakuṇṭaka (the dwarf) to other monks. Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya was very good natured; even young monks would often tease him by pulling his nose or his ear, or by patting him on his head. Very often they would jokingly say, "Uncle, how are you? Are you happy or are you bored with your life here as a monk?" Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya never retaliated in anger, or abused them; in fact, even in his heart he did not get angry with them.

When told about the patience of Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya, the Buddha said, "An arahat never loses his temper, he has no desire to speak harshly or to think ill of others. He is like a mountain of solid rock; as a solid rock is unshaken, so also, an arahat is unperturbed by scorn or by praise."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 81)

yathā: just like; *ēkaghano:* a solid; *sēlō:* rock; *vātēna:* by the wind; *na samīrati:* is not shaken; *ēvaṁ:* in the same way; *paṇḍitā:* the wise ones; *nindā pasaṁsāsu:* both in praise and blame; *na samiñjanti:* remain unmoved

The wise remain unmoved and unruffled both by praise and humiliation. The wise remain unshaken under all vicissitudes of life, like the solid rock that withstands the buffetings of wind, unmoved.

Commentary

nindā pasaṁsāsu: both in praise and blame. The ordinary people tend to be shaken by the changing vicissitudes of life. When something goes wrong, they are depressed. When things go well, they are elated. But, the wise are unshaken, whatever the fortune they face. It is said that the people in general face eight kinds of vicissitudes. They are described in Pāli:

Lābhō alābhō, ayasō, yasōca,
(Gain, loss, neglect and attention
Nindā, pasansā, sukhaṁ, ca dukkham
Insult, praise, pleasure and pain
Ētē aniccā manujēsu dhammā
These unstable human experiences
Asassatī viparinama dhammā
Are transient changing vicissitudes of life.)

There are eight kinds of fortune, good and bad, that affect people: (1) *Lābha:* gain; (2) *Alābha:* loss; (3) *Ayasō:* neglect; (4) *Yasō:* attention; (5) *Nindā:* humiliation; (6) *Pasaṁsā:* praise; (7) *Sukha:* pleasure; and (8) *Dukkha:* pain.

These eight are described as the eight vicissitudes of life *(aṭṭha lōka dhamma)*. The ordinary masses are shaken by these vicissitudes. But the wise remain unshaken by them. The Wise Ones are aware of the changing nature of the world; in response, they remain unmoved by it. In this stanza, this mental stability is compared to the stability of the rock that remains unshaken by the wind. The awareness of the wise ones and their unshaken mind, in the face of such vicissitudes, are summed up this way:

Ētēva ñatvā satimā sumēdhō
(Knowing this, the mind of sage
Avekkhatī viparināma dhammā
Closely observes the changing experience
Iṭṭhassa dhammā na mathenti cittaṁ.
His mind not lured by pleasing experience
Aniṭṭhatō na patighātamēti
What is not pleasing, he does not hate.)

(The wise person considers these vicissitudes carefully and notes that they are subject to fluctuation. His mind is not shaken by good fortune. Nor is he depressed by misfortune.) It is this recognition of impermanence that helps him preserve his calm.

Special Note on Arahat Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya: Though diminutive in stature he had a melodious voice. Among the eight Mahā Arahats, his voice was pre-eminent. Of all gifts, gift of speech is the most precious. His superb voice came next to the Buddha's, which is compared to the singing of the bird called Kuravīka (the Indian nightingale) of the Himālayas, the king of the birds with a sweet voice. His short stature, from which the name Lakuṇṭaka came, was the result of a past kamma .

Arahat Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya's voice was deeply prized. In the Bhaddiya Sutta, the Buddha praised him saying that he, though humpbacked and unsightly, was highly gifted and his character was most lofty. Buddha declared that Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya was pre-eminent in the Sangha, for his voice.

His voice was vibrating with music,
Bringing men to dhamma's fold,
Curing minds by the physic,
Though he was puny to behold.

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The Buddha's teaching makes the wise tranquil like a fathomless lake still and clear.

82. *Yathā'pi rahadō gambhīrō*
vippasannō anāvilō
ēvaṁ dhammāni sutvāna
vippasīdanti paṇḍitā. (6:7)

Even as a fathomless lake,
a lake so calm and clear,
so dhammas having heard
serene the wise become.

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THE WISE ARE HAPPY

6 (7) The Story of Kānamātā (Verse 82)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the mother of Kāna (Kānamātā).

Kānamātā was a devoted lay disciple of the Buddha. Her daughter Kāna was married to a man from another village. As Kāna had been on a visit to her mother for some time, her husband sent a message for her to come home. Her mother told her to wait for one more day as she wanted her to take some sweetmeats for her husband. The next day, Kānamātā made some sweetmeats, but when four monks stood at her door for alms she offered some to them. The four monks told other monks about the sweetmeats from Kānamātā's house and they also came to stand at her door. Kānamātā, as a devotee of the Buddha and his disciples, offered her sweetmeats to the monks as they came in, one after another. The result was that in the end there was none left for Kāna and she did not go home on that day. The same thing happened on the next two days; her mother made some sweetmeats, the monks stood at her door, she offered her sweetmeats to the monks, there was nothing left for her daughter to take home, and her daughter did not go home. On the third day, for the third time, her husband sent her a message, which was also an ultimatum stating that if she failed to come home the next day, he would take another wife. But on the next day also, Kāna was unable to go home because her mother offered all her sweetmeats to the monks. Kāna's husband then took another wife and Kāna became very bitter towards the monks. She used to abuse all monks so much so that the monks kept away from the house of Kānamātā.

The Buddha heard about Kāna and went to the house of Kānamātā; there she offered him some rice gruel. After the meal, the Buddha sent for Kāna and asked her, "Did my monks take what was given them or what was not given them?" Kāna answered that the monks had taken only what was given them, and then added, "They were not in the wrong; only I was in the wrong." Thus, she owned up her fault and she also paid homage to the Buddha. The Buddha then gave a discourse. At the end of the discourse, Kāna attained sōtāpatti fruition.

On the way back to the monastery, the Buddha met King Pasēnadi of Kōsala. On being told about Kāna and her bitter attitude towards the monks, King Pasēnadi asked the Buddha whether he had been able to teach her the dhamma and make her see the truth (dhamma). The Buddha replied, "Yes, I have taught her the dhamma, and I have also made her rich in her next existence." Then the king promised the Buddha that he would make Kāna rich even in this existence. The king then sent his men with a palanquin to fetch Kāna. When she arrived, the king announced to his ministers, "Whoever can keep my daughter Kāna in comfort may take her." One of the ministers volunteered to adopt Kāna as his daughter, gave her all his wealth, and said to her, "You may give in charity as much as you like." Every day, Kāna made offerings to the monks at the four city-gates. When told about Kāna giving generously in charity, the Buddha said, "Monks, the mind of Kāna which was muddled was made clear and calm by my words."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 82)

yathā api gambhīrō rahadō vippasannō anāvilō
ēvaṁ paṇḍitā dhammāni sutvāna vippasīdanti

yathā api: just as; *gambhīrō:* the deep; *rahadō:* ocean; *vippasannō:* is very clear; *anāvilō:* and is not turbulent; *ēvaṁ:* in the same way; *paṇḍitā:* the wise ones; *dhammāni:* the Teaching; *sutvāna:* having heard; *vippasīdanti:* become purified mentally

The exceedingly deep oceans are tranquil, calm and are not agitated. In the same way those wise ones who listen to the words of the Buddha acquire deep awareness and are extremely calm and tranquil.

Commentary

rahadō gambhīrō: the deep ocean. In this stanza, the purity of mind experienced by those who have heard the word of the Buddha, is declared to be similar to the clarity of the water of the deep oceans. The ordinary masses who have not had the advantage of listening to the word of the Buddha are impure in mind, agitated and troubled

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The wise are not elated or depressed by happiness or by pain. The wise do renounce all.

83. *Sabbattha vē sappurisā cajanti*
na kāmakāmā lapayanti santō
sukhēna phuṭṭhā atha vā dukhēna
na uccāvacam paṇḍitā dassayanti. (6:8)

Everything the good renounce,
the peaceful chatter not of fond delights,
and whether touched by pleasure or pain
nor joy nor woe in the wise is seen.

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THE WISE ARE TRANQUIL

6 (8) The Story of the Five Hundred Monks (Verse 83)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of monks.

At the request of a Brahmin from Vērañjā, the Buddha was, on one occasions, staying at Vērañjā with a group of monks. While they were at Vērañjā, the brahmin failed to look after them. The people of Vērañjā, who were then facing a famine, could offer very little to the monks when they went on their alms-round. In spite of all these hardships, the monks were not disheartened; they were quite contented with the small amount of shrivelled grain which the horse-traders offered them daily. At the end of the vassa (rainy season), after informing the brahmin from Vērañjā, the Buddha returned to the Jētavana Monastery, accompanied by the monks. The people of Sāvatthi welcomed them back with choice food of all kinds.

A group of people living with the monks, eating whatever was left over by the monks, ate greedily like true gluttons and went to sleep after their meals. On waking up, they were shouting, singing and dancing, thus making themselves a great nuisance. When the Buddha came in the evening to the congregation of monks, they reported to him about the behaviour of those unruly persons, and said, "These people living on the left-overs were quite decent and well-behaved when all of us were facing hardship and famine in Vērañjā. Now that they have enough good food they are going about shouting, singing and dancing, and thus make themselves a great nuisance. The monks, however, behave themselves here just as they were in Vērañjā".

To them the Buddha replied, "It is in the nature of the foolish to be full of sorrow and feel depressed when things go wrong, and to be full of gladness and feel elated when things go well. The wise, however, can withstand the ups and downs of life."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 83)

sappurisā vē sabbattha cajanti santō kāmakāmā
na lapayanti sukhēna phuṭṭhā athavā dukhēna
paṇḍitā uccāvacaṁ na dassayanti

sappurisā: noble ones; *vē sabbattha:* certainly in all things; *cajanti:* are non-attached; *santō:* the noble ones; *kāmakāmā:* desiring sensual things; *na lapayanti:* do not talk; *sukhēna:* by happiness; *phuṭṭhā:* touched; *athavā:* or else; *dukhēna:* by misery (touched); *paṇḍitā:* wise ones; *uccāvacaṁ:* a fluctuation; *na dassayanti:* do not display

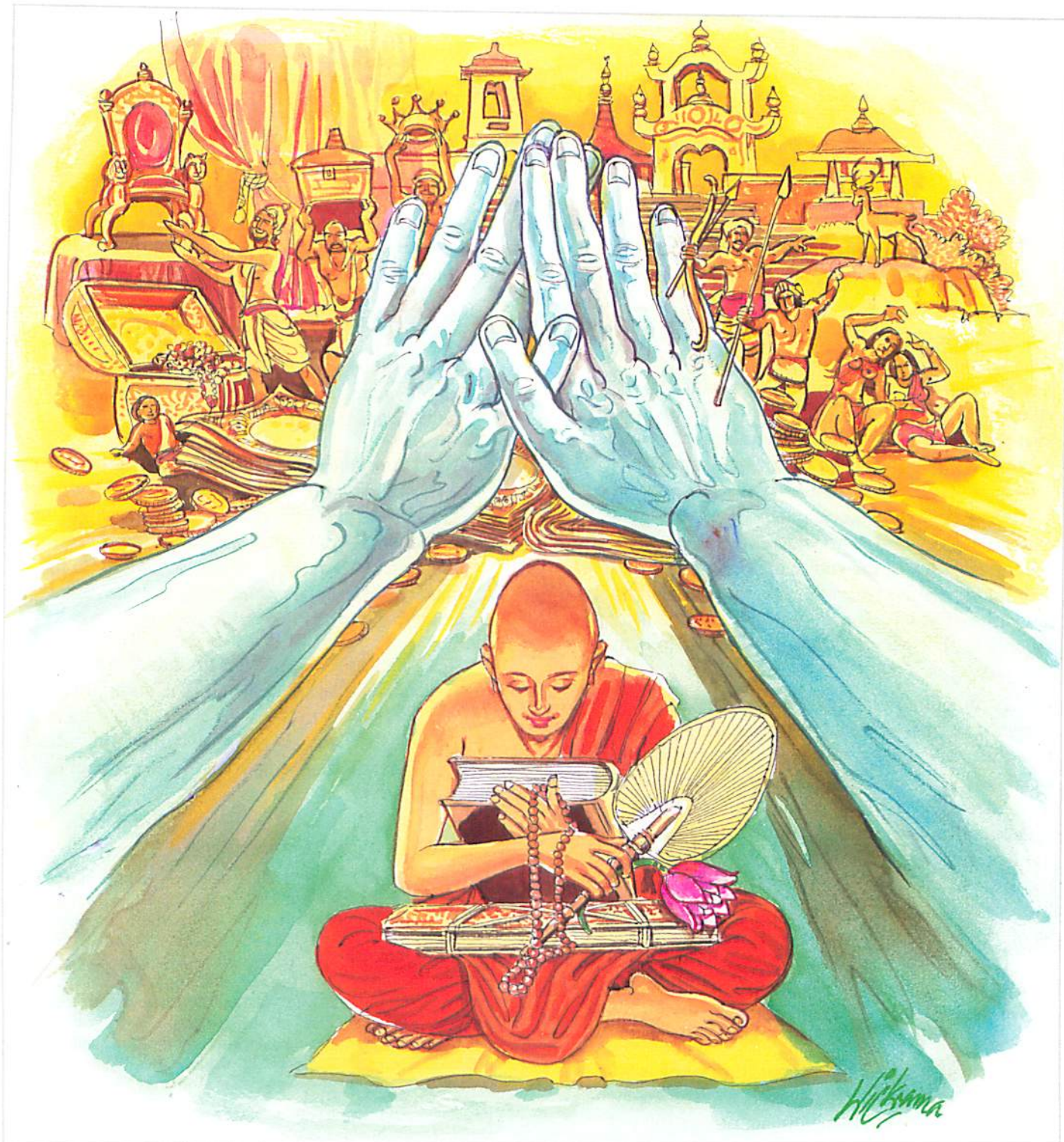
The noble and wise persons are not attached to anything whatsoever in the world. The disciplined persons do not talk desiring worldly things, material benefits or sensual delights. Whatever fortune or ill fortune may touch them, they remain calm, neither depressed nor elated.

Commentary

sukhēna dukkhēna: the wise remain undisturbed both in pleasure and in pain. Pleasure and pain are a pair of opposites. They are the most powerful factors that affect mankind. What can be endured with ease is *sukha* (pleasure), what is difficult to bear is *dukkha* (pain). Ordinary happiness is the gratification of a desire. No sooner the desired thing is gained then we desire some other kind of pleasure. So insatiate are our selfish desires. the enjoyment of sensual pleasures is the highest and only happiness to an average person. No doubt there is a momentary happiness in the anticipation, gratification and recollection of such sensual pleasures, highly priced by the sensualist, but they are illusory and temporary.

Real happiness is found within, and is not to be defined in terms of wealth, power, honours or conquests.

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The wise will never do any wrong for the sake of any gain whatsoever.

84. *Na attahētu na parassa hētu*
na puttamicchē na dhanaṁ na raṭṭhaṁ
na iccheyya adhammēna samiddhim attanō
sa sīlavā paññavā dhammikō siyā. (6:9)

Neither for one's own, nor for another's sake
one should wish for children, wealth, estate,
nor success desire by means unjust,
thus virtuous and wise, righteous one would be.

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THE WISE LIVE CORRECTLY

6 (9) The Story of Venerable Dhammika (Verse 84)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Dhammika.

Dhammika lived in Sāvatthi with his wife. One day, he told his pregnant wife that he wished to become a monk; his wife pleaded with him to wait until after the birth of their child. When the child was born, he again requested his wife to let him go; again, she pleaded with him to wait until the child could walk. Then Dhammika thought to himself, "It will be useless for me to ask my wife for her approval to join the Sangha; I shall work for my own liberation." Having made a firm decision, he left his house to become a monk. He took a meditation topic from the Buddha and practiced meditation ardently and diligently and soon became an arahat.

Some years later, he visited his house in order to teach the Dhamma to his son and his wife. His son entered the Sangha and he too attained arahatship. The wife then thought, "Now that both my husband and my son have left the house, I had better leave it, too." With this thought she left the house and became a nun; eventually, she too attained arahatship.

At the congregation of the monks, the Buddha was told how Dhammika became a monk and attained arahatship, and how through him his son and his wife also attained arahatship. To them the Buddha said, "Monks, a wise man does not wish for wealth and prosperity by doing evil, whether it is for his own sake or for the sake of others. He only works for his own liberation from the round of rebirths (saṁsāra) by comprehending the teachings and living according to the dhamma."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 84)

attahētu na parassa hētu na puttaṁ na dhanaṁ na raṭṭhaṁ na icchē Adhammēna attanō samiddhiṁ na iccheyya Sō sīlavā paññavā dhammikō siyā

attahētu: for the sake of one's self; *na:* he does not; *parassa hētu:* for the sake of others; *na:* he does not; *na puttaṁ:* no son; *na dhanaṁ:* no wealth; *na raṭṭhaṁ:* no kingdom; *icchē:* does he wish; *attanō samiddhiṁ:* his own prosperity; *adhammēna:* unrealistically; *na iccheyya:* he does not desire (to gain). *sō:* such a one; *sīlavā:* well behaved; *paññavā:* penetrative; *dhammikō:* realistic; *siyā:* becomes

Not for one's own benefit nor for that of others, does he desire children, wealth or kingdom. Nor does he desire self-glory. Thus he is realistic, penetrative and well behaved.

Commentary

This verse gives an appropriate answer to the common question, "Why did Prince Siddhatta forsake his wife, child, parents and kingdom, if not for his own benefit." This verse reminds us that he would not do the unrealistic thing for his own benefit or for another's.

It is owing to the right understanding of the nature of the world, its instability, sorrowfulness and impersonality, that he left home. At the same time, he did not disparage worldly wisdom. He tried to acquire knowledge even from his servants. Never did he show any desire to display his knowledge. What he knew was always at the disposal of others, and that he imparted to them unreservedly. He tried his best to lead others from darkness to light. What he did was to stop running after illusions. He started to live realistically; not only for himself, but also to show an example to others.

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Only a few cross over to the further shore. Others run helplessly along the near shore.

85. *Appakā tē manussēsu*
yē janā pāragāminō
athāyaṁ itarā pajā
tīramēvānudhāvati. (6:10)

Among folk they are few
who go to the Further Shore,
most among humanity
scurry on this hither shore.

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A FEW REACH THE OTHER SHORE

6 (10) The Story of Dhamma Listeners (Verses 85 & 86)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a congregation of people who had come to listen to a religious discourse in Sāvatthi. On one occasion, a group of people from Sāvatthi made special offerings to the monks collectively and they arranged for some monks to deliver discourses throughout the night, in their locality. Many in the audience could not sit up the whole night and they returned to their homes early; some sat through the night, but most of the time they were drowsy and half-asleep. There were only a few who listened attentively to the discourse.

At dawn, when the monks told the Buddha about what happened the previous night, he replied, "Most people are attached to this world; only a very few reach the other shore (nibbāna)."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 85)

manussēsu yē janā pāragāminō tē appakā athā itarā ayaṁ pajā tīraṁ ēva anudhāvati

manussēsu: of the generality of people; *yē janā:* those who; *pāragāminō:* cross over to the other shore; *tē:* they; *appakā:* (are) only a few; *atha:* but; *itarā:* the other; *ayaṁ pajā:* these masses; *tīraṁ ēva:* on this shore itself; *anudhāvati:* keep running along

Of those who wish to cross over to the other side only a handful are successful. Those others who are left behind keep running along this shore. Those masses who have not been able to reach liberation continue to be caught up in Saṁsāra.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 86)

yē ca khō sammadakkhātē dhammē dhammānuvattinō tē janā suduttaraṁ maccudhēyyaṁ pāraṁ ēssanti

yē ca khō: whosoever; *sammadakkhātē:* in the well articulated; *dhammē:* teaching; *dhammānuvattinō:* who live in accordance with the Teaching; *tē janā:* those people; *suduttaraṁ:* difficult to be crossed; *maccudheyyaṁ:* the realm of death; *pāraṁ essanti:* cross over

The realms over which Māra has sway, are difficult to be crossed. Only those who quite righteously follow the way indicated in the well-articulated Teachings of the Buddha, will be able to cross these realms that are so difficult to cross.

Commentary

Dhammē Dhammānuvattinō: the teaching of the Buddha and those who practice the Teaching. The Buddha expounded his Teaching, initially, to the Five Ascetics and preached his first sermon — "The Turning of the Wheel of Truth". Thus did the Enlightened One proclaim Dhamma and set in motion the matchless 'Wheel of Truth". With the proclamation of the Dhamma, for the first time, and with the conversion of the five ascetics, the Deer Park at Isipatana became the birth place of the Buddha's Dispensation, and of the Sangha, the community of monks, the ordained disciples. The Buddha addressed his disciples, the accomplished ones (arahats), and said: "Released am I, monks, from all ties whether human or divine. You also are delivered from fetters whether human or divine. Go now and wander for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the gain, welfare and happiness of gods and men. Let not two of you proceed in the same direction. Proclaim the Dhamma that is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, possessed of the meaning and the letter both utterly perfect. Proclaim the life of purity, the holy life consummate and pure. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who will be lost through not hearing the Dhamma. There are beings who will understand the Dhamma. I also shall go to Uruvēlā, to Sēnānigama to teach the Dhamma. Thus did the Buddha commence his sublime mission which lasted to the end of his life. With his disciples he walked the highways and byways of Jambudīpa, land of the rose apple (another name for India), enfolding all within the aura of his boundless compassion and wisdom.

The Buddha made no distinction of caste, clan or class when communicating the Dhamma. Men and women from different walks of life — the rich and the poor; the lowliest and highest; the literate and the illiterate; brahmins and outcasts, princes and paupers, saints and criminals — listened to the Buddha, took refuge in him, and followed him who showed the path to peace and enlightenment. The path is open to all. His Dhamma was for all.

Caste, which was a matter of vital importance to the brahmins of India, was one of utter indifference to the Buddha, who strongly condemned so debasing a system. The Buddha freely admitted into the Sangha people from all castes and classes, when he knew that they were fit to live the holy life, and some of them later distinguished themselves in the Sangha. The Buddha was the only contemporary teacher who endeavoured to blend in mutual tolerance and concord those who hitherto had been rent asunder by differences of caste and class. The Buddha also raised the status of women in India. Generally speaking, during the time of the Buddha, owing to brahminical influence, women were not given much recognition. Sometimes they were held in contempt, although there were solitary cases of their showing erudition in matters of philosophy, and so on. In his magnanimity, the Buddha treated women with consideration and civility, and pointed out to them, too, the path to peace, purity and sanctity. The Buddha established the order of nuns *(Bhikkhunī Sāsana)* for the first time in history; for never before this had there been an order where women could lead a celibate life of renunciation. Women from all walks of life joined the order. The lives of quite a number of these noble nuns, their strenuous endeavours to win the goal of freedom, and their paeans of joy at deliverance of mind are graphically described in the 'Psalms of the Sisters' *(Thērīgāthā)*.

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Those who practise Dhamma and whose action is right will cross to Nibbāna, the Deathless.

86. *Yē ca khō sammadakkhātē*
dhammē dhammānuvattinō
tē janā pāramessanti
maccudheyyaṁ suduttaraṁ. (6:11)

But they who practise Dhamma
according to Dhamma well-told,
from Death's Dominion hard to leave
they'll cross to the Further Shore.

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THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE DHAMMA ARE LIBERATED

6 (10) The Story of Dhamma Listeners (Verses 85 & 86) (cont'd)

Commentary

While journeying from village to village, from town to town, instructing, enlightening and gladdening the many, the Buddha saw how superstitious folk, steeped in ignorance, slaughtered animals in worship of their gods. He spoke to them:

> Of life, which all can take but none can give,
> Life which all creatures love and strive to keep,
> Wonderful, dear and pleasant unto each,
> Even to the meanest....

The Buddha never encouraged wrangling and animosity. Addressing the monks he once said: "I quarrel not with the world, monks, it is the world that quarrels with me. An exponent of the Dhamma quarrels not with anyone in the world."

To the Buddha the practice of the Dhamma is of great importance. Therefore, the Buddhists have to be *Dhammānuvatti* (those who practice the Teaching). The practical aspects are the most essential in the attainment of the spiritual goals indicated by the Buddha's Dhamma (Teaching).

There are no short-cuts to real peace and happiness. As the Buddha has pointed out in many a sermon this is the only path which leads to the summit of the good life, which goes from lower to higher levels of the mental realm. It is a gradual training, a training in speech, deed and thought which brings about true wisdom culminating in full enlightenment and the realization of Nibbāna. It is a path for all, irrespective of race, class or creed, a path to be cultivated every moment of our waking life.

The one and only aim of the Buddha in pointing out this Teaching is stated in these words: "Enlightened is the Buddha, He teaches the Dhamma for enlightenment; tamed is the Buddha, He teaches the Dhamma for taming; calmed is the Buddha, He teaches the Dhamma for calming; crossed over has the Buddha, He teaches the Dhamma for crossing over; attained to Nibbāna has the Buddha, He teaches the Dhamma for attainment of *Nibbāna*."

This being the purpose for which the Buddha teaches the Dhamma, it is obvious that the aim of the listener or the follower of that path should also be the same, and not anything else. The aim, for instance, of a merciful and understanding physician should be to cure the patients that come to him for treatment, and the patient's one and only aim, as we know, is to get himself cured as quickly as possible. That is the only aim of a sick person.

We should also understand that though there is guidance, warning and instruction, the actual practice of the Dhamma, the treading of the path, is left to us. We should proceed with undiminished vigour surmounting all obstacles and watching our steps along the right Path — the very path trodden and pointed out by the Buddhas of all ages.

To explain the idea of crossing over, the Buddha used the simile of a raft: "Using the simile of a raft, monks, I teach the Dhamma designed for crossing over and not for retaining."

The Buddha, the compassionate Teacher, is no more, but he has left a legacy, the sublime Dhamma. The Dhamma is not an invention, but a discovery. it is an eternal law; it is everywhere with each man and woman, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, Eastern or Western. The Dhamma has no labels, it knows no limit of time, space or race. It is for all time. Each person who lives the Dhamma sees its light, sees and experiences it himself. It cannot be communicated to another, for it has to be self-realized.

Kamma: action, correctly speaking denotes the wholesome and unwholesome volitions and their concomitant mental factors, causing rebirth and shaping the destiny of beings. These karmical volitions become manifest as wholesome or unwholesome actions by body, speech and mind. Thus the Buddhist term *kamma* by no means signifies the result of actions, and quite certainly not the fate of man, or perhaps even of whole nations (the so-called wholesale or mass-karma), which misconceptions have become widely spread in some parts of the world. Said the Buddha, "Volition, O Monks, is what I call action, for through volition one performs the action by body, speech or mind. There is *Kamma*, O Monks, that ripens in hell. *Kamma* that ripens in the animal world. *kamma* that ripens in the world of men. *Kamma* that ripens in heavenly world. Three-fold, however, is the fruit of *kamma*: ripening during the life-time, ripening in the next birth, ripening in later births.

The three conditions or roots of unwholesome *kamma* (actions) are: Greed, Hatred, Delusion; those of wholesome *kamma* are: Unselfishness, Hatelessness (goodwill), Non-delusion.

"Greed is a condition for the arising of *kamma*, Hatred is a condition for the arising of *kamma*, Delusion is a condition for the arising of *kamma*".

"The unwholesome actions are of three kinds, conditioned by greed, or hate, or delusion."

"Killing, stealing, unlawful sexual intercourse, lying, slandering, rude speech, foolish babble, if practiced, carried on, and frequently cultivated, lead to rebirth in hell, or amongst the animals, or amongst the ghosts." "He who kills and is cruel goes either to hell or, if reborn as man, will be short-lived. He who torments others will be afflicted with disease. The angry one will look ugly, the envious one will be without influence, the stingy one will be poor, the stubborn one will be of low descent, the indolent one will be without knowledge. In the contrary case, man will be reborn in heaven or reborn as man, he will be long-lived, possessed of beauty, influence, noble descent and knowledge."

"Owners of their *kamma* are the beings, heirs of their *kamma*. The *kamma* is the womb from which they are born, their *kamma* is their friend, their refuge. Whatever *kamma* they perform, good or bad, thereof they will be the heirs."

Kilēsa: defilements — mind-defiling, unwholesome qualities. "There are ten defilements, thus called because they are themselves defiled, and because they defile the mental factors associated with them. They are: (1) greed; (2) hate; (3) delusion; (4) conceit; (5) speculative views; (6) skeptical doubt; (7) mental torpor; (8) restlessness; (9) shamelessness; (10) lack of moral dread or unconsciousness.

Vipāka: karma-result — is any karmically (morally) neutral mental phenomenon (e.g., bodily agreeable or painful feeling, sense-consciousness etc.), which is the result of wholesome or unwholesome volitional action through body, speech or mind, done either in this or some previous life. Totally wrong is the belief that, according to Buddhism, everything is the result of previous action. Never, for example, is any karmically wholesome or unwholesome volitional action *(kamma)*, the result of former action, being in reality itself *kamma*.

Karma-produced corporeal things are never called *kamma-vipāka*, as this term may be applied only to mental phenomena.

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Abandon unwholesome views, become homeless and wisely strive for Nibbāna.

87. *Kaṇhaṁ dhammaṁ vippahāya*
sukkaṁ bhāvētha paṇḍitō
ōkā anōkaṁ āgamma
vivēkē yattha dūramaṁ. (6:12)

Abandoning the Dhammas dark
the wise should cultivate the bright,
having from home to homeless gone
in solitude unsettling.

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LIBERATION THROUGH DISCIPLINE

6 (11) The Story of Five Hundred Visiting Monks (Verses 87, 88 & 89)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to five hundred visiting monks.

Fifty monks who had passed the rainy season in the kingdom of Kōsala came to Jētavana at the close of the rainy season for the purpose of seeing the Buddha; and having paid obeisance to the Buddha, sat down respectfully on one side. The Buddha, after listening to the story of their experiences, instructed them in the Dhamma by reciting the stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 87)

paṇḍitō yattha vivēkē dūramaṁ ōkā anōkaṁ
āgamma kaṇhaṁ dhammaṁ vippahāya sukkaṁ
bhāvētha

paṇḍitō: the wise one; *yattha vivēkē:* in that liberation; *dūramaṁ:* difficult to take interest in; ōkā: from home; *anōkaṁ āgamma:* go to homelessness (the life of the samana); *kaṇhaṁ dhammaṁ:* tainted views; *vippahāya:* giving up totally; *sukkaṁ bhāvētha:* cultivate purity (conducive to liberation)

The wise person abandons fully and totally those tainted views and questionable ways of behaviour and moves away from the known comforts of lay life into the unfamiliar way of life of the renunciate. He practises virtues conducive to the achievement of liberation.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 88)

akiñcanō paṇḍitō kāmē hitvā tatrā abhiratiṁ ic-
cheyya cittaklēsēhi attānaṁ pariyōdapeyya

akiñcanō: being without possessions (unattached); *paṇḍitō:* the wise person; *kāmē hitvā:* giving up sensual pleasures; *tatra:* in that (liberation); *abhiratiṁ:* interested; *iccheyya:* (and) desiring; *cittaklēsēhi:* from mental defilements; *attānaṁ pariyōdapeyya:* cleanses oneself

He takes interest in liberation. He gives up all preferences for sensualities. This way, he is without any possessions. The wise person proceeds to cleanse his mind from those defilements that blemish the mind.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 89)

yēsaṁ cittaṁ sambōdhiaṇgēsu sammā sub-
hāvitaṁ yē anupādāya ādāna paṭinissaggē ratā
jutīmantō tē khīṇāsavā lōkē parinibbutā

yēsaṁ: of those (blemishless ones); *cittaṁ:* the mind; *sambōdhiaṇgēsu:* in the factors conducive to enlightenment; *sammā subhāvitaṁ:* well practiced and developed; *yē:* they; *anupādāya:* without clinging to anything; *ādāna paṭinissaggē:* in the giving up of grasping; *ratā:* interested; *jutīmantō:* the shining ones; *tē khīṇāsavā:* those who are bereft of influences; *lōkē:* in this world; *parinibbutā:* have attained Nibbāna.

There are those wise individuals who have practiced extremely well the factors conducive to the attainment of liberation. They do not cling to anything emotionally or mentally. They are opposed to the tendency to be greedy and grasping. They take delight in non-grasping. They, the shining ones, who are totally bereft of blemishes, have attained liberation in this world itself.

Commentary

pariyōdapeyya attānaṁ cittaklēsēhi paṇḍitō: the wise one purifies one's mind from the defilements that blemish the mind. This is a summing up of the total process of refining the mind, so that it will be a fit instrument to explore deathlessness. Of the defilements that blemish the mind, the foremost are the five-fold hindrances.

Nīvarana: to hinder. In this context, what is meant is preventing behaviour that is not conducive to the attainment of spiritual heights. Those factors that hinder or obstruct one's progress along the path to liberation and higher states are described as *Nibbāna*. There are five kinds of these hindrances. They are: (1) sensual desires, (2) ill-will, (3) sloth and torpor, (4) restlessness and worry, and (5) doubts.

(1) Sensual desires or attachment to pleasurable sense-objects such as form, sound, odour, taste, and contact. This is regarded as one of the Fetters, too, that bind one to saṁsāra.

An average person is bound to be tempted by alluring objects of sense. Lack of self-control results in the inevitable arising of passions. This hindrance is inhibited by one-pointedness, which is one of the five characteristics of jhānas. It is attenuated on attaining sakadāgāmi and is completely eradicated on attaining anāgāmi. Subtle forms of attachment such as rūpa rāga and arūpa rāga (attachment to realms of form and formless realms) are eradicated only on attaining arahatship.

(Cont'd on page 187)

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The wise person purifies himself, being non-attached, desireless and by forsaking pleasures.

88. *Tatrābhiratimiccheyya*
hitvā kāmē akiñcanō
pariyōdapeyya attānaṁ
cittaklēsēhi paṇḍitō. (6:13)

Let them desire that rare delight,
renouncing pleasures, owning nought,
those wise ones should cleanse themselves
from all defilements of the mind.

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PURIFY YOUR MIND

6 (11) The Story of Five Hundred Visiting Monks (Verses 87, 88 & 89) (cont'd)

The following six conditions tend to the eradication of sense-desires. (i) perceiving the loathsomeness of the object, (ii) constant meditation on loathsomeness, (iii) sense-restraint, (iv) moderation in food, (v) good friendship, and (vi) profitable talk.
(2) ill-will or aversion. A desirable object leads to attachment, while an undesirable one leads to aversion. These are the two great fires that burn the whole world. Aided by ignorance these two produce all sufferings in the world. Ill-will is inhibited by *pīti* or joy which is one of the *jhāna* factors. It is attenuated on attaining *sakadāgāmi* and is eradicated on attaining *anāgāmi.*
The following six conditions tend to the eradication of ill-will. (i) perceiving the object with thoughts of goodwill, (ii) constant meditation on loving-kindness *(mettā)*, (iii) thinking that *kamma* is one's own, (iv) adherence to that view, (v) good friendship, and (vi) profitable talk.
(3) Sloth is explained as a morbid state of the mind, and Middha as a morbid state of the mental states. A stolid mind is as 'inert as a bat hanging to a tree, or as molasses cleaving to a stick, or as a lump of butter too stiff for spreading'. Sloth and torpor should not be understood as bodily drowsiness, because arahats, who have destroyed these two states, also experience bodily fatigue. These two promote mental inertness and are opposed to strenuous effort. They are inhibited by the *jhāna* factor and are eradicated on attaining arahatship.
The following six conditions tend to the eradication of Sloth and Torpor: (i) reflection on the object of moderation in food, (ii) changing of bodily postures, (iii) contemplation on the object of light; (iv) living in the open, (v) good friendship and (vi) profitable talk.
(4) Mental restlessness or excitement of the mind. It is a mental state associated with all types of immoral consciousness. As a rule an evil is done with some excitement or restlessness. Worry is either repentance over the committed evil or over the unfulfilled good. Repentance over one's evil does not exempt one from its inevitable consequences. The best repentance is the will not to repeat that evil.
Both these hindrances are inhibited by the *jhāna* factor, *sukha* or happiness. Restlessness is eradicated on attaining Arahatship, and worry is eradicated on attaining *anāgāmi.* The following six conditions tend to the eradication of these two states: (i) erudition or learning, (ii) questioning or discussion, (iii) understanding the nature of the *vinaya* discipline, (iv) association with senior monks, (v) good friendship and (vi) profitable talk.
5) Doubt or indecision. That which is devoid of the remedy of wisdom. It is also explained as vexation due to perplexed thinking. Here it is not used in the sense of doubt with regard to the Buddha etc., for even non-Buddhists inhibit *vicikicchā* and gain *jhānas.* As a fetter *vicikicchā* is that doubt about Buddha etc., but as a hindrance it denotes unsteadiness in one particular thing that is being done. The commentarial explanation of *vicikicchā* is the inability to decide anything definitely that it is so. In other words it is indecision.
This state is inhibited by the *jhāna* factor — *vicāra*, sustained application. It is eradicated on attaining *sōtāpatti.*
The following six conditions tend to its eradication: (i) knowledge of the *Dhamma* and *vinaya*, (ii) discussion or questioning, (iii) understanding of the nature of the *vinaya* discipline, (iv) excessive confidence, (v) good friendship, and (vi) profitable talk. Another comment on Nibbāna obstacles to the mind and blind our mental vision. In the presence of them we cannot reach neighbourhood-concentration and full concentration, and are unable to discern clearly the truth. They are: sensuous desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and scruples, and skeptical doubt.

In the similies, sensuous desire is compared with water mixed with manifold colours, ill-will with boiling water, sloth and torpor with water covered by mosses, restlessness and scruples with agitated water whipped by the wind, skeptical doubt with turbid and muddy water. Just as in such water one cannot perceive one's own reflexion, so in the presence of these five mental Hindrances, one cannot clearly discern one's own benefit, nor that of others, nor that of both. Regarding the temporary suspension of the five hindrances on entering the first absorption, the Sutta text runs as follows:
"He has cast away sensuous desire; he dwells with a heart free from sensuous desire; from desire he cleanses his heart.
"He has cast away Ill-will; he dwells with a heart free from ill-will, cherishing love and compassion toward all living beings, he cleanses his heart from ill-will.
"He has cast away sloth and torpor; he dwells free from sloth and torpor; loving the light, with watchful mind, with clear consciousness, he cleanses his mind from sloth and torpor.
"He has cast away restlessness and scruples; dwelling with mind undisturbed, with heart full of peace, he cleanses his mind from restlessness and scruples.
"He has cast away skeptical doubt; dwelling free from doubt, full of confidence in the good, he cleanses his heart from doubt.
"He has put aside these five hindrances, and come to know these paralysing defilements of the mind. And far from sensual impressions, far from unwholesome things, he enters into the first absorption etc."
The overcoming of these five hindrances by the absorptions is, as already pointed out, a merely temporary suspension, called 'overcoming through repression'. They disappear for ever on entering the four supermundane paths i.e., skeptical doubt on reaching *sōtāpanna*-ship; sensuous desire, ill-will and mental worry on reaching *anāgāmi*-ship; sloth, torpor and restlessness on reaching arahatship.

sambōdhi angēsu: factors conducive to enlightenment. These are seven factors that are conducive to enlightenment. They are described as *bhojjaṅga.* The truth-seekers attitude towards these seven factors of enlightenment is given below:

The truth-seeker knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of mindfulness', or when it is not present — he knows well that is absent; he knows well how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to be and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to be. When the enlightenment factor of 'investigation of reality' *(dhammavicaya)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of investigation of reality'; when it is not present he knows well that it is absent; he knows well how the arising of the enlightenment factor of investigation of reality comes to be and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of investigation of reality comes to be.

When the enlightenment factor of Energy *(viriya)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of energy', or when it is not present, he knows well that it is absent; he knows well how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment factor of energy comes to be. When the enlightenment factor of joy *(pīti)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of joy' or when it is not present he knows well that it is absent; he knows well how the rising of the non-arising enlightenment factor of joy comes to be, and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of joy comes to be.

(Cont'd on page 189)

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Practice of the seven factors and non-attachment ensure Nibbāna.

89. *Yēsaṁ sambōdhiaṅgēsu*
sammā cittaṁ subhāvitaṁ
ādānapaṭinissaggē
anupādāya yē ratā
khīṇāsavā jutīmantō
tē lōkē parinibbutā. (6:14)

Those who come to Wakening
with mind full-cultivated,
delight, no longer clinging,
in relinquishing attachment:
they, without pollution, radiant,
in this world have reached Nibbāna.

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ARAHATS ARE BEYOND WORLDLINESS

6 (11) The Story of Five Hundred Visiting Monks (Verses 87, 88 & 89) (cont'd)

When the enlightenment factor of tranquility *(passaddhi)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of tranquility or when it is not present he knows well that it is absent; he knows well how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment factor of tranquility comes to be, and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of tranquility comes to be.

When the enlightenment factor of concentration *(samādhi)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of concentration,' or when it is not present he knows well that it is absent, he knows well how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment factor of concentration comes to be, and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of concentration comes to be.

When the enlightenment factor of equanimity *(upekkhā)* is present he knows well — 'I have the enlightenment factor of equanimity', or when it is not present he knows well that it is absent; he knows well how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment factor of equanimity comes to be, and how the fulfillment by meditation of the arisen enlightenment factor of equanimity comes to be.

Thus the truth-seeker lives contemplating the Dhammas, clinging to nothing in this world.

Thus a disciple lives contemplating the dhammas with respect to the seven factors of enlightenment.

Bojjhanga: the seven factors of enlightenment', are: mindfulness, investigation of the law, energy, rapture, tranquility, concentration, equanimity. "Because they lead to enlightenment, therefore they are called factors of enlightenment".

The seven factors are said to be the means of attaining the threefold wisdom.

They may be attained by means of the four foundations of mindfulness. The Buddha said:

(1) "Whenever, O monks, the monk dwells contemplating the body *(kāya)*, feeling *(vēdanā)*, mind *(citta)* and mind-objects *(dhamma)*, strenuous, clearly-conscious, mindful, after subduing worldly greed and grief, at such a time his mindfulness is present and undisturbed; and whenever his mindfulness is present and undisturbed, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Factor of Enlightenment 'Mindfulness' *(sati-sambojjhañga)*, and thus this factor of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.
(2) "Whenever, while dwelling with mindfulness, he wisely investigates, examines and thinks over the law at such a time he has gained and is developing the factor of enlightenment 'Investigation of the Law' *(dhaṁma-vicaya)*.
(3) "Whenever, while wisely investigating his energy is firm and unshaken at such a time he has gained and is developing the Factor of Enlightenment 'Energy' *(viriya)*.
(4) "Whenever in him, while firm in energy, arises supersensuous rapture at such a time he has gained and is developing the factor of enlightenment ecstasy *(pīti)*.
(5) "Whenever, while enraptured in mind, his body and his mind become composed at such a time he has gained and is developing the Factor of Enlightenment tranquility *(passaddhi)*.
(6) "Whenever, while being composed in his body and happy, his mind becomes concentrated at such a time he has gained and is developing the Factor of Enlightenment Concentration *(samādhi)*.
(7) "Whenever he looks with complete indifference on his mind thus concentrated at such a time he has gained and is developing the Factor of Enlightenment 'Equanimity' *(upekkhā)*.

kanhaṁ dhammaṁ: tainted views and practices — those activities and beliefs that are not conducive to the achievement of liberation.

ōkā amōkaṁ: from the lay life with its known comforts, to the life of homelessness.

tatrābhiratimiccheyya: takes pleasure in that (which is liberation).

akiñcanō: giving up everything and becoming possessionless.

cittaklēsēhi: defilements that blemish the mind.

ādānapatinissaggē: shunning the tendency to grasp.

lōke parinibbutē: they have attained Liberation in this life (this world) itself.

parinibbutē: passed into Nibbāna. This expression is associated exclusively with the demise of the Buddha in Buddhist literature, although it can be used in the instance of any Arahat. It also refers to the attainment of full enlightenment. The Parinibbāna of the Buddha is described in detail in Buddhist Scripture. The following is a brief description of the Buddha's last moment. The Buddha attained to the first ecstacy *(jhāna)*. Emerging from it, He attained in order to the second, third, and fourth ecstasies. Emerging from the fourth ecstacy, He attained to "The realm of the infinity of space" *(ākāsānañcāyatana)*. Emerging from it He attained to 'the realm of the infinity of consciousness' *(viññānañcāyatana)*. Emerging from it, He attained to the realm of nothingness' *(ākiñcaññāyatana)*. Emerging from it, He attained to 'the realm of neither perception nor non-perception' *(N'eva saññā nāsaññāyatana)*. Emerging from it, He attained to 'the cessation of perceptions and sensations' *(Saññāvēdayita-Nirōdha)*.

Then the Buddha, emerging from 'the cessation of perceptions and sensations', attained to 'the realm of neither perception nor non-perception.' Emerging from it, He attained to 'the realm of nothingness.' Emerging from it, He attained to 'the realm of the infinity of consciousness.' Emerging from it, He attained to 'the realm of the infinity of space.' Emerging from it, He attained to the fourth ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the third ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the second ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the third ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the fourth ecstasy. Emerging from it, and immediately after, the Buddha finally passed away.

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A Buddhist is not a slave to anybody

A Buddhist is not a slave to a book or to any person. Nor does he sacrifice his freedom of thought by becoming a follower of the Buddha. He can exercise his own free will and develop his knowledge even to the extent of attaining Buddhahood himself, for all are potential Buddhas.

Ven. Narada Maha Thera, " What is Buddhism"

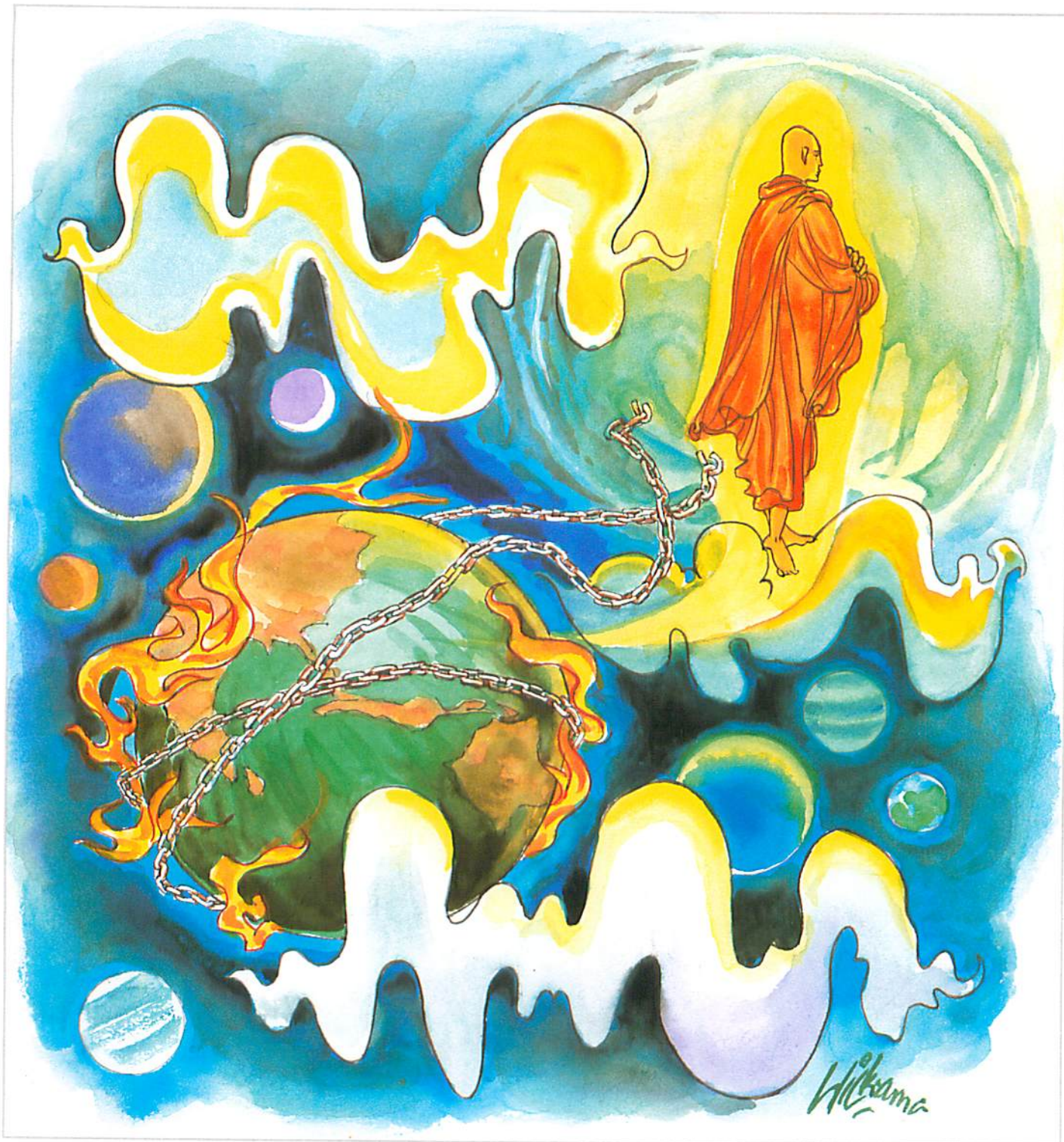
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Chapter 7

ARAHANTA VAGGA

The Saints

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Journeyed, sorrowless, freed from bonds, one suffers no torment of passions here.

90. *Gataddhinō visōkassa*
vippamuttassa sabbadhi
sabbaganthappahīnassa
pariḷāhō na vijjati. (7:1)

With journey finished and sorrowless,
from everything completely free,
for one who's loosened all the ties
passion's fever is not found.

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ARAHANTA VAGGA (The Saints)
PASSION'S FEVER GONE

7 (1) The Story of the Question Asked by Jīvaka (Verse 90)

While residing at the mango-grove Monastery of Jīvaka, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the question raised by Jīvaka to the Buddha.

Now on a certain occasion Dēvadatta joined forces with Ajātasattu, climbed Vulture Peak, and out of the wickedness of his heart, saying to himself, "I will kill the Buddha," hurled down a rock. Two mountain crags caught the rock and splintered it; but one of the flying pieces struck the foot of the Buddha and caused blood to flow. The Buddha suffered intense pains and was removed by the monks to Maddakucchi. Desiring to go on to Jīvaka's Mango-grove, the Buddha said to the monks, "Carry me thither." So the monks took the Buddha and carried him to Jīvaka's Mango-grove. When Jīvaka heard the news, he immediately went to the Buddha and to heal the wound applied an ointment. Then he bound up the wound and said to the Buddha, "Venerable, I have a patient in the city. As soon as I have visited him, I will return. Let this dressing remain exactly as it is until I return." So saying, Jīvaka went and treated his patient. But the gate was closed when he returned, and he was therefore unable to enter. Thereupon the following thought occurred to him, "I have committed a grievous fault. I applied an astringent to the foot of the Buddha and bound up his wound, just as I should have bound up the wound of any other man. It is now time to remove the bandage. For if the bandage remains unbound all night long, the Buddha will suffer intense pain."

At that moment the Buddha addressed the Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, Jīvaka returned late in the evening and was unable to enter the gate. This was the thought in his mind, 'Now it is time to remove the bandage.' Therefore remove the bandage, whereupon the scar disappeared like bark from a tree. At early dawn Jīvaka hastened to the Buddha's side and asked, "Venerable, did you suffer intense pain?" Said the Buddha, "Jīvaka, all suffering is extinguished for the Buddha, even as when he sat on the Throne of Enlightenment."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 90)

gataddhinō visōkassa sabbadhi vippamuttassa sabbaganthappahīnassa pariḷāhō na vijjati

gataddhinō: those who are at journey's end; *visōkassa:* sorrowless; *sabbadhi:* in all things; *vippamuttassa:* fully released; *sabbaganthappahīnassa:* have totally freed themselves from all bonds; *pariḷāhō:* anxiety; *na vijjati:* (in them) does not occur

They are at the journey's end — their quest for liberation has succeeded. They are sorrowless and are totally released in mind. They have got rid of all knots and no bonds bind them. In them no anxiety exists.

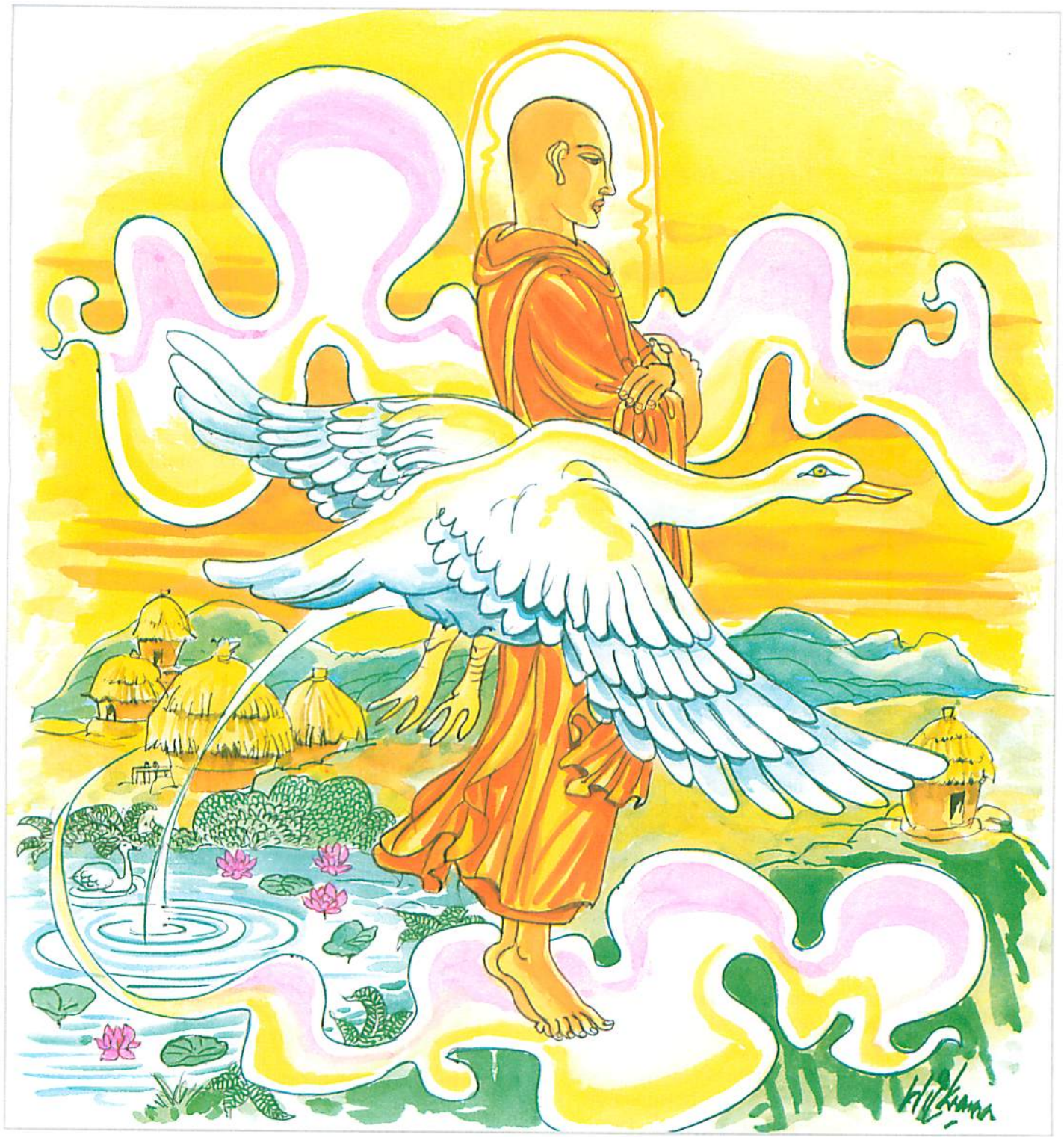
Commentary

gataddhinō: he who has fully travelled the road, who has gone all the way — and that person is the arahat. There are two roads that can be taken by humans. One is the wilderness road. The other is the road through succeeding cycles of existence — which is *saṁsāra*. The wilderness roads are of five types. One is the bandit Wilderness which is dominated by plundering and murdering bandits. The second is the wilderness of wild beasts. The ferocious beasts hold sway over it. The third is the waterless wilderness where there is no water for drinking or washing. The fourth is the Wilderness of non-human and sub-human species. That kind of Wilderness is dominated by devils and demons. The fifth is the foodless wilderness. There, no edible things are found. But, when the arahats are described as *gataddhinō* — those who have travelled the road — what is meant is the road through the cycle of existence. The arahats have completed their journey through it — *Saṁsāra*.

sabba ganthappahīnassa: to him who has given up all bonds. Bonds are four in number. They are: (1) *abhijjhā:* covetousness: desiring the possessions of others; (2) *vyāpāda:* ill-will; hatred, resentment and anger towards others; (3) *sīlabbata-parāmāsa:* alienated discipline; (4) *idam saccābhinivēso:* the bias that what I hold is entirely true and all others are untrue. These four bonds keep a person shackled to recurrent existence *(saṁsāra)*.

Jīvaka: personal physician of the Buddha. The Buddha pronounced this stanza for Jīvaka. Immediately after his birth Jīvaka was placed in a casket and was cast away by his mother, a courtesan, on a dust heap by the road side. Prince Abhaya, a son of King Bimbisāra, who happened to pass that way, saw the helpless infant surrounded by crows, and discovering that he was alive *(jīvati)*, caused him to be given to the care of the nurses. As he was found alive he was named Jīvaka. Being adopted by a prince, he was called Kōmārabhacca. Growing up, he became a skilful physician and surgeon. Books state that he made two successful operations on a millionaire who was suffering from a severe headache. He used to attend on the Buddha three times a day. When, in this instance, the Buddha's foot was wounded by a splinter caused by the hurling of a rock by Dēvadatta, it was Jīvaka who attended on Him and healed Him.

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Mindfully delighting in no abode, they move from home to homeless like departing swans.

91. *Uyyuñjanti satīmantō*
na nikētē ramanti tē
haṁsā'va pallalaṁ hitvā
ōkamōkaṁ jahanti tē. (7:2)

Mindful Ones exert themselves,
in no abode do they delight,
as swans abandoning their lake
home after home they leave behind.

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SAINTS ARE NON-ATTACHED

7 (2) The Story of Venerable Mahākassapa (Verse 91)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Mahākassapa

On a certain occasion, after keeping residence during the season of the rains at Rājagaha, the Buddha made this announcement to the monks, "At the end of a fortnight I will go forth on a pilgrimage for alms." But while the monks were scalding their bowls and dyeing their robes, the Venerable Mahākassapa washed his robes. The monks were offended at this and said, "Why does the Venerable wash his robes? Within and without this city dwell a hundred and eighty million people. So many of these as are not the Venerable's kinsfolk are his supporters; and so many as are not his supporters are his kinsfolk. All these people show honour and reverence to the Venerable by providing him with the four requisites. If he rejects all their good offices, where will he go? Even were he to go, he would not go farther than Māpamāda Cave." (Māpamāda Cave, by the way, acquired its name in the following way: Whenever the Buddha reached this cave, he would say to the monks who were to return, "Now you may return; be not heedless — *mā pamajjittha*." Thus this cave came to be called Māpamāda Cave.)

Likewise the Buddha thought, as he set out on his pilgrimage, "Within and without this city dwell a hundred and eighty million people, and on occasions of public festivals or disasters, there the monks must go. It is therefore out of the question to leave the monastery empty. But shall I direct all of them to return?" Then the following thought occurred to him, "These people are either kinsfolk or retainers of Mahākassapa; therefore, it is Mahākassapa whom I should direct to return." Accordingly he said to the Venerable, "Mahākassapa, it is out of the question to leave the monastery empty, for there is need of monks on occasions of public festivals or disasters; therefore take your own retinue with you and return." "Very well, Venerable," replied the Venerable and taking his own retinue with him, he returned.

The monks were offended at this and said, "Did you observe, brethren? Did we not just say, 'Why is Mahākassapa washing his robes? He will not accompany the Buddha.' Everything has happened just as we said it would." When the Buddha heard the talk of the monks, he turned around, stood still, and said, "Monks, what is this you are saying?' "We are talking about Venerable Mahākassapa, Venerable," Replied the monks, and then repeated their conversation word for word. The Buddha listened to what they had to say and then replied, "Monks, you say, 'Mahākassapa is attached to his households and his requisites.' As a matter of fact, he turned back because it was his desire to obey my command. For in a previous state of existence he made an earnest wish and became, like the moon, free from attachment. He made the earnest wish, 'May I be able to approach the households of supporters.' Mahākassapa has no attachment for a household or a requisite. Beginning with Mahākassapa, I preached to all a path like that of the moon, the path of the stock of the elect. My son has no attachment anywhere, but is like a royal goose which goes down into a lake and swims and remains there.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 91)

satīmantō uyyuñjanti tē nikētē na ramanti tē pallalaṁ hitvā haṁsā iva ōkamōkaṁ jahanti

satīmantō: those mindful ones; *uyyuñjanti:* constantly practice; *tē:* they; *nikētē:* in attachment; *na ramanti:* do not take interest in; *tē pallalaṁ hitvā iva:* like leaving the lake; *haṁsā:* swans; *ōkamōkaṁ:* all settled abodes; *jahanti:* leave (give-up)

Those mindful ones make the effort to keep their attentiveness always in trim. They are not at all attached to abodes or settlements. Giving up all places of settled living, they leave like the swans who fly away free in mind.

Commentary

satīmantō: those who are attentive. Sati is attention, perpetual alertness. Attentiveness, which is introspective attention, is one of the five spiritual Faculties and Powers, one of the seven factors of enlightenment, and the seventh link of the eight-fold path, and is, in its widest sense, one of those mental factors inseparably associated with all kammically wholesome and *kamma*-produced lofty states of mind.

arahants: Arahants wander whithersoever they like without any attachment to any particular place as they are free from the conception of 'I' and 'mine'.

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The path of the liberated cannot be traced like the course of birds in the sky.

92. *Yēsaṁ sannicayō natthi*
yē pariññātabhōjanā
suññatō animittō ca
vimokkhō yassa gōcarō
ākāsē'va sakuntānaṁ
gati tēsaṁ durannayā. (7:3)

For those who don't accumulate,
who well reflect upon their food,
they have as range the nameless and
the void of perfect freedom too.
As birds that wing through space,
hard to trace their going.

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BLAMELESS IS THE NATURE OF SAINTS

7 (3) The Story of Venerable Bellaṭṭhisīsa (Verse 92)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Bellaṭṭhisīsa.

Venerable Bellaṭṭhisīsa, after going on an alms-round in the village, stopped on the way and took his food there. After the meal, he continued his round of alms for more food. When he had collected enough food he returned to the monastery, dried up the rice and hoarded it. Thus, there was no need for him to go on an alms-round every day; he then remained in jhāna (one-pointed) concentration for two or three days. Arising from *jhāna* concentration he ate the dried rice he had stored up, after soaking it in water. Other monks thought ill of the thēra on this account, and reported to the Buddha about his hoarding of rice. Since then, the hoarding of food by the monks has been prohibited.

As for Venerable Bellaṭṭhisīsa, since he stored up rice before the ruling on hoarding was made and because he did it not out of greed for food, but only to save time for meditation practice, the Buddha declared that the thēra was quite innocent and that he was not to be blamed.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 92)

yēsaṁ sannicayō natthi yē pariññatabhōjanā
yassa suññatō animittō vimokkhō ca gōcarō
tēsaṁ gati ākāsē sakuntānaṁ iva durannayā

yēsaṁ: to those (liberated persons); *sannicayō natthi:* there is no amassing; *yē:* they; *pariññatabhōjanā:* full of understanding of the nature of food; *yassa:* to whom; *suññatō:* emptiness; *animittō:* objectlessness; *vimokkhō:* freedom of mind; *ca gōcarō:* are the field; *tēsaṁ gati:* their whereabouts; *ākāsē sakuntānaṁ iva:* like the birds in the sky; *durannayā:* are difficult to be perceived or known

With full understanding that nature is empty and objectless the mind is free of craving and leaves no trace of its whereabouts like the paths of birds in flight.

Commentary

sannicayō natthi: no hoarding. The evolved persons — the saintly individuals — do not hoard anything. This statement is true in two ways. It is quite clear that they do not hoard worldly requisites and material things. They do not also accumulate fresh merit or sin. They do not accumulate new Kamma. Because of that they do not have a rebirth. An arahat may commit an act of virtue. He does not accumulate new merit for that act.

arahat: This stanza dwells on the special qualities of an arahat. Who, then, are the arahats? They are those who cultivate the path and reach the highest stage of realization *(arahatta)*, the final liberation from suffering.

> Victors like me are they, indeed,
> They who have won defilements' end.

Arahats have given up all attachments, even the subtlest. Therefore, an arahat's mind roams only on emptiness, objectlessness and total freedom of thought.

The Buddha, however, also made clear to his disciples the difference between himself and the arahats who were his disciples. They were declared by the Buddha to be his equals as far as the emancipation from defilements and ultimate deliverance are concerned:

'The Buddha, O disciples, is an Arahat, a fully Enlightened One. It is He who proclaims a path not proclaimed before, He is the knower of a path, who understands a path, who is skilled in a path. And now His disciples are way-farers who follow in His footsteps. That is the distinction, the specific feature which distinguishes the Buddha, who is an Arahat, a Fully Enlightened One, from the disciple who is freed by insight.' Sanskrit arhat 'the Consummate One', 'The Worthy One': are titles applied exclusively to the Buddha and the perfected disciples. As the books reveal, the first application of the term to the Buddha was by himself. That was when the Buddha was journeying from Gayā to Bārānasi to deliver his first sermon to the five ascetics. On the way, not far from Gayā, the Buddha was met by Upaka, an ascetic, who, struck by the serene appearance of the Master, inquired: 'Who is thy teacher? Whose teaching do you profess?' Replying in verse, the Buddha said:

> 'I, verily, am the Arahat in the world,
> A teacher peerless am I...'

He used the word for the second time when addressing the five ascetics thus: 'I am an Arahat, a Tathāgata, fully enlightened.'

The word is applied only to those who have fully destroyed the taints. In this sense, the Buddha was the first Arahat in the world as he himself revealed to Upaka.

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Path of the passionless, unattached to food, is untraceable like the course of birds in the air.

93. *Yassā'savā parikkhīṇā*
āhārē ca anissitō
suññatō animittō ca
vimokkhō yassa gōcarō
ākāsē'va sakuntānaṁ
padaṁ tassa durannayaṁ. (7:4)

For whom pollutions are destroyed,
not attached to any food,
he has as range the nameless and
the void of perfect freedom too.
As birds that wing through space,
hard to trace his going.

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ARAHAT'S STATE CANNOT BE TRACED

7 (4) The Story of Venerable Anuruddha (Verse 93)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Anuruddha.

One day, the Venerable, whose robes were worn out, was seeking material on refuse-heaps and in other similar places. Now in the Venerable's third previous existence he had a wife who had been reborn in the World of the Thirty-three as the goddess Jālinī. When the goddess saw the Venerable seeking cloths for robes, she resolved to aid him. So taking three celestial cloths thirteen cubits long and four cubits wide, and thinking to herself, "If I display these cloths in this manner, the Venerable will not take them," she went to a certain refuse-heap in front of the heap where the Venerable was seeking cloths and laid them down in such a way that only the hems were visible.

Taking the cloths with him, he went his way. On the day he was to make his robes, the Buddha, accompanied by his retinue of many monks, went to the monastery and sat down; likewise the eighty chief Venerables sat down there also. For the purpose of sewing the robes, Venerable Kassapa the Great sat at the foot, Venerable Sāriputta in the midst, and Venerable Ānanda at the head. The company of monks spun out the thread, the Buddha threaded the needle, and Venerable Moggallāna went hither and thither supplying whatever else might be needed.

The goddess entered the village and incited the inhabitants to give alms, saying, "They are making robes for my noble Venerable Anuruddha. The Buddha, surrounded by the eighty chief disciples, and accompanied by his retinue of many monks, has gone to the monastery and sat down therein. Take rice-porridge and other provisions and go to the monastery." During the meal Venerable Moggallāna brought large pieces of rose-apple, but the monks were unable to eat it. Sakka drew a circle about the place where they were making the robes; the earth was as if dyed with lac; there was a great heap of food both soft and hard remaining over and above to the monks who had eaten.

The monks were offended, and said, "Why should such a quantity of food be provided for so few monks? When they told The Buddha, he said, "But, monks, you do not think that this was brought by any orders of Anuruddha, do you?" "Yes, Venerable; we do." "Monks, my son Anuruddha does not talk thus. They that have rid themselves of the corruptions do not spend their time talking about requisites; nay, these provisions were produced by the supernatural power of a goddess."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 93)

yassa āsavā parikkhīṇā āhārē ca anissitō yassa
suññatō animittō ca vimokkhō gōcarō tassa
padaṁ ākāsē sakuntānaṁ iva durannayaṁ

yassa: whose; āsavā: taints; *parikkhīṇā:* exhausted (gone); *āhārē ca:* even in food; *anissitō:* not attached; *yassa:* to whom; *suññatō:* emptiness; *animittō ca:* and objectlessness; *vimokkhō gocarō:* liberation are their field; *tassa padaṁ:* their path; *ākāsē:* in the sky; *sakuntānaṁ iva:* like those of birds; *durannayaṁ:* cannot be seen

If one is totally rid of influences, internal or external, that motivate human behaviour, and is not attached even to food, that kind of individual focusses his mind on emptiness, objectlessness and freedom of thought. The path of such saints is difficult to be traced, like the path of birds flying through the sky.

Commentary

āsavā: Usually translated as cankers, fluxes, fluxions, taints, corruptions, intoxicants, biases. We translate this word (*ā* + *sava* = flowing in) as influence that motivates behaviour. Four influences are listed in the Suttas: 1) tendency towards sensual desires *(kāmāsava)*; 2) tendency towards existence *(bhavāsava)*; 3) tendency towards beliefs *(diiṭṭhāsava)*; and 4) tendency towards unawareness *(avijjāsava)*. A list of three, omitting the tendency towards views is also found in the Suttas. The four-fold division also occurs under the name of 'floods' and 'yokes'.

Through the path of stream-entry, the influence of views is destroyed; through the path of non-returning, the influence of sense-desire; through the path of arahatship, the influence of existence and ignorance. Buddha shows how to overcome the influences namely through insight, sense-control, avoidance, wise use of the necessities of life.

Khīnāsava, one whose influences are destroyed, or one who is influence-free, is a name for the arahat or Holy One. The state of arahatship is frequently called *āsavakkhaya*, 'the destruction of the influences'. Suttas concluding with the attainment of arahatship by the listeners, often end with the words "During this utterance, the hearts of the monks were freed from the influences through clinging no more".

This term *āsava* could mean impulse, urge, compulsion, motive or influence. It is similar to the term *tanhā* commonly translated as craving. *Tanhā* is also of three kinds: thirst for sensual pleasure *(kāma tanhā)*; thirst for existence *(bhava tanhā)*; and thirst for non-existence *(vibhava tanhā)*.

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He whose senses are guarded like trained horses, is pure and humble, is adored even by gods.

94. *Yass'indriyāni samathaṅ gatāni*
assā yathā sārathinā sudantā
pahīṇamānassa anāsavassa
dēvā'pi tassa pihayanti tādinō. (7:5)

Whose faculties are pacified
as steeds by charioteer well-tamed,
with pride abandoned, unpolluted,
to even dēvas this One's dear.

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GODS ADORE ARAHATS

7 (5) The Story of Venerable Mahākaccāyana (Verse 94)

While residing at the Pubbārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Mahākaccāyana.

For once upon a time, on the occasion of the terminal festival, the Buddha sat on the ground floor of the mansion of the Mother of Migāra, surrounded by a company of eminent lay disciples. At this time Venerable Kaccāyana resided in the Avanti country. Now this Venerable, although obliged to come from a great distance, regularly attended the preaching of the Dhamma. Therefore, when the Venerables sat down, they always left a seat for Venerable Kaccāyana.

Sakka the king of gods drew near with his celestial retinue from the two Worlds of Gods, and honoured the Buddha with celestial perfumes and garlands. Not seeing Venerable Kaccāyana, he thought to himself, "Why is my noble Venerable nowhere seen? It would be well if he were to draw near." At that very moment the Venerable drew near, and showed himself sitting in his proper seat. When Sakka saw the Venerable, he grasped him firmly by the ankles and said, "It is indeed well that my noble Venerable has come; that my noble Venerable should come, was the very thing I wished for." So saying, he rubbed the Venerable's feet with both hands, honoured him with perfumes and garlands, and having paid obeisance to him, stood respectfully on one side.

The monks were offended and said, "Sakka shows respect of persons in rendering honour. Such honour as this, he has not rendered to the rest of the Chief Disciples. The moment he saw Venerable Kaccāyana, he grasped him by the ankles and said, 'It is indeed well that my noble Venerable has come; that my noble Venerable should come, was the very thing I wished for.' So saying, he rubbed the Venerable's feet with both hands, honoured him with perfumes and garlands, and having paid obeisance to him, stood respectfully on one side." The Buddha, hearing their talk, said, "Monks, those monks who, like my son Kaccāyana, keep the doors of their senses guarded, are beloved both by gods and men."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 94)

yassa indriyāni sārathinā sudantā assā yathā
samathaṁ gatāni, pahīṇamānassa anāsavassa
tādinō tassa dēvā api pihayanti

yassa: whose; *indriyāni:* senses; *sārathinā:* like by charioteer; *sudantā:* (are) well tamed; *assā yathā:* like horses; *samathaṁ:* calmness; *gatāni:* have reached; *pahīṇamānassa:* judgement given up; *anāsavassa:* taintless; *tādinō:* mentally stable one; *tassa:* their (sight); *dēvā api:* even gods; *pihayanti:* (are) pleased by.

Those whose senses are calmed as a horse trained by a horse-tamer, who have fully given up judgement, who is free of influences, the sight of those mentally stable ones pleases even the gods.

Commentary

indriyāni: the senses. "Sense" is a name for the six senses mentioned in the Suttas. They are: 1) Eye: *cakkhu*; 2) Ear: *sōta*; 3) Nose: *ghāna*; 4) Tongue: *jivhā*; 5) Body: *kāya*; 6) Thought: *manō*.

tādinō: steady; unaffected by the influences within and without. The Buddha is steady in four ways because he has ended his wanderings in saṁsāra. These are the four ways in which he is steady on that account: (1) *Bhagavā kāmōgham tinnō:* The Buddha has crossed the flood of desires. (2) *Bhagavā bhavōgham tinnō:* the Buddha has crossed the flood of being; (3) *Bhagavā Avijjōgham tinnō:* the Buddha has crossed the flood of unawareness. Due to these and many other reasons the Buddha is steady, stable *(tādi)*.

A person's stability is the emotional stability that comes from not reacting to what is seen, heard, smelt, tasted or touched. The reaction begins with the judgement of things as good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. Guarding the senses *(indriya saṁvara)* prevents the reaction. When not reacting, the senses are calmed.

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Peaceful like the earth and pure like a lake the Arahant runs no more in Saṁsāra.

95. *Paṭhavīsamō nō virujjhati*
indakhīlū'pamō tādi subbatō
rahadō'va apetākaddamō
saṁsārā na bhavanti tādinō. (7:6)

Like earth is one who's well-behaved,
secure and not resentful,
as city-post, as filth-free lake,
no wanderings-on for One Who's Thus.

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ARAHATS ARE NOBLE

7 (6) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta (Verse 95)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the Chief Disciple Sāriputta and a young monk.

Once upon a time, at the conclusion of the rains, Venerable Sāriputta, desiring to go forth on an alms-pilgrimage, took leave of the Buddha, paid obeisance to him, and departed with his own retinue. Many other monks took leave of the Venerable. In dismissing the monks the Venerable mentioned the personal and family name of all of the monks who were known by personal and family names. A certain monk who was not known by a personal and family name said, "Oh, that the Venerable would greet me by a personal and family name in dismissing me." But in the great throng of monks the elder did not notice him. thereupon the monk said to himself, "He does not greet me as he does the other monks," and straightaway conceived a grudge against the Venerable.

Besides that, the hem of the Venerable's garment brushed against the monk, and this also served to intensify the hatred the monk felt towards the Venerable. So soon as he knew that the Venerable had passed beyond the entrance to the monastery, he approached the Buddha and said to him, "Venerable, Venerable Sāriputta, doubtless thinking to himself, 'I am your chief disciple,' struck me a blow that almost injured my ear. Having so done, without so much as begging my pardon, he set out on his alms-pilgrimage." The Buddha caused the Venerable to be summoned.

Venerable Sāriputta came with the rest, saluted the Buddha, and sat down respectfully on one side. When the Buddha questioned him about the incident, the elder, instead of saying, "I did not strike that monk," recited his own virtues.

As the Venerable recited his own virtues, remorse pervaded the whole body of the monk who had unjustly slandered him. And straightaway he fell at the feet of the Buddha, admitted that he was guilty of slander, and confessed his fault. The Buddha addressing the Venerable, said, "Sāriputta, pardon this deluded man, lest his head split into seven pieces." Thereupon the Venerable crouched before the monk, and extending his clasped hands in an attitude of reverence, said to him, "Venerable, I freely pardon this venerable monk. Let this venerable monk also pardon me if I have in any way offended against him." Thereupon the monks said, "Behold, brethren, the surpassing goodness of the Venerable! He cherishes neither anger nor hatred against this lying, slanderous monk. Instead, he crouches before him, extends his hands in an attitude of reverence, and asks his pardon." When the Buddha heard the talk of the monks, he said, "Monks, what are you talking about?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, it is impossible for Sāriputta and his like to cherish anger or hatred. Sāriputta's mind is like the great earth, like a threshold, like a pool of still water."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 95)

subbatō paṭhavīsamō nō virujjati indakhīlūpamō tādi rahadō iva apetakaddamō tādinō saṁsārā na bhavanti

subbatō: well conducted; *paṭhavīsamō:* like the earth; *nō virujjati:* does not stand opposed to anyone; *indakhīlūpamō:* like a fortress tower; *tādi:* stable; *rahadō iva:* like the ocean; *apētakaddamō:* devoid of mud; *tādinō:* stable one; *saṁsārā:* (for him) wandering in existence; *na bhavanti:* does not happen

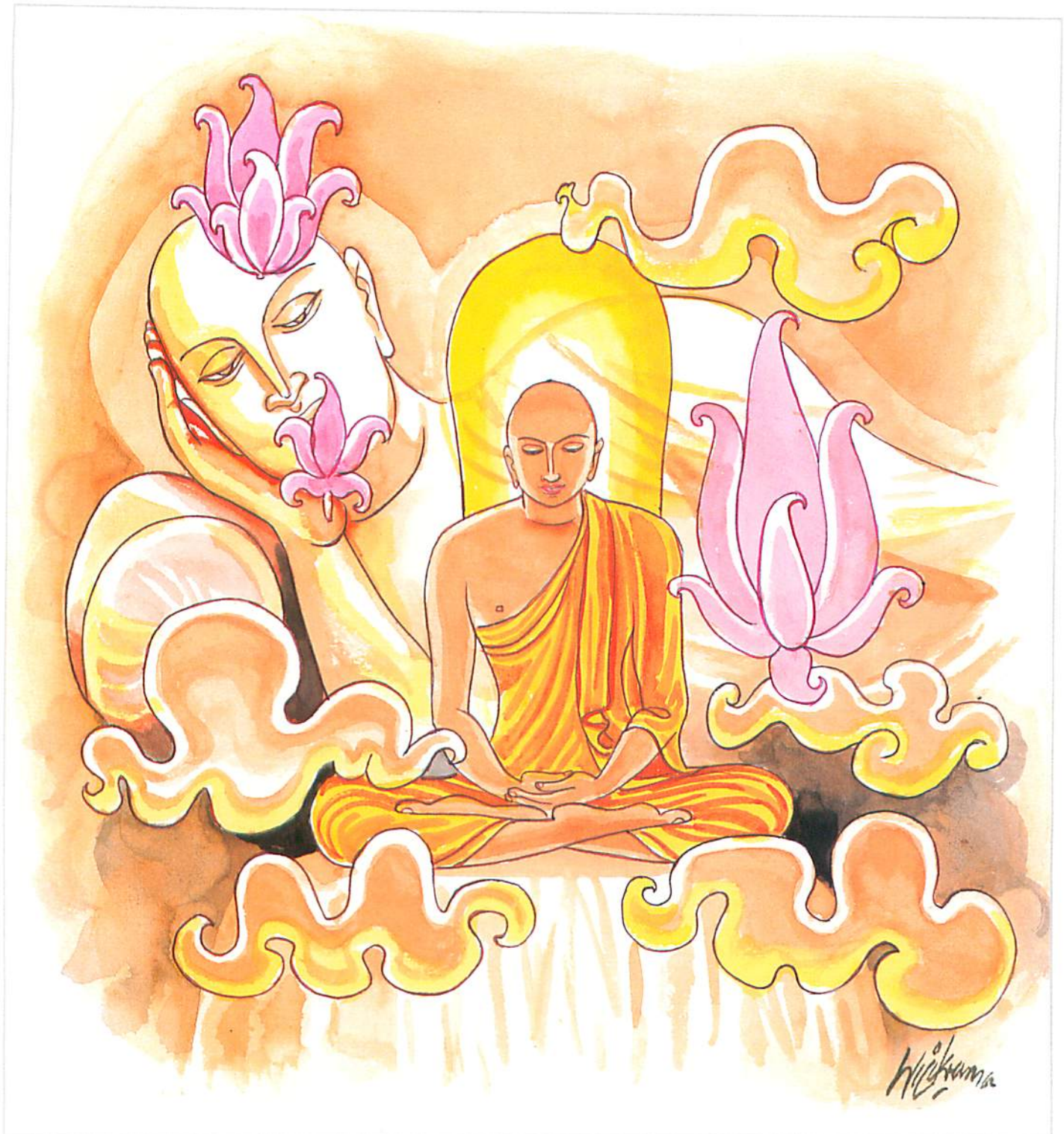
The noble Arahats never lose their temper whatsoever is done to them. They are as firm and unshaken as the gate-pillars that secure city-gates. They are as lucid and tranquil as the ocean and the lakes devoid of mud. That kind of noble person ceases to wander in the round of existence — *saṁsāra.*

Commentary

indakhīla: either a column as firm and high as that of Sakka's, or the main tower that stands at the entrance of a fortress, or city. Commentators state that these *indakhīlas* are firm posts which are erected either inside or outside the city as an embellishment. Usually they are made of bricks or of durable wood and are octagonal in shape. Half of the post is embedded in the earth, hence the metaphor 'as firm and steady as an *indakhīla*'.

tādinō: *Tādi* is one who has neither attachment to desirable objects nor aversion to undesirable objects. Nor does he cling to anything. Amidst the eight worldly conditions - gain and loss, fame and infamy, blame and praise, happiness and pain - an Arahant remains unperturbed, manifesting neither attachment nor aversion, neither elation nor depression.

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Tranquil in mind, in speech, and action is he who is totally freed through perfect wisdom.

96. *Santaṁ tassa manaṁ hōti*
santā vācā ca kamma ca
sammadaññā vimmuttassa
upasantassa tādinō. (7:7)

Peaceful his mind and peaceful
his speech and action too,
perfect in knowledge of freedom,
One Thus is of utmost peace.

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THE TRANQUILITY OF THE SAINTS

7 (7) The Story of a Novice Monk from Kōsambi (Verse 96)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a novice monk, a pupil of Venerable Tissa from Kōsambi.

A certain youth of respectable family, residing at Kōsambi, retired from the world and became a monk in the religion of the Buddha. After making his full profession, he was known as Venerable Kōsambivāsī Tissa. After he had kept residence during the season of the rains at Kōsambi, his supporter brought a set of three robes and offerings of ghee and palm sugar and laid them at his feet. "Venerable, if it be true that you have no novice to minister to your needs, my son will become your novice." The Venerable graciously accepted the offer. The lay disciple brought his own son, but seven years old, to the Venerable, and committed him into the Venerable's hands, saying, "Pray receive him into the Sangha, Venerable." The Venerable moistened the boy's hair, taught him how to meditate on the first five of the consistent parts of the body, and received him into the Sangha. The instant the razor touched his hair, he attained arahatship, together with the supernatural faculties. The Venerable, having received the youth into the Sangha, remained at Kōsambi for a fortnight. Then, deciding to visit the Buddha, he directed the novice to take the requisites, and set out on his Journey. On the way he entered a monastery. The novice obtained lodging for the Venerable and looked after it for him. While he was thus engaged, it grew dark and he was therefore unable to provide a lodging for himself. So assuming a cross-legged posture near the bed of his preceptor, the novice spent the night sitting up.

The Venerable rose at dawn and said to himself, "I must cause the novice to go out." So he took a fan which was placed at the side of the bed, struck the mat of the novice with the tip of the palm-leaf, and then, tossing the fan into the air, said, "Novice, go out." The handle of the fan struck the novice in the eye and straightaway blinded his eye. "What did you say, Venerable?" said the novice. "Rise and go out," was the reply. The novice, instead of saying, "Venerable, my eye has been blinded," covered his eye with one hand and went out. Moreover, when it was time for him to perform his duties as novice, he did not say, "My eye has been blinded," nor did he remain seated, but covering his eye with one hand and taking a hand-broom in the other hand, he swept out the privy and the wash-room, after which, setting out water for washing the face, he swept out the Venerable's cell.

When he advanced to present the toothstick to the Venerable, the novice told him the whole story from the beginning. When the Venerable heard his story, he was deeply moved. The novice tried to comfort the Venerable but he would not be comforted. Overcome with remorse he took the novice to the Buddha. The Buddha asked him, "Monk, is everything really well?" The Venerable replied, "All is well with me. But here is a young novice whose good qualities surpass anything I have ever seen." The Venerable told him the story. "Venerable, when I asked him to pardon me, he said, 'You are not to blame in this matter, and neither am I.'" Said the Buddha to the Venerable, "Monk, those who have rid themselves of the depravities, cherish neither anger nor hatred towards anyone."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 96)

sammā aññāya vimuttassa upasantassa tādinō
tassa manaṁ santaṁ hōti vācā ca santā kammaṁ ca

sammā: harmonious; *aññāya:* by "disknowing"; *vimuttassa:* freed; *upasantassa:* tranquil within; *tādinō:* stable one's; *tassa manaṁ:* mind; *santaṁ hōti:* is calm; *vācā ca:* also his speech; *kammaṁ ca:* his actions too; *santā:* (are) calmed

A noble arahat, who is freed by 'disknowing', is calm and unshaken by the impact of changing circumstances. His mind is at peace. His words are peaceful. His actions are peaceful.

Commentary

santā: peaceful. The saintly — the arahat — is truly peaceful. He is peaceful because he has reached total "disknowing", or freedom from knowing, as he has attained that level of calm that is not perturbed. Since the mind is the fountain of all activity, his words are calm. Since his mind and words are calm, his actions too are calm. Therefore he is totally serene in personality. This leads him to the status of total serenity — *upasantā* (tranquil within). 'Disknowing' means that one does not form opinions about circumstances based on past experience or present. When one does not, one remains unmoved and one is at peace.

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No more believer, a knower of his goal, a relentless demolisher of all that interferes.

97. *Assaddhō akataññū ca*
sandhicchēdō ca yō narō
hatāvakāsō vantāsō
sa vē uttamapōrisō. (7:8)

With no beliefs, the Unmade known,
with fetters finally severed,
with kammas cut and cravings shed,
attained to humanity's heights.

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EXALTED ARE THE UNBLEMISHED

7 (8) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta (Verse 97)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Sāriputta.

One day thirty forest-dwellers approached the Buddha, paid obeisance to him, and sat down. The Buddha, seeing that they possessed the requisite faculties for attaining arahatship, addressed Venerable Sāriputta as follows, "Sāriputta, do you believe that the quality of faith, when it has been developed and enlarged, is connected with the deathless and terminates in the deathless?" In this manner the Buddha questioned the Venerable with reference to the five moral qualities.

Said the Venerable, "Venerable, I do not go by faith in the Buddha in this matter, that the quality of faith, when it has been developed and enlarged, is connected with the deathless and terminates in the deathless. But of course, Venerable, those who have not known the deathless or seen or perceived or realized or grasped the deathless by the power of reason, such persons must of necessity go by the faith of others in this matter; namely, that the faculty of faith, when it has been developed and enlarged, is connected with the deathless and terminates in the deathless." Thus did the Venerable answer his question.

When the monks heard this, they began a discussion: "Venerable Sāriputta has never really given up false views. Even today he refused to believe even the supremely Enlightened One." When the Buddha heard this, he said, "Monks, why do you say this? For I asked Sāriputta the following question, 'Sāriputta, do you believe that without developing the five moral qualities, without developing tranquillity and spiritual insight, it is possible for a man to realize the paths and the fruits?' And he answered me as follows, 'There is no one who can thus realize the paths and the fruits.' Then I asked him, 'Do you not believe that there is such a thing as the ripening of the fruit of almsgiving and good works? Do you not believe in the virtues of the Buddhas and the rest?' But as a matter of fact, Sāriputta walks not by the faith of others, for the reason that he has, in and by himself, attained states of mind to which the Paths and the Fruits lead, by the power of spiritual insight induced by ecstatic meditation. Therefore he is not open to censure."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 97)

yō narō assaddhō akataññū ca sandhicchēdō
hatāvakāsō vantāsō ca, sō vē uttamapōrisō

yō narō: a person; *assaddhō:* not believing false views; *akataññū:* aware of nibbāna; *ca sandhicchēdō:* also having severed all connections; *hatāvakāsō:* having destroyed all the opportunities; *vantāsō:* having given up all desires; *sō:* he; *vē:* without any doubt; *uttamaporisō:* is a noble person

He has no faith in anyone but in himself. He is aware of deathlessness — the unconditioned. He is a breaker of connections, because he has severed all his worldly links. He has destroyed all the opportunities for rebirth. He has given up all desires. Because of all these he — the arahat — is a truly noble person.

Commentary

assaddhō: non-believer; he so firmly believes his own view and that of the Buddha he does not need to believe in any other.

akataññū: literally, 'ungrateful'; but, in this context, 'aware of the unconditioned — that is *Nibbāna*'.

sandhicchēdō: is the term usually given to a burglar, because he breaks into houses. But, here, it signifies severing all worldly connections.

hatāvakāsō: a person who has given up all opportunities. But, here it is meant having given up opportunities for rebirth.

Special Note: All the expressions in this stanza can be interpreted as applying to persons who are not noble, but to depraved persons. But, the interpretation of those forms to give positive spiritually wholesome meanings and not negative ones, is quite intriguing. In other words, the Buddha has, in this stanza, used a set of expressions used in general parlance to denote people of mean behaviour. But, due to the implications attributed to them by the Buddha, these depraved terms acquire a high significance.

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The abode of Arahats whether in village, valley, forest, hill or dale is indeed delightful.

98. *Gāmē vā yadi vā'raññē*
ninnē vā yadī vā thalē
yatthārahantō viharanti
taṁ bhūmiṁ rāmaṇeyyakaṁ. (7:9)

Whether in town or woods,
whether in vale, on hill,
wherever dwell the Arahants
so pleasing there the earth.

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DWELLING OF THE UNBLEMISHED IS ALLURING

7 (9) The Story of Venerable Rēvata (Verse 98)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Rēvata of the Acacia (khadira) Forest.

Rēvata was the youngest brother of the Chief Disciple Sāriputta. He was the only one of the brothers and sisters of Sāriputta who had not left home for the homeless life. His parents were very anxious to get him married. Rēvata was only seven years old when his parents arranged a marriage for him to a young girl. At the wedding reception, he met an old lady who was one hundred and twenty years old, and he realized that all beings are subject to ageing and decay. So, he ran away from the house and went straight to a monastery, where there were thirty monks. Those monks had been requested earlier by Venerable Sāriputta to make his brother a novice monk if he should come to them. Accordingly, he was made a novice monk and Venerable Sāriputta was informed about it.

Monk Rēvata took a meditation topic from those monks and left for an acacia forest, thirty yōjanas (leagues) away from the monastery. At the end of the vassa (rainy season), the novice monk attained arahatship. Venerable Sāriputta then àsked permission from the Buddha to visit his brother, but the Buddha replied that he himself would go there. So the Buddha accompanied by Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Sīvalī and many other monks set out to visit Sāmanēra (novice) Rēvata.

The journey was long, the road was rough and the area was uninhabited by people; but the dēvas looked to all the needs of the Buddha and the monks on the way. At an interval of every yōjana (league), a monastery and food were provided, and they travelled at the rate of a yōjana a day. Rēvata, learning about the visit of the Buddha, also made arrangements to welcome him. By supernormal power he created a special monastery for the Buddha and five hundred monasteries for the other monks, and made them comfortable throughout their stay there.

On their return journey, they travelled at the same rate as before, and came to the Pubbārāma Monastery on the eastern end of Sāvatthi at the end of the month. From there, they went to the house of Visākhā, who offered them alms-food. After the meal, Visākhā asked the Buddha if the place of Rēvata in the acacia forest was pleasant.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 98)

gāmē vā yadi araññē vā ninnē vā yadī thalē vā,
yattha arahatō viharanti, taṁ bhūmiṁ
rāmaṇeyyakaṁ

gāme vā: whether in a village; *yadi:* or else; *araññe vā:* whether in a forest; *ninnē vā:* even in a valley; *yadī:* or else; *thalē vā:* whether in a plain; *yattha:* in whatever place; *arahatō:* noble ones; *viharanti:* dwell; *taṁ bhūmiṁ:* that particular place; *rāmaṇeyyakaṁ:* is attractive

Whether in the village, in the forest, in a valley or in the plain, wherever arahats — noble saints — dwell, that place is alluring in the extreme.

Commentary

arahat: the noble ones; Evolved Ones. They are also described as *Ariya-Puggala* (Noble Ones). *Ariya-Puggala* are those who have realized one of the eight stages of holiness, i.e., the four supermundane Paths *(magga)* and the four supermundane Fruitions *(phala)* of these paths. There are four pairs:- (1) the one realizing the path of stream-winning; (2) the one realizing the fruition of stream-winning; (3) the one realizing the path of once-return; (4) the one realizing the fruition of once-return; (5) the one realizing the path of non-return; (6) the one realizing the fruition of non-return; (7) the one realizing the path of holiness; (8) the one realizing the fruition of holiness. Summed up, there are four noble individuals: the stream-winner, the once-returner, the non-returner, the holy one. In some texts *gōtrabhū* is listed as the ninth noble individual. According to the Abhidhamma, supermundane path, or simply path *(magga)*, is a designation of the moment of entering into one of the four stages of holiness — Nibbāna being the object — produced by intuitional insight into the impermanency, misery and impersonality of existence, flashing forth and transforming one's life and nature. By fruitions are meant those moments of consciousness, which follow immediately thereafter as the result of the path, and which in certain circumstances may repeat for innumerable times during life-time.

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Forests where no commoners delight, are a delight to those who seek no sensual pleasures.

99. *Ramaṇīyāni araññāni*
yattha na ramatī janō
vītarāgā ramissanti
na tē kāmagavēsinō. (7:10)

Delightful are the forests
where folk do not delight,
there the Passionless delight,
they're not pleasure-seekers.

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THE PASSIONLESS DELIGHT IN FORESTS

7 (10) The Story of a Woman (Verse 99)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a woman of doubtful character. We are told that a certain monk who lived by his alms-bowl, got a meditation topic from the Buddha and retired to a dilapidated pleasure garden for the purpose of meditation. Now a certain courtesan made an appointment with a man, saying, "I will go to such and such a place and you meet me there." The woman kept the appointment, but the man did not. For some time she watched in vain the path by which she expected him to come. Finally, disappointed at his failure to keep his appointment, she strolled hither and thither and went into the pleasure garden. There she saw the monk sitting cross-legged. Looking this way and that, and seeing no one else about, she said to herself, "Here is a man; I will throw his thoughts into confusion." So standing in front of the monk, she took down her undergarment several times and put it on again, unloosened her hair and bound it up again, and clapped her hands and laughed. The Venerable became excited; his whole body, in fact, was suffused with excitement. "What does this mean?" thought he.

The Buddha considered within himself, "A monk obtained a meditation topic from me and went forth to perform his meditations. How is he getting on?" Seeing that woman, and observing her evil conduct, and perceiving that her evil conduct was upsetting the Venerable, still remaining seated in his perfumed chamber, he spoke as follows, "Monks, there is no delight where those abide who seek after their lusts. But where those abide who are free from passion, that place is full of delight." So saying, he sent forth a radiant image of himself, and instructing the Venerable in the Dhamma, recited this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 99)

yattha janō na ramatī ramaṇīyāni araññāni
vītarāgā ramissanti tē kāmagavēsinō na

yattha: those places; *janō:* the worldly masses; *na ramatī:* do not take delight in; *ramaṇīyāni araññāni:* (such) attractive forests; *vītarāgā:* the passionless; *ramissanti:* take delight in; *tē:* those places; *kāmagavēsinō:* pursuers of sensual pleasures; *na:* do not take delight in

Those fascinating forests that do not capture the mind of the worldly masses and in which they do not take delight are attractive to the passionless ones. The Arahats take delight in the forests, because they are not pursuers of sensual pleasures.

Commentary

vītarāgō: the passionless one : the arahat. The arahat is essentially a passionless one. An arahat, literally, a worthy one, is not subject to rebirth because he does not accumulate fresh Kammic activities. The seeds of his reproduction have all been destroyed. The arahat realizes that what was to be accomplished has been done, a heavy burden of sorrow has finally been relinquished, and all forms of craving and all shades of ignorance are totally annihilated. The happy pilgrim now stands on heights more than celestial, far removed from uncontrolled passions and the defilements of the world, experiencing the unutterable bliss of Nibbāna. Rebirth can no longer affect him since no more reproductive seeds are formed by fresh kammic activities. An arahat is called an *asēkha*, one who does not undergo training, as who has lived the holy life and has accomplished his object. The other saints from the *sōtāpatti* stage to the arahat path stage are called *sēkhas* because they still undergo training. Arahats could experience the Nibbānic bliss uninterruptedly for as long as they liked even in this life. This, in Pāli, is known as *nirōdha-samāpatti*.

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Persecution

Of the great religions of history I prefer Buddhism, especially in its earliest forms, because it has had the smallest element of persecution.

Bertrand Russell

Appreciation of Buddhism

Although one may originally be attracted by its remoteness, one can appreciate the real value of Buddhism only when one judges it by the result it produces in one's own life from day to day.

Dr. Edward Conze, A Western Buddhist Scholar

Religion of Man

Buddhism will last as long as the sun and moon last and the human race exists upon the earth, for it is the religion of man, of humanity as a whole.

Bandaranaike, Former Prime Minster of Sri Lanka

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Chapter 8

SAHASSA VAGGA

Thousands

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One meaningful word which leads to calm is better than a thousand empty ones.

100. *Sahassamapi cē vācā*
anatthapadasaṁhitā
ēkaṁ atthapadaṁ seyyō
yaṁ sutvā upasammati. (8:1)

Though a thousand speeches be
composed of meaningless lines,
better the single meaningful line
one hears, then comes to calm.

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SAHASSA VAGGA (THOUSANDS)
ONE PACIFYING WORD IS NOBLE

8 (1) The Story of Tambadāṭhika (Verse 100)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Tambadāṭhika, the executioner of thieves.

Tambadāṭhika served the king as an executioner of thieves for fifty-five years. In old age he could no longer cut off a man's head with a single blow. On the day he was retired from office, he gave orders that sweet milk-porridge should be cooked for him. And taking with him old clothes and jasmine flowers and perfumes, he went to the river and bathed. Having so done, he put on the old clothes, decked himself with garlands, anointed his limbs, and went home and sat down. They set before him sweet milk-porridge made with fresh ghee and water for rinsing the hands. At that moment Venerable Sāriputta showed himself at the door of the former executioner's house. When the man saw the Venerable, he paid obeisance to him. And escorting him into his house, he provided him with a seat, poured the sweet milk-porridge into his bowl, spread fresh ghee thereon, and standing beside him, began to fan him.

After the meal, the monk taught him the Dhamma, but Tambadāṭhika could not pay attention, because he was so agitated as he recollected his past life as an executioner. When the monk knew this, he decided to ask Tambadāṭhika tactfully whether he killed the thieves because he wished to kill them or because he was ordered to do so. Tambadāṭhika answered that he was ordered to kill them by the king and that he had no wish to kill. Then the monk asked, "If that is so, would you be guilty or not?" Tambadāṭhika then concluded that, as he was not responsible for the evil deeds, he was not guilty. He, therefore, calmed down, and requested the monk to continue his exposition. As he listened to the Dhamma with proper attention, he came very close to attaining sōtāpatti magga and reached as far as *anulōma ñāṇa* (adaption-to-truth-knowledge). After the discourse, Tambadāṭhika accompanied Venerable Sāriputta for some distance and then returned home. On his way home a cow (actually a demon in the guise of a cow) gored him to death.

When the Buddha came to the congregation of the monks in the evening, they informed him about the death of Tambadāṭhika. When asked where Tambadāṭhika was reborn, the Buddha told them that although Tambadāṭhika had committed evil deeds throughout his life, because he comprehended the Dhamma after hearing it from Venerable Sāriputta and had already attained *anulōma ñāṇa* before he died, he was reborn in the Tusita dēva world. The monks wondered how such an evil-doer could have such great benefit after listening to the Dhamma just once. To them the Buddha said that the length of a discourse is of no consequence, for one single word of sense can produce much benefit.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 100)

anatthapadasaṁhitā vācā cē sahassaṁ api yaṁ
sutvā upasammati ēkaṁ atthapadaṁ seyyō

anatthapadasaṁhitā: full of meaningless and worthless expressions; *vācā:* words; *cē:* even; *sahassaṁ api:* thousands (are not worth); *yaṁ:* if; *sutvā:* by hearing (it); *upasammati:* a person is pacified; *ēkaṁ atthapadaṁ:* one such meaningful word; *seyyō:* is noble

Expressions replete with thousands of words are of no value. One single meaningful word is more valuable, if hearing it one is pacified.

Commentary

vācā anatthapadasaṁhitā: discourse full of useless words. Words that are not conducive to the attainment of higher spiritual goals are meant here. In traditional commentaries, descriptions of sky, mountains, forests, villages, cities, settlements, oceans, moon-rise, sun-rise, parks, water-sports, drinking parties, get-togethers, are considered themes unfit to be talked about by aspirants. These are considered futile and as not being helpful in spiritual pursuits. Thirty-two topics come within the category of useless discourses. Similarly, topics such as *rājakathā* (matters relating to kings), *cōrakathā* (matters relating to thieves), *mahāmaccakathā* (matters relating to administrators), *senā* (forces), *bhaya* (Fears), *yuddha* (wars) are termed unfit words to be discussed by those seeking higher spiritual goals.

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One meaningful stanza which leads to calm is better than a thousand empty ones.

101. *Sahassamapi cē gāthā*
anatthapadasaṁhitā
ēkaṁ gāthāpadaṁ seyyō
yaṁ sutvā upasammati. (8:2)

Though a thousand verses be
composed of meaningless lines,
better the single line of verse
one hears, then comes to calm.

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ONE USEFUL VERSE IS BETTER THAN A THOUSAND USELESS VERSES

8 (2) The Story of Bāhiyadārucīriya (Verse 101)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Bāhiyadārucīriya.

A group of merchants went out to sea in a boat; their boat was wrecked at sea and all, except one, died. The only survivor got hold of a plank and eventually came to land at the port of Suppāraka. As he was naked, he tied a piece of bark to his body, got hold of a bowl, and sat in a place where people could see him. Passers-by gave him rice and gruel; some thought that he was a holy man and paid respects to him. Some brought clothes for him to wear but he refused, fearing that by wearing clothes, people would give less respect to him. Besides, because some said that he was an arahat, he mistakenly came to think that he really was one. Thus, because he was a man of wrong views who was wearing a piece of bark as his clothing, he came to be known as Bāhiyadārucīriya. Mahābrahma came to him in the night and said to him, "Bāhiya, you are not an arahat yet, and what is more, you do not have the qualities that make one an arahat." Bāhiya looked up at Mahābrahma and said, "Yes, I must admit that I am not an arahat, as you have said. I now realize that I have done a great wrong. But is there anyone else in this world now who is an arahat (a perfected person)?" Mahābrahma then told him that there lived in Sāvatthi a Teacher, Gōtama Buddha, an arahat, who was perfectly self-enlightened.

Bāhiya found the Buddha going on an alms-round with other monks and respectfully followed him. He pleaded with the Buddha to teach him the Dhamma, but the Buddha replied that since they were on an alms-round it was not yet time for a religious discourse. And again, Bāhiya pleaded, "Venerable, one cannot know the danger to your life or to my life, so please talk to me about the Dhamma." The Buddha knew that Bāhiya had made the journey of one hundred and twenty yōjanas in one night, and also that he was overwhelmed with joy at seeing the Buddha. That was why the Buddha did not want to talk about the Dhamma immediately but wanted him to calm down to enable him to take in the Dhamma properly. Still, Bāhiya persistently pleaded. So, while standing on the road, the Buddha said to Bāhiya, "Bāhiya, when you see an object, be conscious of just the visible object; when you hear a sound, be conscious of just the sound; when you smell or taste or touch something, be conscious of just the smell, the taste or the touch; and when you think of anything, be conscious of just the mind-object."

After hearing the above discourse, Bāhiya attained arahatship and he asked permission from the Buddha to join the Sangha. The Buddha told him to get the robes, the bowl and other requisites of a monk. On his way to get them, he was gored to death by a cow which was, in fact, a female evil spirit in the likeness of a cow. When the Buddha and the other monks came out after having had their meal, they found Bāhiya lying dead on a rubbish heap. As instructed by the Buddha, the monks cremated the body of Bāhiya and had his bones enshrined in a stūpa. Back at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha told the monks that Bāhiya had realized Nibbāna. He also told them that as far as speed was concerned in attaining Magga Insight *(abhiññā)* Bāhiya was the fastest, the best *(ētadaggaṁ)*. The monks were puzzled by the statement made by the Buddha and they asked him why and when Bāhiya became an Arahat. To this, the Buddha replied, "Bāhiya attained arahatship while he listened to my instructions given to him on the road when we were on the alms-round." The monks wondered how one could attain arahatship after listening to just a few sentences of the Dhamma. So, the Buddha told them that the number of words or the length of a speech did not matter if it was beneficial to someone.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 101)

anatthapadasaṁhitā gāthā cē sahassaṁ api yaṁ
sutvā upasammati ēkaṁ gāthāpadaṁ seyyō

anatthapadasaṁhitā: full of meaningless expressions; *gāthā:* stanzas; *cē:* even; *sahassaṁ api:* thousands (are not worth); *yaṁ:* which if; *sutvā:* by hearing; *upasammati:* a person is pacified; *ēkaṁ gāthāpadaṁ:* only one such meaningful stanza; *seyyō:* is noble

A poem replete with thousands of verses is of no value if it has no useful meaning. One single stanza pregnant with wisdom is more valuable, if hearing it one is pacified.

Commentary

gāthā: verse; stanza. A Pāli composition in verse, usually of four lines.

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One single dhamma word which leads to calm is better than uttering a thousand empty ones.

102. *Yō cē gāthāsataṁ bhāsē*
anatthapadasaṁhitā
ēkaṁ dhammapadaṁ seyyō
yaṁ sutvā upasammati. (8:3)

Though one a hundred verses chant
composed of meaningless lines,
better the single Dhamma-line
one hears, then comes to calm.

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A DHAMMA-WORD IS NOBLE

8 (3) The Story of Nun Kuṇḍalakēsī (Verses 102 & 103)

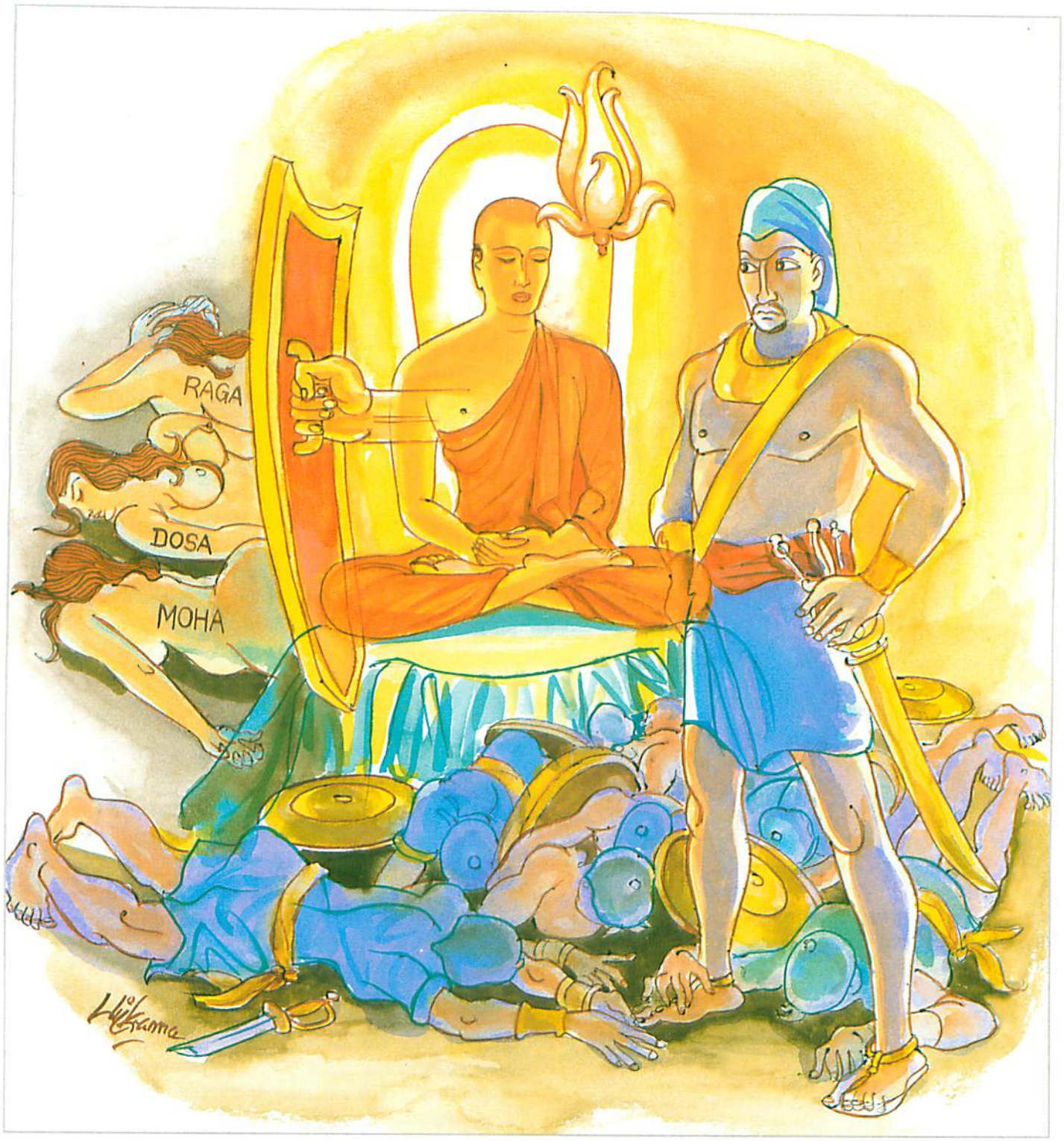
While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses with reference to Nun Kuṇḍalakēsī.

A rich merchant of Rājagaha had an only daughter who was about sixteen years of age, and she was exceedingly beautiful and fair to see. Her mother and father lodged her on the topmost floor of a seven-storied palace in an apartment of royal splendour, and gave her only a single slave-woman to wait upon her. Now one day a young man of station was caught in the act of robbery. They bound his hands behind his back and led him to the place of execution, scourging him with lashes at every cross-road. The merchant's daughter heard the shouts of the crowd, said to herself, "What is that?" looked down from the top of the palace, and saw him. Straightaway she fell in love with him. So great, in fact, was her longing for him that she took to her bed and refused to eat. Her mother asked her, "What does this mean, my dear daughter?" "If I can have that young man who was caught in the act of committing robbery and who was led through the streets, life will be worth living; if not, life is not worth living; I shall die here and now." The mother, unable to pacify her daughter, told the father; but the father likewise was unable to pacify his daughter. "What is to be done?" thought he. He sent a thousand pieces of money to the king's officer who had captured the robber and who was accompanying him to the place of execution, saying, "Take this money and send the robber to me." "Very well!" said the king's officer. He took the money, released the robber, had another man put to death, and sent word to the king, "The robber has been executed, your majesty."

The merchant gave his daughter in marriage to the robber. She resolved to win favour of her husband; and from that time on, adorned with all her adornments, she prepared her husband's meals with her own hand. After a few days the robber thought to himself, "When can I kill this woman, take her jewels and sell them, and so be able to take my meals in a certain tavern? This is the way!" He took to his bed and refused to eat. She came to him and asked, "Are you in pain?" "Not at all, wife." "Then perhaps my mother and father are angry with you?" "They are not angry with me, wife." "What is the matter, then?" "Wife, that day when I was bound and led through the streets, I saved my life by vowing and offering to the deity that lives on Robbers' Cliff; likewise it was through his supernatural power that I gained you for my wife. I was wondering how I could fulfill my vow of an offering to the deity." "Husband, do not worry; I will see to the offering; tell me what is needed." "Rich rice-porridge, flavoured with honey; and the five kinds of flowers, including the lājā flower." "Very well, husband, I will make ready the offering." Having prepared the whole offering, she said to her husband, "Come, husband, let us go." "Very well, wife; let your kinsmen remain behind; put on your costly garments and adorn yourself with your precious jewels, and we will go gaily, laughing and enjoying ourselves." She did as she was told. But when they reached their destination, he said to her, "I have no use for the offering; I deceived you in bringing you here with an offering." "Then why did you bring me here, husband?" "To kill you, seize your jewels, and escape." Terrified with the fear of death, she said to him, "Husband, both my jewels and my person belong to you; why do you speak thus?" Over and over again she pleaded with him, "Do not do this;" but his only reply was, "I will kill you." "After all, what will you gain by killing me? Take these jewels and spare my life."

She thought to herself, "Oh, what a wicked deed is this! However, wisdom was not made to be cooked and eaten, but rather to make men look before they leap. I shall find a way of dealing with him." And she said to him, "Husband, when they caught you in the act of committing robbery and led you through the streets, I told my mother and father, and they spent a thousand pieces of money in ransoming you, and they gave you a place in their house, and from that time on I have been your benefactress; today do me the favour of letting me pay obeisance to you." "Very well, wife," said he, granted her the favour of paying obeisance to him, and then took his stand near the edge of the cliff. She walked around him three times, keeping him on her right hand, and paid obeisance to him in the four places. Then she said to him, "Husband, this is the last time I shall see you. Henceforth you will see me no more, neither shall I see you any more." And she embraced him both before and behind. Then, remaining behind him, as he stood off his guard near the edge of the cliff, she put one hand to his shoulder and the other to the small of his back, and flung him over the cliff. Thus was the robber hurled into the abyss of the mountain, and dashed to pieces when he reached the bottom. Having thrown the robber over the cliff, she came to a certain hermitage of nuns. She reverently bowed and said, "Sister, receive me into your order as a nun." So they received her as a nun.

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Conquest of oneself excels the victory over a thousand others in battle.

103. *Yō sahassaṁ sahassēna*
saṅgāmē mānusē jinē
ēkaṁ ca jeyyam'attānaṁ
sa vē saṅgāmajuttamō. (8:4)

Though thousand times a thousand
in battle one may conquer,
yet should one conquer just oneself
one is the greatest conqueror.

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SELF-CONQUEST IS THE HIGHEST VICTORY

8 (3) The Story of Nun Kuṇḍalakēsī (Verses 102 & 103)

When she had mastered the thousand articles of faith, they said to her, "You have acquired proficiency; now go throughout the length and breadth of Jambudīpa and look for some one able to match question and answer with you." So, placing a branch of rose-apple in her hands, they dismissed her with these words, "Go forth, sister; if any one who is a layman is able to match question and answer with you, become his slave; if any monk, enter his Sangha as a nun." No one was able to match question and answer with her; in fact, such a reputation did she acquire that whenever men heard the announcement, "Here comes the 'Nun of the Rose-Apple,'" they would run away.

Before entering a town or village for alms, she would scrape a pile of sand together before the village gate and there plant her rose-apple branch. Then she would issue her challenge, "Let him that is able to match question and answer with me trample this rose-apple branch under his feet." So saying, she would enter the village. No one dared to pass beyond that spot. When one branch withered, she would procure a fresh one. Travelling about in this way, she arrived at Sāvatthi, planted the branch before the city gate, issued her challenge in the usual way, and went in to seek alms. A number of young boys gathered about the branch and waited to see what would happen. Then the Venerable Sāriputta said, "Go ahead, boys, trample that branch under your feet."

When the nun returned, she asked, "Venerable, did you tell them to trample my branch under their feet?" "Yes, sister." "Well then, match question and answer with me." "Very well, I will do so."

The nun said to the Venerable, "Venerable, I wish to ask you a question." "Ask it, sister." So she asked him the thousand articles of faith. Every question the nun asked, the Venerable answered correctly. Then he said to her, "I will ask you just one; will you answer me?" "Ask your question, Venerable." Then the Venerable asked her, "What is one?" She said to herself, "This is a question I should be able to answer," but not knowing the answer, she inquired of the Venerable, "What is it, Venerable?" "This is the Buddha's question, sister." "Tell me also the answer, Venerable." "If you will enter our Sangha, I will tell you the answer." "Very well, admit me to the Sangha." The Venerable sent word to the nuns and had her admitted. After being admitted to the Sangha, she made it her full profession, took the name Kuṇḍalakēsī, and after a few days became an arahat endowed with the supernatural faculties.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 102)

yō ca anatthapadasaṁhitā gāthā sataṁ bhāsē
yaṁ sutvā upasammati ēkaṁ dhammapadaṁ
seyyō

yō ca: if someone; *anatthapadasaṁhitā:* full of meaningless expressions; *gāthā sataṁ:* a hundred verses; *bhāsē:* were to recite; *yaṁ sutvā:* if someone listening; *upasammati:* a person is pacified; *ēkaṁ:* even one; *dhammapadaṁ:* Dhamma word; *seyyō:* is noble.

One may recite hundreds of verses replete with meaningless expressions. If one recites one line of verse pregnant with wisdom, which is pacifying, it will be more valuable and nobler.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 103)

yō saṅgāmē sahassēna sahassaṁ mānusē jinē, ca
ēkaṁ attānaṁ jeyya sa vē saṅgāmajuttamō.

yō: if someone; *saṅgāmē:* in battle; *sahassēna sahassaṁ:* thousands of thousands (million); *mānusē:* men; *jinē:* were to conquer; *ca ēkaṁ attānaṁ:* if one's own self (which is just one); *jeyya:* were to conquer; *sō:* he; *vē:* truly; *saṅgāmajuttamō:* is the greatest conqueror of battles.

One may conquer a thousand men in thousand battles. But the person who conquers just one person, which is one's own self, is the greatest conqueror.

Commentary

attānam: one's own self. In this stanza what is established is the supreme victory of the person who conquers himself. The individual who conquers himself, conquers just one individual — one's self. But this victory is greater than conquering tens of thousands in a battle. The implication is, defeating thousands in battle is relatively easier than conquering just one's own ignorance.

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Win oneself, not other common folk. 'Tis victory supreme. With a self ever restrained...

104. *Attā havē jitaṁ seyyō*
yā cā'yaṁ itarā pajā
attadantassa pōsassa
niccaṁ saññatacārinō. (8:5)

Greater the conquest of oneself
than subjugating others,
that one who's always well-restrained,
that one who's tamed of self—

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VICTORY OVER ONESELF IS UNEQUALLED

8 (4) The Story of the Brahmin Anatthapucchaka (Verses 104 & 105)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the brahmin Anatthapucchaka.

On one occasion, a brahmin by the name of Anatthapucchaka, came to the Buddha and said to him, "Venerable, I think that you know only the practices that are beneficial and not the practices that are not beneficial." To him, the Buddha answered that he also knew the practices which were not beneficial and harmful. Then the Buddha enumerated six practices which cause dissipation of wealth; they are: (1) sleeping until the sun has risen, (2) habitual idleness, (3) cruelty, (4) indulgence in intoxicants which cause drunkenness and negligence, (5) sauntering alone in streets at unearthly hours, and (6) sexual misconduct.

When the brahmin heard this, he applauded the Buddha, saying, "Well said, well said, teacher of the multitude, leader of the multitude! You know indeed both gain and loss." "Indeed, brahmin, there is none other that knows loss so well as I." Then the Buddha considered within himself what motive actuated the brahmin, and asked him, "Brahmin, how do you make your living?" "By gambling, Venerable." "But who wins, you or the other man?" "Sometimes I win and sometimes the other man wins." Then said the Buddha, "Brahmin, a trifling matter is the victory of him who defeats another; there is no superior advantage in such a victory. But he who overcomes his depravities and so conquers self, wins a better victory, for such a victory no one can turn into defeat."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 104)

attā jitaṁ havē seyyō, yā ca ayaṁ itarā pajā attadantassa niccaṁ saññatacārino pōsassa.

attā: one's own self; *jitaṁ:* conquered; *havē seyyō:* is truly noble; *yā ca ayaṁ itarā pajā:* if other people are conquered (that is not noble); *ca attadantassa:* the self conquerer; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *saññatacārinō:* is restrained in behaviour; *pōsassa:* of that kind of individual.

Self conquest is greater than the conquest of others. The victory of one who conquers himself cannot be turned into defeat. He remains a self controlled individual who lives ever disciplined.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 105)

tathārūpassa jantunō jitaṁ dēvō, na ēva apajitaṁ kayirā gandhabbō na Brahmunā saha Mārō na

tathārūpassa jantunō: of that kind of person; *jitaṁ:* conquest; *dēvō:* an angel or a god; *na ēva apajitaṁ kayirā:* cannot be turned into a defeat; *gandhabbō:* a spirit; *Brahmunā:* creator; *saha:* and; *Māra:* Devil; *na:* cannot turn into a defeat.

Such conquest cannot be turned into defeat either by a god, a spirit, a Māra (devil) or a Brahmā (creator).

gandhabbō: a group of divine beings given to singing, dancing and rejoicing. In this stanza it is said that not even a *'gandhabbō'* can turn a self-conquerer's victory into defeat. According to traditional commentaries, the *'gandhabbas'* live in the heaven called *'Cātur mahā rājika'* — the four great kingdoms of heaven. They take delight in music and dancing. In a traditional stanza their groups are enumerated thus:

Hā, hū hūs citgrarathō,
Hansō, vishvāvasus tathā
Gomāyustumburu nandi,
Rēva mādrusca tē smrutā.

Commentary

"They are known by such names as *Hā-hā, hū, citraratha, hansa, vishvāvasu, gomāya, tumburu and Nandi.*" In the ancient text *'Vahni Purāna'*, (The Adoration of Fire) they are divided into eleven groups. All these gandhabbas are divided into two main groups: (1) *mātarva gāndharva* (those who are born in that state due to past merit in this age); (2) *dēva gāndharva* (those born in that state due to merit in previous ages).

attadantassa pōsassa: to the person who has conquered his own self. In Buddhist thought *atta* (soul or self) is mentioned at times for the conventional purpose of identifying a person. But, the concept of no soul or selflessness *(anatta)* is a central principle of Buddhist thought. The following is a detailed commentary on this concept: apart from mind and matter, which constitute this so-called being, Buddhism does not assert the existence of an immortal soul, or an eternal ego, which man has obtained in a mysterious way from an equally mysterious source. A soul which is eternal must necessarily remain always the same without any change whatever. If the soul which is supposed to be the essence of man is eternal, there could be neither a rise nor a fall. Nor could one explain why 'different souls are so variously constituted at the outset.' To justify the existence of endless felicity in an eternal heaven and unending torment in an eternal hell, it is absolutely necessary to postulate an immortal soul.

"It should be said," writes a philosopher, "that the old distinction between soul and body has evaporated, quite as much because 'matter' has lost its solidity as because mind has lost its spirituality. Psychology is just beginning to be scientific. In the present state of psychology belief in immortality can at any rate claim no support from science."

According to the learned author of the Riddle of the Universe:

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Such victory of a man should irreversible be by Māra or Brahma or any of the gods.

105. *N'ēva dēvō na gandhabbō*
na Mārō saha Brahmunā
jitaṁ apajitaṁ kayirā
tathārūpassa jantunō. (8:6)

Neither dēva nor minstrel divine,
nor Māra together with Brahma,
can overthrow the victory
of such a one as this.

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VICTORY OVER SELF CANNOT BE UNDONE

8 (4) The Story of the Brahmin Anatthapucchaka (Verses 104 & 105) (cont'd)

"This theological proof that a personal creator has breathed an immortal soul (generally regarded as a portion of the divine soul) into man is a pure myth. The cosmological proof that the 'moral order of the world' demands the eternal duration of the human soul is a baseless dogma. The teleological proof that the 'higher destiny' of man involves the perfecting of his defective, earthly soul beyond the grave — rests on a false anthropism. The moral proof — that the defects and the unsatisfied desires of earthly existence must be fulfilled by 'compensative justice' on the other side of eternity — is nothing more than a pious wish. The ethnological proof — that the belief in immortality, like the belief in God, is an innate truth, common to all humanity — is an error in fact. The ontological proof — that the soul, being a simple, immaterial, and indivisible entity cannot be involved in the corruption of death — is based on an entirely erroneous view of the psychic phenomena; it is a spiritualistic fallacy. All these and similar 'proofs of athanatism' are in a parlous condition; they are definitely annulled by the scientific criticism of the last few decades." If nothing in the form of a spirit or soul passes from this life to the other, what is it that is reborn? In this question it is taken for granted that there is some thing to be reborn. A few centuries ago it was argued — "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think, therefore I am). True, but first it has to be proved that there is an "I" to think. We say that the sun rises in the East and sets in the West, although we know that actually it is not so. We have to admit that one cannot strike an identical place twice although to all appearance one has done so. Everything changes so soon. For no two moments are we identically the same.

Buddhists agree with a philosopher when he says, "There is obviously some reason in which I am the same person as I was yesterday, and, to take an even more obvious example, if I simultaneously see a man and hear him speaking, there is some sense in which I see and hear."

Brahma: These stanzas state that the self-conquest achieved by a person cannot be undone either by a *gandhabba* or *Brahmas*. *Brahmas* are *Brahma-kāyika-dēvas*.

Brahma-kāyika-dēva: The 'Heavenly Beings of the Brahma-words, inhabit the 3 first heavens of the Fine-material world (*rūpa-lōka*), corresponding to the 1st Absorption (*jhāna*) The highest ruler of them is called the Great Brahma (*mahā-brahmā*). With caustic humour he is said to pretend: 'I am Brahmā, the Great Brahma, the Most High, the Invincible One, the Omniscient One, the Ruler, the Lord, the Creator, the Maker, the Perfect One, the Preserver, the Controller, the Father of all that was and will be.'

Brahma-lōka: 'Brahma-world', in the widest sense, is a name for the Fine-material (*rūpa-lōka*) and Immaterial World (*arūpa-lōka*); in a narrower sense, however, only for the first three heavens of the Fine-material world.

The Brahma belongs to dēvas.

Dēva: (lit. the Radiant Ones; related to Lat. *deus*), Heavenly Beings, deities, celestials; are beings who live in happy worlds, and who, as a rule, are invisible to the human eye. They are subject however, just as all human and other beings, to ever-repeated rebirth, old age and death, and thus not freed from the cycle of existence. and not freed from misery. There are many classes of heavenly beings.

I. The 5 classes of heavenly beings of the Sensuous Sphere (*kāmāvacara* or *kāma-lōka*; are: *Cāturmahārājikadēvā, Tāvatiṁsa, Yāma, Tusita, Nimmāna-rati, Paranimmita-vasavatti.*

II. The heavenly beings of the Fine-material Sphere (*rūpāvacara* or *rūpalōka).* are:

(1) *Brahma-pārisajja, Brahma-purōhita, Mahā-brahma.* Amongst these three classes will be reborn those with a weak, medium or full experience of the 1st absorption (*jhāna*),

(2) *Parittāba, Appamānābha, Ābhassara.* Here will be reborn those with experience of the second absorption.

(3) *Paritta-subha, Appamāna-subha, Subha Kiṇṇa* (or *Kiṇha*). Here will be reborn those with experience of the 3rd absorption.

(4) *Vehapphala, Asaññā-satta, Suddhāvāsa.* Amongst the two first classes will be reborn those with experience of the 4th absorption, but amongst the third class only *anāgāmis*.

III. The 4 grades of heavenly beings of the Immaterial Sphere (*arūpāvacara* or *arūpa-lōka*) are: the Heavenly Beings of the Sphere of Unbounded Space (*ākāsānañcāyatanūpaga-dēvā*), of Unbounded Consciousness (*viññāṇañcāyatanūpaga-dēvā*), of Nothingness (*ākiñcaññāyatanūpaga-dēvā*), of Neither-Perception-nor Nonperception (*nēvasaññā-nāsaññāyatanūpaga-dēvā*). Here will be reborn those with experience of the 4 Immaterial Spheres (*arūpāyatana*).

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Even a moment's homage to a self-cultured person excels worship of a hundred years.

106. *Māsē māsē sahassēna*
yō yajētha sataṁ samaṁ
ēkaṁ ca bhāvitattānaṁ
muhuttam api pūjayē
sā yēva pūjanā seyyō
yaṁ cē vassasataṁ hutaṁ. (8:7)

Month by month for a hundred years
a thousand one might sacrifice,
but if for only a moment one
might honour the self-developed,
such honour then were better by far
than century of sacrifice.

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THE GREATEST OFFERING

8 (5) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta's Uncle (Verse 106)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brahmin, who was the maternal uncle of Venerable Sāriputta.

Venerable Sāriputta once went to his uncle and said, "Brahmin, do you ever do a single good deed?" "I do, Venerable."

"What do you do?" "Month after month, I give alms to the value of a thousand pieces of money."

"To whom do you give this money?" "To the naked ascetics, Venerable."

"And what do you hope to gain thereby?" "I hope to gain the world of Brahma."

"But is this the way to reach the World of Brahma?" "Yes, Venerable."

"Who told you so?" "My teachers told me so, Venerable."

"Brahmin, neither you nor your teachers know the way to the World of Brahma. The Buddha alone knows the way thereto. Come with me, and I will ask him to tell you the way to the world of Brahma."

So Venerable Sāriputta took his uncle with him, went to the Buddha, and told him all about it, saying, "Venerable, this Brahmin said so and so. Be so good as to tell him the way to the World of Brahma."

The Buddha asked, "Brahmin, are you correctly reported?" "Yes, Venerable."

"Brahmin, though you should give alms in this way for a hundred years, yet were it far more fruitful for a man, with believing heart, for but a single instant to look upon my disciple or to bestow upon him a mere spoonful of boiled rice."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 106)

yō māsē sahassēna sataṁ samaṁ yajētha bhāvitattānaṁ ēkaṁ ca muhuttaṁ api pūjayē cē vassasataṁ yaṁ hutaṁ sā pūjanā yēva seyyō

yō: if someone: *māsē māsē:* month after month; *sahassēna:* at the expense of a thousand; *sataṁ samaṁ:* for a hundred years; *yajētha:* gives alms: *bhāvitattānaṁ:* (but if an individual) with a restrained and disciplined mind; *ēkaṁ:* one noble arahat; *ca muhuttaṁ api:* even for a moment; *pūjayē:* adores; *cē vassasataṁ:* through out a hundred years; *yaṁ hutaṁ:* conducted fire worship; *sā pūjanā yēva:* that one adoration alone; *seyyō:* is nobler.

One may make sacrifices every month for a hundred years; but, the honour paid to one spiritually developed person, for one moment, is greater than oblations made for a hundred years.

Commentary

hutaṁ: propitiation; offering. This usage generally denotes the sacrifices made by non-Buddhists. In the days of the Buddha, fire-worship was described as *huta*. In Vedic Literature of ancient India, ghee thrown into fire as propitiation of the Fire God was described as *huta*.

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Adoring one who has developed himself excels fire-worship of a hundred years.

107. *yō cē vassasataṁ jantu*
aggiṁ paricarē vanē
ēkañ ca bhāvitattānaṁ
muhuttam api pūjayē
sā yēva pūjanā seyyō
yaṁ cē vassasataṁ hutaṁ. (8:8)

One might tend for a hundred years
the forest's sacred fire,
but if for only a moment one
might honour the self-developed,
such honour then were better by far
than century of sacrifice.

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EVEN BRIEF ADORATION OF ARAHAT FRUITFUL

8 (6) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta's Nephew (Verse 107)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Sāriputta's nephew.

For the Venerable went to his nephew also and said, "Brahmin, do you ever do a single good deed?" "Yes, Venerable."

"What do you do?" "Month after month, I slay a single beast and tend the sacrificial fire."

"For what purpose do you do that?" "That, they say, is the way to the World of Brahma."

"Who told you so?" "My teachers, Venerable."

"Neither you nor your teachers know the way to the World of Brahma. Come, let us go to the Buddha."

So Venerable Sāriputta conducted his nephew to the Buddha, informed the Buddha of the incident, and said to him, "Venerable, tell this man the way to the world of the Brahma."

Said the Buddha, "Brahmin, are you correctly reported?" "Yes, Venerable."

"Brahmin, though you should thus tend the sacrificial fire for a hundred years, yet would the merit of your performance not attain the worth of honour done to my disciple for even a single instant."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 107)

yō jantu vanē cē vassasataṁ aggiṁ paricarē
bhāvitattānaṁ ēkaṁ muhuttaṁ api pūjayē vassasataṁ yaṁ hutaṁ sā pūjanā ēva seyyō

yō jantu: some individual; *vanē:* in the forest; *cē:* if; *vassasataṁ:* for a hundred years; *aggiṁ paricarē:* worships fire; *bhāvitattānaṁ:* disciplined and restrained in self; *ēkaṁ:* one noble arahat; *muhuttaṁ api:* just for one moment only; *pūjayē:* adores; *vassasataṁ:* for a hundred years; *yaṁ hutaṁ:* if fire worship has been conducted; *sā pūjanā ēva:* that one adoration alone; *seyyō:* is nobler

A person may perform fire-worship ritual in the forest for a hundred years. Yet, for a person who adores just for one moment, a self-restrained, disciplined Arahant, that moment's adoration of the Arahant is far nobler than the fire-worship of hundred years.

Commentary

aggiṁ paricarē vanē: if someone were to dwell in the forest offering sacrifices to the fire. In the two stories, that gave rise to verses, relating to Venerable Sāriputta's uncle, his nephew and his friend, the sacrifices sanctioned by the Vedic Hindu practices of the Buddha's day are referred to. Here, in this verse, Chief Disciple Sāriputta's nephew is told that offering sacrifices to Fire-God, dwelling in the forest is a futile pursuit, if he intends to attain higher spiritual goals through that rite. The Teaching of the Buddha, emphasizing inner purity and unblemished conduct exercised a strong force against untemporary systems that sought to achieve liberation through externalized practices like Fire-worship. In the instance of this stanza, the fire-worship takes place in the forest. The fire-worshipper has renounced his lay life and has gone into the forest to practice fire-worship as his whole activity. He has attributed such importance to this ritual of fire-worship because he is convinced that it was only this ritual that will ensure him life in the world of Brahma.

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Acts of worship and prayer for a year never equal a fourth of homage to the worthy.

108. *Yaṁ kiñ ci yiṭṭhaṁ va hutaṁ va lōkē*
saṁvaccharaṁ yajētha puññapēkhō
sabbaṁ'pi taṁ na catubhāgamēti
abhivādanā ujjugatēsu seyyō. (8:9)

Whatever one who merit seeks
should for a year make sacrifice,
all comes not to a quarter part
of honouring the Noble.

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WORSHIPPING AN UNBLEMISHED INDIVIDUAL IS NOBLE

8 (7) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta's Friend (Verse 108)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a friend of Venerable Sāriputta.

The Venerable approached him and asked him, "Brāhmin, do you ever do a single good deed?" "Yes, Venerable."

"What do you do?" "I offer sacrificial slaughter." (At that time, we are told, it was the custom to offer sacrificial slaughter at an expenditure of immense sums of money.)

The Venerable, after questioning his companion in that manner, conducted him to the Buddha, informed him of the incident, and said to him, "Venerable, tell this man the way to the World of Brahma."

The Buddha asked him, "Brahmin, are you correctly reported?" "Yes," replied the brahmin.

"Brahmin, though you should offer sacrificial slaughter for a year, yet would your act not be worth the fourth part of the act of him who, with believing heart, gives alms on the people, or of those who, with good intention, render homage to my disciples."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 108)

lōkē puññapēkhō yaṁ kiñci yiṭṭhaṁ vā hutaṁ vā saṁvaccharaṁ yajētha taṁ sabbaṁ api na catubhāgaṁ na ēti ujjugatēsu abhivādanā seyyō

lōkē: in this world; *puññapēkhō:* one desiring good; *yaṁ kiñci yiṭṭhaṁ vā:* even some minor alms-giving or; *hutaṁ vā:* a major alms-giving or; *saṁvaccharaṁ:* for a whole year; *yajētha:* offers; *taṁ sabbaṁ api:* all that; *catubhāgaṁ na ēti:* does not become even one fourth (compared to); *ujjugatēsu:* straight walking person (arahat); *abhivādanā:* saluting; *seyyō:* which is greater

In this world, an individual seeking merit may give alms and offerings during a religious festival. Or else that person may conduct an elaborate sacrifice for a whole year. But the merit from all those activities put together is not even one-fourth the merit one gets by paying homage to a person who walks straight — an arahat.

Commentary

brahma: In several verses of this Chapter, references are made to Brahma. Besides the stories that have occasioned the pronouncing of several of these stanzas, too, have to do with those who practiced various rites and rituals, with the intention of attaining the Brahma world. What is the Buddhist attitude to the concept of Brahma and the Brahma worlds? In *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (Buddha's First Sermon — The Turning of the Wheel of Righteousness) reference is made to Brahma worlds.

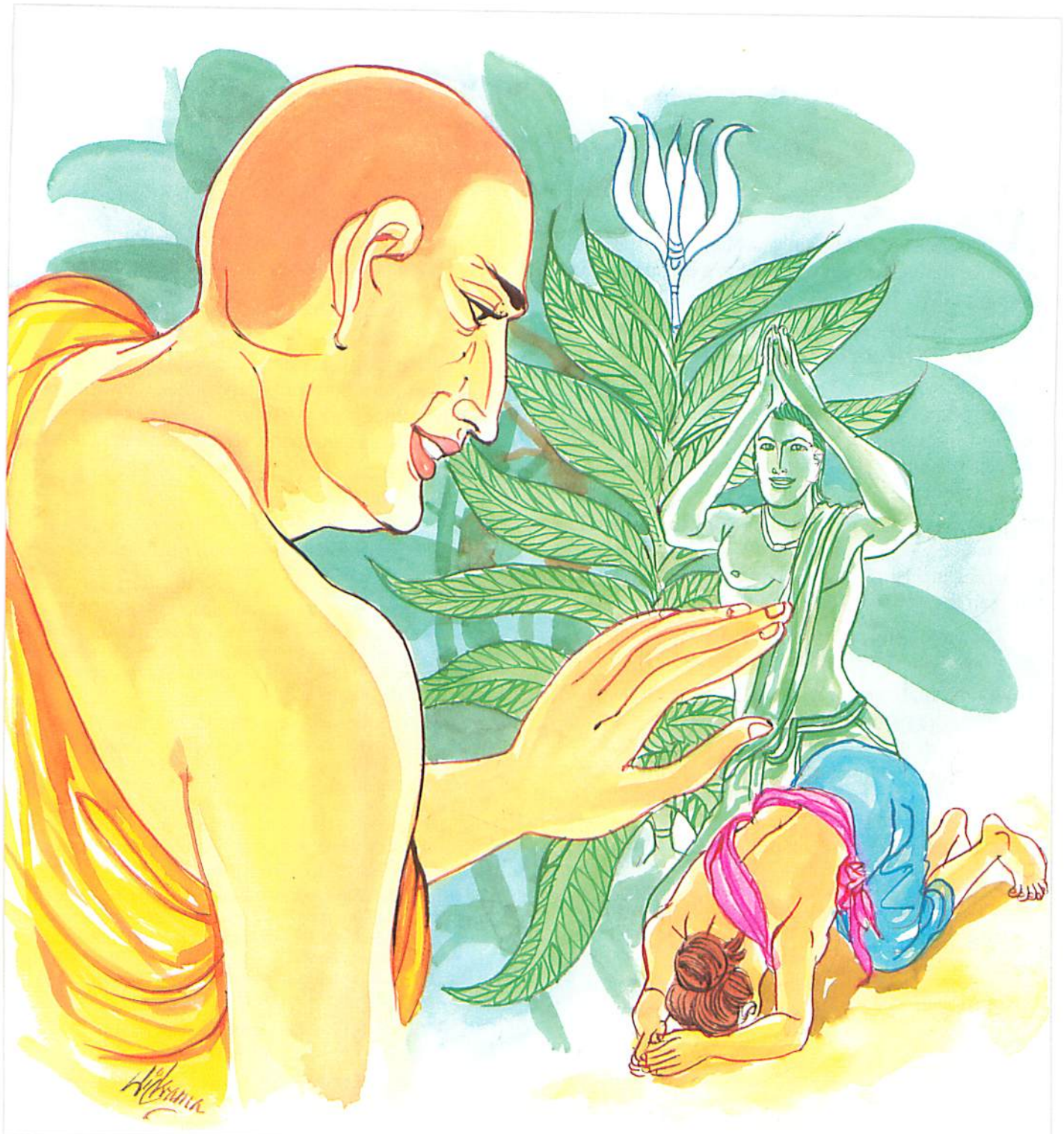
Hearing this, the Dēvas Cātummāhārājikā, Tāvatiṁsa, Yāma, Tusita, Nimmānaratī, Paranimmitavasavattī, and the Brahmas of Brahma Pārisajja, Brahma Purōhita, Mahā Brahma, Parittābha, Appamānabha, Ābhassara, Parittasubha, Appamānasubha, Subhakinna Vēhapphala, Avīha, Atappa, Sudassa, Sudassī, and Akaniṭṭha, also raised the same joyous cry. Thus at that very moment, at that very instant, this cry extended as far as the Brahma realm. These ten thousand world systems quaked, shook and trembled violently.

Throughout Buddhist Literature, references are made to Brahma; but in the Buddhist system, one's liberation is not sought through sacrifices to gods. Brahma world is considered the abode of the creator — god (Mahā Brahma). The idea that Brahma is the creator god is sarcastically dismissed in *Bhūridatta Jātaka* (The Birth Story). This *Jātaka* Tale (Birth Story) enquires thus:

> "He who has eyes can see the sickening sight,
> Why does not Brahma set his creatures right?"

Although there is a heavenly being called Mahā Brahma, who believes he is the creator, and whom the brahamins believe is the creator, and is recognized in Buddhism, Buddhists do not believe that he is the creator of the world.

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Respectful behaviour towards elders confers long life, beauty, joy and strength.

109. *Abhivādanasīlissa*
niccaṁ vaḍḍhāpacāyinō
cattārō dhammā vaḍḍhanti
āyu vaṇṇō sukhaṁ balaṁ. (8:10)

For one of respectful nature
who ever the elders honours,
long life and beauty, joy and strength,
these qualities increase.

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SALUTING VENERABLES YIELDS FOUR BENEFITS

8 (8) The Story of Āyuvaḍḍhanakumāra (Verse 109)

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

Once, there were two hermits who lived together practicing religious austerities for forty-eight years. Later, one of the two left the hermit life and got married. After a son was born, the family visited the old hermit and paid obeisance to him. To the parents the hermit said, "May you live long." but he said nothing to the child. The parents were puzzled and asked the hermit the reason for his silence. The hermit told them that the child would live only seven more days and that he did not know how to prevent his death, but the Buddha might know how to do it.

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

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

Explanatory Translation (Verse 109)

abhivādana sīlissa niccaṁ vuḍḍhāpacāinō āyu
vaṇṇō sukhaṁ balaṁ cattārō dhammā vaḍḍhanti

abhivādana sīlissa: of those who are in the habit of honouring and respecting; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *vaḍḍhāpacāinō:* those who are developed and mature in mind; *āyu:* length of life; *vaṇṇō:* complexion; *sukhaṁ:* comfort; *balaṁ:* strength; *cattārō dhammā:* four things; *vaḍḍhanti:* increase

If a person is in the habit of constantly honouring and respecting those who are developed and mature, their lives improve in four ways. Their life span soon increases. Their complexion becomes clearer. Their good health and comfort will improve. Their vigour and stamina too will increase.

Commentary

vaḍḍhāpacāinō: the developed and the mature. This stanza extols the virtue of honouring those who are spiritually evolved. In terms of traditional commentaries, there are four categories that should be considered as 'mature' and as deserving honour. The four categories are:

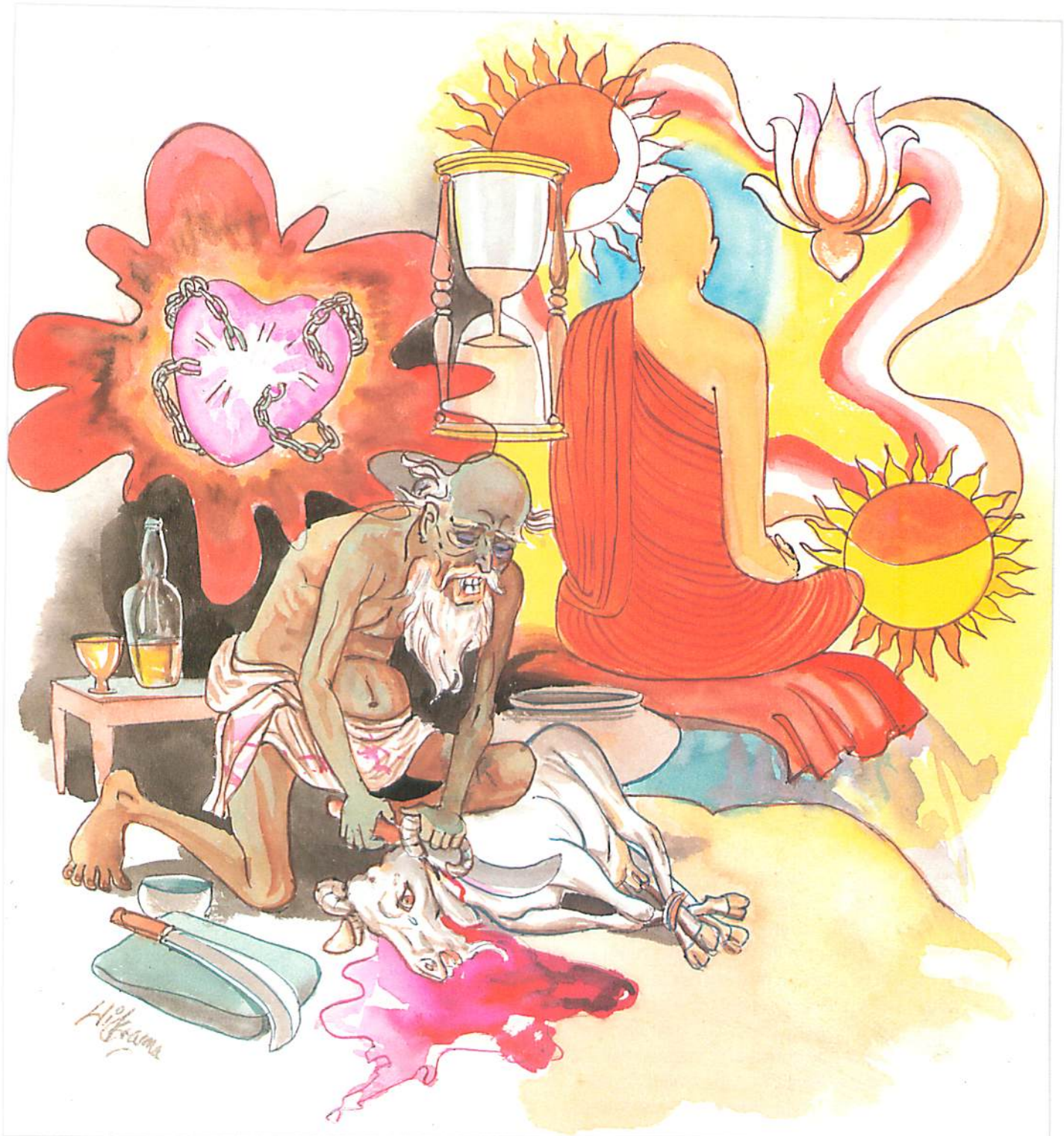
(1) *Jātivuddha*: mature or higher in terms of race. Among some groups of people there is the convention that some categories of race should be considered superior. Though this form of superiority is not accepted in Buddhism, the commentaries recognize its existence;

(2) *Gotta vuddha*: deserving honour due to caste or clan superiority. In some systems this kind of superiority is accepted, but not in the Buddhist system;

(3) *Vayō vuddha*: superiority through age. In most cultures this form of honour is valid. Those younger in years always respect those who are superior to them in age;

(4) *Guṇa vuddha*: superior in terms of character. In the Buddhist Sangha hierarchy, this system prevails. In the Buddhist system all lay men honour all Buddhist monks because they are committed to certain superior principles of living even though the Buddhist monk may have been initiated into the order only a few seconds ago.

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Virtuous and wise life of a single day outweighs a hundred years of sinful unbridled life.

110. *Yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē*
dussīlō asamāhitō
ēkā'haṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
sīlavantassa jhāyinō. (8:11)

Though one should live a hundred years
foolish, uncontrolled,
yet better is life for a single day
moral and meditative.

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VIRTUOUS LIFE IS NOBLE

8 (9) The Story of Novice Monk Saṁkicca (Verse 110)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to novice monk Saṁkicca.

On one occasion, thirty monks each took a meditation topic from the Buddha and left for a large village, one hundred and twenty yōjanas (leagues) away from Sāvatthi. At that time, five hundred robbers were staying in a thick jungle, and they wanted to make an offering of human flesh and blood to the guardian spirits of the forest. So they came to the village monastery and demanded that one of the monks be given up to them for sacrifice to the guardian spirits. From the eldest to the youngest, each one of the monks volunteered to go. With the monks, there was also a young novice monk by the name of Saṁkicca, who was sent along with them by Venerable Sāriputta. This novice monk was only seven years old, but had already attained arahatship. Saṁkicca said that Venerable Sāriputta, his teacher, knowing this danger in advance, had purposely sent him to accompany the monks, and that he should be the one to go with the robbers. So saying, he went along with the robbers. The monks felt very bad for having let the young novice monk go. The robbers made preparations for the sacrifice; when everything was ready, their leader came to the young novice monk, who was then seated, with his mind fixed on jhāna concentration. The leader of the robbers lifted his sword and struck hard at the young novice monk, but the blade of the sword curled up without cutting the flesh. He straightened up the blade and struck again; this time, it bent upwards right up to the hilt without harming the novice monk. Seeing this strange happening, the leader of the robbers dropped his sword, knelt at the feet of the novice monk and asked his pardon. All the five hundred robbers were amazed and terror-stricken; they repented and asked permission from Saṁkicca to become monks. He complied with their request.

Having so done, he established them in the ten precepts, and taking them with him, set out. So with a retinue of five hundred monks he went to their place of residence. When they saw him, they were relieved in mind.

Then Saṁkicca and the five hundred monks continued on their way to pay respect to Venerable Sāriputta, his teacher, at the Jētavana Monastery. After seeing Venerable Sāriputta they went to pay homage to the Buddha. When told what had happened, the Buddha said,"Monks, if you rob or steal and commit all sorts of evil deeds, your life would be useless, even if you were to live a hundred years. living a virtuous life even for a single day is much better than a hundred years of a life of depravity."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 110)

dussīlō asamāhitō yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē sīlavantassa jhāinō ekāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō

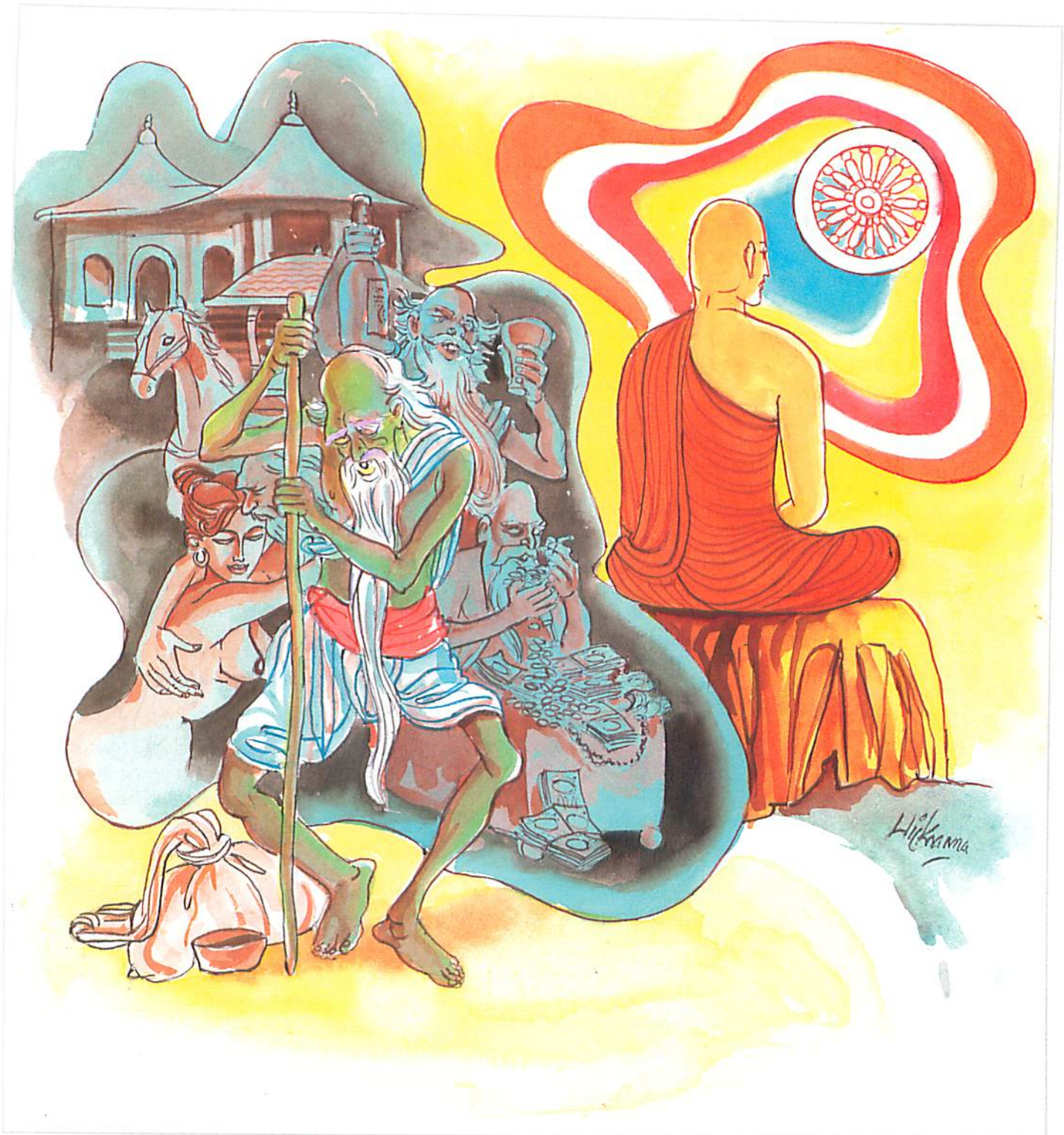
dussīlō: a person who is bereft of virtue; *asamāhitō:* uncomposed in mind; *yō:* that one; *ca:* even if; *vassasataṁ:* hundred years; *jīvē:* were to live; *sīlavantassa:* of the virtuous; *jhāinō:* who is meditative; *ēkāhaṁ:* only one day's; *jīvitaṁ:* living; *seyyō:* is great

A single day lived as a virtuous meditative person is greater than a hundred years of life as an individual bereft of virtue and uncomposed in mind.

Commentary

jhāinō: one who practises *jhāna* (meditation). *Jhāna* — (mental repose) refers to the four meditative levels of mental repose of the "sphere of form". They are attained through a process of mental purification during which there is a gradual, though temporary, calming down of five-fold sense-activity and of the Five Obscurants (emotional disturbances that cloud the mind). The state of mind, however, is one of full alertness and lucidity. This high degree of tranquillity is generally developed by the practice of one or more of the forty subjects of Tranquillity Meditation. There are also the four formless levels of tranquillity called 'formless spheres' *(arūpa āyatana)*.

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A day's life of a wise meditator is greater than a hundred years of an immoral fool.

111. *yō ca vassasatam jīvē*
duppaññō asamāhitō
ekā'haṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
paññāvantassa jhāyinō. (8:12)

Though one should live a hundred years
foolish, uncontrolled,
yet better is life for a single day
wise and meditative.

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A WISE ONE'S LIFE IS GREAT

8 (10) The Story of Khānu-Koṇḍañña (Verse 111)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Khānu Koṇḍañña.

This Venerable, it appears, obtained a meditation topic from the Buddha, and while residing in the forest attained arahatship. Desiring to inform the Buddha of his attainment, he set out to return from the forest. Growing tired by the way, he left the road, seated himself on a flat stone, and entered into a state of trance. Now at that time a band of five hundred thieves plundered a village, packed up their spoils in sacks of sizes proportioned to the strength of their several members, placed the sacks on their heads, and carried them for a long distance. Becoming weary, they said to themselves, "We have come a long distance; let us rest on the top of this flat rock." So saying, they left the road, went to the rock, and mistook the Venerable for the stump of a tree. One of the thieves placed his sack on the Venerable's head, and another placed his sack near his body. One after another, the five hundred thieves set their sacks in a circle about him and then lay down and went to sleep.

At dawn they woke up and took their sacks. Seeing the Venerable, and thinking he was an evil spirit, they started to run away. The Venerable said to them, "Lay disciples, have no fear; I am a monk." Thereupon they prostrated themselves before his feet and begged his pardon, saying, "Pardon us, Venerable; we mistook you for the stump of a tree." The ringleader of the thieves said, "I intend to become a monk under the Venerable." The rest said, "We also will become monks." And with one accord all the thieves requested the Venerable to make them monks. The Venerable made monks of them all, just as did the novice Saṁkicca. From that time forward he went by the name of Stump Koṇḍañña, Khānu-Koṇḍañña.

Accompanied by those monks, he went to the Buddha. When the Buddha asked him, "Koṇḍañña, you have obtained pupils?" he told him what had happened. The Buddha asked, "Monks, is this true?" "Yes, Venerable; we never saw such an exhibition of magical power before and therefore we have become monks." The Buddha replied, "Monks, it were better for you to live but a single day in the exercise of the wisdom you have just acquired than to live for a hundred years committing such acts of foolishness."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 111)

duppaññō asamāhitō yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē
paññavantassa jhāinō ēkāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō

duppaññō: unwise; *asamāhitō:* unsteady and fluctuating in mind; *yō:* some person; *ca:* even if; *vassasataṁ jīvē:* were to live hundred years; *paññavantassa:* of a person endowed with wisdom; *jhāinō:* mentally disciplined; ēkāhaṁ: only one day's; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *seyyō:* is greater

A single day's life of a wise person, who is aware of reality, is greater than even hundred years of life of an individual who is bereft of wisdom and insight.

Commentary

jhāinô: one who practises *jhāna*. The Buddha describes *jhāna* this way:

(1) Withdrawn from sensual objects, withdrawn from unwholesome states of mind, the monk enters into the first *jhāna*, which is accompanied by inference *(vitakka)* and inquiry *(vicâra)*, filled with joy *(pīti)* and comfort *(sukha)* which is born of detachment.

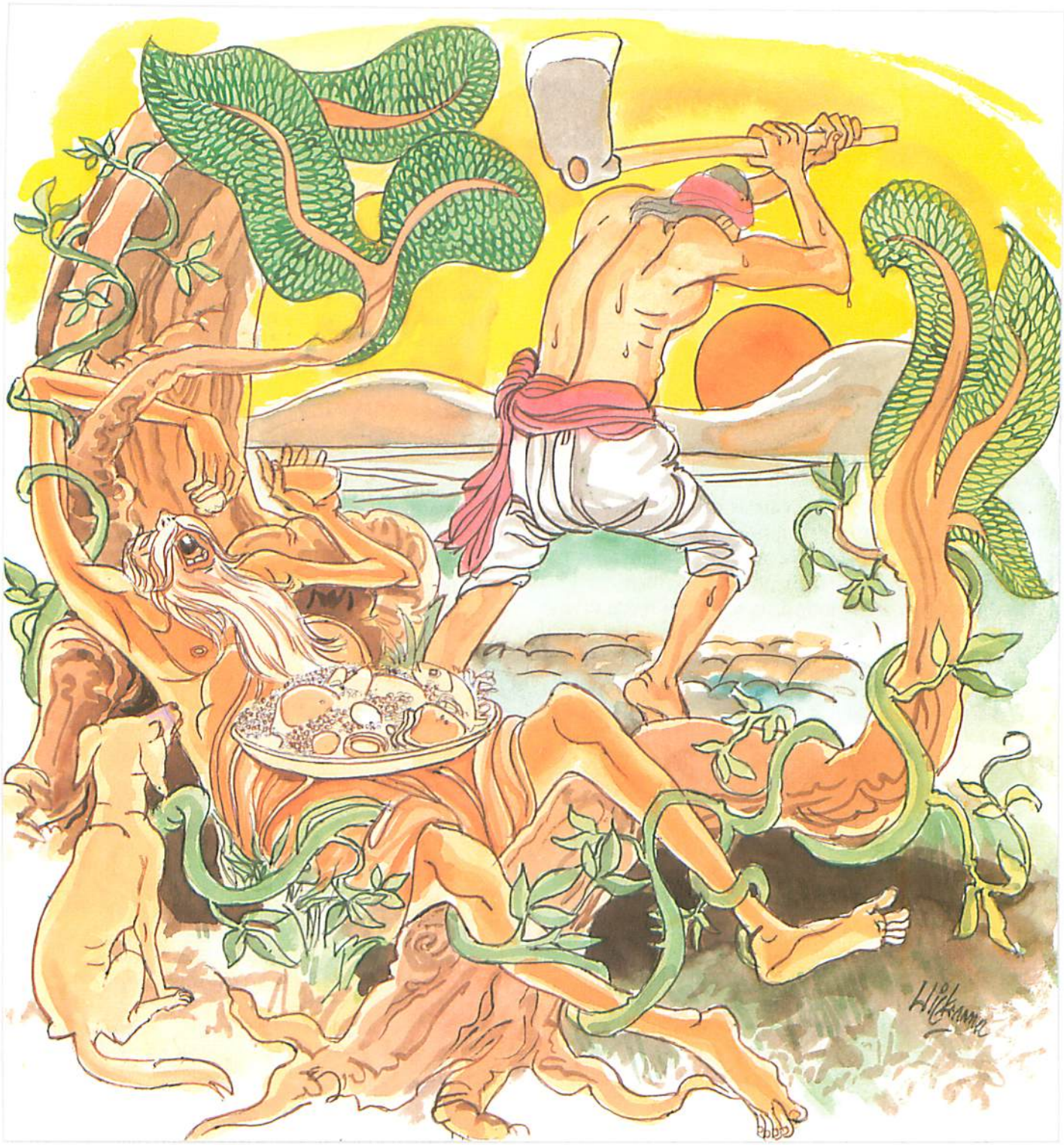
(2) After the subsidence of inference and inquiry, and by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters into the second *Jhāna*, which is born of stillness of mind, and filled with joy *(pīti)* and comfort *(sukha)*.

(3) After the fading away of joy he dwells in equanimity, mindful, clearly conscious; and he experiences in his person that feeling of which the Noble Ones say, 'Happy lives the man of equanimity and attentive mind'; thus he enters the Third absorption.

(4) After having given up pleasure and pain, and through the disappearance of previous joy and grief, he enters into a state beyond pleasure and pain, into the Fourth absorption, which is purified by Equanimity *(upekkhā)* and mindfulness.

(5) Through the total overcoming of the perceptions of matter, however, and through the vanishing of sense-reactions and the non-attention to the perceptions of variety, with the idea, 'boundless is space', he reaches the sphere of boundless space *(ākāsānañcāyatana)* and abides therein.

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One day's life of a man of effort is greater than a hundred years of a sluggard.

112. *Yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē*
kusītō hīnavīriyō
ekāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
viriyamā rabhatō daḷhaṁ. (8:13)

Though one should live a hundred years
lazy, of little effort,
yet better is life for a single day
strongly making effort.

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THE PERSON OF EFFORT IS WORTHY

8 (11) The Story of Venerable Sappadāsa (Verse 112)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Sappadāsa.

Once a monk was not feeling happy with the life of a monk; at the same time he felt that it would be improper and humiliating for him to return to the life of a householder. So he thought it would be better to die. So thinking this, on one occasion, he put his hand into a pot where there was a snake but the snake did not bite him. This was because in a past existence the snake was a slave and the monk was his master. Because of this incident the monk was known as Venerable Sappadāsa. On another occasion, Venerable Sappadāsa took a razor to cut his throat; but as he placed the razor on his throat he reflected on the purity of his morality practice throughout his life as a monk and his whole body was suffused with delightful satisfaction *(pīti)* and bliss *(sukha)*. Then detaching himself from *pīti*, he directed his mind to the development of insight knowledge and soon attained arahatship, and he returned to the monastery.

On arrival at the monastery, other monks asked him where he had been and why he took the knife along with him. When he told them about his intention to take his life, they asked him why he did not do so. He answered, "I originally intended to cut my throat with this knife, but I have now cut off all moral defilements with the knife of insight knowledge." The monks did not believe him; so they went to the Buddha and asked, "Venerable Sir, this monk claims that he has attained arahatship as he was putting the knife to his throat to kill himself. Is it possible to attain *arahatta magga* within such a short time?" To them the Buddha said, "Monks! Yes, it is possible; for one who is zealous and strenuous in the practice of tranquillity and insight development, arahatship can be gained in an instant. As the monk walks in meditation, he can attain arahatship even before his raised foot touches the ground."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 112)

kusītō hīnavīriyō yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē daḷhaṁ viriyaṁ ārabhatō ekāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō

kusītō: lazy; *hīnavīriyō:* without initiative, lethargic; *yō:* an individual; *ca:* if; *vassasataṁ:* hundred years; *jīvē:* were to live; *daḷhaṁ viriyaṁ:* full of effort; *ārabhatō:* who develops; *ekāhaṁ jīvitaṁ:* even one day's life; *seyyō:* is noble

A single day's life of a wise person who is capable of strenuous effort, is nobler than even hundred years of life of an individual who is lazy, incapable of making an effort and is wanting in initiative.

Commentary

viriyam: effort; specifically spiritual effort. Closely allied with *Paññā* (wisdom) is *Viriya* (Perseverance). Here, *Viriya* does not mean physical strength though this is an asset, but mental vigour or strength of character, which is far superior. It is defined as the persistent effort to purify the mind. Firmly establishing himself in this virtue, the Bōdhisatta develops *viriya* and makes it one of his prominent characteristics.

The *Viriya* of a Bōdhisatta is clearly depicted in the *Mahājanaka Jātaka*. Shipwrecked in the open sea for seven days he struggled on without once giving up hope until he was finally rescued. Failures he views as steps to success, opposition causes him to double his exertion, dangers increase his courage. Cutting his way through difficulties, which impair the enthusiasm of the feeble, surmounting obstacles, which dishearten the ordinary, he looks straight towards his goal. Nor does he ever stop until his goal is reached. To Māra who advised the Bōdhisatta to abandon his quest, he said, "Death, in battle with passions seems to me more honourable than a life of defeat." Just as his wisdom is always directed to the service of others, so also is his fund of energy. Instead of confining it to the narrow course leading to the realization of personal ends, he directs it into the open channel of activities that tend to universal happiness. Ceaselessly and untiringly he works for others, expecting no remuneration in return or reward. He is ever ready to serve others to the best of his ability.

In certain respects, *Viriya* plays an even greater part than *Paññā* in the achievement of the goal. In one who treads the noble eight-fold path, right effort *(sammā vāyāma* or *viriya)* prevents the arising of evil states, removes those which have arisen, cultivates good states, and maintains and develops those good states which have already arisen. It serves as one of the seven factors of enlightenment *(viriya sambojjhanga)*. It is one of the four means of accomplishment *(viriyiddhipāda)*. It is *viriya* that performs the function of the four modes of right endeavour *(sammappadhāna)*. It is one of the five powers *(viriya bala)* and one of the five controlling faculties *(viriyindriya)*.

Viriya therefore may be regarded as an officer that performs nine functions. It is this persistent effort to develop the mind that serves as a powerful hand to achieve all ends.

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A day's life seeing the dawn and demise of things excels a hundred years of life without it.

113. *Yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē*
apassaṁ udayabbayaṁ
ēkā'haṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
passatō udayabbayaṁ. (8:14)

Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing rise and fall,
yet better is life for a single day
seeing rise and fall.

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WHO KNOWS REALITY IS GREAT

8 (12) The Story of Nun Patācārā (Verse 113)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Patācārā.

Patācārā was the daughter of a rich man from Sāvatthi. She was very beautiful and was guarded very strictly by her parents. But one day, she eloped with a young male attendant of the family and went to live in a village, as a poor man's wife. In due course she became pregnant and as the time for confinement drew near, she asked permission from her husband to return to her parents in Sāvatthi, but her husband discouraged her. So, one day, while her husband was away, she set out for the home of her parents. He followed her and caught up with her on the way and pleaded with her to return with him; but she refused. It so happened that as her time was drawing so near, she had to give birth to a son in one of the bushes. After the birth of her son she returned home with her husband.

Then, she was again with child and as the time for confinement drew near, taking her son with her, she again set out for the home of her parents in Sāvatthi. Her husband followed her and caught up with her on the way; but her time for delivery was coming on very fast and it was also raining hard. The husband looked for a suitable place for confinement and while he was clearing a little patch of land, he was bitten by a poisonous snake, and died instantaneously. Patācārā waited for her husband, and while waiting for his return she gave birth to her second son. In the morning, she searched for her husband, but only found his dead body. Saying to herself that her husband died on account of her, she continued on her way to her parents. Because it had rained incessantly the whole night, the Aciravati River was in spate; so it was not possible for her to cross the river carrying both her sons. Leaving the elder boy on this side of the river, she crossed the stream with her day-old son and left him on the other bank. She then came back for the elder boy. While she was still in the middle of the river, a large hawk hovered over the younger child taking it for a piece of meat. She shouted to frighten away the bird, but it was all in vain; the child was carried away by the hawk. Meanwhile, the elder boy heard his mother shouting from the middle of the stream and thought she was calling out to him to come to her. So he entered the stream to go to his mother, and was carried away by the strong current. Thus Patācārā lost her two sons as well as her husband. So she wept and lamented loudly, "A son is carried away by a hawk, another son is carried away by the current, my husband is also dead, bitten by a poisonous snake!" Then, she saw a man from Sāvatthi and she tearfully asked after her parents. The man replied that due to a violent storm in Sāvatthi the previous night, the house of her parents had fallen down and that both her parents, together with her three brothers, had died, and had been cremated on one funeral pyre. On hearing this tragic news, Patācārā went stark mad. She did not even notice that her clothes had fallen off from her and that she was half-naked. She went about the streets, shouting out, "Woe is me!"

While the Buddha was giving a discourse at the Jētavana Monastery, he saw Patācārā at a distance; so he willed that she should come to the congregation. The crowd seeing her coming tried to stop her, saying "Don't let the mad woman come in." But the Buddha told them not to prevent her coming in. When Patācārā was close enough to hear him, he told her to be careful and to keep calm. Then, she realized that she did not have her skirt on and shamefacedly sat down. Someone gave her a piece of cloth and she wrapped herself up in it. She then told the Buddha how she had lost her sons, her husband, her brothers and her parents. She later became a nun and attained liberation.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 113)

udayabbayaṁ apassaṁ yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē
(tatō) udayabbayaṁ passatō kusītō hīnavīriyō
ēkāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō

udayabbayaṁ: the rise and decline; *apassaṁ:* does not see; *yō ca:* an individual; *vassasataṁ:* a hundred years; *jīvē:* were to live; *udayabbayaṁ:* the arising and disappearance; *passatō:* he who sees; *ēkāhaṁ:* even one day's; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *seyyō:* is noble

A single day's life of a person who perceives the arising and the disappearance of things experienced is nobler and greater than the hundred-year life-span of a person who does not perceive the process of the arising and the disappearance of things.

Commentary

udayabbayam: the coming into being of the five-fold totality of experience *(panca khanda)*: (1) form; (2) sensation; (3) perception; (4) conception and (5) cognition.

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A day's life seeing the deathless is greater than a hundred years without seeing it.

114. *Yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē*
apassaṁ amataṁ padaṁ
ēkā'haṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
passatō amataṁ padaṁ. (8:15)

Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing the Deathless State,
yet better is life for a single day
seeing Deathlessness.

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THE SEER OF THE DEATHLESS IS A WORTHY ONE

8 (13) The Story of Nun Kisāgōtami (Verse 114)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Kisāgōtami.

Kisāgōtami was the daughter of a rich man from Sāvatthi; she was known as Kisāgōtami because of her slim body. Kisāgōtami was married to a rich young man and a son was born to them. The boy died when he was just a toddler and Kisāgōtami was stricken with grief. Carrying the dead body of her son, she went about asking for medicine that would restore her son to life from everyone she happened to meet. People began to think that she had gone mad. But a wise man seeing her condition thought that he should be of some help to her. So, he said to her, "The Buddha is the person you should approach, he has the medicine you want; go to him." Thus, she went to the Buddha and asked him to give her the medicine that would restore her dead son to life.

The Buddha told her to get some mustard seeds from a house where there had been no death. Carrying her dead child in her bosom, Kisāgōtami went from house to house, with the request for some mustard seeds. Everyone was willing to help her, but she could not find a single house where death had not occurred. Then, she realized that hers was not the only family that had faced death and that there were more people dead than living. As soon as she realized this, her attitude towards her dead son changed; she was no longer attached to the dead body of her son.

She left the corpse in the jungle and returned to the Buddha and reported that she could find no house where death had not occurred. Then the Buddha said, "Did you not get the single pinch of mustard seed?" "No, that did I not, Venerable. In every village the dead are more in number than the living." Said the Buddha, "Vainly did you imagine that you alone had lost a child. But all living beings are subject to an unchanging law, and it is this: The prince of death, like a raging torrent, sweeps away into the sea of ruin all living beings; with their longings still unfulfilled. Gōtami, you thought that you were the only one who had lost a son. As you have now realized, death comes to all beings; before their desires are fulfilled death takes them away." On hearing this, Kisāgōtami fully realized the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality of the aggregates and attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Soon afterwards, Kisāgōtami became a nun. One day, as she was lighting the lamps she saw the flames flaring up and dying out, and suddenly she clearly perceived the arising and the perishing of beings. The Buddha, through supernormal power, saw her from his monastery, and sent forth his radiance and appeared to her in person. Kisāgōtami was told to continue meditating on the impermanent nature of all beings and to strive hard to realize Nibbāna. She reached higher stages of spiritual awakening.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 114)

amataṁ padaṁ apassaṁ yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē
amataṁ padaṁ passatō ekāhaṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō

amataṁ padaṁ: Deathless state (nibbāna); *apassaṁ:* without seeing; *yō ca:* if an individual; *vassasataṁ jīvē:* were to live a hundred years; *amataṁ padaṁ:* the deathless state (nibbāna); *passatō:* the perceiver's; *ēkāhaṁ:* one day's; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *seyyō:* is noble

A single day's life of a person who sees the state of deathlessness is far greater and nobler than the hundred-year life-span of a person who does not perceive the deathless state.

Commentary

amatam padam: the state of deathlessness — Nibbāna. Nibbāna is characterized as 'the deathless' because it is the cessation of the illusion of existence. Nibbāna has to be won by depersonalizing the personalized five-fold totality *(pancūpādāna khanda)* of experience.

The self image of existence that we carry in our mind is created by the personalization of impersonal phenomena. Our existence or being is the continuation of this self image called personality. When we have removed this self image through depersonalization, we cease to exist. When we cease to exist, we cease to die. This is the deathless state. To observe the experience, as it comes and goes, without personalizing it, is to experience the deathless Nibbāna here and now.

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A day's life seeing the supreme dhamma is greater than a hundred years without seeing it.

115. *Yō ca vassasataṁ jīvē*
apassaṁ dhammamuttamaṁ
ēkā'haṁ jīvitaṁ seyyō
passatō dhammamuttamaṁ. (8:16)

Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing Dhamma Supreme,
yet better is life for a single day
seeing Dhamma Supreme.

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LIFE OF ONE WHO KNOWS THE TEACHING IS NOBLE

8 (14) The Story of Nun Bahūputtika (Verse 115)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Bahūputtika, a mother of many children.

Once in Sāvatthi, there lived a couple, with their seven sons and seven daughters. All the children got married and the family was doing quite well. Then, the father died and the mother kept all the property without giving anything to the children. Her sons and daughters wanted the inheritance, so they said to their mother, "What benefit do we get from our property? Can't we make it multiply? Can't we look after our mother?" They said such things again and again so their mother thought that her children would look after her, and she finally divided up the property without leaving anything for herself.

After a few days had passed, the wife of her oldest son said to her, "Apparently this is the only house our excellent mother visits; she acts as though she had given both parts of her estate to her oldest son." In like manner did the wives of her other sons address her. So likewise did her daughters address her whenever she entered their houses, from the oldest to the youngest. With such disrespect was she treated that finally she said to herself, "Why should I live with them any longer? I will enter the Sangha and live the life of a nun." So she went to the nuns' convent and asked to be admitted to the Sangha. They received her into the Sangha, and when she had made it her full profession she went by the name of Bahūputtika the nun because she was the mother of many children.

"Since I have entered the Sangha in old age," thought she, as she performed the major and minor duties assigned to nuns, "it behooves me to be heedful; I will therefore spend the whole night in meditation." On the lower terrace, putting her hand on a pillar, she guided her steps thereby and meditated. Even as she walked along, fearful that in the dark places she might strike her head against a tree or against some other object, she put her hand on a tree and guided her steps thereby, and meditated. Resolved to observe only the Dhamma taught by the Buddha, she considered the Dhamma and pondered the Dhamma and meditated.

The Buddha, seated in the perfumed chamber, sent forth a radiant image of himself, and sitting as it were face to face with her, talked with her, saying, "Bahūputtika, it is better that one lives only for a moment seeing the Dhamma I have taught than to live a hundred years without seeing what I taught."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 115)

uttamaṁ dhammaṁ apassaṁ yō ca vassasataṁ
jīvē uttamaṁ dhammaṁ passatō ēkāhaṁ jīvitaṁ
seyyō

uttamaṁ dhammaṁ: the Supreme Teaching of the Buddha (the noblest of doctrines); *apassṁ:* who does not perceive; *yō ca:* if some person; *vassasataṁ jīvē:* were to live a hundred years; *uttamaṁ dhammaṁ:* the Supreme Teaching of the Buddha (the noblest of doctrines); *passatō:* the seer's; *ēkāhaṁ:* one day's; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *seyyō:* is nobler.

A single day's life of a seer of the Noble Teaching of the Buddha is by far greater than the life of a hundred years of a person who does not see the Noblest Teaching.

Commentary

Dhammaṁ Uttamaṁ: the Noblest of the Noble -- Teaching of the Buddha. Dhamma, the Teaching of the Buddha, is the way to transcend the world. The Dhamma is described as nine-fold: the four paths, four fruits and Nibbāna — (the deathless).

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No forced conversion

It was never, however, the Buddhist way to proselytise - in the sense of forcing ideas and beliefs upon an unwilling audience, much less to exert pressure of any kind, or any kind of flattery, deceit or cajolery, to win adherence to one's own point of view. Buddhist missionaries have never competed for converts in the market place.

Dr. G.P. Malalasekera

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Chapter 9

PĀPA VAGGA

Evil

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Hasten to cultivate goodness. Restrain the mind from vice. Delay diverts the mind to evil.

116. *Abhittarētha kalyāṇē*
pāpā cittaṁ nivārayē
dandhaṁ hi karōtō puññaṁ
pāpasmiṁ ramatī manō. (9:1)

Make haste towards the good
and check the mind from evil.
The one who's slow to merit make
delights the mind in evil.

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PĀPA VAGGA (Evil)
NEVER HESITATE TO DO GOOD

9 (1) The Story of Culla Ēkasāṭaka (Verse 116)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brahmin couple by the name of Culla Ēkasāṭaka.

There was once a brahmin couple in Sāvatthi, who had only one outer garment between the two of them. Because of this they were also known as Ēkasāṭaka. As they had only one outer garment, both of them could not go out at the same time. So, the wife would go to listen to the discourse given by the Buddha during the day and the husband would go at night. One night, as the brahmin listened to the Buddha, his whole body came to be suffused with delightful satisfaction and he felt a strong desire to offer the outer garment he was wearing to the Buddha. But he realized that if he were to give away the only outer garment he had, there would be none left for him and his wife. So he wavered and hesitated. Thus, the first and the second watches of the night passed. Came the third watch and he said to himself, "If I am so miserly and hesitant, I will miss the opportunity of ending worldly suffering. I shall now offer my outer garment to the Buddha." So saying, he placed the piece of cloth at the feet of the Buddha and cried out "I have won" three times. King Pasēnadi of Kōsala, who was among the audience, heard those words and ordered a courtier to investigate. Learning about the brahmin's offering to the Buddha, the king commented that the brahmin had done something which was not easy to do and so should be rewarded. The king ordered his men to give the brahmin a piece of cloth as a reward for his faith and generosity. The brahmin offered that piece of cloth also to the Buddha and he was rewarded by the king with two pieces of cloth. Again, the brahmin offered the two pieces of cloth to the Buddha and he was rewarded with four. Thus, he offered to the Buddha whatever was given him by the king, and each time the king doubled his reward. When finally the reward came up to thirty-two pieces of cloth, the brahmin kept one piece for himself and another for his wife, and offered the remaining thirty pieces to the Buddha.

Then, the king again commented that the brahmin had truly performed a very difficult task and so must be rewarded fittingly. The king sent a messenger to the palace to bring two pieces of velvet cloth, each of which was worth one hundred thousand, and gave them to the brahmin. The brahmin made these two pieces of valuable cloth into two canopies and kept one in the perfumed chamber where the Buddha slept and the other in his own house above the place where a monk was regularly offered alms-food. When the king next went to the Jētavana Monastery to pay homage to the Buddha, he saw the velvet canopy and recognized it as the offering made by the brahmin and he was very pleased. This time, he made a reward of seven kinds in fours (sabbacatukka), viz., four elephants, four horses, four female slaves, four male slaves, four errand boys, four villages and four thousands in cash. When the monks heard about this, they asked the Buddha, "How is it that, in the case of this brahmin, a good deed done at present bears fruit immediately?" To them the Buddha replied, "If the brahmin had offered his outer garment in the first watch of the night, he would have been rewarded with sixteen of each kind; if he had made his offering during the middle watch, he would have been rewarded with eight of each kind; since he had made his offering only during the last watch of the night, he was rewarded with only four of each kind. So, when one wants to give in charity, one should do so quickly; if one procrastinates, the reward comes slowly and only sparingly. Also, if one is too slow in doing good deeds, one may not be able to do it at all, for the mind tends to take delight in evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 116)

kalyānē abhittharētha pāpā cittaṁ nivārayē
puññaṁ dandhaṁ hi karōto manō pāpasmiṁ
ramatī

kalyānē: in virtue; *abhittharētha:* be alert; *pāpā:* from evil; *cittaṁ:* the mind; *nivārayē:* guard; *puññaṁ:* good action; *dandhaṁ:* hesitantly; *hi karōtō:* if one does; *manō:* his mind; *pāpasmiṁ:* in evil; *ramatī:* takes delight

In the matter of performing virtuous, meritorious actions, be alert and act quickly. Guard the mind against evil. If one were to perform meritorious actions hesitantly, his mind will begin to take delight in evil things.

Commentary

abhittharētha kalyānē: indulge in wholesome activities without any loss of time. The practice of the spiritual path has been called by the Buddha, going against the stream *(paṭisōtagāmi)*. The normal tendency of the mind is to be carried away by emotions and do the wrong things. If one does not make the effort to go against this current, one will be doing the wrong things and going the wrong way.

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Never repeat an act of evil. Never more incline that way. Evil amassed leads to unhappiness.

117. *Pāpaṁ cē purisō kayirā*
na taṁ kayirā punappunaṁ
na tamhi chandaṁ kayirātha
dukkhō pāpassa uccayō. (9:2)

If one should some evil do
then do it not again, again.
Do not wish for it anew
for evil grows to dukkha.

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DO NO EVIL AGAIN AND AGAIN

9 (2) The Story of Venerable Seyyasaka (Verse 117)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the Venerable Seyyasaka. For Venerable Seyyasaka was Venerable Kāludāyi's fellow-monk. Becoming discontented with the continence required by the Religious Life, he started sexually stimulating himself. Thereafter, as often as he fell into this self-abuse, he broke the same rule. The Buddha heard about his doings, sent for him, and asked him, "Is the report true that you did such and such?" "Yes, Venerable." "Foolish man," said the Buddha, "why have you acted in a manner so unbecoming to your state?" In such fashion did the Buddha reprove him. Having so done, he enjoined upon him the observance of the rules. Then he said to him, "Such a course of action inevitably leads to suffering, both in this world and in the world to come." So saying, the Buddha pronounced this Stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 117)

purisō cē pāpaṁ kayirā taṁ punappunaṁ na kayirā tamhi chandaṁ na kayirātha pāpassa uccayō dukkhō

purisō: some person; *cē pāpaṁ kayirā:* were to commit an evil deed; *taṁ:* that; *punappunaṁ:* repeatedly over and over; *na kayirā:* should not; *tamhi:* in that; *chandaṁ:* a delight; *na kayirātha:* do not take; *pāpassa:* in evil; *uccayō:* accumulation (of evil); *dukkhō:* is painful

A person may do some evil things. But he should not keep on doing it over and over, repeatedly. He should not take delight in it. Accumulation of evil is painful.

Commentary

Special Note: *Arahat Kāludāyi:* the monk who figures in this story is named Seyyasaka. Arahat Kāludāyi was Venerable Seyyasaka's companion and mentor. Arahat Kāludāyi had to impose disciplinary measures on Seyyasaka. Arahat Kāludāyi, who was charged with correcting Venerable Seyyasaka, is a predominant arahat in the history of Buddhism. This Mahā arahat had the unique honour of being the first in inducing the relations of the Buddha to embrace the faith. He was with King Suddhōdana right through the period of six years during the absence of Prince Siddhārtha. He made light the absence of the Prince. After performing many a meritorious deed, he was born at Kapilawastu as a son to a minister of king Suddōdana on the very Wesak Pōya day when Prince Siddhārtha was born. He was a close associate of the Prince Siddhārtha.

The Prince had seven treasures by birth, viz.: (1) The Bōdhi tree under which he received Enlightenment; (2) His Queen Yasōdhara; (3) The Four Great Treasures; (4) Arōhanīya — the royal elephant; (5) Kanthaka the royal horse; (6) Channa — the charioteer and (7) Companion Kāludāyi.

After Enlightenment, the Buddha was at Vēluvanārāma at Rājagaha. King Suddhōdana after an absence of over six years was pining to see his son. So he sent minister after minister each with a retinue of one thousand followers requesting the Buddha to return. In all, he sent nine ministers. But none of them returned. One and all sought ordination and became arahats. Yet they forgot their mission. Finally he dispatched Kāludāyi, the most trusted follower. Kāludāyi and his followers, as others before him, became arahats. The wish of the king was uppermost in his mind. He bided his time for a suitable opportunity. He waited till nature became auspicious for such a journey. Kāludāyi gave the hint and the Buddha was pleased to oblige. The concourse that attended Buddha was about twenty thousand arahats. Kāludāyi heralded the visit by coming through the air with the bowl in hand. The King was glad at the good news. He got the bowl filled up with exquisite food and requested the Venerable to partake of the food then and there agreeing to offer food to the Buddha.

After the Venerable did so, the King repeated the act. The Venerable agreed to the King's request that he should come every day and repeat the process until the arrival of the Buddha. And every day the Venerable preached to the King by way of thanks. It was a merit offering *(puñña-anumōdanā)* — transfer of merit.

Not long afterwards the Buddha addressing the monks and laity declared Venerable Kāludāyi was foremost in the Noble Sangha for inducing relations to embrace the faith.

pāpa: unwholesome actions: *akusala*. Unwholesome are all those karmical volitions and the consciousness and mental concomitants associated therewith, which are accompanied either by greed *(lōbha)* or hate *(dōsa)* or merely delusion *(mōha)*; and all these phenomena are causes of unfavourable Kamma results and contain the seeds of unhappy destiny or rebirth.

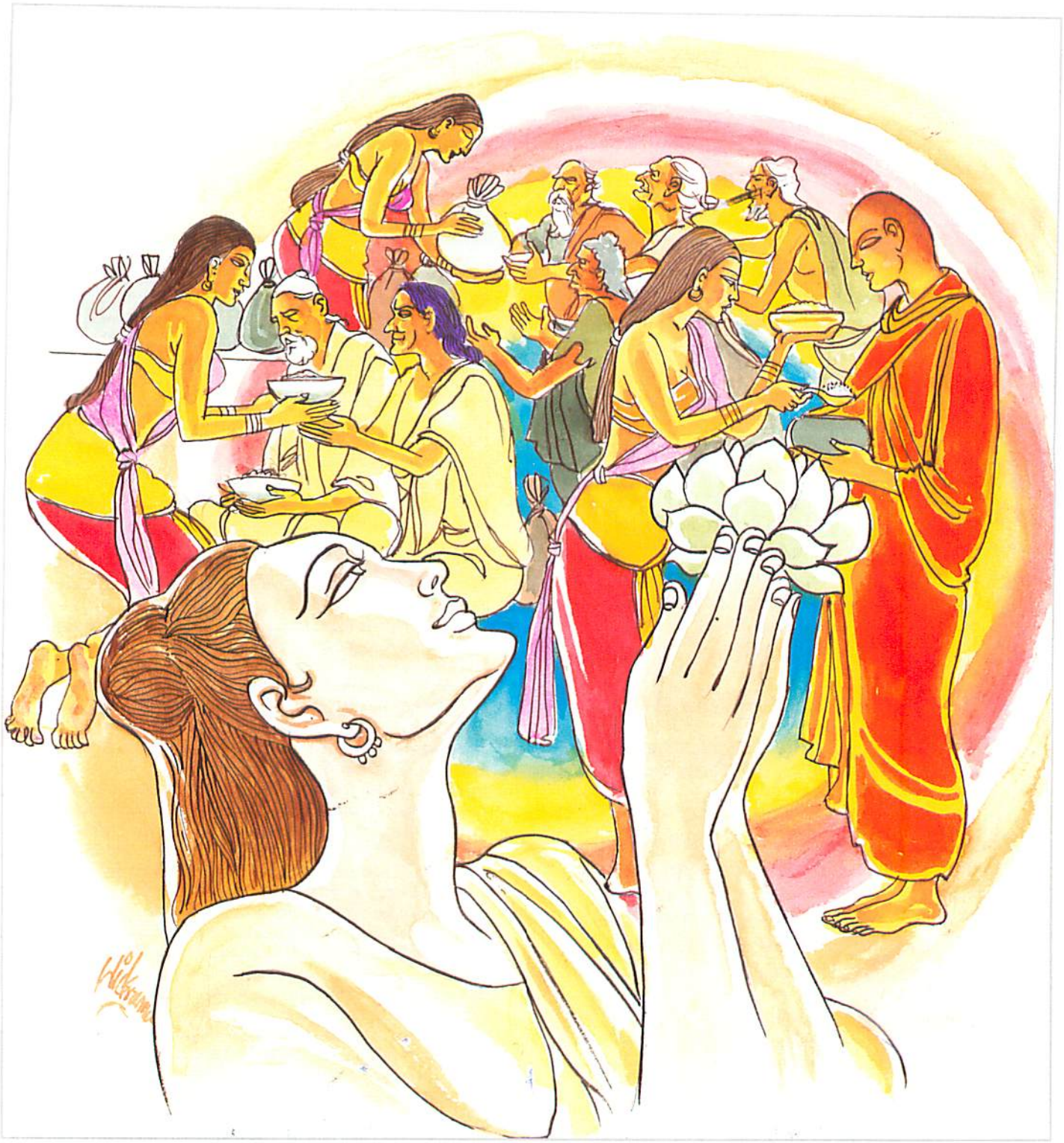
akusala-sādhārana-cētasika: general unwholesome *(pāpa)* mental factors associated with all unwholesome actions (volitions), are four: (1) lack of moral shame *(ahirika)*; (2) lack of moral dread *(anottappa)*; (3) restlessness *(uddhacca)*, (4) delusion *(mōha)*.

mūla: roots, also called *hētu*, are those conditions which through their presence determine the actual moral quality of a volitional state *(cētanā)*, and the consciousness and mental factors associated therewith, in other words, the quality of kamma. There are six such roots, three kammically wholesome and three unwholesome roots, viz.: greed, hate, delusion *(lōbha, dōsa, mōha)* and greedlessness, hatelessness, undeludedness *(alōbha, adōsa, amōha)*.

Greed arises through unwise reflection on an attractive object, hate through unwise reflection on a repulsive object. Thus, greed *(lōbha* or *rāga)* comprises all degrees of attractedness towards an object from the faintest trace of a longing thought up to grossest egoism, whilst hatred *(dōsa)* comprises all degrees of repulsion from the faintest trace of ill-humour up to the highest pitch of hate and wrath. Those *pāpa* (unwholesome) actions — killing, stealing, unlawful sexual intercourse, lying, tale-bearing, harsh language, frivolous talk, covetousness, ill-will and wrong views — these things are either due to greed, or hate, or delusion.

Enraptured with lust (greed), enraged with hate, blinded by delusion, overwhelmed, with mind ensnared, man aims at his own ruin, at others' ruin, at the ruin of both, and he experiences mental pain and grief. And he follows evil ways in deeds, words and thought and he really knows neither his own welfare, nor the welfare of others, nor the welfare of both. These things make him blind and ignorant, hinder his knowledge, are painful, and do not lead him to peace.

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Repeat your acts of goodness. Delight therein. Goodness amassed brings happiness.

118. *Puññaṁ cē purisō kayirā*
kayirāth'ētaṁ punappunaṁ
tamhi chandaṁ kayirātha
sukhō puññassa uccayō. (9:3)

If one should some merit make
do it then again, again.
One should wish for it anew
for merit grows to joy.

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ACCUMULATED MERIT LEADS TO HAPPINESS

9 (3) The Story of Goddess Lājā (Verse 118)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to the goddess Lājā.

For a while Venerable Kassapa the Great was in residence at Pipphalī Cave, he entered into a state of trance, remaining therein for seven days. Arising from trance on the seventh day, he surveyed with supernatural vision the places where he wanted to go for alms. As he looked abroad, he beheld a certain woman, the keeper of a field of rice-paddy, parching heads of rice which she had gathered. Thereupon he considered within himself, "Is she endowed with faith or is she not endowed with faith?" Straightaway becoming aware that she was endowed with faith, he reflected, "Will she be able to render me assistance?" Straightaway he became aware of the following, "This noble young woman is wise and resourceful; she will render me assistance, and as the result of so doing will receive a rich reward." So he put on his robes, took bowl in hand, and went and stood near the rice-field. When this noble young woman saw the Venerable, her heart believed, and her body was suffused with the five sorts of joy. "Wait a moment, Venerable," said she. Taking some of the parched rice, she went quickly to him, poured the rice into the Venerable's bowl, and then, saluting him with the five rests, she made an earnest wish, saying, "Venerable, may I be a partaker of the Truth you have seen?" "So be it," replied the Venerable, pronouncing the words of thanksgiving. Then that noble young woman saluted the Venerable and set out to return, reflecting upon the alms she had given to the Venerable.

Now in a certain hole by the road skirting the field of growing rice lurked a poisonous snake. He was not able to bite the Venerable's leg, for it was covered with his yellow robe. But as that noble young woman reached that spot on her return, reflecting upon the alms she had given to the Venerable, the snake wriggled out of his hole, bit her, and then and there caused her to fall prostrate on the ground. Dying with believing heart, she was reborn in heaven. As a goddess she came down from time to time and attended to the upkeep of the Venerable's place — cleaning the premises etc. When the Venerable saw what had been done, he concluded, "Some probationer or novice must have rendered me this service." On the second day the goddess did the same thing again, and the Venerable again came to the same conclusion. But on the third day the Venerable heard the sound of her sweeping, and looking in through the keyhole, saw the radiant image of her body. And straightaway he asked, "Who is it that is sweeping?" "It is I, Venerable, your female disciple the goddess Lājā." "I have no female disciple by that name." "Venerable, when I was a young woman tending a rice-field, I gave you parched rice; as I returned on my way, a snake bit me, and I died with believing heart and was reborn in the Heavenly World. Since it was through you that I received this glory, I said to myself, 'I will perform the major and minor duties for you and so make my salvation sure.' Therefore came I hither, Venerable." "Was it you that swept this place for me yesterday and on the preceding days, setting out water for drinking?" "Yes, Venerable." "Pray depart hence, goddess. Never mind about the duties you have rendered, but henceforth come no more hither." "Venerable, do not destroy me. Permit me to perform the major and minor services for you and so make my salvation sure." "Goddess, depart hence, lest in the future, when expounders of the law take the variegated fan and sit down, they have reason to say, 'Report has it that a goddess comes and performs the major and minor duties for Venerable Kassapa, setting out water for him to drink.'" Thereupon the goddess wept and wailed and lamented, standing poised in the air. About this incident the Buddha said, "Indeed, both in this world and the world to come, it is the doing of good works alone that brings happiness."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 118)

purisō cē puññaṁ kayirā taṁ punappunaṁ kayirātha taṁ hi chandaṁ kayirātha puññassa uccayō sukhō

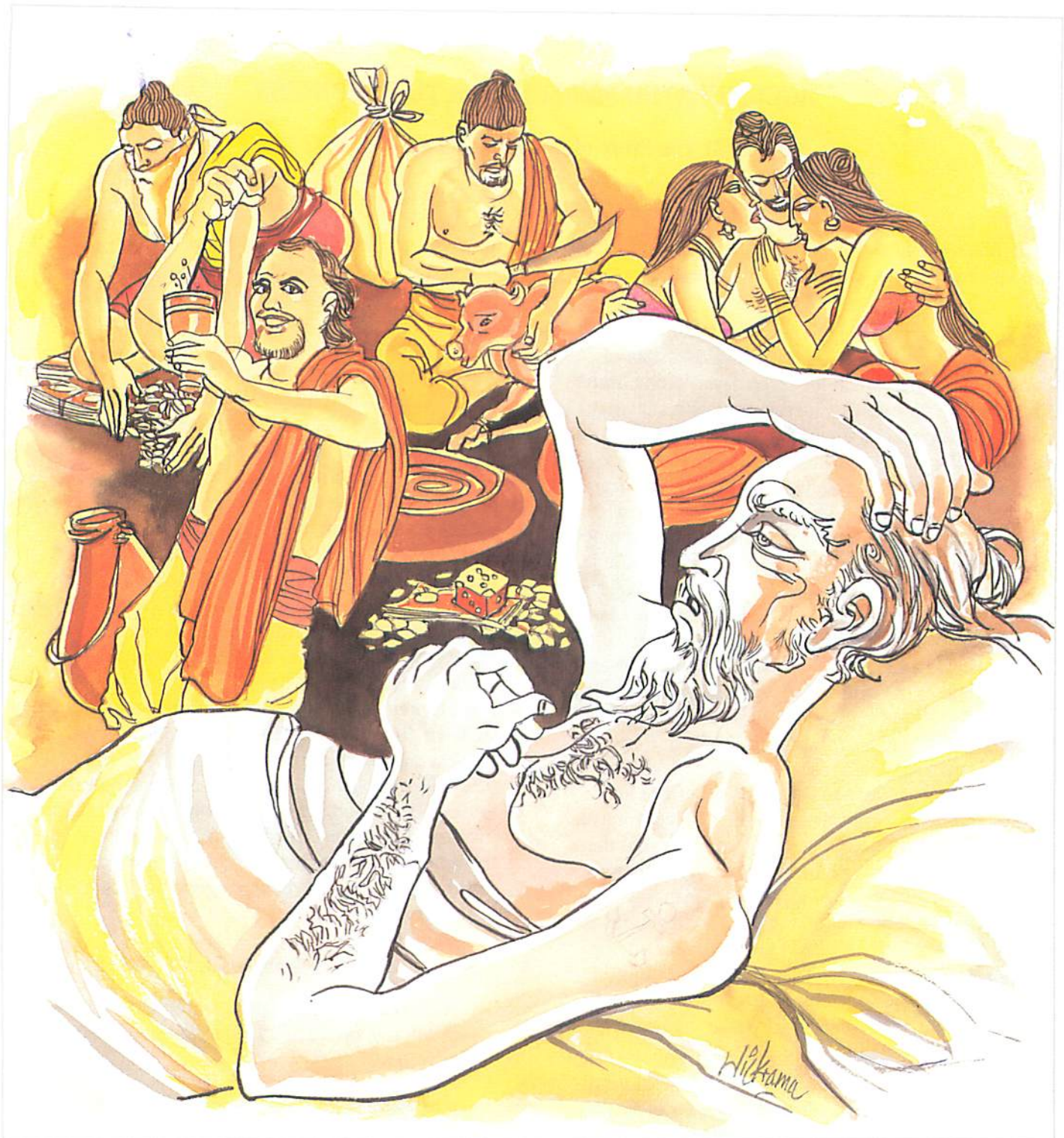
purisō: some person; *cē puññaṁ:* if meritorious activities; *kayirā:* were to do; *taṁ:* that; *punappunaṁ:* repeatedly over and over; *kayirā:* should do; *taṁ hi:* in that; *chandaṁ:* a delight; *kayirātha:* should take; *puññassa:* of merit; *uccayō:* accumulation; *sukhō:* leads to happiness

A person may do some meritorious activity. He must keep on repeating it, over and over. He must take delight in that meritorious action. Accumulation of merit leads to happiness.

Commentary

puñña: meritorious acts. *Kusala* is another term to denote such acts.

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Even evil is seen as goodness till it ripens not. But when it ripens its evil is seen.

119. *Pāpō'pi passati bhadraṁ*
yāva pāpaṁ na paccati
yadā ca paccati pāpaṁ
atha pāpō pāpāni passati. (9:4)

As long as evil ripens not
even the evil one goodness knows,
but when the evil ripens
then that person evil knows.

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EVIL SEEMS SWEET UNTIL IT RIPENS

9 (4) The Story of Anāthapiṇḍika (Verses 119 & 120)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Anāthapiṇḍika, the famous rich man of Sāvatthi.

Anāthapiṇḍika, who spent fifty-four billion of treasure in the religion of the Buddha on Jētavana Monastery alone, proceeded in state three times a day to wait upon the Buddha during the Buddha's residence at Jētavana. Whenever he set out to go thither, he thought, "The probationers and novices will look at my hands and ask the question, 'What has he brought with him as offerings?'" and therefore never went empty-handed.

When he went there early in the morning he carried rice-porridge with him; after breakfast he carried ghee, fresh butter, and other medicaments; in the evening he carried with him perfumes, garlands, unguents, and garments. Now those who lived by trade had borrowed from him eighteen billion of treasure. Moreover eighteen billion of treasure belonging to his family, secretly buried at the bank of the river, had been swept into the great ocean at the time when the river burst its banks. The result was that he was gradually being reduced to a state of poverty. But in spite of this, he just gave alms to the Congregation of Monks as before, although he was unable to give choice food as before.

One day the Buddha asked him, "Are alms provided for us in the house of our householder?" Anāthapiṇḍika replied, "Yes,Venerable, but the food is nothing but bird-feed and sour gruel." Then said the Buddha to him, "Householder, do not allow yourself to think, 'It is nothing but coarse food that I give to the Buddha,' and be not disturbed thereat. If the intention be pure, it is impossible to give the Buddhas and others food that is really coarse."

When the Buddha and the Buddha's disciples entered the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, the goddess who dwelt over the gate, unable to remain by reason of the intensity of their goodness, thought to herself, "I will detach the householder from his allegiance, that they may no more enter this house." Now although the goddess had longed to address the householder, she could not say a word to him in the heyday of his wealth and power. At this time, however, she thought to herself, "The householder is now a poor man, and will therefore be disposed to give heed to my words." Accordingly she went by night, entered the treasurer's chamber of state, and stood poised in the air. When the treasurer saw her, he said, "Who is that?" "It is I, great treasurer, the goddess that resides over your fourth gate. I am come to give you admonition." "Well then, say what you have to say."

"Great treasurer, without considering the future, you have dissipated your great wealth in the religion of the monk Gōtama. Now, although you have reduced yourself to poverty, you still continue to give of your wealth. If you continue this course, in a few days you will not have enough left to provide you with clothing and food. Of what use to you is the monk Gōtama? Abandon your lavish giving, devote your attention to business, and make a fortune." "Is this the advice you came to give me?" "Yes, treasurer." "Then go away. Though a hundred thousand like you should try, you would not be able to move me from my course. You have said to me what you had no right to say; what business have you to dwell in my house? Leave my house instantly." The goddess, unable to withstand the words of a noble disciple who had attained the fruit of conversion, left his house, taking her children with her.

But after the goddess had left his house, she was unable to find lodging elsewhere. Then she thought to herself, "I will ask the treasurer to pardon me and to allow me to resume my residence in this house." Accordingly she approached the tutelary deity of the city, told him of her offense, and said to him, "Come now, conduct me to the treasurer, persuade him to pardon me, and persuade him to allow me to resume my residence in his house." But the tutelary deity of the city replied, "You said something you had no business to say; it will be impossible for me to go with you to the treasurer's residence." Thus did the tutelary deity of the city refuse her request. Then she went to the Four Great Kings, but they likewise refused her request. Then she approached Sakka king of gods, told him her story, and entreated him yet more earnestly. Said she, "Sire, I am unable to find a place wherein to lodge myself, but wander about without protection, children in hand. Obtain for me the privilege of returning to my former residence." Sakka replied, "But neither will it be possible for me to speak to the treasurer in your behalf. However, I will tell you a way." "Very good, sire; tell me what it is."

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The doer of acts of goodness appreciates his own only when good results begin to appear.

120. *Bhadrō'pi passati pāpaṁ*
yāva bhadraṁ na paccati
yadā ca paccati bhadraṁ
atha bhadrō bhadrāni passati. (9:5)

As long as goodness ripens not
even the good one evil knows,
but when the goodness ripens
then that person knows the good.

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GOOD MAY SEEM BAD UNTIL GOOD MATURES

9 (4) The Story of Anāthapiṇḍika (Verses 119 & 120) (cont'd)

"

Go, assume the dress of the treasurer's steward; note on a leaf from the hand of the treasurer a list of the wealth he once possessed; put forth your supernatural power and recover the eighteen billion of wealth borrowed by those who live by trade, and fill therewith the treasurer's empty storeroom. Besides this wealth, there are eighteen billion of wealth which were swept into the great ocean. Yet again there are eighteen billion of wealth without an owner, to be found in such and such a place. Gather all this together and therewith fill his empty storeroom. Having thus atoned for your offence, ask him to grant you pardon." "Very well," said the goddess. And straightaway she did all, just as Sakka king of gods told her to. Having so done, she went and stood poised in the air, illuminating with supernatural radiance the treasurer's chamber of state.

"Who is that?" asked the treasurer. "It is I," replied the goddess, "the blind, stupid goddess that once dwelt over your fourth gate. Pardon me the words I once spoke to you in my blind stupidity. In obedience to the command of Sakka king of gods, I have recovered the fifty-four billion of wealth and filled your empty storeroom therewith; thus have I atoned for my offence; I have no place wherein to lodge myself, and therefore am I greatly wearied." Anāthapiṇḍika thought to himself, "This goddess says to me, 'I have made atonement for my offence,' and confesses her fault; I will conduct her to the Supremely Enlightened." Accordingly he conducted her to the Buddha, saying to her, "Tell the Buddha all you have done." The goddess fell upon her face before the feet of the Buddha and said, "Venerable, because of my folly I did not recognize your eminent merit and spoke evil words; pardon me for having spoken them." Thus did the goddess ask pardon of both the Buddha and of the great treasurer.

Then the Buddha admonished both the treasurer and the fairy with reference to the ripening of deeds both good and evil, saying, "Here in this present life, great treasurer, even an evildoer sees happiness, so long as his evil deed has not yet ripened. But so soon as his evil deed has ripened, then he sees only evil. Likewise a good man sees evil things, so long as his good deeds have not yet ripened; but so soon as his good deeds have ripened, then he sees only happiness."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 119)

yāva pāpaṁ na paccati pāpō api bhadraṁ passati
yadā ca pāpaṁ paccati atha pāpō pāpāni passati

yāva: as long as; *pāpaṁ:* evil action; *na paccati:* does not mature; *pāpō api:* the evil doer; *bhadraṁ passati:* views it as good; *yadā ca:* when; *pāpaṁ:* evil; *paccati:* begins to mature; *atha:* then; *pāpō:* the evil doer; *pāpāni:* the true nature of evil; *passati:* sees

The evil doer sees even evil as good. When evil begins to mature, the evil doer will understand evil to be evil.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 120)

yāva bhadraṁ na paccati bhadrō api pāpaṁ passati yadā ca bhadraṁ paccati atha bhadrō bhadrāni passati

yāva: as long as; *bhadraṁ:* good; *na paccati:* does not mature; *bhadrō api:* even the good; *pāpaṁ passati:* is seen as evil; *yadā:* when; *ca bhadraṁ:* what is good; *paccati:* begins to mature; *atha:* then; *bhadrō:* good; b*hadrāni passati:* is seen really as good

A person may do good things. But those good things may at first seem evil. But when the good matures, then the good will be seen to be actually good.

Commentary

Anāthapiṇḍika: These two stanzas were spoken by the Buddha in the course of an event in which Treasurer Anāthapiṇḍdika figured. Anāthapiṇḍika, a millionaire, was the chief lay disciple and supporter of the Buddha. His name Anāthapiṇḍika, means the 'feeder of the helpless'. His original name was Sudatta. Owing to his unparalleled generosity he was given the new name. His birthplace was Sāvatthi.

atha pāpō pāpāni passati: A wicked person may lead a prosperous life as the result of his past good deeds. He will experience happiness owing to the potentiality of his past good over the present evil, - a seeming injustice which often prevails in this world. When once, according to the inexorable law of kamma, his evil actions fructify, then he perceives the painful effects of his wickedness.

atha bhadrō bhadrāni passati: A virtuous person, as often happens, may meet with adversity owing to the potentiality of his past evil actions over his present good acts. He is convinced of the efficacy of his present good deeds only when, at the opportune moment, they fructify, giving him abundant bliss. The fact that at times the wicked are prosperous and the virtuous are unfortunate is itself strong evidence in support of the belief in kamma and rebirth.

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Ignore not the effects of evil. Even bit by bit they gather like water drops in a pot.

121. *Mā'vamaññētha pāpassa*
Na maṁ taṁ āgamissati
udabindu nipātēna
udakumbhō'pi pūrati
pūrati bālō pāpassa
thōkathōkam'pi ācinaṁ. (9:6)

Think lightly not of evil,
'It will not come to me',
for by the falling of water drops
a water jar is filled.
The fool with evil fills himself,
he soaks up little by little.

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TAKE NOT EVIL LIGHTLY

9 (5) The Story of a Careless Monk (Verse 121)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who was careless in the use of furniture belonging to the monastery.

This monk, after using any piece of furniture (such as a couch, bench or stool) belonging to the monastery, would leave it outside in the compound, thus exposing it to rain, sun and white ants. When other monks chided him for his irresponsible behaviour, he would retort, "I do not have the intention to destroy those things; after all, very little damage has been done," and so on and so forth and he continued to behave in the same way. When the Buddha came to know about this, he sent for the monk and said to him, "Monk, you should not behave in this way; you should not think lightly of an evil act, however small it may be; because, it will grow big if you do it habitually."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 121)

taṁ maṁ na āgamissati pāpassa mā appamaññētha udabindu nipātēna api udakumbhō pūrati thōkathōkaṁ api ācinaṁ bālō pāpassa pūrati

taṁ: that minor evil: *maṁ:* towards me; *na āgamissati:* will not bring evil results; *pāpassa:* about evil action; *mā appamaññētha:* do not underestimate; *udabindu nipātēna api:* only drop by drop; *udakumbhō:* the water pot; *pūrati:* gets filled; *thōkathōkaṁ api:* even little by little; *ācinaṁ:* accumulating; *bālō:* the ignorant; *pāpassa:* by evil; *pūrati:* gets filled

Some tend to believe that evil can be taken lightly. Their attitude to wrong-doing is that they can get away with anything whatsoever. They say in effect: "I will behave in the way I want. Evil results will never come my way." But evil accumulates little by little — very much like a water-pot being filled drop by drop. Little by little the evil accumulates, until he is filled with it.

Commentary

Requisites of a Monk: This stanza was pronounced by the Buddha, about a monk who misuses the requisites of monastic life. The requisites of a monk are traditionally very simple. So far as a monk is concerned there are four requisites *(catu paccaya)* for progress on the path to purity and freedom. They are robes, food, a lodging and medicine. These are the bare necessities without which no human being can live. Basically they are also the fundamental needs of a layman. It was the Buddha's custom to ask the monks on meeting them: "How is it with you; how are you faring? I trust you are well, and that you are not short of food." There is the touching tale of a herdsman who, in looking for a lost ox, missed his midday meal. On his way back, fatigued and hungry, he went to the Buddha to listen to him preaching. The Blessed One, however, knowing that the man had not eaten all day, inquired from the people if he could first be fed. The Buddha knew that it was profitless to preach to this man without first satisfying his hunger.

Although the Buddha did not focus mainly on material progress, he did not entirely ignore it. The Buddha was very outspoken with regard to certain aspects of material conditions and social welfare.

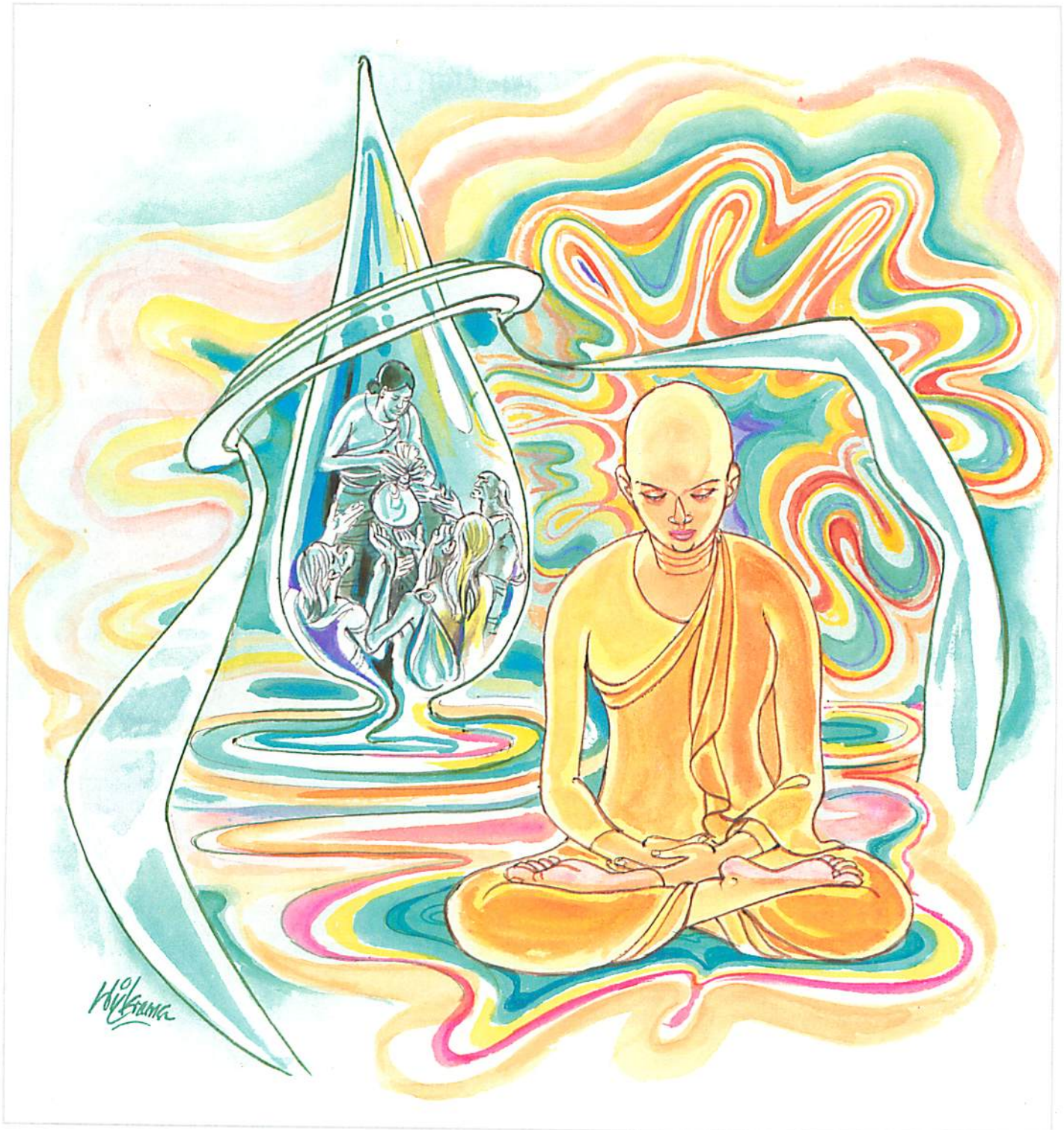
It is an admitted fact that poverty is a contributory cause of crime. If people are deprived of the four requisites mentioned above, the bare necessities, or if these are scarce, especially food, people's minds are not at rest. They cannot and do not think of moral behaviour, or give a thought to righteous living. Necessity has no law, and they stoop to unjust and unrighteous ways of gaining a subsistence. Owing to lack of economic security, and of money, people are led to commit theft and other crimes. The *Kūtadantasutta* states how in order to raise the social and economic conditions of a country, the farmers and traders should be given the necessary facilities to carry on their farming and business, and that people should be paid adequate wages. Thus when they have enough for their subsistence and are economically secure, crime is lessened and peace and harmony prevail.

In another discourse, the Buddha explains to Anāthapiṇḍika (the banker who donated to the Sangha the Jētavana Monastery), the four kinds of happiness a layman ought to enjoy. The first is the satisfaction of ownership *(atthi-sukha)*, or economic security, so that he has sufficient means acquired lawfully by his own efforts; the second is the joy of consumption *(bōgha-sukha)* or happiness gained by the judicious use of lawful wealth; the third is the happiness of freedom from debt *(anana-sukha)*, the joy and satisfaction that comes with the thought, "I owe nothing to anyone"; the fourth is the bliss of innocence *(anavajja-sukha)*, which is the satisfaction derived from the thought, "I am blessed with blameless acts of body, speech and mind."

All these discussions and sermons in Buddhism go to show that the layman, as a member of society, should work hard to earn a living and strengthen his economic and social security, lest he becomes a burden to himself and others, but at the same time he should avoid wrong and unrighteous ways of living and not deviate from the path of self sacrifice, charity, self control, moderation, patience, detachment, meditation, etc.

The Buddha's instructions and advice on right livelihood are addressed both to the layman and to the members of the Sangha. He has clearly explained to his disciples that the monk's life should be absolutely pure and free from fraud. The Master is indeed very emphatic on this matter, for he says: "Monks, whatsoever monks are cheats, stubborn, babblers, cunning, passionate, proud, uncalmed - such monks are no followers of mine. They have fallen away from this *Dhamma-vinaya* (Doctrine and Discipline), nor do they grow, increase and prosper in this *Dhamma-vinaya*. Further says the Master: "Monks, this holy life *(brahmacariyaṁ)* is lived neither to cheat people nor for scheming, nor for profit and favour, nor for the sake of honour. It is not for gossiping, nor with the intention: 'let people know me as so-and-so.' But, monks, this holy life is lived for the sake of restraint, for abandoning, for dispassion, for cessation."

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Underrate not goodness. Even little acts of goodness total up like a pot filling drop by drop.

122. *Māvamaññētha puññassa*
na maṁ taṁ āgamissati
udabindu nipātēna
udakumbhō' pi pūrati
pūrati dhīrō puññassa
thōkathōkam pi ācinaṁ. (9:7)

Think lightly not of goodness,
'It will not come to me',
for by the falling of water drops
a water jar is filled.
The sage with goodness fills himself,
he soaks up little by little.

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MERIT GROWS LITTLE BY LITTLE

9 (7) The Story of Bilālapādaka (Verse 122)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Bilālapādaka, a rich man.

Once, a man from Sāvatthi, having heard a discourse given by the Buddha, was very much impressed, and decided to practice what was taught by the Buddha. The exhortation was to give in charity not only by oneself but also to get others to do so and that by so doing one would gain much merit and have a large number of followers in the next existence. So, that man invited the Buddha and all the resident monks in the Jētavana Monastery for alms-food the next day. Then he went round to each one of the houses and informed the residents that alms-food would be offered the next day to the Buddha and other monks and so to contribute according to their wishes. The rich man Bilālapādaka seeing the man going round from house to house disapproved of his behaviour and felt a strong dislike for him and murmured to himself "O this wretched man! Why did he not invite as many monks as he could himself offer alms, instead of going round coaxing people!" So he asked the man to bring his bowl and into this bowl, he put only a little rice, only a little butter, only a little molass. These were taken away separately and not mixed with what others had given. The rich man could not understand why his things were kept separately, and he thought perhaps that man wanted others to know that a rich man like him had contributed very little and so put him to shame. Therefore, he sent a servant to find out.

The promoter of charity put a little of everything that was given by the rich man into various pots of rice and curry and sweetmeats so that the rich man may gain much merit. His servant reported what he had seen; but Bilālapādaka did not get the meaning and was not sure of the intention of the promoter of charity. However, the next day he went to the place where alms-food was being offered. At the same time, he took a knife with him, intending to kill the chief promoter of charity, if he were to reveal in public just how little a rich man like him had contributed.

But this promoter of charity said to the Buddha, "Venerable, this charity is a joint offering of all; whether one has given much or little is of no account; each one of us has given in faith and generosity; so may all of us gain equal merit." When he heard those words, Bilālapādaka realized that he had wronged the man and pondered that if he were not to own up his mistake and ask the promoter of charity to pardon him, he would be reborn in one of the four lower worlds *(apāyas)*. So he said, "My friend, I have done you a great wrong by thinking ill of you; please forgive me." The Buddha heard the rich man asking for pardon, and on enquiry found out the reason. So, the Buddha said, "My disciple, you should not think lightly of a good deed, however small it may be, for small deeds will become big if you do them habitually.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 122)

taṁ maṁ na āgamissati puññassa mā avamaññētha udabindu nipātēna api udakumbhō pūrati thōkathōkaṁ api ācinaṁ dhīrō puññassa pūrati

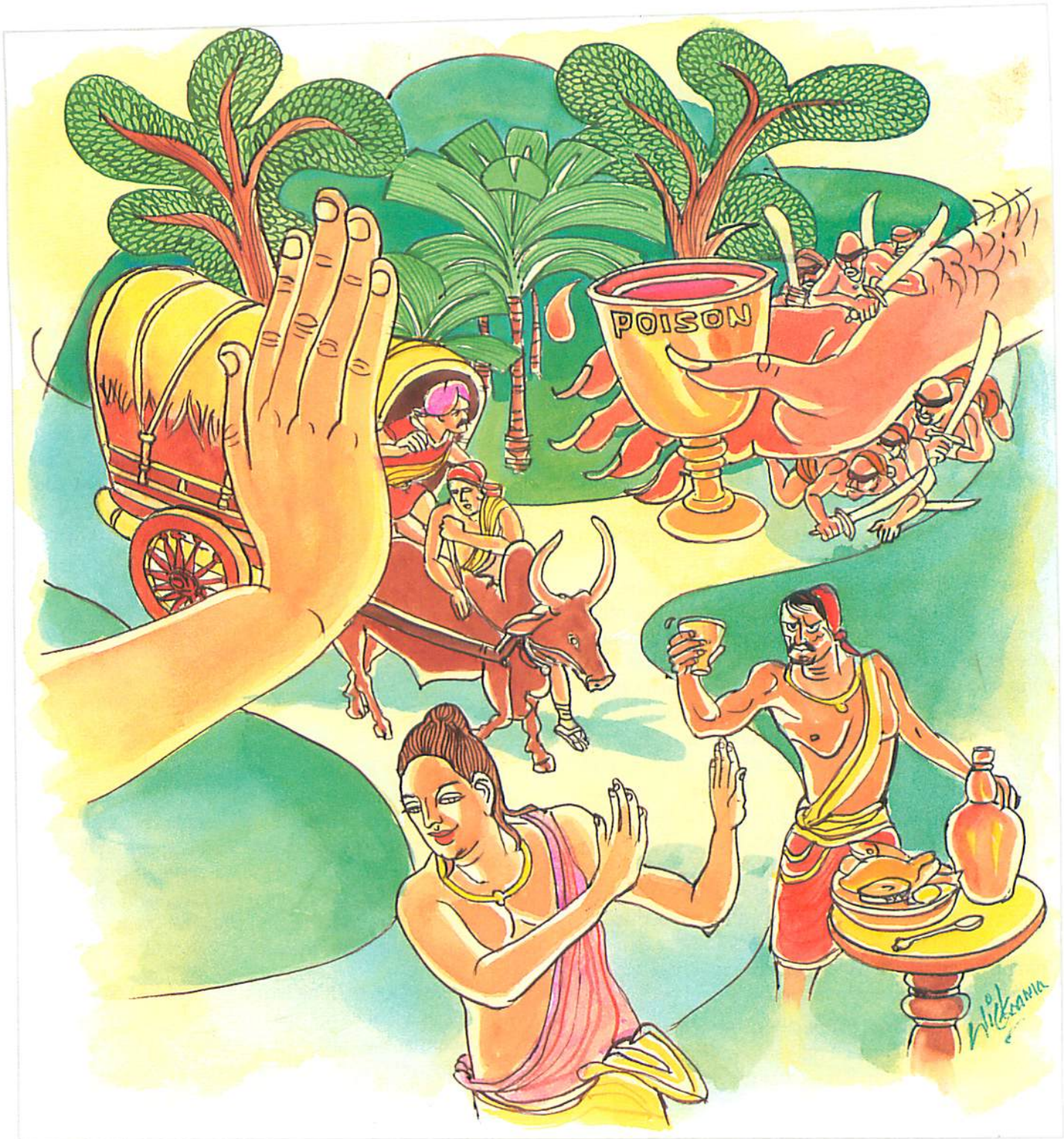
taṁ: that act of merit; *maṁ:* towards me; *na āgamissati:* will not come bringing good results; *puññassa:* act of merit; *mā avamaññētha:* do not underestimate; *udabindu nipātena api:* only drop by drop; *udakumbhō:* the water pot; *pūrati:* gets filled; *thōkathōkaṁ api:* even little by little; *ācinaṁ:* collected; *dhīrō:* the great man; *puññassa:* with merit; *pūrati:* gets filled.

Some tend to think that virtue can be taken lightly, and that virtue practiced is not likely to bring about any spectacular good results. This view is not quite correct. The good done by an individual accumulates little by little. The process is very much like the filling of a water-pot, drop by drop. As time goes on, the little acts of virtue accumulate, until the doer of good is totally filled with it.

Commentary

mâppamaññētha; mâ avamaññētha: do not under estimate. The intention of this Stanza is to stress that wholesome action, however trifling it may seem, is not to be under-estimated. Since the action yields results in terms of happiness, even a modicum of good can be helpful.

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Shun evil ways like a wealthy merchant with little escort shunning a bandit-infested road.

123. *Vāṇijō'va bhayaṁ maggaṁ*
appasatthō mahaddhanō
visaṁ jivitukāmō'va
pāpāni parivajjayē. (9:8)

As merchant on a perilous path,
great wealth having but little guard,
as life-loving man with poison
so with evils heedful be.

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SHUN EVIL AS POISON

9 (7) The Story of Mahādhana (Verse 123)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Mahādhana the merchant.

Mahādhana was a rich merchant from Sāvatthi. On one occasion, five hundred robbers were planning to rob him, but they did not get the chance to rob him. In the meantime, they heard that the merchant would soon be going out with five hundred carts loaded with valuable merchandise. The merchant Mahādhana also invited the monks who would like to go on the same journey to accompany him, and he promised to look to their needs on the way. So, five hundred monks accompanied him. The robbers got news of the trip and went ahead to lie in wait for the caravan of the merchant. But the merchant stopped at the outskirts of the forest where the robbers were waiting. The caravan was to move on after camping there for a few days. The robbers got the news of the impending departure and made ready to loot the caravan; the merchant, in his turn, also got news of the movements of the bandits and he decided to return home. The bandits now heard that the merchant would go home; so they waited on the homeward way. Some villagers sent word to the merchant about the movements of the bandits, and the merchant finally decided to remain in the village for some time. When he told the monks about his decision, the monks returned to Sāvatthi by themselves.

On arrival at the Jētavana Monastery, they went to the Buddha and informed him about the cancellation of their trip. To them, the Buddha said, "Monks, Mahādhana keeps away from the journey beset with bandits; one who does not want to die keeps away from poison; so also, a wise monk, realizing that the three levels of existence are like a journey beset with danger, should strive to keep away from doing evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 123)

mahaddhanō appasatthō vāṇijō bhayaṁ maggaṁ iva jivitukāmō visaṁ iva pāpāni parivajjayē

mahaddhanō: an extremely affluent; *appasatthō:* accompanied by a small retinue of caravans; *vāṇijō:* like a merchant; *bhayaṁ maggaṁ iva:* (avoiding) the risky path; *jīvitukāmō:* being fond of life; *visaṁ iva:* just like poison; *pāpāni:* evil acts; *parivajjayē:* shun totally

A rich and wise trader carrying goods will scrupulously avoid a risky road (a road known to be frequented by bandits), especially if he does not have an adequate retinue of caravans to ensure safety. Again, an individual fond of his life will very carefully avoid poison. In the same way, one must totally shun evil.

Commentary

appasatthō: minor caravan of traders. The expression *'sattha'* denotes a band of merchants. They travel from one place to the other trading their merchandise. At times they travel in formidable caravans. In ancient times such caravans were made up of carts and wagons drawn by oxen. Since they had to traverse a variety of terrain at times they were attacked by bandits. To counter such attacks, the merchants travelled in large groups, capable of dispelling an attack by bandits. In traditional commentary sattha (the merchants) are described as being of two categories: (1) *janghasattha:* hawkers and vendors who travelled mostly singly carrying their merchandise themselves; (2) *sakata sattha:* those who travelled about filling carts with their merchandise. In the days of the Buddha, these caravans of carts were an outstanding feature in the economy. In this stanza, a habit of these extremely wealthy merchants is stressed. If they were very rich but if the caravan is small *(appasatthō)* they would avoid 'fearful paths' *(bhayaṁ maggaṁ)*. Fearful paths were those known to be inhabited by bandits.

pāpāni: evil of body, speech and thought. These are rooted in lust *(lōbha)*, hate *(dōsa)* and mental confusion *(mōha)*. These are emotional acts that bring unhappiness to both oneself as well as others. Evil is as dangerous and distinctive as bandits and poison.

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With no evil deeds no evil effects indeed. A woundless hand safely carries any poison.

124. *Pāṇimhi cē vanō nā'ssa*
hareyya pāṇinā visaṁ
nābbaṇam visamanvēti
natthi pāpaṁ akubbatō. (9:9)

If in the hand's no wound
poison one may bear.
A woundless one is poisoned not,
non-doers have no evil.

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EVIL RESULTS FROM BAD INTENTION

9 (9) The Story of Kukkuṭamitta (Verse 124)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the hunter Kukkuṭamitta and his family.

At Rājagaha there was once a rich man's daughter who had attained sōtāpatti fruition as a young girl. One day, Kukkuṭamitta, a hunter, came into town in a cart to sell venison. Seeing Kukkuṭamitta the hunter, the rich young lady fell in love with him immediately; she followed him, married him and lived with him in a small village. As a result of that marriage, seven sons were born to them and in course of time, all the sons got married. One day, the Buddha surveyed the world early in the morning with his supernormal power and found that the hunter, his seven sons and their wives were due for attainment of sōtāpatti fruition. So, the Buddha went to the place where the hunter had set his trap in the forest. He put his footprint close to the trap and seated himself under the shade of a bush, not far from the trap.

When the hunter came, he saw no animal in the trap; he saw the footprint and surmised that someone must have come before him and let out the animal. So, when he saw the Buddha under the shade of the bush, he took him for the man who had freed the animal from his trap and flew into a rage. He took out his bow and arrow to shoot at the Buddha, but as he drew his bow, he became immobilized and remained fixed in that position like a statue. His sons followed and found their father; they also saw the Buddha at some distance and thought he must be the enemy of their father. All of them took out their bows and arrows to shoot at the Buddha, but they also became immobilized and remained fixed in their respective postures. When the hunter and his sons failed to return, the hunter's wife followed them into the fores, with her seven daughters-in-law. Seeing her husband all her sons with their arrows aimed at the Buddha, she raised both her hands and shouted, "Do not kill my father."

When her husband heard her words, he thought, "This must be my father-in-law", and her sons thought, "This must be our grandfather" and thoughts of loving-kindness came into them. Then the lady said to them, "Put away your bows and arrows and pay obeisance to my father." The Buddha realized that, by this time, the minds of the hunter and his sons had softened and so he willed that they should be able to move and to put away their bows and arrows. After putting away their bows and arrows, they paid obeisance to the Buddha and the Buddha expounded the Dhamma to them. In the end, the hunter, his seven sons and seven daughters-in-law, all fifteen of them, attained sōtāpatti fruition. Then the Buddha returned to the monastery and told Venerable Ānanda and other monks about the hunter Kukkuṭamitta and his family attaining sōtāpatti fruition in the early part of the morning. The monks then asked the Buddha, "Venerable, is the wife of the hunter, who is a sōtāpanna, also not guilty of taking life, if she has been getting things like nets, bows and arrows for her husband when he goes out hunting?" To this question the Buddha answered, "Monks, the sōtāpannas do not kill, they do not wish others to get killed. The wife of the hunter was only obeying her husband in getting things for him. Just as the hand that has no wound is not affected by poison, so also, because she has no intention to do evil she is not doing any evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 124)

cē pānimhi vanō na assa pāṇinā visaṁ hareyya
visaṁ abbanaṁ na anvēti akubbatō pāpaṁ natthi

cē: if; *pānimhi:* in one's palm; *vanō:* wound; *nā assa:* is not present; *pāṇinā:* in the palm; *visaṁ:* poison; *hareyya:* can be taken; *visaṁ:* the poison; *abbanaṁ:* one without the wound in the palm; *na anvēti:* will not enter; *akubbatō:* in the same way to the person does not commit evil; *pāpaṁ natthi:* no evil occurs

If a person has no wound in his palm, that person can carry poison in his hand. This is because the poison will not get absorbed into that person's system. In the same way, to a person who has not committed an evil action, there is no fear of evil consequences.

Commentary

visam: the poison. If a man without a wound in his palm touches poison, it will not affect his system. Similarly, evil will not affect one who does not do evil things.

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Whatever evil act is done against a virtuous person its evil will boomerang on the doer.

125. *Yō appaduṭṭhassa narassa dussati*
suddhassa pōsassa anaṅgaṇassa
tam'ēva bālaṁ paccēti pāpaṁ
sukhumō rajō paṭivātaṁ'va khittō. (9:10)

Who offends the inoffensive,
the innocent and blameless one,
upon that fool does evil fall
as fine dust flung against the wind.

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WRONG DONE TO OTHERS RETURNS TO DOER

9 (9) The Story of Kōka the Huntsman (Verse 125)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Kōka the huntsman.

One morning, as Kōka was going out to hunt with his pack of hounds, he met a monk entering the city for alms-food. He took that as a bad omen and grumbled to himself, "Since I have seen this wretched one, I don't think I would get anything today," and he went on his way. As expected by him, he did not get anything. On his way home also, he saw the same monk returning to the monastery, and the hunter became very angry. So he set his hounds on the monk. Swiftly, the monk climbed up a tree to a level just out of reach of the hounds. Then the hunter went to the foot of the tree and pricked the heels of the monk with the tip of his arrow. The monk was in great pain and was not able to hold his robes on; so the robes slipped off his body on to the hunter who was at the foot of the tree.

The dogs seeing the yellow robe thought that the monk had fallen off the tree and pounced on the body, biting and pulling at it furiously. The monk, from his shelter in the tree, broke a dry branch and threw it at the dogs. Then the dogs discovered that they had been attacking their own master instead of the monk, and ran away into the forest. The monk came down from the tree and found that the hunter had died and felt sorry for him. He also wondered whether he could be held responsible for the death, since the hunter had died for having been covered up by his yellow robes.

So, he went to the Buddha to clear up his doubts. The Buddha said, "My son, rest assured and have no doubt; you are not responsible for the death of the hunter; your morality *(sīla)* is also not soiled on account of that death. Indeed, that huntsman did a great wrong to one whom he should do no wrong, and so had come to this grievous end."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 125)

yō appaduṭṭhassa suddhassa anaṅgaṇassa
narassa pōsassa dussati (taṁ) pāpaṁ paṭivātaṁ
khittō sukhumō rajō iva taṁ bālaṁ ēva paccēti

yō: if someone; *appaduṭṭhassa:* is unblemished; *suddhassa:* is pure; *anaṅgaṇassa:* is free of defilements; *narassa pōsassa:* to such a human being; *dussati:* a person were to become harsh; *pāpaṁ:* that evil act; *paṭivātaṁ:* against the wind; *khitto:* thrown; *sukhumō rajō iva:* like some fine dust; *taṁ bālaṁ ēva:* to that ignorant person himself; *paccēti:* returns

If an ignorant person were to become harsh and crude towards a person who is without blemishes, pure, and is untouched by corruption, that sinful act will return to the evil-doer. It is very much like the fine dust thrown against the wind. The dust will return to the thrower.

Commentary

anaṅganassa: to one bereft of defilements — *aṅganas. Aṅganas* are defilements that are born out of *rāga* (passion), *dōsa* (ill-will), and *mōha* (ignorance). These are described as *aṅganas* (literally , open spaces; play-grounds) because evil can play about in these without inhibition. At times, 'stains', too, are referred to as *aṅgana.* Etymologically, *aṅgana* also means the capacity to deprave a person defiled by blemishes. In some contexts, *aṅgana* implies dirt. An individual who is bereft of defilements is referred to as *anaṅgana.*

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Evil-doers get reborn in hell, and to heavens the virtuous go. The undefiled in Nibbāna end.

126. *Gabbhaṁ ēkē uppajjanti*
niṙayaṁ pāpakamminō
saggaṁ sugatinō yanti
parinibbanti anāsavā. (9:11)

Some find birth within a womb,
evil-doers quicken in hell,
good-farers to the heavens go,
the Unpolluted wholly cool.

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THOSE WHO PASS AWAY

9 (10) The Story of Venerable Tissa (Verse 126)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Tissa. Once, there was a gem polisher and his wife in Sāvatthi; there was also a Venerable (senior monk), who was an arahat. Every day, the couple offered alms-food to the Venerable. One day, while the gem polisher was handling meat, a messenger of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala arrived with a ruby, which was to be cut and polished and sent back to the king. The gem polisher took the ruby with his hand which was covered with blood, put it on a table and went into the house to wash his hands. The pet crane of the family, seeing the blood stained ruby and mistaking it for a piece of meat, picked it up and swallowed it in the presence of the Venerable. When the gem polisher returned, he found that the ruby was missing. He asked his wife and his son and they answered that they had not taken it. Then, he asked the Venerable who said that he did not take it. The gem polisher was not satisfied. As there was no one else in the house, the gem polisher concluded that it must be the Venerable who had taken the precious ruby: so he told his wife that he must torture the Venerable to get admission of theft.

But his wife replied, "This Venerable had been our guide and teacher for the last twelve years, and we have never seen him doing anything evil; please do not accuse the Venerable. It would be better to take the king's punishment than to accuse a noble one." But her husband paid no heed to her words; he took a rope and tied up the Venerable and beat him many times with a stick. As a result of this, the Venerable bled profusely from the head, ears and nose, and dropped on the floor. The crane, seeing blood and wishing to take it, came close to the Venerable. The gem polisher, who was by then in a great rage, kicked the crane with all his might and the bird died instantaneously. Then, the Venerable said, "Please see whether the crane is dead or not," and the gem polisher replied, "You too shall die like this crane." When the Venerable was sure the crane had died, he said, softly, "My disciple, the crane swallowed the ruby."

Hearing this, the gem polisher cut up the crane and found the ruby in the stomach. Then, the gem polisher realized his mistake and trembled with fear. He pleaded with the Venerable to pardon him and also to continue to come to his door for alms. The Venerable replied, "My disciple, it is not your fault, nor is it mine. This has happened on account of what has been done in our previous existences; it is just our debt in saṁsāra; I feel no ill will towards you. As a matter of fact, this has happened because I have entered a house. From today, I would not enter any house; I would only stand at the door." Soon after saying this, the Venerable expired as a result of his injuries.

Later, the monks asked the Buddha where the various characters in the above episode were reborn, and the Buddha answered, "The crane was reborn as the son of the gem polisher; the gem polisher was reborn in Niraya (Hell); the wife of the gem polisher was reborn in one of the dēva worlds; and the Venerable, who was already an arahat when he was living, attained Parinibbāna."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 126)

ēkē gabbhaṁ uppajjanti pāpakammināō nirayaṁ sugatinō saggaṁ yanti anāsavā parinibbanti

ēkē: some; *gabbhaṁ:* in a womb; *uppajjanti:* get conceived; *pāpakammināō:* evil doers; *nirayaṁ:* in hell (are born) *sugatinō:* those who have good ways; *saggaṁ:* heaven; *yanti:* reach; *anāsavā:* those who are free of taints and corruptions; *parinibbanti:* achieve total Nibbāna

Some, after their death, receive conception in wombs. Those who have committed sins in their lifetime are born in hell. Those whose ways have been virtuous when they were alive go to heaven when they die. These blemishless ones who are totally free of taints and corruptions, achieve total Nibbāna, on giving up their mortal lives.

Commentary

sagga: heaven. In the traditional commentaries, *sagga* is defined as follows: *rūpādihi pañca kāma gunēhi sutthu aggōti - saggō*. This means: the place where the five-fold sensualities are at the highest possible level. Those who live in heaven are called *dēvas* (angels or gods).

gabbhaṁ ēkē uppajjanti: According to Buddhism there are four kinds of birth - namely, egg-born *(aṇḍaja)*, womb-born *(jalābuja)*, moisture-born *(saṁsēdaja)*, and spontaneous birth *(ōpapātika)*.

nirayaṁ pāpakaṁmināō: : Niraya = ni + aya = devoid of happiness. There are four kinds of *niraya* - namely, woeful state *(apāya)*, the animal kingdom *(tiracchānayōni)*, the plane of Petas *(pētayōni)*, and the plane of Asura-demons *(asurayōni)*. None of these states is eternal. According to their evil kamma beings may be born in such woeful states. Departing from those states, they may be born in blissful states according to their past good kamma.

parinibbaṇti anāsavā: Arahants, after death, are not born any more, but attain Parinibbāna.

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An evil doer has no escape from his bad actions wherever he tries to hide.

127. *Na antalikkhē na samuddamajjhē*
na pabbatānaṁ vivaraṁ pavissa
na vijjati sō jagatippadēsō
yatthaṭṭhitō muñceyya pāpakammā. (9:12)

Neither in sky nor surrounded by sea,
nor by dwelling in a mountain cave,
nowhere is found that place on earth
where one's from evil kamma free.

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SHELTER AGAINST DEATH

9 (11) The Story of Three Groups of Persons (Verse 127)

A group of monks were on their way to pay homage to the Buddha and they stopped at a village on the way. Some people were cooking alms-food for those monks, when one of the houses caught fire and a ring of fire flew up into the air. At that moment, a crow came flying, got caught in the ring of fire and dropped dead in the central part of the village. The monks seeing the dead crow observed that only the Buddha would be able to explain, for what evil deed this crow had to die in this manner. After taking alms-food, they went to the Buddha, to ask about the crow. Another group of monks were on their way to pay homage to the Buddha. When they were in the middle of the ocean, the boat could not be moved. So, lots were drawn to find out who the unlucky one was. Three times the lot fell on the wife of the skipper. Then the skipper said sorrowfully, "Many people should not die on account of this unlucky woman; tie a pot of sand to her neck and throw her into the water." The woman was thrown into the sea and the ship started to move. On arrival at their destination, the monks disembarked and continued on their way to the Buddha. They also intended to ask the Buddha due to what evil kamma the unfortunate woman was thrown overboard.

A group of seven monks was also went to pay homage to the Buddha. On the way, they enquired at a monastery and they were directed to a cave, and there they spent the night; but in the middle of the night, a large boulder slipped off from above and closed the entrance. In the morning, the monks from the nearby monastery coming to the cave, saw that and they went to bring people from seven villages. With the help of these people they tried to move the boulder, but the seven monks were trapped in the cave without food or water for seven days. On the seventh day, the boulder moved miraculously by itself, and the monks came out and continued their way to the Buddha. They also intended to ask the Buddha due to what previous evil deed they were thus shut up for seven days in a cave.

The three groups of travelling monks went to the Buddha. Each group related to the Buddha what they had seen on their way and the Buddha answered their questions. The Buddha's answer to the first group: "Monks, once there was a farmer who had a very lazy and stubborn ox. The farmer, in anger, tied a straw rope round the neck of the ox and set fire to it, and the ox died. On account of this evil deed, the farmer had suffered for a long time in Hell (Niraya) He had been burnt to death in the last seven existences." The past actions brought on the present suffering. The Buddha's answer to the second group: "Monks, once there was a woman who had a dog. Whatever she did and wherever she went the dog always followed her. As a result, some young boys would poke fun at her. She was very angry and felt so ashamed that she planned to kill the dog. She filled a pot with sand, tied it round the neck of the dog and threw it into the water; and the dog was drowned. On account of this evil deed, that woman had suffered for a long time and, in serving the remain part of the effect, she had been thrown into the water to be drowned." The Buddha's answer to the third group: "Monks, once, seven cowherds saw an iguana going into a mound and, for fun, they closed all the outlets of the mound. After completely forgetting the iguana that was trapped in the mound. Only after seven days did they remember what they had done and hurried to the scene of their mischief to let the iguana out. On account of this evil deed, you seven have been imprisoned together for seven days without any food."

The Buddha replied, "Even in the sky or anywhere else, there is no place which is beyond the reach of the consequences of evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 127)

yatthaṭṭhitō pāpakammā muñceyya sō jagatippadesō na vijjati antalikkhē na samuddamajjhē na pabbatānaṁ vivaraṁ pavissa na

yattha: somewhere; *ṭhitō:* taking shelter; *pāpakammā:* from the results of evil actions; *muñceyya:* (one could) escape; sō: that kind of; *jagatippadēsō:* spot on earth; *na vijjati:* is not seen; *antalikkhē:* out in space; *na:* there is no such place; *samuddamajjhē na:* nor (is there such a place) in the middle of the ocean; *pabbatānaṁ:* of mountains; *vivaraṁ:* cleft, crevice or opening; *pavissa:* having entered: *na:* (one cannot escape)

There is no single spot on Earth an evil-doer can take shelter in to escape the results of his evil actions. No such place is seen out there in space, or in the middle of the ocean. Neither in an opening, a cleft or a crevice in a rocky mountain can he take shelter to escape the results of his evil action.

Commentary

na vijjati sō jagatippadēsō: there is no place. The implication here is that there is no place either on land , in the sea or in the sky where an evil-doer can escape the consequences of his misdeeds. The stanza mentions some of the places which might be considered safe: *antalikkhē* (space; sky); *samuddamajjhē* (in the middle of the sea); *pabbatānam vivaraṁ* (crevices of a rock).

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Wherever a person may hide in the sky, or sea or mountain, there is no escape from Death.

128. *Na antalikkhē na samuddamajjhē*
na pabbatānaṁ vivaraṁ pavissa
na vijjati sō jagatippadēsō
yatthaṭṭhitam nappasahētha maccu. (9:13)

Neither in sky nor surrounded by sea,
nor by dwelling in a mountain cave,
nowhere is found that place on earth
where one's by death not overcome.

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NO ESCAPE FROM DEATH

9 (12) The Story of King Suppabuddha (Verse 128)

While residing at the Nigrōdhārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to King Suppabuddha.

King Suppabuddha was the father of Dēvadatta and father-in-law of Prince Siddhattha who later became Gōtama Buddha. King Suppabuddha was very antagonistic to the Buddha for two reasons. First, because as Prince Siddhattha he had left his wife Yasōdharā, the daughter of King Suppabuddha, to renounce the world; and secondly, because his son Dēvadatta, who was admitted into the Order by Gōtama Buddha, had come to regard the Buddha as his arch enemy. One day, knowing that the Buddha would be coming for alms-food, he got himself drunk and blocked the way. When the Buddha and the monks came, Suppabuddha refused to make way, and sent a message saying, "I cannot give way to Samana Gōtama, who is so much younger than me." Finding the road blocked, the Buddha and the monks turned back. Suppabuddha then sent someone to follow the Buddha secretly and find out what the Buddha said, and to report to him.

As the Buddha turned back, he said to Ānanda, "Ānanda, because King Suppabuddha had refused to give way to me, on the seventh day from now he would be swallowed up by the earth, at the foot of the steps leading to the pinacled hall of his palace." The king's spy heard these words and reported to the king. And the king said that he would not go near those steps and would prove the words of the Buddha to be wrong. Further, he instructed his men to remove those steps, so that he would not be able to use them; he also kept some men on duty, with instructions to hold him back should he go in the direction of the stairs.

When the Buddha was told about the king's instructions to his men, he said, "Monks! Whether King Suppabuddha lives in a pinacled tower, or up in the sky, or in an ocean or in a cave, my word cannot go wrong; King Suppabuddha will be swallowed up by the earth at the very place I have told you."

On the seventh day, about the time of the alms meal the royal horse got frightened for some unknown reason and started neighing loudly and kicking about furiously. Hearing frightening noises from his horse, the king felt that he must handle his pet horse and forgetting all precautions, he started towards the door. The door opened of its own accord, the steps which had been pulled down earlier were also there, his men forgot to stop him from going down. So the king went down the stairs and as soon as he stepped on the earth, it opened and swallowed him up and dragged him right down to Avīci Hell. Thus, no matter how hard he tried, the foolish king was unable to escape the effects of his evil kamma.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 128)

yatthaṭṭhitaṁ maccu nappasahētha sō jagatippadēsō na vijjati antalikkhē na samuddamajjhē na pabbatānaṁ vivaraṁ pavissa na

yattha: somewhere; *ṭhitaṁ:* taking shelter; *maccu:* by Death; *nappasahētha:* will not be overwhelmed; *so:* that kind of; *jagatippadēsō:* spot on earth; *na vijjati:* is not seen; *antalikkhē:* out in space; *na:* there is no such place; *samuddamajjhē na:* nor in the middle of the ocean; *pabbatānaṁ:* of mountains; *vivaraṁ:* cleft, crevice or opening; *pavissa:* having entered; *na:* one cannot escape

Not in the sky, nor in the ocean midst, not even in a cave of a mountain rock, is there a hiding place where one could escape death.

Commentary

nappasahētha maccu: place where death cannot overcome a person. The implication of the stanza is that there is no place whatsoever on Earth where death cannot overcome a person. In positive terms, there is no escape from death, wherever one went.

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Man can stand on his own feet

Buddhism makes man stand on his own feet and rouses self-confidence and energy.

Ven. Narada Thera, "Buddhism in a nutshell"

Man can cease to be crushed

Man is greater than the blind forces of nature because even though he is crushed by them he remains superior by virtue of his understanding of them. Again, Buddhism carries the truth further: it shows that by means of understanding man can also control his circumstances. He can cease to be crushed by them, and use their laws to raise himself.

Pascal

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Chapter 10

DAṆḌA VAGGA

Punishment

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All dread death and physical harassment. Taking oneself as the example, kill not, hurt not.

129. *Sabbē tasanti daṇḍassa*
sabbē bhāyanti maccunō
attānaṁ upamaṁ katvā
na haneyya na ghātayē. (10:1)

All tremble at force,
of death are all afraid.
Likening others to oneself
kill not nor cause to kill.

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DAṆḌA VAGGA (PUNISHMENT)
OF OTHERS THINK OF AS YOUR OWN SELF

10 (1) The Story of a Group of Six Monks (Verse 129)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of six monks.

Once, a group of monks was cleaning up a building in the Jētavana Monastery with the intention of occupying it, when they were interrupted in their task by another group of monks who had arrived at the scene. The monks who had come later told the first group of monks who were cleaning the building, "We are elderly and more senior to you, so you had better accord us every respect and give way to us; we are going to occupy this place and nothing will stop us from doing so."

However, the first group of monks resisted the unwelcome intrusion by the senior monks and did not give in to their demands, whereupon they were beaten up by the senior monks till they could not bear the beatings and cried out in pain.

News of the commotion had reached the Buddha who, on learning about the quarrel between the two groups of monks, admonished them and introduced the disciplinary rule whereby monks should refrain from hurting one another.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 129)

sabbē daṇḍassa tasanti sabbē maccunō bhāyanti
attānaṁ upamaṁ katvā na haneyya na ghātayē

sabbē: all; *daṇḍassa:* at punishment; *tasanti:* are frightened; *sabbē:* all; *maccunō:* death; *bhāyanti:* fear; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *upamaṁ katvā:* taking as the example; *na haneyya:* do not kill; *na ghātayē:* do not get anyone else to kill

All tremble at violence, all fear death. Comparing oneself with others do not harm, do not kill.

Commentary

maccunō bhāyanti: fear death. Buddhism has analyzed the phenomenon of death quite extensively. The *Paticca-Samuppāda* describes the process of rebirth in subtle technical terms and assigns death to one of the following four causes:

1) Exhaustion of the reproductive kammic energy *(kammakkhaya)*. The Buddhist belief is that, as a rule, the thought, volition, or desire, which is extremely strong during lifetime, becomes predominant at the time of death and conditions the subsequent birth. In this last thought-process is present a special potentiality. When the potential energy of this reproductive *(janaka)*. Kamma is exhausted, the organic activities of the material form in which is embodied the life-force, cease even before the end of the life-span in that particular place. This often happens in the case of beings who are born in states of misery *(apāya)* but it can also happen in other planes.

2) The expiration of the life-term *(āyukkhaya)*, which varies in different planes. Natural deaths, due to old age, may be classed under this category. There are different planes of existence with varying age-limits. Irrespective of the kammic force that has yet to run, one must, however, succumb to death when the maximum age-limit is reached. If the reproductive kammic force is extremely powerful, the kammic energy rematerialises itself in the same plane or, as in the case of dēvas, in some higher realm.

3) The simultaneous exhaustion of the reproductive kammic energy and the expiration of the life-term *(ubhayakkhaya)*.

4) The opposing action of a stronger kamma unexpectedly obstructing the flow of the reproductive kamma before the life-term expires *(upacchēdaka-kamma)*. Sudden untimely deaths of persons and the deaths of children are due to this cause. A more powerful opposing force can check the path of a flying arrow and bring it down to the ground. So a very powerful kammic force of the past is capable of nullifying the potential energy of the last thought-process, and may thus destroy the psychic life of the being. The death of Venerable Dēvadatta, for instance, was due to a destructive kamma which he committed during his lifetime.

The first three are collectively called timely deaths *(kāla-marana)*, and the fourth is known as untimely death *(akālamarana)*. An oil lamp, for instance, may get extinguished owing to any of the following four causes — namely, the exhaustion of the wick, the exhaustion of oil, simultaneous exhaustion of both wick and oil, or some extraneous cause like a gust of wind. So may death be due to any of the foregoing four causes.

Very few people, indeed, are prepared to die. They want to live longer and longer, a delusion which contemporary research is making more possible to realize. The craving for more and more of this life is somewhat toned down, if one believes, as many do, that this is only one life of a series. Plenty more lives are available to those who crave for them and work begun in this one does not have to be feverishly rushed to a conclusion but may be taken up again in subsequent births. The actual pains of dying are, of course, various and not all people go through physical agonies. But there is distress of another sort; the frightful stresses which are set up in the mind of one whose body is dying — against his will. This is really the final proof that the body does not belong to me, for if it did, I could do whatever I wanted with it; but at the time of death, although I desire continued life, it just goes and dies — and there is nothing to be done about it. If I go towards death unprepared, then, at the time when the body is dying, fearful insecurity will be experienced, the result of having wrongly identified the body as myself.

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Life is dear to all. Taking oneself as the example, kill not, hurt not.

130. *Sabbē tasanti daṇḍassa*
sabbēsaṁ jīvitaṁ piyaṁ
attānaṁ upamaṁ katvā
na haneyya na ghātayē. (10:2)

All tremble at force,
dear is life to all.
Likening others to oneself
kill not nor cause to kill.

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TO ALL LIFE IS DEAR

10 (2) The Story of a Group of Six Monks (Verse 130)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of six monks. This is linked to the previous verse.

After having exchanged blows over the incident at the Jētavana Monastery, the same two groups of monks quarrelled again over the same building. As the rule relating to physically hurting others had already been laid down by the Buddha, this particular rule was strictly observed by both groups.

However, this time one of the two groups made threatening gestures to the other group, to the extent that the latter cried out in fright. The Buddha, after hearing about this threatening attitude of the monks, introduced the disciplinary rule preventing the making of threatening gestures to each other.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 130)

sabbē daṇḍassa tasanti sabbēsaṁ jīvitaṁ piyaṁ
attānaṁ upamaṁ katvā na haneyya na ghātayē

sabbē: all; *daṇḍassa:* at punishment; *tasanti:* are frightened; *sabbēsaṁ:* to all; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *piyaṁ:* dear; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *upamāṁ katvā:* taking as the example; *na haneyya:* do not kill; *na ghātayē:* do not get anyone else to kill

All are frightened of being hurt or of any threat to one's life. To all, life is dear. Seeing that others feel the same way as oneself, equating others to oneself, refrain from harming or killing.

Commentary

na haneyya, na ghātayē: do not destroy; do not kill. Here, the quality that is being inculcated is compassion. Disagreements and disputes arise due to lack of compassion. A universal compassion arises only when there is the perception of true reality. Compassion expresses itself through wholesome action. Compassion is not merely thinking compassionate thoughts. It has to show itself through compassionate action. Compassion is taking note of the sufferings of other beings in the world. It overcomes callous indifference to the plight of suffering beings, human or otherwise. Likewise, it must be reflected in one's life by a willingness to go out of one's way to give aid where possible and to help those in distress. It has the advantage of reducing one's selfishness by understanding others' sorrows. It is Lord Buddha's medicine for cruelty, for how can one harm others when one has seen how much they have to suffer already? It has also two enemies: the 'near' one is mere grief, while its 'far' enemy is cruelty.

Mettā: compassion — loving-kindness. *Mettā* is the first of the four sublime states. It means that which softens one's heart, or the state of a true friend. It is defined as the sincere wish for the welfare and genuine happiness of all living beings without exception. It is also explained as the friendly disposition, for a genuine friend sincerely wishes for the welfare of his friend.

"Just as a mother protects her only child even at the risk of her life, even so one should cultivate boundless loving-kindness towards all living beings" is the advice of the Buddha. It is not the passionate love of the mother towards her child that is stressed here but her sincere wish for the genuine welfare of her child. *Mettā* is neither carnal love nor personal affection, for grief inevitably arises from both. *Mettā* is not mere neighbourliness, for it makes no distinction between neighbours and others. *Mettā* is not mere universal brotherhood, for it embraces all living beings including animals, our lesser brethren and sisters that need greater compassion as they are helpless. *Mettā* is not religious brotherhood either. Owing to the sad limitations of so-called religious brotherhood human heads have been severed without the least compunction, sincere outspoken men and women have been roasted and burnt alive; many atrocities have been perpetrated which baffle description; cruel wars have been waged which mar the pages of world history. Even in this supposedly enlightened twentieth century the followers of one religion hate or ruthlessly persecute and even kill those of other faiths merely because they cannot force them to think as they do or because they have a different label. If, on account of religious views, people of different faiths cannot meet on a common platform like brothers and sisters, then surely the missions of compassionate world teachers have pitifully failed. Sweet *mettā* transcends all these kinds of narrow brotherhood. It is limitless in scope and range. Barriers it has none. Discrimination it makes not. *Mettā* enables one to regard the whole world as one's motherland and all as fellow-beings. Just as the sun sheds its rays on all without any distinction, even so sublime *mettā* bestows its sweet blessings equally on the pleasant and the unpleasant, on the rich and the poor, on the high and the low, on the vicious and the virtuous, on man and woman, and on human and animal.

Such was the boundless *mettā* of the Buddha who worked for the welfare and happiness of those who loved Him as well as of those who hated Him and even attempted to harm and kill Him. The Buddha exercised *mettā* equally towards His own son Rāhula, His adversary Dēvadatta, His attendant Ānanda, His admirers and His opponents. This loving-kindness should be extended in equal measure towards oneself as towards friend, foe and neutral alike. Suppose a bandit were to approach a person travelling through a forest with an intimate friend, a neutral person and an enemy, and suppose he were to demand that one of them be offered as a victim. If the traveller were to say that he himself should be taken, then he would have no *mettā* towards himself. If he were to say that anyone of the other three persons should be taken, then he would have no *mettā* towards them.

Such is the characteristic of real *mettā*. In exercising this boundless loving-kindness oneself should not be ignored. This subtle point should not be misunderstood, for self-sacrifice is another sweet virtue and egolessness is yet another higher virtue. The culmination of this *mettā* is the identification of oneself with all beings *(sabbattatā)*, making no difference between oneself and others. The so-called I is lost in the whole. Separatism evaporates. Oneness is realized.

There is no proper English equivalent for this graceful Pāli term *mettā*. Goodwill, loving-kindness, benevolence and universal love are suggested as the best renderings. The antithesis of *mettā* is anger, ill-will, hatred, or aversion. *Mettā* cannot co-exist with anger or vengeful conduct.

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Harassing others in quest of one's own happiness, one gains no happiness hereafter.

131. *Sukhakāmāni bhūtāni*
yō daṇḍēna vihiṁsati
attanō sukhamesānō
pecca sō na labhatē sukhaṁ. (10:3)

Whoever harms with force
those desiring happiness,
as seeker after happiness
one gains no future joy.

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THOSE WHO DO NOT RECEIVE HAPPINESS

10 (3) The Story of Many Youths (Verses 131 & 132)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a number of youths.

Once, the Buddha was out on an alms-round at Sāvatthi when he came across a number of youths beating a snake with sticks. When questioned, the youths answered that they were beating the snake because they were afraid that the snake might bite them. To them the Buddha said, "If you do not want to be harmed, you should also not harm others: if you harm others, you will not find happiness in your next existence."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 131)

yō attanō sukhaṁ ēsānō sukha kāmāni bhūtāni
daṇḍēna vihiṁsati sō pecca sukhaṁ na labhatē

yō: if someone; *attanō:* one's own; *sukhaṁ ēsānō:* seeking happiness; *yō:* if someone; *sukha kāmāni bhūtāni:* equally happiness-seeking beings; *daṇḍēna:* with rods (with various inflictions); *vihiṁsati:* tortures (gives pain to); *sō:* that person; *pecca:* in the next birth too; *sukhaṁ:* happiness; *na labhatē:* does not achieve (happiness)

People who like to be happy and are in search of pleasure hurt others through various acts of violence for their own happiness. These victims too want to be happy as much as those who inflict pain on them. Those who inflict pain do not achieve happiness even in their next birth.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 132)

yō attanō sukhaṁ ēsānō sukha kāmāni bhūtāni
daṇḍēna na hiṁsati, sō pecca sukhaṁ labhatē

yō: if someone; *attanō:* one's own; *sukhaṁ ēsānō:* seeking happiness; *sukha kāmāni:* equally happiness-seeking; *bhūtāni:* beings; *daṇḍēna:* with rods (with various inflictions); *na hiṁsati:* does not hurt, torture or give pain; *sō:* that person; *pecca:* in the next world; *sukhaṁ:* happiness; *labhatē:* achieves

If people who like happiness for themselves and are in search of pleasure for themselves, do not hurt or torture others or give pain to others, they achieve happiness in the next life too.

Commentary

Anāthapiṇḍika and Jētavana: most of the stanzas in Dhammapada were spoken by the Buddha while residing at Jētavanārāma, built by Anāthapiṇḍika. In consequence, both these are important institutions for Buddhist especially to Dhammapada.
The original name of Anāthapiṇḍika, which means the feeder of the helpless, was *Sudatta*. Owing to his unparalleled generosity he was latterly known by his new name. His birthplace was Sāvatthi. One day he visited his brother-in-law in Rājagaha to transact some business. He did not come forward as usual to welcome him but *Sudatta* found him in the garden making preparations for a feast. On inquiry, to his indescribable joy, he understood that those arrangements were being made to entertain the Buddha on the following day. The utterance of the mere word Buddha roused his interest and he longed to see Him. As he was told that the Buddha was living in the Sītavana forest in the neighbourhood and that he could see Him on the following morning, he went to sleep. His desire to visit the Budddha was so intense that he had a sleepless night and he arose at an unusual hour in the morning to start for the Sītavana. It appears that, owing to his great faith in the Buddha, a light emanated from his body. He proceeded to the spot passing through a cemetery. It was pitch dark and a fear arose in him. He thought of turning back. Then Sīvaka, a yakkha, himself invisible, encouraged him, saying:

> A hundred elephants and horses too,
> Ay, and a hundred chariots drawn by mules,
> A hundred thousand maidens, in their ears
> Bejewelled rings: — all are not worth
> The sixteenth fraction of a single stride.
> Advance, O citizen, go forward thou!
> Advance for thee is better than retreat.

His fear vanished and faith in the Buddha arose in its place. Light appeared again, and he courageously sped forward. Nevertheless, all this happened a second time and yet a third time. Ultimately he reached Sītavana where the Buddha was pacing up and down in the open air anticipating his visit. The Buddha addressed him by his family name, *Sudatta*, and called him to His presence. Anāthapiṇḍika was pleased to hear the Buddha address him thus and respectfully inquired whether the Buddha rested happily. The Buddha replied:

> Sure at all times happily doth rest
> The arahat in whom all fire's extinct.
> Who cleaveth not to sensuous desires,
> Cool all his being, rid of all the germs
> That bring new life, all cumbrances cut out,
> Subdued the pain and pining of the heart,
> Calm and serene he resteth happily
> For in his mind he hath attained to Peace.

(cont'd on page 283)

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Harassing not others, those who seek happiness gain their own happiness hereafter.

132. *Sukhakāmāni bhūtāni*
yō daṇḍēna na hiṁsati
attanō sukhamēsānō
pecca sō labhatē sukhaṁ. (10:4)

Whoever doesn't harm with force
those desiring happiness,
as seeker after happiness
one then gains future joy.

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THOSE WHO DO NOT RECEIVE HAPPINESS

10 (3) The Story of Many Youths (Verses 131 & 132)

Hearing the Dhamma, he became a *sōtāpanna* (stream-winner), and invited the Buddha to spend the rainy season at Sāvatthi. The Buddha accepted the invitation suggesting that Buddhas take pleasure in solitude. Anāthapindika, returning to Sāvatthi, bought the park belonging to Prince Jēta at a price determined by covering, so the story goes, the whole site with gold coins, and erected the famous Jētavana Monastery at a great cost. Here the Buddha spent nineteen rainy seasons. This monastery where the Buddha spent the major part of His life was the place where He delivered many of His sermons. Several discourses, which were of particular interest to laymen, were delivered to Anāthapiṇḍika, although he refrained from asking any question from the Buddha, lest he should weary Him.

Once, the Buddha, discoursing on generosity, reminded Anāthapiṇḍika that alms given to the Sangha together with the Buddha is very meritorious; but more meritorious than such alms is the building of a monastery for the use of the Sangha; more meritorious than such monasteries is seeking refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha; more meritorious than seeking refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, is the observance of the five precepts; more meritorious than such observance is meditation on loving-kindness *(mettā)* for a moment; and most meritorious of all is the development of Insight as to the fleeting nature of things *(passanā)*.

On another occasion when the Buddha visited the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, he heard an unusual uproar inside the house and inquired what it was. "Lord, it is Sujātā, my daughter-in-law, who lives with us. She is rich and has been brought here from a wealthy family. She pays no heed to her mother-in-law, nor to her father-in-law, nor to her husband; neither does she venerate, honour, reverence nor respect the Buddha," replied Anāthapiṇḍika.

The Buddha called her to His presence and preached an illuminative discourse on seven kinds of wives that exist even in modern society as it was in the days of old.

Who so is wicked in mind, ill-disposed, pitiless, fond of other (men) neglecting husband, a prostitute, bent on harassing — such a one is called a troublesome wife. *(vadhakabhariyā)*

Who so wishes to squander whatever profits, though little, that the husband gains whether by crafts, trade, or plough — such a one is called a thievish wife. *(cōrabhariyā)*

Who so is not inclined to do anything, lazy, gluttonous, harsh, cruel, fond of bad speech, lives domineering the industrious — such a one is called a lordly wife. *(ayyabhariyā)*

Who so is ever kind and compassionate, protects her husband like a mother, her son, guards the accumulated wealth of her husband — such a one is called a motherly wife. *(mātubhariyā)*

Who so is respectful towards her husband just as a younger sister towards her elder brother, modest, lives in accordance with her husband's wishes — such a one is called a sisterly wife. *(bhaginibhariyā)*

Who so rejoices at the sight of her husband even as a friend on seeing a companion who has come after a long time, is of noble birth, virtuous and chaste — such a one is called a friendly wife. *(sakhibhariyā)*

Who so, when threatened with harm and punishment, is not angry but calm, endures all things of her husband with no wicked heart, free from hatred, lives in accordance with her husband's wishes — such a one is called a handmaid wife. *(dāsibhariyā)*

The Buddha describing the characteristics of the seven kinds of wives remarked that of them the troublesome wife *(vadhakabhariyā)*, the thievish wife *(cōrabhariyā)*, and the lordly wife *(ayyabhariyā)*, are bad and undesirable ones, while the motherly wife *(mātubhariyā)*, sisterly wife *(bhaginibhariyā)*, friendly wife *(sakhibhariyā)*, and handmaid wife *(dāsibhariyā)*, are good and praiseworthy ones.

"These *Sujātā*, are the seven kinds of wives a man may have: and which of them are you?" "Lord, let the Buddha think of me as a handmaid wife *(dāsibhariyā)* from this day forth."

Anāthapiṇḍika used to visit the Buddha daily and, finding that people go disappointed in the absence of the Buddha, wished to know from the Venerable Ānanda whether there was a possibility for the devout followers to pay their respects when the Buddha goes out on His preaching tours. This matter was reported to the Buddha with the result that the Ānanda-Bodhi tree, which stands to this day, was planted at the entrance to the monastery.

sukhaṁ: happiness. Commenting on the four kinds of happiness a layman may enjoy, the Buddha declared: "There are these four kinds of happiness to be won by the householder who enjoys the pleasures of sense, from time to time and when occasion offers. They are: the happiness of ownership *(atthisukha)*, the happiness of enjoyment *(bhōgasukha)*, the happiness of debtlessness *(ananasukha)*, and the happiness of innocence *(anavajjasukha)*.

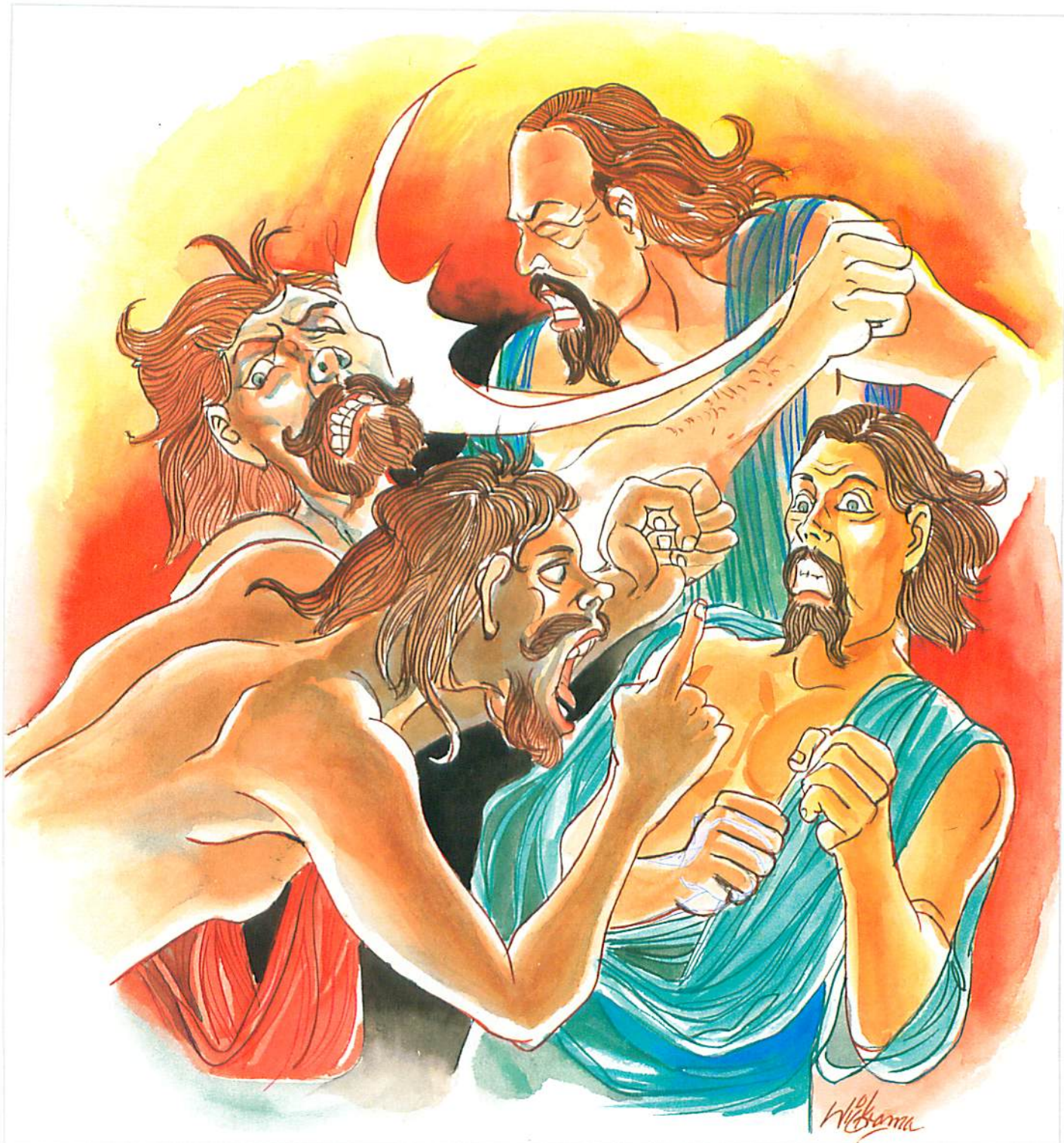
"What is the happiness of ownership?" Herein a clansman has wealth acquired by energetic striving, amassed by strength of arm, won by sweat, lawful, and lawfully gotten. At the thought, wealth is mine, acquired by energetic striving, lawfully gotten, happiness comes to him, satisfaction comes to him. This is called the happiness of ownership.

"What is the happiness of debtlessness?" Herein a clansman owes no debt, great or small, to anyone. At the thought, I owe no debt, great or small, to anyone, happiness comes to him, satisfaction comes to him. This is called the happiness of debtlessness.

"What is the happiness of innocence? Herein the Āryan disciple is blessed with blameless action of body, blameless action of speech, blameless action of mind. At the thought, I am blessed with blameless action of body, speech and mind, happiness comes to him, satisfaction comes to him. This is called the happiness of innocence."

Winning the bliss of debtlessness a man
May then recall the bliss of really having.
When he enjoys the bliss of wealth, he sees
'Tis such by wisdom. When he sees he knows.
Thus is he wise indeed in both respects.
But these have not one-sixteenth of the bliss
(That cometh to a man) of blamelessness.

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Use no harsh words. It is painful. More harsh words will follow with retaliatory action.

133. *M'āvōca pharusaṁ kañci*
vuttā paṭivadeyyu'taṁ
dukkhā hi sārambhakathā
paṭidaṇḍā phuseyyu'taṁ. (10:5)

Speak not harshly to other folk,
speaking so, they may retort.
Dukkha indeed is quarrelsome speech
and force for force may hurt you.

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RETALIATION BRINGS UNHAPPINESS

10 (4) The Story of Venerable Kuṇḍadhāna (Verses 133 & 134)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Kuṇḍadhāna.

From the day Kuṇḍadhāna became a monk a certain female form accompanied him. The Venerable himself never saw her, but everybody else saw her. Indeed, whenever the Venerable made an alms-round in a village, the inhabitants would first give the Venerable a portion of alms saying, "Venerable, this is for you," and then they would give the woman a second portion of alms, saying, "And this is for our female friend." The story goes that in the dispensation of the Buddha Kassapa there were two companion-monks who were as intimately associated with each other as though they had issued from the womb of the same mother. And in the dispensation of the Buddha Dīghāyu, year by year and month by month as the monks met together for the purpose of keeping fast-day, those same two monks would come forth from their lodging and say to each other, "Let us go to the hall of discipline together."

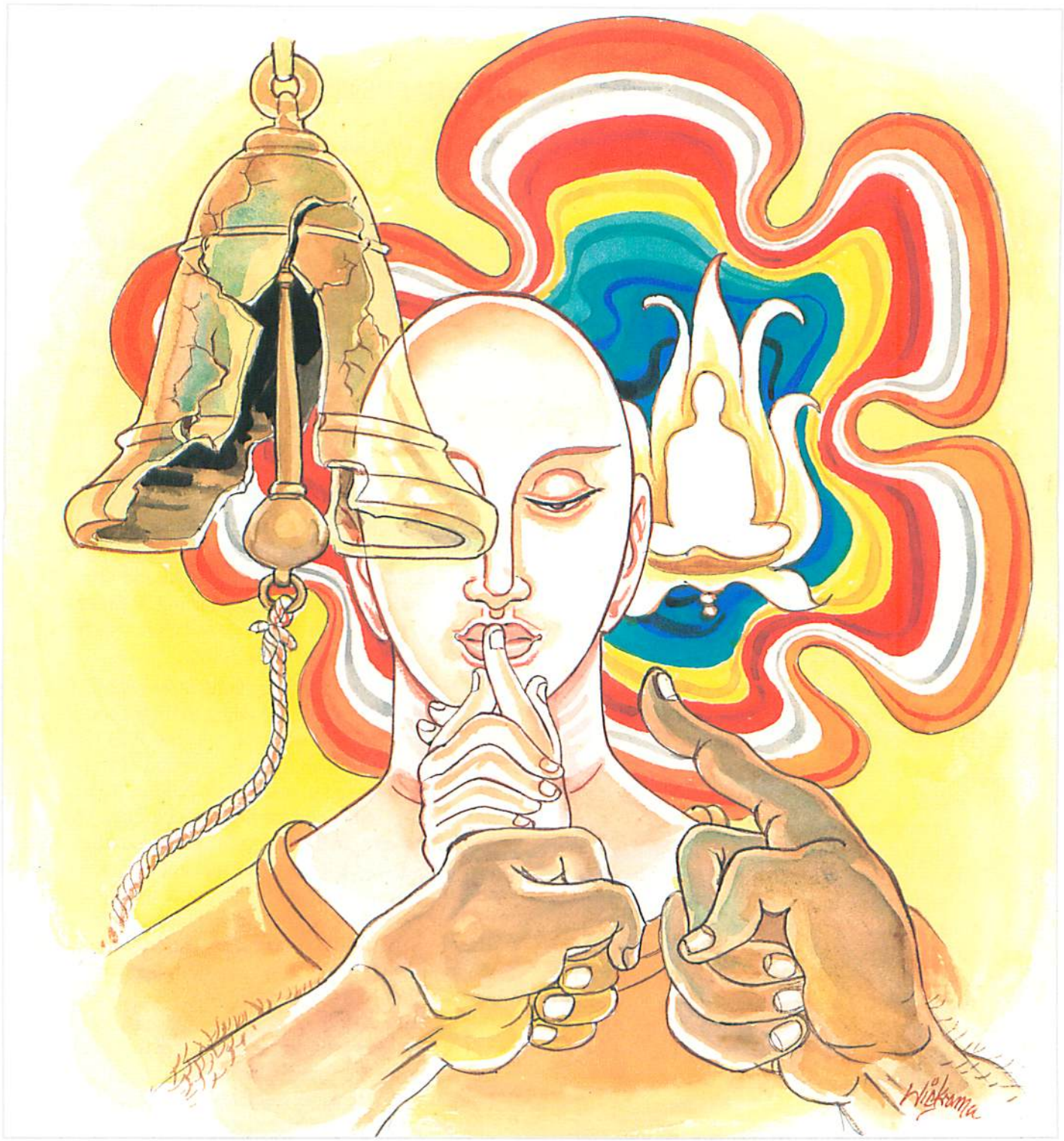
Now at that time a certain goddess, reborn in the heavenly world, seeing those two monks, thought, "These two monks are too much together; is there perhaps some way by which I can separate them?" No sooner had she thought this in her folly then one of the two monks said to his companion, "Brother, wait a moment; I must attend to the needs of nature." So soon as she heard this, that goddess assumed the form of a woman and entered the thicket with the Venerable. When he came out, she followed close behind him, arranging with one hand her tuft of hair and with the other her undergarment. The Venerable himself could not see her, but when the monk who stood outside waiting for him turned and looked, and he saw the woman come out, arranging her hair and her undergarment. As soon as the woman observed that the waiting monk had seen her, she disappeared. When the Venerable came up to the monk who was waiting for him, the latter said to him, "Brother, you have broken your vow of chastity." "I have done no such thing, brother." "Why, I just saw a young woman come out after you, doing this and that. Yet you say you have done nothing."

The Venerable acted as if he had been struck by a thunderbolt. He said, "Brother, do not ruin me. I have done no such thing." Said the monk, "What I saw, I saw with my own eyes. Do you expect me to believe you?" And forthwith he broke off the tip of his staff and departed. Moreover, when he sat down in the hall of concession, he said, "I will not keep the fast-day in his company." The Venerable said to the monks, "Brethren, there is not a fleck of dust even the size of an atom on my chastity." But the monk repeated, "What I saw, I saw with my own eyes." When the female spirit saw that the monk was unwilling to keep the fast-day with the Venerable, she thought to herself, "I have done a grievous wrong." And straightaway she said to the monk, "Venerable, my noble elder has not really violated his vow of chastity. I did this merely to try him. Pray keep the fast-day with him as usual." When the monk saw the female spirit poised in the air, and heard her speak those words, he believed her, and kept the fast-day with the Venerable. He was not, however, so kindly disposed to the Venerable as before. Such was the former deed of the female spirit.

Now at the end of their allotted term of life, the Venerables were reborn according to their good pleasure. The female spirit was reborn in the Avīci Hell, and after suffering torment there for a period of an interval between two Buddhas, was reborn in Sāvatthi in the dispensation of the present Buddha as a man. When he had grown up he retired from the world and decided to become a monk, subsequently making it his full profession. From the day he retired from the world, a phantom in female form appeared and followed him. Therefore they gave him the name Kuṇḍadhāna. When the monks observed that he was followed about by a woman, they said to Anāthapiṇḍika, "Treasurer, drive this unchaste monk out of your monastery, for by reason of him reproach will fall upon all of the other monks." "But, Venerables, is the Buddha not at the monastery?" "He is, lay disciple." "Well then, the Buddha alone will know." The monks went and said the same thing to Visākhā, and she gave them the same answer.

The monks, getting no satisfaction from the two lay disciples, reported the matter to the king, saying, "Great king, Kuṇḍadhāna goes about accompanied by a woman, and has thus cast reproach upon all the rest of the monks. Drive him out of your kingdom." "But where is he, venerables?" "In the monastery, great king." "In which lodging does he reside?" "In such and such." "Very well, go your way. I will have him caught." So in the evening the king went to the monastery, caused the Venerable's lodging to be surrounded by his men, and himself stood facing the entrance to the Venerable's cell.

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Let one hold one's peace like a cracked gong. In this silence one is already in Nibbāna.

134. *Sacē nērēsi attānaṁ*
kaṁsō upahatō yathā
ēsa pattō'si nibbānaṁ
sārambhō tē na vijjati. (10:6)

If like a broken gong
never you reverberate,
quarrelling's not part of you,
that Nibbāna's reached.

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TRANQUILITY SHOULD BE PRESERVED

10 (4) The Story of Venerable Kuṇḍadhāna (Verses 133 & 134) (cont'd)

The Venerable, hearing a loud noise, came out and stood facing the monastery. The king immediately saw that phantom woman standing behind him. When the Venerable observed that the king had come to his cell, he went up into the monastery again and sat down, but the king did not make obeisance to the Venerable. The king saw the woman no more. Although he looked inside the door and under the bed, still he did not see her. Finally he said to the monk, "Venerable, I saw a certain woman in this place; where is she?" "I see none, great king." Then said the king, "I just saw her behind your back." But the Venerable replied as before, "I see no woman, great king." "Venerable, just step out here for a moment." The monk came out and stood below, facing the monastery. Again that woman stood behind the Venerable. The king, seeing her, ascended once more to the upper floor. The Venerable observing that the king had gone, sat down. The king again looked everywhere, but for all that failed to see the woman. And again he asked the monk, "Venerable, where is that woman?" "I do not see her." "Tell me the truth, Venerable. I just saw a woman standing behind your back." "Yes, great king; that is what everybody says. Everybody says, 'A woman follows you wherever you go,' but I never see her."

The king, suspecting it was a phantom, said to the Venerable, "Venerable, with much impurity following about you, no one will give even food. Therefore, visit my house regularly and I alone will furnish you with the four requisites. And, having given this invitation, he departed. The monks went and reported the matter to the Buddha. Then, the Buddha related to them the monk's wicked deed in a previous birth as a female spirit and preached the Dhamma.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 133)

kañci pharusaṁ mā avōca vuttā taṁ paṭivadeyyuṁ hi sārambhakathā dukkhā paṭidaṇḍā taṁ phuseyyuṁ

kañci: to anyone; *pharusaṁ:* harsh words; *mā avōca:* do not speak; *vuttā:* if you speak harshly; *taṁ:* to you; *paṭivadeyyuṁ:* harsh words will be spoken in return; *hi:* for some reason; *sārambhakathā:* cross talk; *dukkhā:* is painful; *paṭidaṇḍā:* mutual attacks; *taṁ:* you; *phuseyyuṁ:* may resort to

Never speak harsh words. If you do, you will also be replied to in the same vein. This kind of cross-talk is painful. It may even lead to the exchange of blows.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 134)

sacē upahatō kaṁsō yathā attānaṁ nērēsi esō nibbānaṁ pattō asi tē sārambhō na vijjati

sacē: just like; *upahatō:* flattened out; *kaṁsō yathā:* a metal pot; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *nērēsi:* is rendered silent; *ēsō:* that way; *nibbānaṁ pattō asi:* Nibbāna has been reached by you; *tē:* for you; *sārambhō:* need to exchange words; *na vijjati:* is not seen

When an individual is tranquil and silent like a flattened out metal pot, it is as if he has already attained Nibbāna. Such a person does not engage in vain talk. Even when it is struck, the flattened out metal pot cannot make a sound in return.

Commentary

pharusaṁ mā avōca: do not speak harsh words. The positive advice here is to practice right speech. Right speech is to abstain (1) from falsehood and always speak the truth; (2) from tale-bearing which brings about discord and disharmony, and to speak words that are conducive to concord and harmony; (3) from harsh and abusive speech, and instead to speak kind and refined words; and (4) from idle chatter, vain talk or gossip and instead to speak words which are meaningful and blameless.

kamsō: a metal pot. The description *kamsa* is given to any one of the five metals — gold, silver, copper, iron or lead. Here, the image is that of a metal pot. When its pot-shape is gone and is flattened out, it does not give out a sound. It is dull and silent.

Esa pattō'si nibbānaṁ: One who follows this exemplary practice, even though not yet having attained Nibbāna, is regarded as having attained Nibbāna.

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A cowherd goads cattle to pasture. Decay and death all beings to their end.

135. *Yathā daṇḍēna gopālō*
gāvō pācēti gōcaraṁ
evaṁ jarā ca maccū ca
āyuṁ pācenti pāṇinaṁ. (10:7)

As with force the cowherds drive
their cattle out to graze,
like this decay and death drive out
the life from beings all.

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DECAY AND DEATH TERMINATE LIFE

10 (5) The Story of Some Ladies Observing the Moral Precepts (Verse 135)

While residing at the Pubbārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to five hundred ladies.

Once, five hundred ladies from Sāvatthi came to the Pubbārāma Monastery to keep the Eight Precepts. The donor of the monastery, the well-renowned Visākhā, asked different age groups of ladies why they had come to keep the fast-day. She got different answers from different age groups for they had come to the monastery for different reasons. The old ladies came to the monastery to keep the fast-day because they hoped to gain the riches and glories of celestial beings in their next existence; the middle-aged ladies had come to the monastery because they did not want to stay under the same roof with the mistresses of their respective husbands. The young married ladies had come because they wanted their first born to be a son, and the young unmarried ladies had come because they wanted to get married to good husbands.

Having had these answers, Visākhā took all the ladies to the Buddha. When she told the Buddha about the various answers of the different age groups of ladies, the Buddha said, "Visākhā! Birth, ageing and death are always actively working in beings; because one is born, one is subject to ageing and decay, and finally to death. Yet, they do not wish to strive for liberation from the round of existences (samsāra); they still wish to linger in samsāra."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 135)

yathā gōpālō daṇḍēna gāvō gōcaraṁ pācēti ēvaṁ jarā ca maccū ca pāninaṁ āyuṁ pācēti

yathā: just as; *gōpālō:* the cow-herd; *daṇḍēna:* with the goad; *gāvō:* the cattle; *gōcaraṁ:* to the pasture; *pācēti:* drives; *ēvaṁ:* similarly; *jarā ca:* decay; *maccū ca:* and death; *pāninaṁ:* of beings; *āyuṁ:* life-span; *pācēti:* drive

The cowherd drives the cattle along to the pasture with the goad. In the same way, decay and death drive the life-span of beings.

Commentary

Visākhā: Special Note on *Visākhā*. *Visākhā* was the daughter of Dhānanjaya. Her mother was Sumanā Devi, and her beloved grandfather was the rich man Mendaka.

When she was only seven years old, the Buddha happened to visit her birth place, Bhaddiya, in the kingdom of Anga. Her grandfather, hearing of Buddha's visit, said to her, "Dear girl, this is a happy day for you and a happy day for me. Summon the maidens who are your attendants, mount the chariots, and accompanied by your retinue of slave-maidens, go forth to welcome the Buddha."
Readily she agreed and, as advised, went up to the Buddha, saluted Him and sat respectfully at a side. The Buddha was pleased with her refined manners and he preached the Dhamma to her and others. Though young in age, she was comparatively far advanced from a moral standpoint. As such, immediately after hearing the Dhamma, she attained the first stage of sainthood *(sōtāpatti)* in her early age.
Books state that even in the prime of her youth she possessed masculine strength and was gifted with all womanly charms. Her hair was like a peacock's tail and when loosened it reached the hem of her skirt and then the ends of the hair curled and turned upwards. Her lips were of a bright red colour and were smooth and soft to the touch. Her teeth were white and were evenly set without interstices and shone like a row of diamonds. Her skin, without the use of any cosmetic, was as smooth as a blue lotus-wreath and was of a golden colour. She retained her youthful appearance although she bore several children.
Endowed with these five kinds of feminine beauty — hair, flesh, bone, skin and youth — young Visākhā excelled both in worldly wisdom and spiritual insight.
When she was about fifteen or sixteen years old, on a certain festival day, she went on foot with her retinue in a holiday spirit to the river to bathe. Suddenly there arose an unexpected shower, and all but young Visākhā ungraciously ran as fast as they could and entered a hall where there were some brahmins who had come in search of a suitable maiden possessed of the five kinds of beauty for their young master. Cultured Visākhā, without any particular haste, gracefully proceeded at her usual gait and entered the hall with garments and ornaments all wet. The inquisitive brahmins criticized her for not quickening up her pace as others had done and thus escaping being drenched in the rain.
Talented Visākhā rose to the occasion and gave an extempore discourse on deportment according to her view. She said that she could have run even faster but she refrained from doing so purposely. Then she explained that it was not becoming for a king, adorned with all jewels, to gird up his loins and run in the palace-court. Likewise it is not becoming for a fully caparisoned state elephant to run; it should move about with the natural grace of an elephant. Monks also incur criticism when they run about like ordinary laymen. Likewise it is not a dignified spectacle to see a woman running about like a man.
Brahmins were pleased with her instructive talk and thought that she was an ideal wife for their master. Accordingly, arrangements were made to give her in marriage to their master, Punnavaddhāna, himself the son of a rich man named Migāra, who was not a follower of the Buddha.
The marriage festival was conducted on an elaborate scale. On the wedding day, in addition to a large dowry and an exquisitely rich ornament *(mahālatāpilandhāna)*, her wise father gave her the following admonitions: (1) do not carry outside the indoor fire; (2) do not take inside the outdoor fire; (3) give only to those that give; (4) do not give to those that do not give; (5) give both to those that give and do not give; (6) sit happily; (7) eat happily; (8) sleep happily; (9) tend the fire and (10) honour the household divinities.
Books state that she had the good fortune to be the happy mother of ten fortunate sons and ten fortunate daughters. She died at the ripe age of one hundred and twenty.

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Evil doer who is unmindful of consequences suffers consequently because of his own deeds.

136. *Atha pāpāni kammāni*
karaṁ bālō na bujjhati
sēhi kammēhi dummēdhō
aggidaḍḍhō'va tappati. (10:8)

When the fool does evil deeds
their end he does not know,
such kamma burns the one unwise
as one who's scorched by fire.

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RESULTS OF EVIL TORMENT THE IGNORANT

10 (6) The Story of the Boa Constrictor Pēta-Ghost (Verse 136)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a boa constrictor peta-ghost.

Once upon a time Venerable Moggallāna was descending from Vulture Peak with Venerable Lakkhana, when by Supernatural Vision he beheld a ghost twenty-five leagues long in the form of a boa-constrictor. Flames of fire proceeded from his head and descended on his extremities; flames of fire proceeded from his extremities and descended on his head; flames of fire proceeded from both sides of him and descended on his middle. When the Venerable beheld that ghost he smiled. When the Venerable Lakkhana asked him why he smiled, he replied, "Brother, it is not the proper time to answer that question; wait until we are in the presence of the Buddha, and then ask me."

When, therefore, Venerable Moggallāna had completed his round for alms in Rājagaha, and had come into the presence of the Buddha, Venerable Lakkhana repeated his question. Venerable Moggallāna replied as follows, "At that spot, brother, I saw a ghost, and his outward appearance was such and such. When I saw him, I thought to myself, 'No such ghost as that did I ever see before.' That is why I smiled." Then said the Buddha, "Monks, my disciples indeed possess eyes and use them." Continuing, he confirmed the statement of the Venerable and added, "I saw that very ghost as I sat on the Throne of Enlightenment. However, the thought came into my mind 'If any refuse to believe my word, it may be to their detriment.' Therefore I said nothing about it. But now that I have Moggallāna for my witness, I do say it." When he had thus spoken, in response to a request of the monks, he explained what the ghost had done in a previous state of existence.

The story goes that in the dispensation of the Buddha Kassapa, a treasurer named Sumangala spread the ground with bricks of gold for a space of twenty usabhas (fathoms), expended an equal amount of treasure in building a monastery, and an equal amount in giving a festival in honour of the opening of the monastery. One day, very early in the morning, as he was on his way to pay his respects to the Buddha, he saw hidden in a certain rest house at the gate of the city a certain thief, his feet spattered with mud, his robe drawn over his head. The treasurer said to himself, "This man with feet all spattered with mud must be some night-prowler in hiding." "Never mind, I know how to get even with you," thought the thief. And conceiving a grudge against the treasurer, he burned his field seven times, cut off the feet of the cattle in his cattle-pen seven times, and burned his house seven times.

But, in spite of all this, he was unable to satisfy his grudge against the treasurer. So he made friends with the treasurer's page and asked him, "What is your master the treasurer especially fond of?" "There is nothing he thinks more of than the perfumed chamber," replied the page. "Very well," thought the thief, "I will burn up the perfumed chamber and thus satisfy my grudge." Accordingly, when the Buddha entered the city for alms he broke all the vessels used for drinking and eating and set fire to the perfumed chamber. When the treasurer heard the cry, "The perfumed chamber is on fire!" he immediately went there, but before he arrived at the perfumed chamber it had burned to the ground. The treasurer rebuilt the monastery and pardoned the thief for his crimes. The thief was reborn as the pēta-ghost.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 136)

atha pāpāni kammāni karaṁ bālō na bujjhati
dummēdhō sēhi kammēhi aggidaḍḍō iva tappati

atha: besides; *pāpāni kammāni:* evil deeds; *karaṁ:* doing; *bālō:* the ignorant person; *na bujjhati:* is not aware; *dummēdhō:* the unwise person; *sēhi kammēhi:* due to his own evil actions; *aggidaḍḍō iva:* as if he has been burnt by fire; *tappati:* burns (suffers)

Fools, unaware that evil rebounds, through evil acts they hurt themselves. As flies leap into fire and burn, their own executioners they become.

Commentary

dummēdhō: an individual who does not possess wisdom. Here, wisdom is meant to be the capacity to weigh right and wrong.

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He who maliciously offends the inoffensive soon falls into one of ten woeful states.

137. *yō daṇḍēna adaṇḍēsu*
appaduṭṭhēsu dussati
dasannam aññataraṁ ṭhānaṁ
khippamēva nigacchati. (10:9)

Whoever forces the forceless
or offends the inoffensive,
speedily comes indeed
to one of these ten states:

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THE EVIL RESULTS OF HURTING THE PIOUS

10 (7) The Story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verses 137 — 140)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Mahā Moggallāna. Once upon a time the heretics met together and said to each other, "Brethren, do you know the reason why the gifts and offerings to the Buddha have waxed great?" "No, we do not know; but do you know?" "Indeed we do know; it has all come about through one Venerable Moggallāna. For Venerable Moggallāna goes to heaven and asks the deities what deeds of merit they performed; and then he comes back to earth and says to men, 'By doing this and that men receive such and such glory.' Then he goes to hell and asks also those who have been reborn in hell what they did; and comes back to earth and says to men, 'By doing this and that men experience such and such suffering.' Men listen to what he says, and bring rich gifts and offerings. Now if we succeed in killing him, all these rich gifts and offerings will fall to us."

"That is a way indeed!" exclaimed all the heretics. So all the heretics with one accord formed the resolution, "We will kill him by hook or by crook." Accordingly they roused their own supporters, procured a thousand pieces of money, and formed a plot to kill Venerable Moggallāna. Summoning some wandering thieves, they gave them the thousand pieces of money and said to them, "Venerable Moggallāna lives at Black Rock. Go there and kill him." The money attracted the thieves and they immediately agreed to do as they were asked. "Yes, indeed," said the thieves; "we will kill the Venerable." So they went and surrounded the Venerable's place of abode.

The Venerable, knowing that his place of abode was surrounded, slipped out through the keyhole and escaped. The thieves, not seeing the Venerable that day, came back on the following day, and again surrounded the Venerable's place of abode. But the Venerable knew, and so he broke through the circular peak of the house and soared away into the air. Thus did the thieves attempt both in the first month and in the second month to catch the Venerable, but without success. But when the third month came, the Venerable felt the compelling force of the evil deed he had himself committed in a previous state of existence, and made no attempt to get away.

At last the thieves succeeded in catching the Venerable. When they had so done, they tore him limb from limb, and pounded his bones until they were as small as grains of rice. Then thinking to themselves, "He is dead," they tossed his bones behind a certain clump of bushes and went their way. The Venerable thought to himself, "I will pay my respects to the Buddha before I pass into Nibbāna." Accordingly he swathed himself with meditation as with a cloth, made himself rigid, and soaring through the air, he proceeded to the Buddha, paid obeisance to the Buddha, and said to him, "venerable, I am about to pass into Nibbāna." "You are about to pass into Nibbāna, Moggallāna?" "Yes, Venerable." "To what region of the earth are you going?" "To Black Rock, Venerable." "Well then, Moggallāna, preach the Law to me before you go, for hereafter I shall have no such disciple as you to look upon." "That will I do, Venerable," replied Venerable Moggallāna. So first paying obeisance to the Buddha, he rose into the air, performed all manner of miracles just as did the Venerable Sāriputta on the day when he passed into Nibbāna, preached the Dhamma, paid obeisance to the Buddha, and then went to Black Rock forest and passed into Nibbāna.

Immediately the report spread all over South Asia. "Thieves have killed the Venerable." Immediately King Ajātasattu sent out spies to search for the thieves. Now as those very thieves were drinking strong drink in a tavern, one of them struck the other on the back and felled him to the ground. Immediately the second thief reviled the first, saying, "You scoundrel, why did you strike me on the back and fell me to the ground?" "Why, you vagabond of a thief, you were the first to strike Venerable Moggallāna." "You don't know whether I struck him or not." There was a babel of voices crying out, "'Twas I struck him, 'Twas I struck him."

Those spies heard what the thieves said, captured all the thieves, and made their report to the king. The king caused the thieves to be brought into his presence and asked them, "Was it you that killed the Venerable?" "Yes, your majesty." "Who, pray, put you up to it?" "The naked ascetics, your, majesty." The king had the five hundred naked ascetics caught, placed them, together with the five hundred thieves, waist-deep in pits which he had dug in the palace-court, caused their bodies to be covered over with bundles of straw, and then caused the bundles of straw to be lighted. When he knew that they had been burned, he caused their bodies to be plowed with iron plows and thus caused them all to be ground to bits.

(cont'd on page 295)

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Evil doer comes to suffer acute pain, break up of body and disease and derangement of mind.

138. *Vēdanaṁ pharusaṁ jāniṁ*
sarīrassa ca bhēdanaṁ
garukaṁ vāpi' ābādhaṁ
cittakkhēpaṁ va pāpuṇē. (10:10)

Sharp pain or deprivation,
or injury to the body,
or to a serious disease,
derangement of the mind;

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EVIL RESULTS OF HURTING HARMLESS SAINTS

10 (7) The Story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verses 137 — 140) (cont'd)

The monks began a discussion in the hall of truth: "Venerable Moggallāna met death which he did not deserve." At that moment the Buddha approached and asked them, "Monks, what are you saying as you sit here all gathered together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, if you regard only this present state of existence, Venerable Moggallāna indeed meet death which he did not deserve. But as a matter of fact, the manner of death he met was in exact conformity with the deed he committed in a previous state of existence." Thereupon the monks asked the Buddha, "But, venerable, what was the deed he committed in a previous state of existence?" In reply the Buddha related his former deed in detail.

The story goes that once upon a time in the distant past a certain youth of good family performed with his own hand all of the household duties, such as pounding rice and cooking, and took care of his mother and father also. One day his mother and father said to him, "Son, you are wearing yourself out by performing all of the work both in the house and in the forest. We will fetch you home a certain young woman to be your wife." The son replied, "Dear mother and father, there is no necessity of your doing anything of the sort. So long as you both shall live I will wait upon you with my own hand." In spite of the fact that he refused to listen to their suggestion, they repeated their request time and again, and finally brought him home a young woman to be his wife.

For a few days only she waited upon his mother and father. After those few days had passed, she was unable even to bear the sight of them and said to her husband with a great show of indignation, "It is impossible for me to live any longer in the same house with your mother and father." But he paid no attention to what she said. So one day, when he was out of the house, she took bits of clay and bark and scum of rice-gruel and scattered them here and there about the house. When her husband returned and asked her what it meant, she said, "This is what your blind old parents have done; they go about littering up the entire house; it is impossible for me to live in the same place with them any longer." Thus did she speak again and again. The result was that finally even a being so distinguished as he, a being who had fulfilled the Perfection, broke with his mother and father.

"Never mind," said the husband, "I shall find some way of dealing with them properly." So when he had given them food, he said to them, "Dear mother and father, in such and such a place live kinsfolk of yours who desire you to visit them; let us go thither." And assisting them to enter a carriage, he set out with them. When he reached the depths of the forest, he said to his father, "Dear father, hold these reins; the oxen know the track so well that they will go without guidance; this is a place where thieves lie in wait for travellers; I am going to descend from the carriage." And giving the reins into the hands of his father, he descended from the carriage and made his way into the forest.

As he did so, he began to make a noise, increasing the volume of the noise until it sounded as if a band of thieves were about to make an attack. When his mother and father heard the noise, they thought to themselves, "A band of thieves are about to attack us." Therefore they said to their son, "Son, we are old people; save yourself, and pay no attention to us." But even as his mother and father cried out thus, the son, yelling the thieves' yell, beat them and killed them and threw their bodies into the forest. Having so done, he returned home.

When the Buddha had related the foregoing story of Venerable Moggallāna's misdeed in a previous state of existence, he said, "Monks, by reason of the fact that Venerable Moggallāna committed so monstrous a sin, he suffered torment for numberless hundreds of thousands of years in hell; and thereafter, because the fruit of his evil deed was not yet exhausted, in a hundred successive existences he was beaten and pounded to pieces in like manner and so met death. Therefore the manner of death which Venerable Moggallāna suffered was in exact conformity with his own misdeed in a previous state of existence. Likewise the five hundred heretics who with the five hundred thieves offended against my son who had committed no offense against them , suffered precisely that form of death which they deserved. For he that offends against the offenseless, incurs misfortune and loss through ten circumstances."

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Evil doer comes to suffer rejection by kings, serious accusations, loss of wealth and kinsmen.

139. *Rājatō vā upassaggaṁ*
abbhakkhānaṁ va dārunaṁ
parikkhayaṁ va ñātīnaṁ
bhōgānaṁ'va pabhaṅguraṁ. (10:11)

Troubled by the government,
or else false accusation,
or by the loss of relatives,
destruction of one's wealth;

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HARMING THE HOLY IS DISASTROUS

10 (7) The Story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verses 137— 140) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 137)

yō adaṇḍēsu appaduṭṭhēsu daṇḍēna dussati dasannam aññataraṁ ṭhānaṁ khippamēva nigacchati

yō: if a person; *adaṇḍēsu:* the non-violent ones; *appaduṭṭēsu:* one bereft of evil; *daṇḍēna:* through violence; *dussati:* hurts; *dasannam:* (of) ten forms of suffering; *aññataraṁ ṭhānaṁ:* one form of suffering; *khippam ēva:* without delay; *nigacchati:* will happen

If one attacks one who is harmless, or ill-treats innocent beings, ten woeful states lie here and now to one of which he shall fall.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 138)

pharusaṁ vēdanaṁ jāniṁ sarīrassa bhēdanaṁ vā api garukaṁ ābādhaṁ va cittakkhēpaṁ va pāpuṇē

pharusaṁ: severe; *vēdanaṁ:* pain; *jāniṁ:* disaster; *sarīrassa bhēdanaṁ:* physical damage; *vā api:* also; *garukaṁ ābādhaṁ:* serious illness; *cittakkhēpaṁ:* mental disorder; *pāpuṇē:* will occur

The following ten forms of suffering will come to those who hurt the harmless, inoffensive saints: severe pain; disaster; physical injury; serious illness, mental disorder.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 139)

rājatō upassggaṁ vā dārunaṁ abbhakkhānaṁ vā ñātīnaṁ parikkhayaṁ vā bhōgānaṁ pabhaṇguraṁ vā

rājatō: from kings; *upassaggaṁ vā:* trouble; *dārunaṁ:* grave; *abbhakkhānaṁ:* charges; *vā ñātīnaṁ:* of relatives; *parikkhayaṁ:* loss; *bhōgānaṁ pabhaṇguraṁ:* loss of property

Trouble from rulers; grave charges; loss of relatives; property loss.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 140)

atha ivā assa agārāni pāvakō aggi ḍahati so duppaññō kāyassa bhēdā nirayaṁ upapajjati

atha ivā: or else; *assa:* his; *agārāni pāvakō aggi ḍahati:* houses the fire will burn; *sō duppaññō:* that ignorant person; *kāyassa bhēdā:* on dissolutio of the body; *nirayaṁ:* in hell; *upapajjati:* will be born

Or else, his houses will be burnt by fire and, upon death, that wicked person will be reborn in hell.

Commentary

Venerable Moggallāna: These four stanzas relate to the demise, under tragic circumstances, of the Chief Disciple Moggallāna. If Sāriputta could be regarded as the Chief Disciple on the right of Buddha, Moggallāna was the Chief Disciple on His left. They were born on the same day and were associated with each other during many previous lives; so were they during the last life. It is one of the oldest recorded friendships in the world. Venerable Moggallāna was foremost in the noble Sangha in psychic power. Once a king of cobras called Nandōpananda, also noted for psychic feats, was threatening the Buddha and some arahats. The Buddha was besieged with offers from various members of the noble sangha to subdue the snake king. At last Venerable Moggallāna's turn came and the Buddha readily assented. He knew he was equal to the task. The result was a psychic confrontation with the Naga King who was worsted and he begged for peace. The Buddha was present throughout the encounter. This epic feat is commemorated in the seventh verse of the Jayamangala Gāthā which is recited at almost every Buddhist function. Whether in shaking the marble palace of Sakka, the heavenly ruler, with his great toe, or visiting hell, he was equally at ease. These visits enabled him to be a sort of an information bureau. He could graphically narrate, to dwellers of this earth, the fate of their erstwhile friends or relatives. How, by evil Kamma, some get an ignominious rebirth in hell, and others, by good Kamma, an auspicious rebirth in one of the six heavens. These ministrations brought great fame to the dispensation, much to the chagrin of other sects. His life is an example and a grim warning. Even a chief disciple, capable of such heroic feats, was not immune from the residue of evil kamma sown in the very remote past. It was a heinous crime. He had committed matricide and patricide under the most revolting circumstances. Many rebirths in hell could not adequately erase the evil effects of the dire deed. Long ago, to oblige his young wife, whose one obsession was to get rid of her parents-in-law, he took his aged parents to a forest, as if going on a journey, waylaid and clubbed them to death, amidst cries of the parents, imploring the son to escape from the robbers, who they imagined were clubbing them. In the face of such cruelty, the love of his parents was most touching. In the last life of Moggallāna, he could not escape the relentless force of kamma. For, with an arahat's *parinibbāna*, good or bad effects of kamma come to an end. He was trapped twice by robbers but he made good his escape. But, on the third occasion, he saw with his divine eye, the futility of escape. He was mercilessly beaten, so much so that his body could be put even in a sack. But death must await his destiny. It is written that a chief disciple must not only predecease the Buddha, but also had to treat the Buddha before his death *(parinibbāna)*, and perform miraculous feats and speak verses in farewell, and the Buddha had to enumerate his virtues in return. He was no exception. The curtain came down closing a celebrated career.

(cont'd on page 299)

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Fire burns down the dwellings of the evil doer. Such a man gets born in hell after death.

140. *Atha v'assa agārāni*
aggi ḍahati pāvakō
kāyassa bhēdā duppaññō
nirayaṁ sō'papajjati. (10:12)

Or one's houses burn
in raging conflagration,
at the body's end, in hell
arises that unwise one.

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WOEFUL STATES IN THE WAKE OF EVIL DOING

10 (7) The Story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verses 137— 140) (cont'd)

Commentary

The noble Sangha was bereft of the most dynamic figure. Chief Disciple Moggallāna's life story is intimately linked with that of co-Chief Disciple Sāriputta.

Not far from Rājagaha, in the village Upatissa, also known as Nālaka, there lived a very intelligent youth named Sāriputta. Since he belonged to the leading family of the village, he was also called Upatissa. Though nurtured in Brāhmanism, his broad outlook on life and matured wisdom compelled him to renounce his ancestral religion, for the more tolerant and scientific teachings of the Buddha Gōtama. His brothers and sisters followed his noble example. His father, Vanganta, apparently adhered to the Brahmin faith. His mother, who was displeased with the son for having become a Buddhist, was converted to Buddhism by himself at the moment of his death.

Upatissa was brought up in the lap of luxury. He found a very intimate friend in Kōlita, also known as Moggallāna, with whom he was closely associated from a remote past. One day, as both of them were enjoying a hill-top festival, they realized how vain, how transient, were all sensual pleasures. Instantly they decided to leave the world and seek the path of release. They wandered from place to place in quest of peace.

The two young seekers went at first to Sanjaya, who had a large following, and sought ordination under him. Before long, they acquired the meager knowledge which their master imparted to them, but dissatisfied with his teachings, as they could not find a remedy for that universal ailment with which humanity is assailed — they left him and wandered hither and thither in search of peace. They approached many a famous brahmin and ascetic, but disappointment met them everywhere. Ultimately, they returned to their own village and agreed amongst themselves that, whoever would first discover the Path should inform the other.

It was at that time that the Buddha dispatched His first sixty disciples to proclaim the sublime Dhamma to the world. The Buddha Himself proceeded towards Uruvela, and the Venerable Assajī, one of the first five disciples, went in the direction of Rājagaha.

The good kamma of the seekers now intervened, as if watching with sympathetic eyes their spiritual progress. For Upatissa, while wandering in the city of Rājagaha, casually met an ascetic whose venerable appearance and saintly deportment at once arrested his attention. This ascetic's eyes were lowly fixed a yoke's distance from him, and his calm face showed deep peace within him. With body well composed, robes neatly arranged, this venerable figure passed with measured steps from door to door, accepting the morsels of food which the charitable placed in his bowl. "Never before have I seen," he thought to himself, "an ascetic like this. Surely, he must be one of those who have attained arahatship, or one who is practicing the path leading to arahatship. How if I were to approach him and question, 'For whose sake, Sire, have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?'"

Upatissa, however, refrained from questioning him, as he thought he would thereby interfere with his silent begging tour. The Arahat Assajī, having obtained what little he needed, was seeking a suitable place to eat his meal. Upatissa seeing this, gladly availed himself of the opportunity to offer him his own stool and water from his own pot. Fulfilling thus the preliminary duties of a pupil, he exchanged pleasant greetings with him, and reverently inquired, "Venerable, calm and serene are your organs of sense, clean and clear is the hue of your skin. For whose sake have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?" The unassuming Arahat Assajī modestly replied, as is the characteristic of all great men, "I am still young in the sangha, brother, and I am not able to expound the Dhamma to you at length."

"I am Upatissa, Venerable. Say much or little according to your ability, and it is left to me to understand it in a hundred or thousand ways."

"Say little or much," Upatissa continued, "tell me just the substance. The substance only do I require. A mere jumble of words is of no avail."

The Venerable Assajī spoke a four line stanza, thus skillfully summing up the profound philosophy of the Master, on the truth of the law of cause and effect.

Yē dhaṁmā hētuppabhavā —
tēsaṁ hētuṁ tathāgatō
Āha tēsañ ca yō nirōdhō —
ēvaṁ vādi mahā samanō.

(Of things that proceed from a cause, their cause the Buddha has told, and also their cessation. Thus teaches the great ascetic.)

Upatissa was sufficiently enlightened to comprehend such a lofty teaching succinctly expressed. He was only in need of a slight indication to discover the truth. So well did the Venerable Assajī guided him on his upward path that immediately on hearing the first two lines, he attained the first stage of sainthood, *sōtāpatti*. The new convert *Upatissa* must have been, no doubt, destitute of words to thank to his heart's content his Venerable teacher for introducing him to the sublime teachings of the Buddha. He expressed his deep indebtedness for his brilliant exposition of the truth, and obtaining from him the necessary particulars with regard to the master, took his leave. Later, the devotion showed towards his teacher was such that since he heard the Dhamma from the Venerable Assaji, in whatever quarter he heard that his teacher was residing, in that direction he would extend his clasped hands in an attitude of reverent obeisance and in that direction he would turn his head when he lay down to sleep.

Now, in accordance with the agreement, he returned to his companion Kōlita to convey the joyful tidings. Kōlita, who was as enlightened as his friend, also attained the first stage of Sainthood on hearing the whole stanza. Overwhelmed with joy at their successful search after peace, as in duty bound, they went to meet their teacher Sanjaya with the object of converting him to the new doctrine. Frustrated in their attempt Upatissa and Kōlita, accompanied by many followers of Sanjaya, who readily joined them, repaired to the Vēluvana Monastery to visit their illustrious Teacher, the Buddha.

In compliance with their request, the Buddha admitted both of them into the sangha by the mere utterance of the words — *Ētha Bhikkhavē!* (Come, O Monks!). A fortnight later, the Venerable Sāriputta attained arahatship on hearing the Buddha expound the *Vēdanā Pariggaha Sutta* to the wandering ascetic *Dīghanakha*. On the very same day in the evening, the Buddha gathered round Him His disciples, and the exalted positions of the first and second disciples in the Sangha, were respectively conferred upon the Venerables Upatissa (Sāriputta) and Kōlita (Moggallāna), who also had attained arahatship a week earlier.

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Nudity nor fasting, nor diverse penances will cleanse a mortal who is steeped in doubt.

141. *Na naggacariyā na jatā na paṅkā*
nānāsakā thaṇḍilasāyikā vā
rajō ca jallaṁ ukkuṭikappadhānaṁ
sōdhenti maccaṁ avitiṇṇakaṅkhaṁ. (10:13)

Not going naked, nor matted hair, nor filth,
nor fasting, not sleeping on bare earth,
no penance on heels, nor sweat nor grime
can purify a mortal still overcome by doubt.

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PRACTICES THAT WILL NOT LEAD TO PURITY

10 (8) The Story of Venerable Bahūbhāṇḍika (Verse 141)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Bahūbhāṇḍika, a monk with many possessions.

Once there was a rich man in Sāvatthi. After the death of his wife, he decided to become a monk. But before he entered the sangha, he built a monastery, which included a kitchen and a store room. He also brought his own furniture, utensils and a large stock of rice, oil, butter and other provisions. Whatever dishes he wanted was cooked for him by his servants. Thus, even as a monk he was living in comfort, and because he had so many things with him, he was known as Bahūbhaṇḍika. One day, other monks took him to the Buddha, and in his presence told the Buddha about the many things he had brought along with him to the monastery, and also how he was still leading the luxurious life of a rich man. So, the Buddha said to Bahūbhaṇḍika, "My son, I have been teaching all of you to live an austere life; why have you brought so much property with you?" When reprimanded even this much, that monk lost his temper and said angrily, "Indeed, venerable! I will now live as you wish me to." So saying, he cast off his upper robe.

Seeing him thus, the Buddha said to him, "My son, in your last existence you were an evil spirit; even as an evil spirit you had a sense of shame and a sense of fear to do evil. Now that you are a monk in my Teaching, why do you have to throw away the sense of shame, and the sense of fear to do evil?" When he heard those words, the monk realized his mistake; his sense of shame and fear to do evil returned, and he respectfully paid obeisance to the Buddha and asked that he should be pardoned. The Buddha then said to him, "Standing there without your upper robe is not proper; just discarding your robe etc., does not make you an austere monk; a monk must also discard his doubt."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 141)

naggacariyā na jaṭā na paṅkā na ānāsakā na thaṇḍilasāyikā vā, rajō jallaṁ va ukkuṭikappadhānaṁ va avitiṇṇa-kaṅkhaṁ maccaṁ na sōdhenti

naggacariyā: by going about naked; *jaṭā:* by matted hair; *paṅkā:* by smearing body with mud; *ānāsakā:* by fasting; *thaṇḍilasāykā vā:* even by lying on bare earth; *rajō jallaṁ vā:* by accumulating dust on one's body; *ukkuṭikappadhānaṁ:* by scotting; *avitiṇṇa-kaṅkhaṁ:* who has not been able to overcome his wavering of mind; *maccaṁ:* mortal; *na sōdhenti:* will not become spiritually cleansed

A person seeking the purification of his soul may practice the ritual of wandering about naked; or else he may wear turbans; he may even smear his body with mud; he may even refrain from partaking of food as an austerity to obtain purity; he may lie on bare earth; or else he may throw dust all over his body. And again, some may practice a squatting posture. All these will not wash a person into spiritual purity if his wavering of mind has not been overcome.

Commentary

na naggacariyā: not by wandering naked. This stanza refers to innumerable rites and rituals practiced by various ascetics and liberation-seekers. Their mistaken efforts are considered here. Gymnosophism is still practiced in Jambudīpa. External dirtiness is regarded by some as a mark of saintliness. The Buddha denounces strict asceticism confined to such externals. The members of His celibate sangha follow the middle path, avoiding the extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence. Simplicity, humility, and poverty should be the chief characteristics of monks as much as cleanliness. Unwashed matted hair is regarded by the foolish as a mark of holiness. The non-cleaning of teeth and smearing the body with mud and fasting alone do not tend to purification. The monks too fast daily between midday and the following dawn. Sleeping on the ground does not lead to purity. Monks only avoid luxurious and high couches. Rubbing the body with ashes is still practiced by some ascetics.

Superficial observances and vows do not purify a person, no matter how long it is practiced. As long as the mind wavers between good and bad (and has not achieved integrity (where the mind is set on being good without hesitation), purity of mind has not been achieved. Overcoming wavering is the achievement of this integrity, which is the beginning of the process of mental purification.

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The celibate who's restrained and is full of love for the entire world is indeed a true bhikkhu.

142. *Alaṅkatō ce'pi samaṁ careyya*
santō dantō niyatō brahmacārī
sabbēsu bhūtēsu nidhāya daṇḍaṁ
sō brāhmaṇō sō samaṇō sa bhikkhu. (10:14)

Even though adorned, if living at peace
calm, tamed, established in the holy life,
for beings all laying force aside:
one pure, one peaceful, a bhikkhu is he.

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COSTUMES DO NOT MAR VIRTUE

10 (9) The Story of Santati the Minister (Verse 142)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Santati, the minister of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala.

On one occasion, Santati the minister returned after suppressing a rebellion on the border. King Pasēnadi was so pleased with him that he honoured the minister with the gift of the riches and glory of a ruler together with a dancing girl to entertain him for seven days. On the seventh day, riding the ornamented royal elephant, he went down to the riverside for a bath. On the way, he met the Buddha going on an alms-round, and being drunk, he just bowed casually, as a sign of respect to the Buddha. The Buddha smiled, and Ānanda asked the Buddha why he smiled. So, the Buddha said to Ānanda, "Ānanda, this minister will come to see me this very day and after I have given him a short discourse, he will become an arahat. Soon after becoming an arahat he will realize parinibbāna."

Santati and his party spent the whole day at the riverside, bathing, eating, drinking and thus thoroughly enjoying themselves. In the evening the minister and his party went to the garden to have more drinks and to be entertained by the dancer. The dancer, on her part, tried her best to entertain the minister. For the whole week she was living on reduced diet to keep herself trim. While dancing, she suffered a severe stroke and collapsed, and at that instant she died with her eyes and mouth wide open. The minister was shocked and deeply distressed. In agony, he tried to think of a refuge and remembered the Buddha. He went to the Buddha, accompanied by his followers, and related to him about the grief and anguish he suffered on account of the sudden death of the dancer. He then said to the Buddha, "Venerable! Please help me get over my sorrow; be my refuge, and let me have the peace of mind." To him the Buddha replied, "Rest assured my son, you have come to One, who could help you, One who could be a constant solace to you and who will be your refuge. The tears you have shed due to the death of this dancer throughout the round of rebirths is more than the waters of all the oceans." The Buddha then instructed the minister in verse. The meaning of the verse is as follows: "In the past there has been in you clinging *(upādāna)* due to craving; get rid of it. In future, do not let such clinging occur in you. Do not also harbour any clinging in the present; by not having any clinging, craving and passion will be calmed in you and you will realize Nibbāna."

After hearing the verse, the minister attained arahatship. Then, realizing that his life span was at an end, he said to the Buddha, "Venerable! Let me now realize parinibbāna (great demise), for my time has come." The Buddha consenting, Santati rose to a height of seven toddy-palms into the sky and there, while meditating on the element of fire *(tējō kasina)*, he passed away realizing parinibbāna. His body went up in flames, his blood and flesh burnt up and bone relics *(dhātu)* fell through the sky and dropped on the clean piece of cloth which was spread by the monks as instructed by the Buddha. The monks asked, " The minister had realized parinibbāna dressed in full regalia; is he a samana or a brahmana?" The Buddha replied, "My son can be called both samana and brahmana."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 142)

alaṅkatō api cē santō dantō niyatō brahmacārī samaṁ careyya sabbēsu bhūtēsu daṇḍaṁ nidhāya sō brāhmaṇō sō samaṇō sa bhikkhu

alaṅkatō api: though a person may be attractively dressed; *cē:* if; *santō:* tranquil; *dantō:* restrained; *niyatō:* of assured liberation; *brahmacārī:* leading a higher life; *samaṁ:* modest; *careyya:* behaves; *sabbēsu bhūtēsu:* towards every being; *daṇḍaṁ:* violence; *nidhāya:* setting aside (refraining from); *sō brāhmaṇō:* he is truly a priest; *sō samaṇō:* he is truly an ascetic; *sōbhikkhu:* he is truly a mendicant monk

Although a person may be attractively dressed, he behaves in a harmonious manner. He is tranquil, restrained; assured of liberation. He leads the religious life. He is not violent towards beings. Such a person is truly a priest (brāhmana), an ascetic (samana), and a mendicant monk (bhikkhu).

Commentary

brahma-cariyā: pure (chaste) or holy life, is a term for the life of the monk. Also, a lay-devotee who observes the eight moral precepts and takes as the third precept the vow of chastity upon himself, full abstention from sexual relations. The highest aim and purpose of *brahma-cariyā* is the unshakable deliverance of mind.

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Man deterred by a sense of shame is apprehensive of censure like a good horse of the whip.

143. *Hirīnisēdhō purisō*
kōci lōkasmiṁ vijjati
yō nindaṁ appabōdhati
assō bhadrō kasāmiva. (10:15)

Where in the world is found
one restrained by shame,
awakened out of sleep
as splendid horse with whip?

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AVOID EVIL THROUGH SHAME

10 (10) The Story of Venerable Pilōtikatissa (Verses 143 & 144)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Pilōtikatissa.

Once, Venerable Ānanda saw a shabbily dressed youth going round begging for food; he felt pity for the youth and made him a sāmanēra. The young novice monk left his old clothes and his begging plate on the fork of a tree. When he became a monk he was known as Pilōtikatissa. As a monk, he did not have to worry about food and clothing as he was in affluent circumstances. Yet, sometimes he did not feel happy in his life as a monk and thought of going back to the life of a layman. Whenever he had this feeling, he would go back to that tree where he had left his old clothes and his plate. There, at the foot of the tree, he would put this question to himself, "Oh shameless one! Do you want to leave the place where you are fed well and dressed well? Do you still want to put on these shabby clothes and go begging again with this old plate in your hand?" Thus, he would rebuke himself, and after calming down, he would go back to the monastery.

After two or three days, again, he felt like leaving the monastic life of a monk, and again, he went to the tree where he kept his old clothes and his plate. After asking himself the same old question and having been reminded of the wretchedness of his old life, he returned to the monastery. This was repeated many times. When other monks asked him why he often went to the tree where he kept his old clothes and his plate, he told them that he went to see his teacher. Thus keeping his mind on his old clothes as the subject of meditation, he came to realize the true nature of the aggregates of the *khandhas*, such as *anicca, dukkha, anatta*, and eventually he became an arahat. Then, he stopped going to the tree. Other monks, noticing that Pilōtikatissa had stopped going to the tree where he kept his old clothes and his plate, asked him, "Why don't you go to your teacher any more?" To them, he answered, "When I had the need, I had to go to him; but there is no need for me to go to him now." When the monks heard his reply, they took him to see the Buddha. When they came to his presence they said, "Venerable! This monk claims that he has attained arahatship; he must be telling lies." But the Buddha refuted them, and said, "Monks! Pilōtikatissa is not telling lies, he speaks the truth. Though he had relationship with his teacher previously, now he has no relationship whatsoever with his teacher. Venerable Pilōtikatissa has instructed himself to differentiate right and wrong causes and to discern the true nature of things. He has now become an arahat, and so there is no further connection between him and his teacher."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 143)

bhadrō assō kasāṁ iva yō nindaṁ appabōdhati
hirī nisēdhō purisōlōkasmiṁ kōci vijjati

bhadrō assō: well bread horse; *kasāṁ iva:* with the horse whip; *yō:* if a person; *nindaṁ:* disgrace; *appabōdhati:* avoids; *hirī nisēdhō:* gives up evil through shame; *puriso:* such a person; *lōkasmiṁ kōci:* rarely in the world; *vijjati:* is seen

Rarely in the world is that person who is restrained by shame. Like a well-bred horse who avoids the whip, he avoids disgrace.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 144)

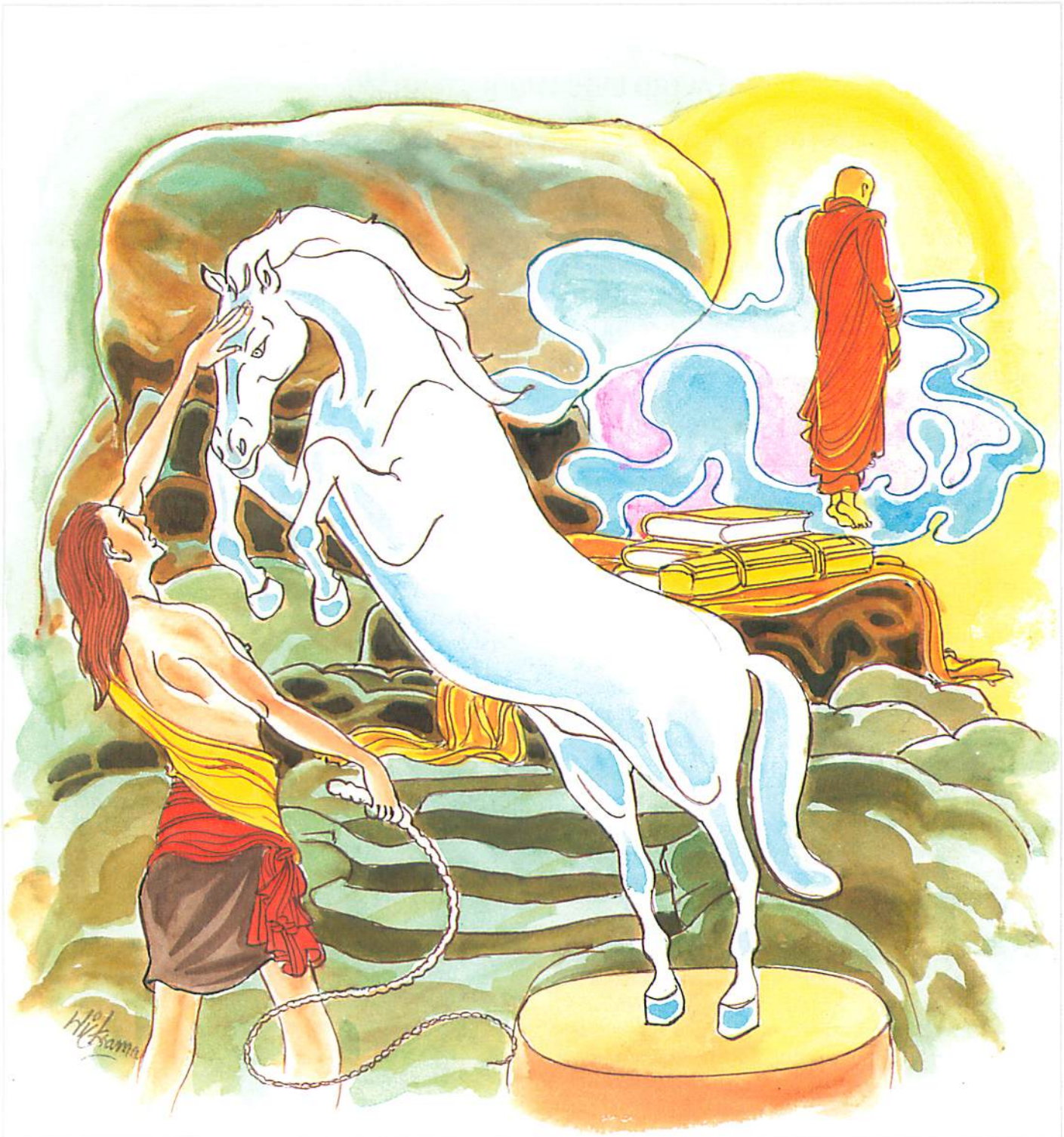
kasā niviṭṭhō bhadrō assō yathā ātāpinō bhavātha;
saṁvēginō bhavātha; saddhāya ca sīlena ca vīriyena ca samādhinā ca dhammavinicchayēna ca
sampannavijjācaranā patissatā anappakaṁ idaṁ dukkhaṁ pahassatha

kasā: with the whip; *niviṭṭhō:* controlled; *bhadrō:* well bred; *assō:* horse; *yathā:* in what manner; *ātāpinō:* being penitent; *saṁvēginō:* deeply motivated; *saddhāya:* through devotion; *sīlena ca:* through discipline; *vīriyēna ca:* and through persistence; *samādhinā ca:* through mental composure; *dhammavinicchayēna ca:* through examination of experience; *sampannavijjācarana:* through the attainment of conscious response; *patissatā:* through introspection; *anappakaṁ:* not little; *idaṁ dukkhaṁ:* this suffering; *pahassatha:* gets rid of

Like a well-bred horse duly disciplined by the whip, you shall be persistent and earnest. Possessed of devotion, discipline and persistence, and with composure examine experience. Attain to conscious response with well established introspection.

(cont'd on page 307)

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Do ye discipline and restrain yourselves like a noble steed at whip-lash.

144. *Assō yathā bhadrō kasāniviṭṭhō*
ātāpino saṁvēginō bhavātha
saddhāya sīlēna ca vīriyēna ca
samādhinā dhammavinicchayēna ca
sampannavijjācaraṇā patissatā
pahassatha dukkhamidaṁ anappakaṁ. (10:16)

As splendid horse touched with whip,
be ardent, deeply moved,
by faith and virtue, effort too,
by meditation, Dhamma's search,
by knowledge, kindness, mindfulness:
abandon dukkha limitless!

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EFFORT IS NECESSARY TO AVOID SUFFERING

10 (10) The Story of Venerable Pilōtikatissa (Verses 143 & 144) (cont'd)

Commentary

sīla: virtue. Combined with this extra-ordinary generosity of a Bodhisatta is his virtuous conduct *(sīla)*. The meaning of the Pāli term is virtue. It consists of duties that one should perform *(cāritta)* and abstinences which one should practice *(vāritta)*. These duties towards parents, children, husband, wife, teachers, pupils, friends, monks, subordinates, etc., are described in detail in the *Sigālōvāda Sutta*.

The duties of a layman are described in a series of relationships, each for mnemonic reasons of five items:

(1) A child should minister to his parents by: (i. supporting them, (ii) doing their duties, (iii) keeping the family lineage, (iv) acting in such a way as to be worthy of his inheritance and furthermore, (v) offering alms in honour of his departed relatives.

(2) Parents, who are thus ministered to by their children, should (i) dissuade them from evil, (ii) persuade them to do good, (iii) teach them an art, (iv) give them in marriage to a suitable wife, and (v) hand over to them their inheritance at the proper time.

(3) A pupil should minister to a teacher by: (i) rising, (ii) attending on him, (iii) attentive hearing, (iv) personal service, and (v) respectfully receiving instructions.

(4) Teachers thus ministered to by pupils should: (i) train them in the best discipline, (ii) make them receive that which is well held by them, (iii) teach them every suitable art and science, (iv) introduce them to their friends and associates, and (v) provide for their safety in every quarter.

(5) A husband should minister to his wife by: (i) courtesy, (ii) not despising her, (iii) faithfulness, (iv) handing over authority to her, and (v) providing her with ornaments.

(6) The wife, who is thus ministered to by her husband, should: (i) perform her duties in perfect order, (ii) be hospitable to the people around, (iii) be faithful, (iv) protect what he brings, and (v) be industrious and not lazy in discharging her duties.

(7) A noble scion should minister to his friends and associates by: (i) generosity, (ii) courteous speech, (iii) promoting their good, (iv) equality, and (v) truthfulness.

(8) The friends and associates, who are thus ministered to by a noble scion, should: (i) protect him when he is heedless, (ii) protect his property when he is heedless, (iii) become a refuge when he is afraid, (iv) not forsake him when in danger, and (v) be considerate towards his progeny.

(9) A master should minister to servants and employees by: (i) assigning them work according to their strength, (ii) supplying them with food and wages, (iii) tending them in sickness, (iv) sharing with them extraordinary delicacies, and (v) relieving them at times.

(10) The servants and employees, who are thus ministered to by their master, should: (i) rise before him, (ii) go to sleep after him, (iii) take only what is given, (iv) perform their duties satisfactorily, and (v) spread his good name and fame.

(11) A noble scion should minister to ascetics and brahmins by: (i) lovable deeds, (ii) lovable words, (iii) lovable thoughts, (iv) not closing the doors against them, and (v) supplying their material needs.

(12) The ascetics and brahmins, who are thus ministered to by a noble scion, should: (i) dissuade him from evil, (ii) persuade him to do good, (iii) love him with a kind heart, (iv) make him hear what he has not heard and clarify what he has already heard, and (v) point out the path to a heavenly state.

A Bodhisatta who fulfills all these social duties *(cāritta sīla)* becomes truly a refined gentleman in the strictest sense of the term. Apart from these duties he endeavours his best to observe the other rules relating to *vāritta sīla* (abstinence) and thus lead an ideal Buddhist life. Rightly discerning the law of action and consequence, of his own accord, he refrains from evil and does good to the best of his ability. He considers it his duty to be a blessing to himself and others, and not a curse to any, whether man or animal.

As life is precious to all and as no man has the right to take away the life of another, he extends his compassion and loving-kindness towards every living being, even to the tiniest creature that crawls at his feet, and refrains from killing or causing injury to any living creature. It is the animal instinct in man that prompts him mercilessly to kill the weak and feast on their flesh. Whether to appease one's appetite or as a pastime it is not justifiable to kill or cause a helpless animal to be killed by any method whether cruel or humane. And if it is wrong to kill an animal, what must be said of slaying human beings, however noble the motive may at first sight appear.

Furthermore, a Bodhisatta abstains from all forms of stealing, direct or indirect, and thus develops honesty, trustworthiness and uprightness. Abstaining from misconduct, which debases the exalted nature of man, he tries to be pure and chaste in his sex life. He avoids false speech, harsh language, slander, and frivolous talk and utters only words which are true, sweet, peaceable and helpful. He avoids intoxicating liquors which tend to mental distraction and confusion, and cultivates heedfulness and clarity of vision.

A bodhisatta would adhere to these five principles which tend to control deeds and words, whether against his own interests or not. On a proper occasion he will sacrifice not only possessions and wealth but life itself for the sake of his principles. It should not be understood that a Bodhisatta is perfect in his dealings in the course of his wanderings in samsāra. Being a worldling, he possesses his own failings and limitations. Certain jātakas, like the Kānavēra Jātaka, depict him as a very desperate highway robber. This, however, is the exception rather than the rule. The great importance attached by an aspirant to Buddhahood to virtue is evident from the Sīlavīmamsa Jātaka where the Bodhisatta says: "Apart from virtue wisdom has no worth."

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The morally good ones discipline themselves like irrigators the water, fletchers the arrow...

145. *Udakaṁ hi nayanti nettikā*
usukārā namayanti tējanaṁ
dāruṁ namayanti tacchakā
attānaṁ damayanti subbatā. (10:17)

Irrigators govern waters,
fletchers fashion shafts,
as joiners shape their timber
those of good conduct tame themselves.

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THOSE WHO RESTRAIN THEIR OWN MIND

10 (11) The Story of Novice Monk Sukha (Verse 145)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sukha, a sāmanēra (novice monk).

Sukha was made a novice monk at the age of seven years by Venerable Sāriputta. On the eighth day after being made a novice monk he followed Venerable Sāriputta on his alms-round. While doing the round they came across some farmers irrigating their fields, some fletchers were straightening their arrows and some carpenters were making things like cart-wheels. Seeing these, he asked Venerable Sāriputta whether these inanimate things could be guided to where one wished or be made into things one wished to make, and the monk answered him in the affirmative. The young novice monk then pondered that if that were so, there could be no reason why a person could not tame his mind and practice tranquillity and insight meditation.

So, he asked permission from the monk to return to the monastery. On that very day, as the Buddha, who had gone out early in the morning, sat in the perfumed chamber, he considered to himself, "Today the novice Sukha gave his preceptor his bowl and robe and turned back, saying, 'I will strive earnestly for the attainment of arahatship;' has he yet completed his task?" Straightaway, he perceived that the novice had attained the three paths and fruits. Considering the matter further, the Buddha became aware of the following, "Today the novice will succeed in attaining arahatship." With this thought in his mind, the Buddha went forth from the perfumed chamber, and posting himself at the gateway, stood on guard.

The Venerable brought the food. The Buddha asked him four questions, and when he had answered the last of the questions, the novice attained arahatship. Then the Buddha addressed the Venerable, saying, "Go, Sāriputta, give the novice his food." The elder monk went and forced the door, whereupon the novice came out and paid his respects to the Venerable. "Eat the food I have brought you," said the Venerable.

Just then the Buddha approached and asked, "Monks, what is it that you are sitting here talking about now?" The monks replied, "Venerable, today the morning seemed very long, and the evening was tardy. The novice has but just finished his meal. Moreover the sun has just passed beyond the zenith before our very eyes." The Buddha replied, "Monks, that is what always happens when they that possess merit engage in meditation. Today the novice Sukha saw ditch-diggers leading the water in a watercourse, arrow-makers straightening their arrows, and carpenters fashioning wheels and so forth. And having seen these things, he subdued himself and attained arahatship."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 145)

nettikā hi udakaṁ nayanti usukārā tējanaṁ
namayanti tacchakā dāruṁ namayanti subbatā attānaṁ damayanti panditā

nettikā: irrigators; *udakaṁ:* water; *nayanti:* lead along to whatever place they like; *usukārā:* the fletchers; *tējanaṁ:* arrow shafts; *namayanti:* shape; *tacchakā:* the carpenters; *dāruṁ:* the wood; *namayanti:* bend; *subbatā:* the conscientious; *attānaṁ:* the self; *damayanti:* control; *panditā:* the wise persons

Irrigators direct the water. Fletchers shape the arrows. Carpenters shape the wood. The wise conscientiously control themselves.

Commentary

subbatā: the obedient ones. A *subbatā* is a person who is amenable to advice. They obey the advice given. Traditional commentary describes them this way: *sukhēna ōvaditabbā, anusāsi tabbāti subbatā* ... A person who could be easily advised and instructed. A really obedient person *(subbatā)* never resents any advice, even if harshly given. The response of such a person is — "If you do not advise me, who else will?"

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To Awake the Human Heart

Surely the mysterious East, that fertile mother of religions, has given us in Buddhism a true revelation, since it makes known to us the moral beauty and purity that lies in the deep of human nature needing no other divinity than that which abides in the human heart to awake them into living glory.

Charles T. Gorham

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Chapter 11

JARĀ VAGGA

Old Age

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For ever ablaze, what laughter, what joy? Trapped in darkness, seek ye not a light?

146. *Kō nu hāsō kimānandō*
niccaṁ pajjalitē sati?
Andhakārēna ōnaddhā
padīpaṁ na gavessatha? (11:1)

Why this laughter, why this joy,
when it's ever blazing?
shrouded all about by gloom
won't you look for light?

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JARĀ VAGGA (OLD AGE)
ONE PACIFYING WORD IS NOBLE

11 (1) The Story of the Companions of Visākhā (Verse 146)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to companions of Visākhā.

Five hundred men from Sāvatthi, wishing to make their wives to be generous, kind-hearted and virtuous like Visākhā, sent them to Visākhā to be her constant companions. During a drunken festival which lasted for seven days, the wives of those men took all the drinks left by the husbands and got drunk in the absence of Visākhā. For this misbehaviour they were beaten by their husbands. On another occasion, saying that they wished to listen to the Buddha's discourse, they asked Visākhā to take them to the Buddha and secretly took small bottles of liquor hidden in their clothes.

On arrival at the monastery, they drank all the liquor they had brought and threw away the bottles. Visākhā requested the Buddha to teach them the Dhamma. By that time, the women were getting intoxicated and felt like singing and dancing. Māra, taking this opportunity made them bold and shameless, and soon they were boisterously singing, dancing, clapping and jumping about in the Monastery. The Buddha saw the hand of Māra in the shameless behaviour of these women and said to himself, "Māra must not be given the opportunity." So, the Buddha sent forth dark-blue rays from his body and the whole room was darkened; the women were frightened and began to get sober. Then, the Buddha vanished from his seat and stood on top of Mt. Mēru, and from there he sent forth white rays and the sky was lit up as if by a thousand moons. After thus manifesting his powers, the Buddha said to those women; "You ladies should not have come to my monastery in this unmindful state. Because you have been negligent Māra has had the opportunity to make you behave shamelessly, laughing and singing loudly, in my monastery. Now, strive to put out the fetters of passion *(rāga)* which is in you." At the end of the discourse, those women attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 146)

niccaṁ pajjalitē sati kō nu hāsō kiṁ ānandō andhakārēna ōnaddhā padīpaṁ na gavessatha

niccaṁ: constantly; *pajjalitē sati:* burning; *kō nu hāsō:* what laughter; *kiṁ ānandō:* what pleasure; *andhakārēna:* with the darkness; *ōnaddhā:* enveloped; *padīpaṁ:* a light; *na gavessatha:* why don't you seek

When you are perpetually burning with the flames of passion, what laughter, what pleasure? When you are enveloped in the darkness of ignorance, why do you not seek the light of Wisdom to dispel that darkness?

Commentary

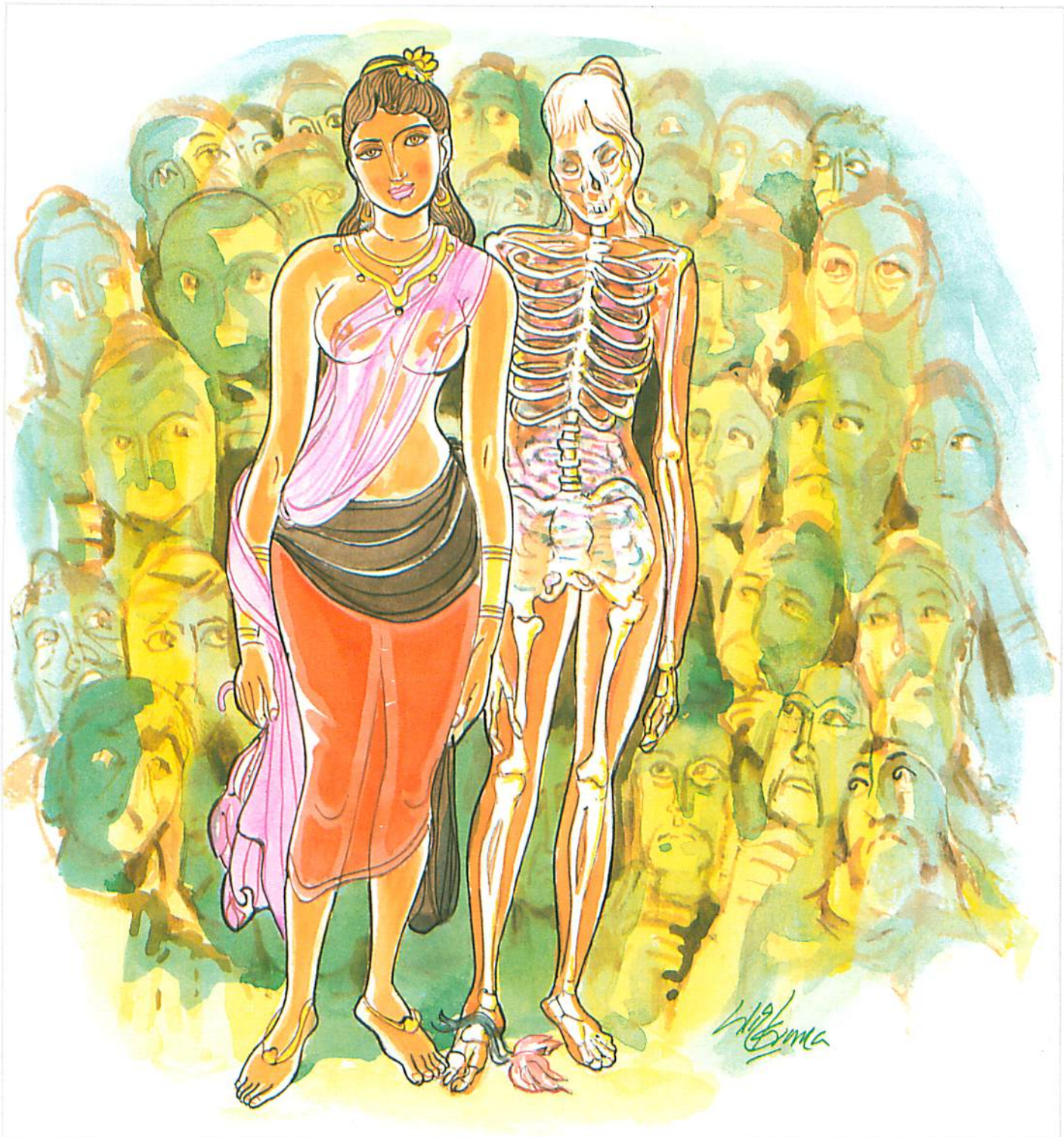
Special Note: In most of these background stories, the utterance of the stanzas by the Buddha, results in people attaining sōtāpatti fruition. The status of a stream-winner *(sōtāpatti)*: The *sōtāpanna*, i.e., the stream-winner, is the lowest of the eight noble disciples. Three kinds of stream-winners are to be distinguished: the one with seven rebirths at the most *(sattakkhattu-parama)*, the one passing from one noble family to another *(kōlankōla)*, the one germinating only once more *(ēka-bījī)*.

(1) If a man after the disappearance of the three fetters (personality-belief, skeptical doubt, attachment to rules and ritual) has entered the stream (to Nibbāna), he is no more subject to rebirth in lower worlds, is firmly established, destined to full enlightenment. After having passed amongst heavenly and human beings only seven times more through the round of rebirths, he puts an end to suffering. Such a man is called one with seven rebirths at the most *(sattakkhattu-parama)*.

(2) If a man after the disappearance of the three fetters is destined to full enlightenment, he after having passed among noble families two or three times through the round of rebirths, puts an end to suffering. Such a man is called one passing from one noble family to another *(kōlankōla)*.

(3) If a man after the disappearance of the three fetters is destined to full enlightenment, he, after having only once more returned to human existence, puts an end to suffering. Such a man is called one germinating only once more *(ēka-bījī)*.

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See this decked out body, much thought of. But truly sore within. It's never ever steady.

147. *Passa cittakataṁ bimbaṁ*
arukāyaṁ samussitaṁ
āturaṁ bahusaṅkappaṁ
yassa natthi dhuvaṁ ṭhiti. (11:2)

See this body beautiful
a mass of sores, a congeries,
much considered but miserable
where nothing's stable, nothing persists.

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BEHOLD THE TRUE NATURE OF THE BODY

11 (2) The Story of Sirimā (Verse 147)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sirimā the courtesan.

Once, there lived in Rajagaha, a very beautiful courtesan by the name of Sirimā. Every day Sirimā offered alms-food to eight monks. One of these monks happened to mention to other monks how beautiful Sirimā was and also that she offered very delicious food to the monks every day. On hearing this, a young monk fell in love with Sirimā even without seeing her. The next day, the young monk went with the other monks to the house of Sirimā. Sirimā was not well on that day, but since she wanted to pay obeisance to the monks, she was carried to the presence of the monks. The young monk, seeing Sirimā, thought to himself, "Even though she is sick, she is very beautiful!" And he felt a strong desire for her.

That very night, Sirimā died. King Bimbisara went to the Buddha and reported to him that Sirimā, the sister of Jīvaka, had died. The Buddha told King Bimbisara to take the dead body to the cemetery and keep it there for three days without burying it, but to have it protected from crows and vultures. The king did as he was told. On the fourth day, the dead body of the beautiful Sirimā was no longer beautiful or desirable; it got bloated and maggots came out of the nine orifices. On that day, the Buddha took his monks to the cemetery to observe the body of Sirimā. The king also came with his men. The young monk, who was so desperately in love with Sirimā, did not know that Sirimā had died. When he learnt that the Buddha and the monks were going to see Sirimā, he joined them. At the cemetery, the corpse of Sirimā was surrounded by the monks headed by the Buddha, and also by the king and his men.

The Buddha, surrounded by the congregation of monks, stood on one side of the corpse; the congregation of nuns and the king's retinue and the company of lay disciples, both male and female, stood on the other side of the corpse, each company in its proper place. The Buddha then asked the king, "Great king, who is this woman?" "Venerable, it is Jīvaka's sister Sirimā." "Is this Sirimā?" "Yes, Venerable." "Well! Send a drum through the town and make proclamation, 'Those who will pay a thousand pieces of money for Sirimā may have her.'" Not a man said 'hem' or 'hum'. The king brought down the price to a penny, then to a half-penny, then to a quarter of a penny, then to an eighth of a penny. At last he proclaimed to the beating of a drum, "They may have her for nothing." Not a man said 'hem' or 'hum'. Then said the king to the Buddha, "Venerable, no one will take her, even as a gift." The Buddha replied, "Monks, you see the value of a woman in the eyes of the multitude. In this very city men used to pay a thousand pieces of money for the privilege of spending one night with this woman. Now there is no one who will take her as a gift. Such was her beauty which had perished and gone. Behold, monks, this body diseased and corrupt."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 147)

yassa dhuvaṁ ṭhiti natthi. arukāyaṁ samussitaṁ āturaṁ bahusaṇkappaṁ cittakataṁ bimbaṁ passa

yassa: for this body; *dhuvaṁ ṭhiti:* permanent existence; *natthi:* there is not; *arukāyaṁ:* (it is in fact) body of sores; *samussitaṁ:* propped up by many bones; *āturaṁ:* (it is) afflicted with sickness; *bahusaṇkappaṁ:* by many well thought of; *cittakataṁ:* glamorously made up; *bimbaṁ:* this body; *passa:* observe

This body has no permanent existence. It is in fact a body of sores. It is diseased. It is propped up by many kinds of bones. It is considered by many to be good. It is well thought of by many. It is glamorously made up. Observe this true nature of the body.

Commentary

natthi dhuvam ṭhiti: this body cannot last. It has no permanent existence — arukāyaṁ. This is, in fact, a body of sores:

āturam: it is diseased; ***bahusankappam:*** well thought of by many; ***samussitaṁ:*** the body has many bones. These bones prop it up; ***cittakataṁ:*** glamorously made up. All these are categorized as illusory notions regarding body.

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This body fragile, the ideal nesting place for disease. Life necessarily ends in death.

148. *Parijiṇṇaṁ idaṁ rūpaṁ*
rōganiḍḍhaṁ pabhaṅguraṁ
bhijjati pūtisandēhō
maraṇantaṁ hi jīvitaṁ. (11:3)

All decrepit is this body,
diseases' nest and frail;
this foul mass is broken up
for life does end in death.

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LIFE ENDS IN DEATH

11 (3) The Story of Nun Uttarā (Verse 148)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Nun Uttarā.

Nun Uttarā, who was one hundred and twenty years old, was one day returning from her alms-round when she met a monk and requested him to accept her offering of alms-food; so she had to go without food for that day. The same thing happened on the next two days. Thus Nun Uttarā was without food for three successive days and she was feeling weak. On the fourth day, while she was on her alms-round, she met the Buddha on the road where it was narrow. Respectfully, she paid obeisance to the Buddha and stepped back. While doing so, she accidentally stepped on her own robe and fell on the ground, injuring her head. The Buddha went up to her and said, "Your body is getting very old and infirm, it is ready to crumble, it will soon perish." At the end of the discourse, Nun Uttarā attained sōtapatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 148)

idaṁ rupaṁ parijiṇṇaṁ rōganiḍḍhaṁ pabhaṇguraṁ pūtisandēhō bhijjati hi jīvitaṁ maraṇantaṁ

idaṁ rupaṁ: this form: *parijiṇṇaṁ:* fully broken down; *rōganiḍḍhaṁ:* (it is like) a nest of diseases; *pabhaṇguraṁ:* disintegrates easily; *pūtisandēhō:* putrid matter oozes out of it; *bhijjati:* it breaks apart easily; *hi jīvitaṁ maraṇantaṁ:* Death ends it

This form — this body — is fully broken down. It is truly a den of diseases. It disintegrates easily. Out of its nine orifices, patrid matter oozes constantly. It breaks apart. Death puts an end to it.

Commentary

jīvitaṁ maraṇantaṁ: life ends in death. The central purpose of this stanza is to drive home the fact of impermanence of life. Impermanence *(aniccā)* is the first of three characteristics of existence *(tilakkhana)*. It is from the fact of impermanence that, in most texts, the other two characteristics, suffering *(dukkha)* and not-self *(anattā)*, are derived. Impermanence of things is the rising, passing and changing of things, or the disappearance of things that have become or arisen. The meaning is that these things never persist in the same way, but that they are vanishing and dissolving from moment to moment.

Impermanence is a basic feature of all conditioned phenomena, be they material or mental, coarse or subtle, one's own or external. All formations are impermanent. That the totality of existence is impermanent is also often stated in terms of the five aggregates, the twelve sense bases. Only Nibbāna which is unconditioned and not a formation *(asankata)*, is permanent.

The insight leading to the first stage of deliverance, stream-entry, is often expressed in terms of impermanence: "Whatever is subject to origination, is subject to cessation." In his last exhortation, before his Parinibbāna, the Buddha reminded his monks of the impermanence of existence as a spur to earnest effort: "Behold now, monks, I exhort you. Formations are bound to vanish. Strive earnestly!"

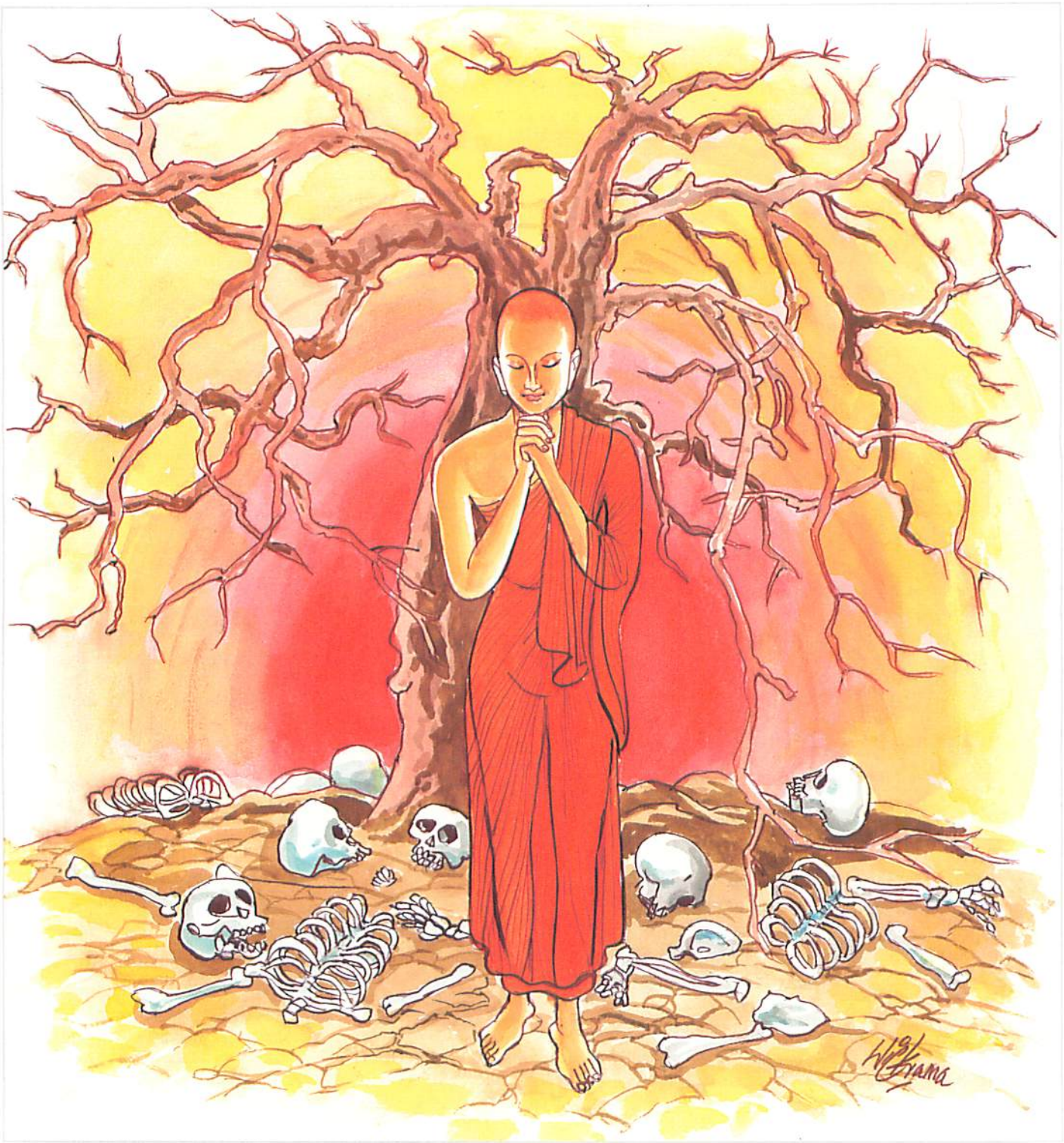
Without deep insight into the impermanence and unsubstantiality of all phenomena of existence there is no attainment of deliverance. Hence comprehension of impermanence gained by direct meditative experience, heads two lists of insight knowledge: (a) contemplation of impermanence is the first of the eighteen chief kinds of insight; (b) the contemplation of arising and vanishing is the first of nine kinds of knowledge which lead to the purification by knowledge and vision of the path congress. Contemplation of impermanence leads to the conditionless deliverance. As herein the faculty of confidence is outstanding, he who attains in that way the path of stream-entry, is called a faith-devotee and at the seven higher stages he is called faith-liberated.

pabhaṇguraṁ: the body is likely to disintegrate easily.

pūtisandēhō: putrid matter oozes out of its nine orifices.

aniccā: impermanence. Regarding impermanence, though we may see leaves on a tree, some young and unfolding, some mature, while others are sere and yellow, impermanence does not strike home in our hearts. Although our hair changes from black, to grey, to white over the years, we do not realize what is so obviously being preached by this change — impermanence. There is a vast difference between occasionally acquiescing in the mind or admitting with the tongue the truth of impermanence, and actually realizing it constantly in the heart. The trouble is that while intellectually we may accept impermanence as valid truth, emotionally we do not admit it, specially in regard to I and mine. But whatever our unskillful emotions of greed may or may not admit, impermanence remains a truth, and the sooner we come to realize through insight that it is a truth, the happier we shall be, because our mode of thought will thus be nearer to reality.

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Seeing bleached human bones lying all around, how could there be delight in sensuality.

149. *Yān'imāni apatthāni*
alāpūn'ēva sāradē
kāpōtakāni aṭṭhīni
tāni disvāna kā rati? (11:4)

These dove-hued bones
scattered in Fall,
like long white gourds,
what joy in seeing them?

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A SIGHT THAT STOPS DESIRE

11 (4) The Story of Adhimānika Monks (Verse 149)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to some monks who over-estimated themselves.

A great number of monks, after taking a subject of meditation from the Buddha, went into the woods. There, they practiced meditation ardently and diligently and soon attained deep mental absorption (jhāna) and they thought that they were free from sensual desires and, therefore, had attained arahatship. Actually, they were only over-estimating themselves. Then, they went to the Buddha, with the intention of informing the Buddha about what they thought was their attainment of arahatship.

When they arrived at the outer gate of the Monastery, the Buddha said to the Venerable Ānanda, "Those monks will not benefit much by coming to see me now; let them go to the cemetery first and come to see me only afterwards." The Venerable Ānanda then delivered the message of the Buddha to those monks, and they reflected, "The Buddha knows everything; he must have some reason in making us go to the cemetery first." So they went to the cemetery.

There, when they saw the putrid corpses they could look at them as just skeletons, and bones, but when they saw some fresh dead bodies they realized, with horror, that they still had some sensual desires awakening in them. The Buddha saw them from his perfumed chamber and sent forth his radiance; then he appeared to them and said, "Monks! Seeing these bleached bones, is it proper for you to have any sensual desires in you?" At the end of the discourse, the monks attained arahatship.

Then the Buddha pronounced this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 149)

sāradē apatthāni alāpūni iva kāpōtakāni yāni imāni aṭṭhīni tāni disvāna kā rati

sāradē: during autumn; *apatthāni:* scattered carelessly; *alāpūni iva:* like gourds; *kāpōtakāni:* grey coloured; *yāni imāni:* such; *aṭṭhīni tāni:* these bones; *disvāna:* having seen; *kā rati:* who ever will lust

In the dry autumnal season, one can see bones and skulls strewn around. These dry grey-hued skulls are like gourds thrown here and there. Seeing these, whoever will lust?

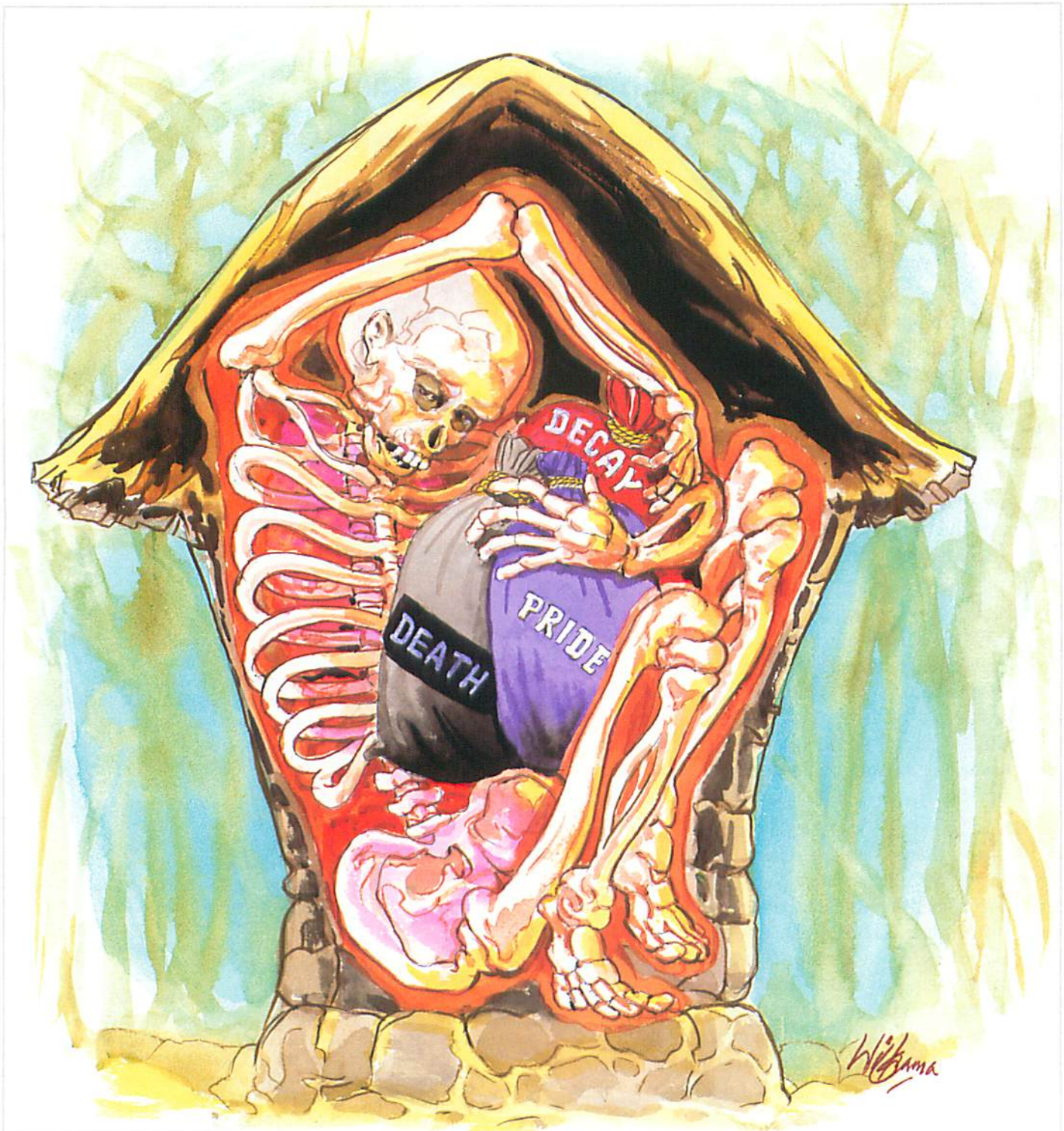
Commentary

aṭṭhīni: bones. The stanza describes a variety of human bones strewn in a cemetery. They symbolize the universal law of decay — *jarā.*

jarā: old age, decay. Old age (decay) is one of the three divine messengers. divine messengers is a symbolic name for old age, disease and death, since these three things remind man of his future and rouse him to earnest striving. It is said, "Did you, O man, never see in the world a man or a woman eighty, ninety or a hundred years old, frail, crooked as a gable-roof, bent down, resting on crutches, with tottering steps, infirm, youth long since fled, with broken teeth, grey and scanty hair, or bald-headed, wrinkled, with blotched limbs? And did it never occur to you that you also are subject to old age, that you also cannot escape it? Did you never see in the world a man or a woman, who being sick, afflicted and grievously ill, and wallowing in their own filth, was lifted up by some people, and put down by others? And did it never occur to you that you also are subject to disease, that you also cannot escape it? Did you never see in the world the corpse of a man or a woman, one, or two, or three days after death, swollen up, blue-black in colour, and full of corruption? And did it never occur to you that you also are subject to death, that you also cannot escape it?"

When one sees the impermanence of everything in life: how everything one is attached to and dependent on, changing, parting or coming to destruction, what is left is only the emotional disturbance: the feeling of insecurity, loneliness, fear, anxiety, worry and unhappiness. The only way to find happiness is to learn to control the emotions and calm the mind, by changing the way we think. We have to become detached from things and independent emotionally. This is done by understanding that we do not own anything in the world, including what we call ourselves: the body, mind, and spirit.

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A citadel of bones, flesh and blood plastered; home of decay, death, hypocrisy and pride.

150. *Aṭṭhīnaṁ nagaraṁ kataṁ*
maṁsalōhitalēpanaṁ
yattha jarā ca maccū ca
mānō makkhō ca ōhitō. (11:5)

This city's made of bones
plastered with flesh and blood,
within are stored decay and death,
besmearing and conceit.

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THE BODY IS A CITY OF BONES

11 (5) The Story of Nun Rūpanandā (Janapadakalyāni) (Verse 150)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Janapadakalyāni.

Princess Janapadakalyāni was the daughter-in-law of Gōtamī, the step-mother of Gōtama the Buddha; because she was very beautiful she was also known as Rūpanandā. She was married to Nanda, half brother of the Buddha. One day she pondered, "My elder brother who could have become a Universal Monarch has renounced the world to become a monk; he is now a Buddha. Rāhula, the son of my elder brother, and my own husband Prince Nanda have also become monks. My mother Gōtami has also become a nun, and I am all alone here!" So saying, she went to the monastery of some nuns and became a nun herself. Thus, she had become a nun not out of faith but only in imitation of others and because she felt lonely.

Rūpanandā had heard from others that the Buddha often taught that impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality of the khandhas (component things). So she thought he would talk deprecatingly about her good looks if he should see her; and thus thinking, she kept away from the Buddha. But other nuns, coming back from the monastery, kept talking in praise of the Buddha; so, one day, she decided to accompany other nuns to the monastery.

The Buddha saw her and reflected, "A thorn can only be taken out with a thorn; Rūpanandā being very attached to her body and being very proud of her beauty, I must take the pride and attachment out of her through beauty." So, with his supernormal power, he caused an image of a very beautiful lady of about sixteen years of age to be seated near him, fanning him. This young girl was visible only to Rūpanandā and the Buddha. When Rūpanandā saw the girl, she realized that compared to that girl, she herself was just like an old, ugly crow compared to a beautiful white swan. Rūpanandā had a good look at the girl and she felt that she liked her very much. Then, she looked again and was surprised to find that the girl had grown to the age of about twenty. Again and again, she looked at the figure beside the Buddha and every time she noticed that the girl had grown older and older. Thus, the girl turned into a grown-up lady, then into a middle-aged lady, and a very old lady, successively. Rūpanandā also noticed that with the arising of a new image, the old image disappeared, and she came to realize that there was a continuous process of change and decay in the body. With the coming of this realization, her attachment to the body diminished. Meanwhile, the figure near the Buddha had turned into an old, decrepit lady, who could no longer control her bodily functions, and was rolling in her own excreta. Finally, she died, her body got bloated, pus and maggots came out of the nine openings and crows and vultures were trying to snatch at the dead body.

Having seen all these, Rūpanandā pondered, "This young girl has grown old and decrepit and died in this very place under my own eyes. In the same way, my body will also grow old and wear out; it will be subject to disease and I will also die." Thus, she came to perceive the true nature of the khandhas. At this point, the Buddha talked about the impermanence, the unsatisfactoriness and the insubstantiality of the khandhas, and Rūpanandā attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 150)

yattha jarāca maccū ca mānō ca makkhō ca ōhitō
maṁsalōhita lēpanaṁ aṭṭhīnaṁ kataṁ nagaraṁ

yattha: where; *jarā ca:* decay; *maccū ca:* death; *mānō makkhō ca:* pride and ingratitude too; ōhitō: are deposited; *maṁsalōhita lēpanaṁ:* plastered with flesh and blood; *aṭṭhīnaṁ:* of bones; *kataṁ:* is built; *nagaraṁ:* a city

The body is made of bones which form its structure. This bare structure is plastered and filled with flesh and blood. Inside this citadel are deposited decay, death, pride and ingratitude.

Commentary

makkhō: ingratitude; slander. The tendency to run down others and to slur what is good about them is described as *makkha*. The bad quality of attempting to cancel even the highest traits of others is meant by this expression. Both laymen and the clergy may be guilty of this tendency to negate the good done to one by another. Here, it is considered a general human failing.

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Decorated royal coaches perish. Even so our bodies. The revered true Dhamma thrives.

151. *Jīranti vē rājarathā sucittā*
Athō sarīraṁ'pi jaraṁ upēti
satañca dhammō na jaraṁ upēti
santō havē sabbhi pavēdayanti. (11:6)

Even rich royal chariots rot,
the body too does rot, decay,
but undecaying's Dhamma of the Good
who to the good declare.

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BUDDHA'S TEACHING NEVER DECAYS

11 (6) The Story of Queen Mallika (Verse 151)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Mallikā, queen of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala.

One day, Mallikā went into the bathroom to wash her face, hands and feet. Her pet dog came in; as she was bending to wash her feet, the dog tried to have sex with her, and the queen appeared to be amused and somewhat pleased. The king saw this strange incident through the window from his bedroom. When the queen came in, he said angrily to the queen, "Oh, you wicked woman! What were you doing with that dog in the bathroom? Do not deny what I saw with my own eyes." The queen replied that she was only washing her face, her hands and her feet, and so was doing nothing wrong. Then she continued, "But, that room is very strange. If anyone went into that room, to one looking from this window there would appear to be as two. If you do not believe me, O king, please go into that room and I will look through this window."

So, the king went into the bathroom. When he came out, Mallikā asked the king why he misbehaved with a she-goat in that room. The king denied it, but the queen insisted that she saw them with her own eyes. The king was puzzled, but being dim-witted, he accepted the queen's explanation, and concluded that the bathroom was, indeed very strange.

From that time, the queen was full of remorse for having lied to the king and for having brazenly accused him of misbehaving with a she-goat. Thus, even when she was approaching death, she forgot to think about the great, unrivalled charities she had shared with her husband and only remembered that she had been unfair to him. As a result of this, when she died she was reborn in Niraya (hell). After her burial, the king intended to ask the Buddha where she was reborn. The Buddha wished to spare his feelings, and also did not want him to lose faith in the Dhamma. So he willed that this question should not be put to him and King Pasēnadi forgot to ask the Buddha.

However, after seven days in niraya, the queen was reborn in the Tusita dēva world. On that day, the Buddha went to King Pasēnadi's palace for alms-food; he indicated that he wished to rest in the coach-shed where the royal carriages were kept. After offering alms-food, the king asked the Buddha where queen Mallikā was reborn and the Buddha replied, "Mallika has been reborn in the Tusita dēva world." Hearing this, the king was very pleased, and said, "Where else could she have been reborn? She was always thinking of doing good deeds, always thinking what to offer to the Buddha on the next day. Venerable! Now that she is gone, I, your humble disciple, hardly know what to do." To him the Buddha said, "Look at these carriages of your father and your grandfather; these are all worn down and lying useless; so also is your body, which is subject to death and decay. Only the Dhamma of the virtuous is not subject to decay."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 151)

sucittā rājarathā vē jīranti athō sarīraṁ api jaraṁ upēti, sataṁ dhammō ca jaraṁ na upēti, santō sabbhi havē pavēdayanti.

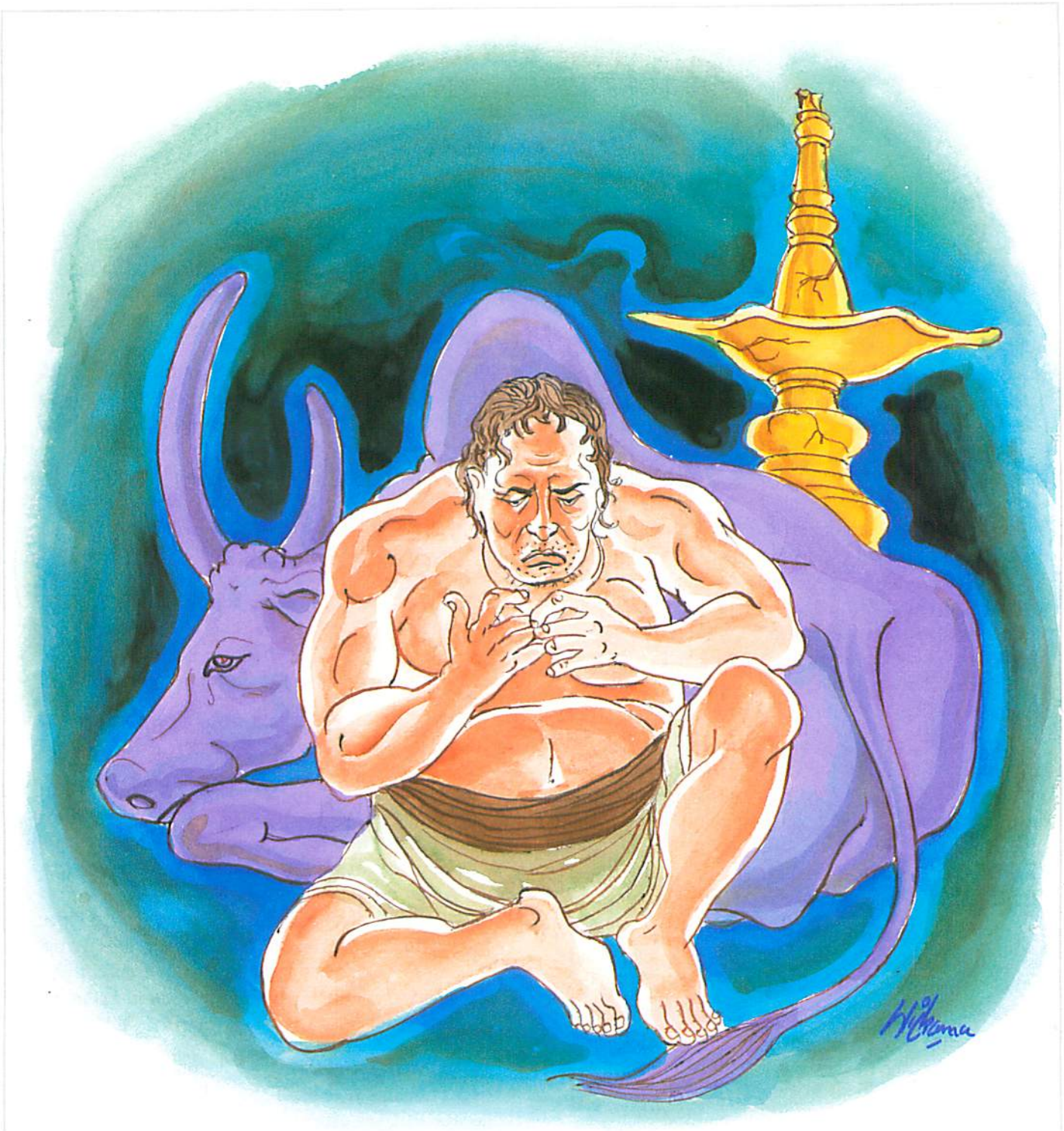
sucittā: the well decked; *rājarathā:* the royal carriages; *vē jīranti:* certainly disintegrate; *athō:* similarly; *sarīraṁ api:* the body too; *jaraṁ:* decay; *upēti:* reaches; *sataṁ:* of noble person (like the Buddha); *dhammō:* the teaching; *ca jaraṁ:* decay; *na upēti:* does not reach; *santō:* those supremely disciplined persons; *sabbhi:* with good people; *havē:* without any doubt; *pavēdayanti:* communicate

Such beautiful and attractive objects as the carriages of kings also disintegrate. The human body too decays. But, the experience of truth never decays. The calm ones experience this truth.

Commentary

While everything decays and dies, if one can maintain an unshaken mind, that calmness is the only stable experience which is known only to those who have achieved the serenity of Nibbāna.

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The unwise man of little learning ages like the bull. His flesh does grow. Not his wisdom.

152. *Appassutā'yaṁ purisō*
balivaddō'va jīrati
maṁsāni tassa vaḍḍhanti
paññā tassa na vaḍḍhati. (11:7)

Just as the ox grows old
so this man of little learning:
his fleshiness increases,
his wisdom doesn't grow.

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Chapter 13

LŌKA VAGGA

World

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No depraved vision, no heedlessness, and no low pursuits for worldly gains.

167. *Hīnaṁ dhammaṁ na sēveyya*
pamādēna na saṁvasē
micchādiṭṭhiṁ na sēveyya
na siyā lōkavaḍḍhanō. (13:1)

Do not follow base desires,
nor live with heedlessness,
do not follow wrong beliefs
to grow in worldly ways.

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LÔKA VAGGA (WORLD)
DO NOT CULTIVATE THE WORLDLY

13 (1) The Story of a Young Monk (Verse 167)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a young monk.

Once, a young monk accompanied an older monk to the house of Visākhā. After taking rice gruel, the elder monk left for another place, leaving the young monk behind at the house of Visākhā. The granddaughter of Visākhā was filtering some water for the young monk, and when she saw her own reflection in the big water pot she smiled. Seeing her thus smiling, the young monk looked at her and he also smiled. When she saw the young monk looking at her and smiling at her, she lost her temper, and cried out angrily, "You, with a shaven head! Why are you smiling at me?" The young monk retorted, "You are a shaven head yourself; your mother and your father are also shaven heads!" Thus, they quarrelled, and the young girl went weeping to her grandmother. Visākhā came and said to the young monk, "Please do not get angry with my granddaughter. But, a monk does have his hair shaved, his finger nails and toe nails cut, and putting on a robe which is made up of cut pieces, he goes on alms-round with a bowl. What this young girl said was quite right." The young monk replied, "It is true, but why should she abuse me on that account?" At this point, the elder monk returned; but both Visākhā and the old monk failed to appease the young monk and the young girl who were quarrelling.

Soon after this, the Buddha arrived and learned about the quarrel. The Buddha knew that time was ripe for the young monk to attain sōtāpatti fruition. Then, in order to make the young monk more responsive to his words, he seemingly sided with him and said to Visākhā, "Visākhā, what reason is there for your granddaughter to address my son as a shaven head just because he has his head shaven? After all, he had his head shaven to enter my order, didn't he?" Hearing these words, the young monk went down on his knees, paid obeisance to the Buddha, and said, "Venerable! You alone understand me; neither my teacher nor the great donor of the monastery understands me." The Buddha knew that the monk was then in a receptive mood and so he said, "To smile with sensual desire is not right and improper to have ignoble thoughts." At the end of the discourse, the young monk attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation

hīnaṁ dhammaṁ na sēveyya pamādēna na saṁvasē micchādiṭṭhiṁ na sēveyya lōkavaḍḍhanō na siyā

hīnaṁ: depraved; *dhammaṁ:* ways of life, traits; *na sēveyya:* do not cultivate; *pamādēna:* slothfully; *na saṁvasē:* do not live your life; *micchādiṭṭhiṁ:* false views; *na sēveyya:* do not turn to; *lōkavaḍḍhanō:* a cultivator of the world; *na siyā:* do not be

Stoop not to depraved ways, to practices that promote lower urges. Do not live slothfully. Do not associate yourself with those who hold false views.

Commentary

micchādiṭṭhim na sēveyya: do not embrace false views. These are views that go against the Teaching of the Buddha - against Dhamma. Those who take to false views can be described as treading the false path - *micchā-magga* which is *atthangika:* The eightfold wrong path, i.e., (1) wrong view *(micchā-diṭṭhi)*; (2) wrong thought *(micchāsankappa)*; (3) wrong speech *(micchā-vācā)*; (4) wrong bodily action *(micchā-kammanta)*; (5) wrong livelihood *(micchā-ājiva)*; (6) wrong effort *(micchā-vāyāma)*; (7) wrong mindfulness *(micchā-sati)*; (8) wrong concentration *(micchā-samādhi)*. Just as the eight-fold right path *(sammā-magga)*, so also here the eight links are included in the group of mental formations *(sankhāra-kkhandha)*. The links 2, 6, 7 and 8 are inseparably bound up with every kammically-unwholesome state of consciousness. Often are also present 3, 4, or 5, sometimes link 1.

Special Note: Of those religious persons who held false views in the Buddha's days, six are very well known. Their names and the systems they professed are given below: (1) *Pūrana Kassapa - akiriya vāda* (doctrine of inefficacy); (2) *Ajitha Kēsakambala - uchchēda vāda* (materialist doctrine of annihilationism); 3) *Pakuda Kaccāyana - akrunktatavāda* (nihilism); (4) *Makkhali-Gōsāla - daiva vāda* (fatalism); (5) *Sanjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta Amarāvikkhēpa vāde - anischita vāda* (doctrine of rational sceptisism); (6) *Niganthanāthaputta - chātuyāma saṁvara vāda* (doctrine of Ahimsā). Of these six teachers, information regarding four i.e., *Pūrana Kassapa, Ajitha Kēsakaṁbala, Pakuda Kachchāyana* and *Sanjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta*, is given in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāyā*. Information regarding the other two is given in both Jaina and Buddhist literature. The teachings of these six teachers can be divided into two categories: (1) *Asthika Vāda* (Belief in the existence of the soul and the next world); (2) *Nāsthika Vāda* (Non-belief in a soul and the next world, and in the results of good and bad deeds).

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Diligently active, live the Dhamma to perfection. Such life gives happiness here and hereafter.

168. *Uttiṭṭhē nappamajjeyya*
dhammaṁ sucaritaṁ carē
dhammacāri sukhaṁ sēti
asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca. (13:2)

Rouse yourself, be diligent,
in Dhamma faring well.
Who dwells in Dhamma's happy
in this birth and the next.

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THE RIGHTEOUS ARE HAPPY — HERE AND HEREAFTER

13 (2) The Story of King Suddhōdana (Verses 168 & 169)

While residing at the Banyan Grove, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to his own father.

For a certain time the Buddha made his first journey to the city of Kapila, and when he arrived there, his kinsmen came forth to meet him and to greet him. On that occasion, in order to break the overwhelming pride of his kinsfolk, he created by supernormal psychic power a cloister of jewels in mid-air, and in this cloister walked up and down preaching the Dhamma. The hearts of his kinsfolk were straightaway endowed with faith, and beginning with the great king Suddhōdana, all did reverence to him. Thereupon there fell upon the assemblage of his kinsfolk a shower of rain, with reference to which there arose a discussion among the multitude. Said the Buddha, "Monks, this is not the first time a shower of rain has fallen upon an assemblage of my kinsfolk; the same thing happened in a previous state of existence also." So saying, he related the Vessantara Jātaka. Having heard him preach the Dhamma, his kinsfolk departed, not even one extending an invitation to the Buddha. Likewise, the king, although the thought occurred to him, "If my son does not come to my house, where will he go?", went home without inviting him. When he reached the royal residence, however, he caused rice-gruel and other kinds of food to be prepared for twenty thousand monks, and likewise seats to be provided for them.

On the following day, as the Buddha entered the city to receive alms, he considered within himself, "Did the Buddhas of the past, upon entering the city of their father, straightaway enter the house of their kinsfolk, or did they go from house to house in regular order receiving alms?" Perceiving that they always went from house to house, the Buddha, likewise, began at the first house and went from house to house receiving alms. They brought word of this to the king. The king went quickly out of his residence, adjusting his cloak as he went, and prostrating himself before the Buddha, said, "Son, why do you mortify me? I am overwhelmed with shame to see you going from house to house receiving alms. In this very city where you used to go in a golden carriage it would be improper for you to go from house to house in a golden litter receiving alms. Why do you put me to shame?" "Great king, I am not putting you to shame; I am merely keeping up the tradition of my lineage." "But, my dear son, is it a tradition of my lineage to gain a livelihood by going from house to house receiving alms?" "No, great king, that is not a tradition of your lineage. But it is a tradition of my lineage, for countless thousands of Buddhas have gone from house to house receiving alms, and have so gained their sustenance."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 168)

uttiṭṭhē nappamajjeyya dhammaṁ sucaritaṁ carē
dhammacāri asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca sukhaṁ sēti

uttiṭṭhē: wake up to reality; *nappamajjeyya:* do not be deluded; *dhammaṁ:* in reality; *sucaritaṁ carē:* live correctly; *dhammacāri:* one who lives realistically; *asmiṁ lōkē:* in this world; *paramhi ca:* and in the next; *sukhaṁ:* in comfort; *sēti:* lives

Wake up to reality; do not be deluded. Live in accordance with reality. The realistic person lives happily in this world and in the next.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 169)

dhammaṁ sucaritaṁ carē naṁ duccaritaṁ na
carē dhammacāri asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca sukhaṁ
sēti

dhammaṁ: within reality; *sucaritaṁ carē:* live correctly; *naṁ:* that; *duccaritaṁ:* in a wrong way; *na carē:* do not live; *dhammacāri:* he who lives realistically; *asmiṁ lōkē:* in this world; *paramhi ca:* and in the next; *sukhaṁ:* in comfort; *sēti:* lives

Practice the dhamma to perfection. Do not practice it in a bad, faulty manner. He who follows the teaching in the proper manner will live in peace and comfort both in this world and in the next.

(cont'd on page 363)

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Live dhamma to perfection, not half-heartedly. Dhamma-life ensures happiness everywhere.

169. *Dhammaṁ carē sucaritaṁ*
na taṁ duccaritaṁ carē
dhammacārī sukhaṁ sēti
asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca. (13:3)

Fare in Dhamma coursing well,
in evil courses do not fare.
Who dwells in Dhamma's happy
in this birth and the next.

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BEHAVE ACCORDING TO THE TEACHING

13 (2) The Story of King Suddhōdana (Verses 168 & 169) (cont'd)

Commentary

King Suddhōdana: News that the Buddha was residing at Rājagaha and was preaching the Dhamma reached the ears of the aged King Suddhōdana, and his anxiety to see his enlightened son grew stronger. On nine successive occasions he sent nine courtiers, each with a large following, to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. Contrary to his expectations, they all heard the Dhamma and, attaining arahatship, entered the Sangha. Since arahats were indifferent to worldly things they did not convey the message to the Buddha. The disappointed king finally dispatched another faithful courtier, Kāludāyi, who was a playmate of the Buddha. Like the rest he also had the fortune to attain arahatship and joined the Sangha. But, unlike the others, he conveyed the message to the Buddha, and persuaded Him to visit His aged royal father. As the season was most suitable for travelling, the Buddha, attended by a large retinue of disciples, journeyed in slow stages delivering the Dhamma on the way, and in due course arrived at Kapilavatthu in two months. Arrangements were made for Him to reside at the Park of Nigrōdha, a Sākya. The conceited elderly Sākyas, thinking to themselves, "He is our younger brother, our nephew, our grandson," said to the young princes: "You do him obeisance; we will sit behind you." As they sat without paying Him due reverence he subdued their pride by rising into the air and issued water and heat from his body. The king, seeing this wonderful phenomenon, saluted Him immediately, saying that it was his third salutation. He saluted Him for the first time when he saw the infant prince's feet rest on the head of ascetic Asita whom he wanted the child to revere. His second salutation took place at the ploughing festival when he saw the infant prince seated cross-legged on the couch, absorbed in meditation. All the Sākyas were then compelled to pay Him due reverence. Thereupon the Buddha came down from the sky and sat on the seat prepared for him. The humbled relatives took their seats eager to listen to His Teachings. At this moment an unexpected shower of rain fell upon the Sākya kinsfolk. The occurrence of this strange phenomenon resulted in a discussion amongst themselves. Then the Buddha preached the *Vessantara Jātaka* to show that a similar incident took place in the presence of His relatives in a previous birth. The Sākyas were delighted with the discourse, and they departed, not knowing that it was their duty to invite the Buddha and the disciples for the noon-day meal. It did not occur to the king to invite the Buddha, although he thought to himself: "If my son does not come to my house, where will he go?" Reaching home, he made ready several kinds of food expecting their arrival in the palace.

As there was no special invitation for the noon-day meal on the following day, the Buddha and His disciples got ready for their usual alms-round. Before proceeding He considered to Himself: "Did the sages of the past, upon entering the city of their kinsfolk, straightaway enter the houses of the relatives, or did they go from house to house in regular order receiving alms?" Perceiving that they did so from house to house, the Buddha went in the streets of Kapilavatthu seeking alms. On hearing of this seemingly disgraceful conduct of the Buddha from his daughter-in-law Yasōdharā, perturbed in mind, hurried to the Buddha and, saluting Him, said, "Son, why do you ruin me? I am overwhelmed with shame to see you begging alms. Is it proper for you, who used to travel in a golden palanquin, to seek alms in this very city? Why do you put me to shame?"

"I am not putting you to shame, O great king! I am following the custom of my lineage," replied the Buddha, to the king's astonishment. "But, dear son, is it the custom of my lineage to gain a livelihood by seeking alms? Surely ours is the warrior lineage of Mahāsammata, and not a single warrior has gone seeking alms." "O great king, that is the custom of your royal lineage. But this is the custom of my Buddha lineage. Several thousands of sages have lived by seeking alms." Standing on the street, the Buddha then advised the king thus: "Be not heedless in standing at a door for alms. Lead a righteous life. The righteous live happily both in this world and in the next." Hearing it, the king realized the Teaching and attained the first stage of sainthood. Immediately after, he took the Buddha's bowl and, conducting Him and His disciples to the palace, served them with choice food. At the close of the meal the Buddha again exhorted him thus: "Lead a righteous life, and not one that is corrupt. The righteous live happily both in this world and in the next." Thereupon the king attained the second stage of sainthood *(sakadāgāmi)* and Pajāpatī Gōtamī attained the first stage of sainthood *(sōtāpatti)*. On a later occasion when it was related to the Buddha that the King refused to believe that his son had died owing to his severe austerities without achieving his goal, the Buddha preached the *Dhammapāla Jātaka* to show that in a previous birth too he refused to believe that his son had died although he was shown a heap of bones. At this time he attained the third stage of sainthood *(anāgāmi)*. On his death-bed, the king heard the Dhamma from the Buddha for the last time and attained arahatship. After experiencing the bliss of emancipation for seven days, he passed away as a lay arahat when the Buddha was about forty years old. King Suddhōdana had the greatest affection for his son Prince Siddhattha. Some traditions record seven dreams dreamt by the king, just before Prince Siddhattha saw the four presages, and renounced the lay-life. These are the dreams: (1) Innumerable crowds of people gathered around a great imperial banner like that of Indra, and they, lifting it and holding it up, proceeded to carry it through Kapilavatthu, and finally went from the city by the Eastern Gate; (2) Prince Siddhatha riding on a royal chariot drawn by great elephants passed through the Southern Gate; (3) The Prince seated in a very magnificent four-horsed chariot again proceeded through the Western Gate; (4) A magnificently jewelled discus flew through the air, and proceeded through the Northern Gate; (5) The Prince sitting in the middle of the four great highways of Kapilavatthu, and holding a large mace, smote with it a large drum; (6) The Prince was seated on the top of a high tower in the centre of Kapilavatthu, and scattered in the four quarters of heaven countless jewels of every kind, which were gathered by the innumerable concourse of living creatures who came there; (7) Outside the city of Kapilavatthu, not very far off, six men raised their voices and wailed greatly and wept, and with their hands they plucked out the hair of their heads, and flung it by handfuls on the ground.

The Brahmin advisers of the king, when called upon to observe, expressed their inability to interpret the dreams of the king. Then a deity appeared in the guise of a brahmin at the palace gate and said that he could interpret the king's dreams. When received by the king and requested to interpret the dreams, he explained them thus: (1) According to the first dream: the prince will soon give up his present condition, and surrounded by innumerable dēvas, he will proceed from the city and become a recluse; (2) According to the second dream: the prince having left his home, will very soon attain enlightenment and ten powers of the mind; (3) According to the third dream: the prince will, after attaining enlightenment, arrive at the four intrepidities; (4) According to the fourth dream: the prince will set the wheel of the good doctrine in motion for the good of gods and men; (5) According to the fifth dream: after the prince becomes a Buddha and setting the wheel of the Dhamma in motion, the sound of his preaching will extend through the highest heavens; (6) According to the sixth dream: after enlightenment he will scatter the gems of the Dhamma for the sake of gods and men and the eight classes of creatures; 7) The seventh dream signified the misery and distress of the six heretical teachers whom the prince will, after enlightenment, discomfit and expose.

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With correct vision of life one slips out of Death's grip.

170. *Yathā bubbulakaṁ passē*
yathā passē marīcikaṁ
ēvaṁ lōkaṁ avekkhantaṁ
maccurājā na passati. (13:4)

Just as a bubble may be seen,
just as a faint mirage,
so should the world be viewed
that the Death-king sees one not.

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OBSERVE THE IMPERMANENCE OF LIFE

13 (3) The Story of Many Monks (Verse 170)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of monks.

On one occasion, a large number of monks, after taking a meditation topic from the Buddha, went into the forest to practice meditation. But they made very little progress; so they returned to the Buddha to ask for a more suitable subject of meditation. On their way to the Buddha, seeing a mirage they meditated on it. As soon as they entered the compound of the monastery, a storm broke out; as big drops of rain fell, bubbles were formed on the ground and soon disappeared. Seeing those bubbles, the monks stated, "This body of ours is perishable like the bubbles" and perceived the impermanent nature of the aggregates (khandhas). At the end of the discourse, the monks attained arahatship.

The Buddha saw them from his perfumed chamber and sent forth the radiance and appeared in their vision.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 170)

bubbulakaṁ yathā passē, marīcikaṁ yathā passē,
ēvaṁ lōkaṁ avekkhantaṁ maccurājā na passati

bubbulakaṁ: a water bubble; *yathā:* like; *passē:* one sees; *marīcikaṁ:* the mirage; *ēvaṁ:* in that manner; *lōkaṁ:* the world; *avekkhantaṁ:* the person who looks at; *maccurājā:* the king of Death; *na passati:* does not see

Look at a bubble. How impermanent is it? Look at a mirage. What an illusion! If you look at the world in this way, even the king of death will not see you.

Commentary

lōkam: the world. *lōka* denotes the three spheres of existence comprising the whole universe, i.e. (1) the sensuous world *(kāma-lōka)*, or the world of the five senses; (2) the form world *(rūpa-lōka)*, corresponding to the four levels of mental repose *(jhāna)*; (3) the formless world *(arūpalōka)*, corresponding to the four mental vacancy *(samāpatti)*.

The sensual world comprises the hells *(niraya)*, the animal kingdom *(tiracchāna-yōni)*, the ghost-realm *(pēta-lōka)*, the world of asura demons *(asura-nikāya)*, the human world *(manussa-lōka)* and the six sensual celestial worlds.

bubbulakam, marīcikam: a bubble, a mirage. This stanza reveals an aspect of Buddhist meditation. The meditator looks at the world as a phenomenon.

Elsewhere, sensation is compared to a fountain and perception to a mirage. Sensation and perception are the basic elements of experience. They are called mental constructs *(citta-sankhāra)*. Conception *(vitakka)* is called a verbal construct *(vacī-sankhāra)*. The world we perceive and conceive is a creation of these transitory psychophysical processes. This is why the world has to be seen as a fountain or a mirage. By seeing the emptiness of the world this way, all attachment ceases.

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The world looks a gaily decked royal chariot. But the wise sink not therein.

171. *Ētha passath'imaṁ lōkaṁ*
cittaṁ rājarathūpamaṁ
yattha bālā visīdanti
natthi saṅgō vijānataṁ. (13:5)

Come, look upon this world
like to a rich, royal chariot
wherein fools lounge at ease
but alert ones linger not.

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THE DISCIPLINED ARE NOT ATTACHED TO THE BODY

13 (4) The Story of Prince Abhaya (Verse 171)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Prince Abhaya (Abhayarājakumāra).

The story goes that Prince Abhaya suppressed an uprising on the frontier, which so pleased his father Bimbisāra that when the prince returned, the king gave him an entertainment woman girl skilled in dancing and singing, and conferred the kingdom on him for seven days. Accordingly for seven days the prince did not leave the house, but remained within enjoying the splendour of majesty. On the eighth day he went to the bathing-place on the river and bathed. Having so done, he entered his pleasure garden, sat down, like Santati the king's minister, and watched that woman dance and sing. However, as soon as she began to dance and sing, at that moment, just as in the case of the entertainment woman belonging to Santati the king's minister, sharp pains arose within her, and then and there she died.

Prince Abhaya was overwhelmed with sorrow at the death of this woman. Immediately the thought came to him, "With the single exception of the Buddha, there is no one who can extinguish my sorrow." So he approached the Buddha and said to him, "Venerable, please extinguish my sorrow." The Buddha comforted him by saying, "Prince, in the round of existences without conceivable beginning, there is no counting the number of times this woman has died in this manner, and no measuring the tears you have shed as you have wept over her." Observing that the prince's grief was assuaged by the lesson, he said, "Prince, do not grieve; only immature folk allow themselves to sink in the sea of grief."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 171)

yattha bālā visīdanti vijānataṁ saṅgō natthi
cittaṁ rājarathūpamaṁ imaṁ lōkaṁ ētha passatha

yattha: wherein; *bālā:* the immature; *visīdanti:* sink and perish; *vijānataṁ:* to those who are aware of reality; *saṅgō:* clinging; *natthi:* there is not; *cittaṁ:* (like a) well decked; *rājarathūpamaṁ:* royal carriage; *imaṁ lōkaṁ:* this world; *ētha:* come; *passatha:* see

The spiritually immature ones are fully engrossed in this world the glamour of which is deceptively like a decoration of royal carriage. Those who are aware of reality do not cling to those worldly things. See the world as it really is.

Commentary

vijānatam: those who see reality. In Buddhism, the Dhamma, the Teaching of the Buddha, is the true reality. The original Pāli term for Buddhism is *Dhamma*. which, literally, means that which upholds or sustains him who acts in conformity with its principles and thus prevents him from falling into woeful states. There is no proper English equivalent that exactly conveys the meaning of the Pāli term. The Dhamma is that which really is. It is the doctrine of reality. It is a means of deliverance from suffering and deliverance itself. Whether the Buddhas arise or not the Dhamma exists from all eternity. It is a Buddha that realizes this Dhamma, whichever lies hidden from the ignorant eyes of men, until the Buddha comes and compassionately reveals it to the world.

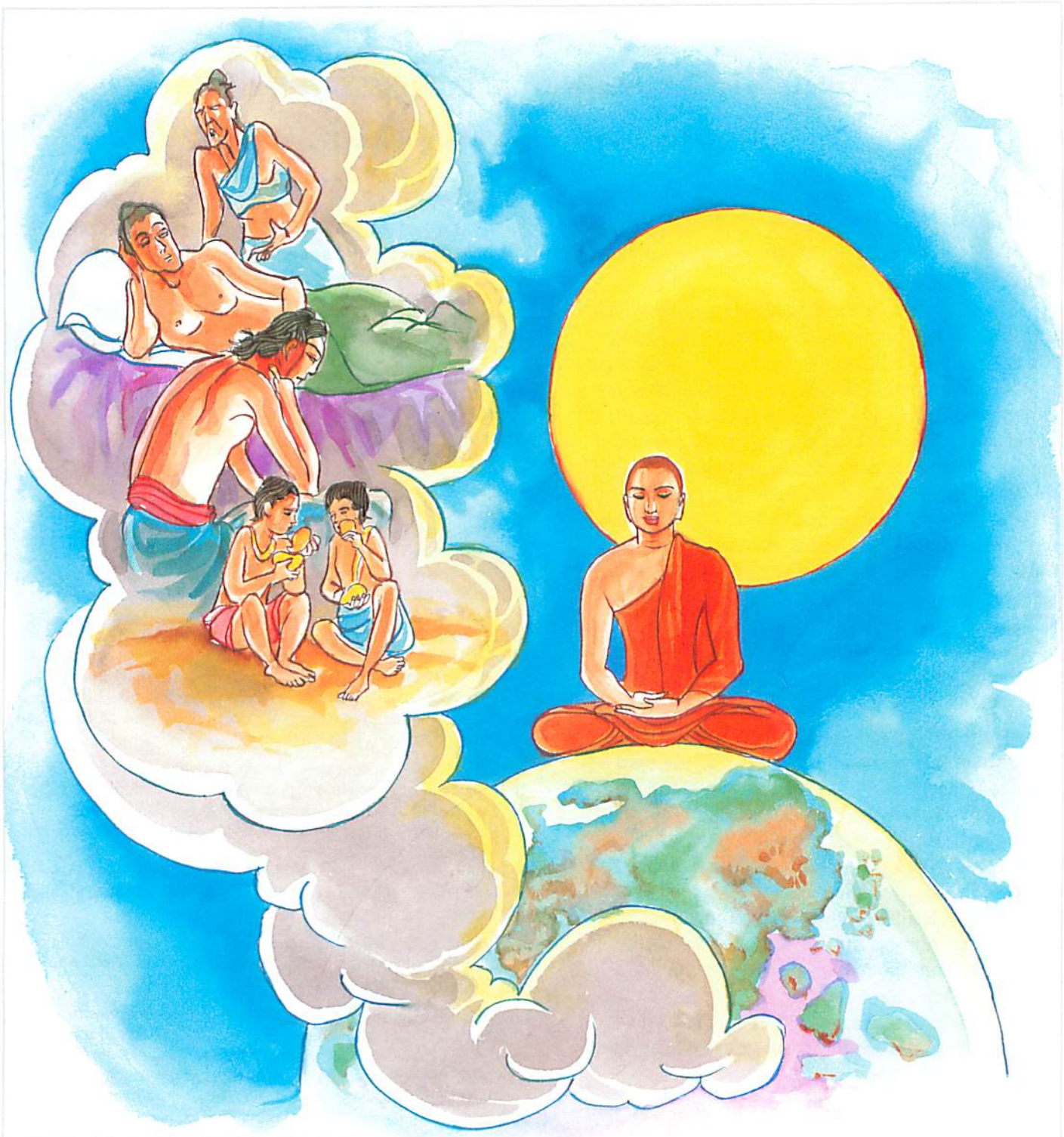
"Whether the Buddhas appear or not, O monks, it remains a fact, an established principle, a natural law that all conditioned things are transient *(anicca)*, sorrowful *(dukkha)* and that everything is soulless *(anatta)*. This fact the Tathāgata realizes, understands and when He has realized and understood it, announces, teaches, proclaims, establishes, discloses, analyses, and makes it clear, that all conditioned things are transient, sorrowful, and that everything is soulless."

In the text *Majjhima Nikāya* the Buddha says: "Only one thing only does the Buddha teach: suffering and the cessation of suffering." This is the doctrine of reality.

Those who are fully capable of seeing this reality are described as *vijānataṁ* - 'The true awareness of reality'. To be a seer of reality, effort and discipline are necessary. Discipline regulates words and deeds: concentration controls the mind; but it is insight *(paññā)*, the third and final stage, that enables the aspirant to sainthood to eradicate wholly the defilements inhibited by *samādhi*.

At the outset he cultivates purity of vision *(diṭṭhi visuddhi)* in order to see things as they truly are. With a tranquil mind he analyses and examines this so-called being. This searching examination shows what he has called 'I' personality, to be merely an impersonal mass of transitory phenomena which have been personalized. When the true nature of the phenomena is seen, this phenomenal experience is depersonalized. This is the cessation of being a self. This is the cessation of suffering, birth and death. This is the experience of Nibbāna.

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Mistakes corrected makes one to shine like the moon beaming out of a bank of clouds.

172. *Yō ca pubbē pamajjitvā*
pacchā sō nappamajjati
sō imaṁ lōkaṁ pabhāsēti
abbhā muttō'va candimā. (13:6)

Whoso was heedless formerly
but later lives with heedfulness
illuminates all this world
as moon when free from clouds.

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THE DILIGENT ILLUMINE THE WORLD

13 (5) The Story of Venerable Sammuñjanī (Verse 172)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this Verse, with reference to Venerable Sammuñjanī.

Venerable Sammuñjanī spent most of his time sweeping the precincts of the monastery. At that time, Venerable Rēvata was also staying at the monastery; unlike Sammuñjanī, Venerable Rēvata spent most of his time in meditation or deep mental absorption. Seeing Venerable Rēvata's behaviour, Venerable Sammuñjanī thought the other monk was just idling away his time. Thus, one day Sammuñjanī went to Venerable Rēvata and said to him, "You are being very lazy, living on the food offered out of faith and generosity; don't you think you should sometimes sweep the floor or the compound or some other place?" To him, Venerable Rēvata replied, "Friend, a monk should not spend all his time sweeping. He should sweep early in the morning, then go out on the alms-round. After the meal, contemplating his body he should try to perceive the true nature of the aggregates, or else, recite the texts until nightfall. Then he can do the sweeping again if he so wishes." Venerable Sammuñjanī strictly followed the advice given by Venerable Rēvata and soon attained arahatship.

Other monks noticed some rubbish piling up in the compound and they asked Sammuñjanī why he was not sweeping as much as he used to, and he replied, "When I was not mindful, I was all the time sweeping; but now I am no longer unmindful." When the monks heard his reply they were skeptical; so they went to the Buddha and said, "Venerable! Venerable Sammuñjanī falsely claims himself to be an arahat; he is telling lies." To them the Buddha said, "Sammuñjanī has indeed attained arahatship; he is telling the truth."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 172)

Yō pubbē pamajjitvā ca sō pacchā nappamajjati;
sō abbhā muttō candimā iva imaṁ lōkaṁ pabhāsēti

Yō: if some one; *pubbē:* previously; *pamajjitvā:* having been deluded; *ca sō:* he here too; *pacchā:* later on; *nappamajjati:* becomes disillusioned; *sō:* he; *abbhā muttō:* released from dark cloud; *candimā iva:* like the moon; *imaṁ lōkaṁ:* this world; *pabhāsēti:* illumines

An individual may have been deluded in the past. But later on corrects his thinking and becomes a disillusioned person. He, therefore, is like the moon that has come out from behind a dark cloud; thus, he illumines the world.

Commentary

abbhā muttō candimāiva: like the moon that is released from the dark clouds. This image is used about those who have attained higher states of spirituality. The moon shines in all its brightness when it escapes dark clouds. When truth-seekers escape the bonds of worldliness, they, too, shine forth. The escape from the dark clouds of worldly hindrances, takes place in several stages. When the *jhānas* are developed by temporarily removing the obscurants *(Nīvarana)* the mind is so purified that it resembles a polished mirror, where everything is clearly reflected in true perspective.

Discipline *(sīla)* regulates words and deeds; composure *(samādhi)* calms the mind; but it is insight *(paññā)* the third and the final stage, that enables the aspirant to sainthood to eradicate wholly the defilements removed temporarily by *samādhi*. At the outset, he cultivates purity of vision *(diṭṭhi visuddhi)* in order to see things as they truly are. With calmed mind he analyses and examines his experience. This searching examination shows what he has called 'I' personality, to be merely an impersonal process of phychophysical activity.

Having thus gained a correct view of the real nature of this so-called being, freed from the false notion of a permanent soul, he searches for the causes of this ego.

Thereupon, he contemplates the truth that all constructs are transitory *(anicca)*, painful *(dukkha)*, and impersonal *(anatta)*. Wherever he turns his eyes he sees noght but these three characteristics standing out in bold relief. He realizes that life is a mere flux conditioned by internal and external causes. Nowhere does he find any genuine happiness, because everything is fleeting.

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Who so by the power of one's virtues reduces one's evil done, he beams like the moon...

173. *Yassa pāpaṁ kataṁ kammaṁ*
kusalēna pithīyati
sō imaṁ lōkaṁ pabhāsēti
abbhā muttō'va candimā. (13:7)

Who by wholesome kamma
covers up the evil done
illumines all this world
as moon when free from clouds.

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EVIL IS OVERCOME BY GOOD

13 (6) The Story of Venerable Angulimāla (Verse 173)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Angulimāla.

Angulimāla was the son of the head-priest in the court of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala. His original name was Ahiṁsaka. When he was of age, he was sent to Taxilā, the renowned university town. Ahiṁsaka was intelligent and was also obedient to his teacher. So he was liked by the teacher and his wife; as a result, other pupils were jealous of him. So they went to the teacher and falsely reported that Ahiṁsaka was having an affair with the teacher's wife. At first, the teacher did not believe them, but after being told a number of times he believed them; and so he vowed to have revenge on the boy. To kill the boy would reflect badly on him; so he thought of a plan which was worse than murder. He told Ahiṁsaka to kill one thousand men or women and in return he promised to give the boy priceless knowledge. The boy wanted to have this knowledge, but was very reluctant to take life. However, he agreed to do as he was told. Thus, he kept on killing people, and not to lose count, he threaded a finger each of everyone he killed and wore them like a garland round his neck. In this way, he was known as Angulimāla, and became the terror of the countryside. The king himself heard about the exploits of Angulimāla, and he made preparations to capture him. When Mantāni, the mother of Angulimāla, heard about the king's intention, out of love to her son, she went into the forest in a desperate bid to save her son. By this time, the chain round the neck of Angulimāla had nine hundred and ninety-nine fingers in it, just one finger short of one thousand.

Early in the morning on that day, the Buddha saw Angulimāla in his vision, and reflected that if he did not intervene, Angulimāla who was on the look out to the last person to make up the one thousand would see his mother and might kill her. In that case, Angulimāla would have to suffer in niraya endlessly. So out of compassion, the Buddha left for the forest where Angulimāla was. Angulimāla, after many sleepless days and nights, was very tired and near exhaustion. At the same time, he was very anxious to kill the last person to make up his full quota of one thousand and so complete his task. He made up his mind to kill the first person he met. Suddenly, as he looked out he saw the Buddha and ran after him with his knife raise. But the Buddha could not be reached while he himself was completely exhausted. Then, looking at the Buddha, he cried out, "O monk, stop! Stop!" and the Buddha replied, "I have stopped, only you have not stopped." Angulimāla did not get the significance of the words of the Buddha, so he asked, "O monk! Why do you say that you have stopped and I have not stopped?"

The Buddha then said to him, "I say that I have stopped, because I have given up killing all beings, I have given up ill-treating all beings, and because I have established myself in universal love, patience, and knowledge through reflection. But, you have not given up killing or ill-treating others and you are not yet established in universal love and patience. Hence, you are the one who has not stopped." On hearing these words from the mouth of the Buddha, Angulimāla reflected, "These are the words of a wise man. This monk is so very wise and so very brave; he must be the Buddha himself! He must have come here specially to make me see the light." So thinking, he threw away his weapon and asked the Buddha to admit him to the order of the monks. Then and there, the Buddha made him a monk.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 173)

yassa kataṁ pāpaṁ kammaṁ kusalēna pithīyati
sō abbhā muttō candimā iva imaṁ lōkaṁ pabhāsēti

yassa: if by someone; *kataṁ pāpaṁ kammaṁ:* evil action done; *kusalēna:* by good; *pithīyati:* is stopped; *sō:* he; *abbhā muttō:* escaped from a dark cloud; *candimā iva:* like the moon; *imaṁ lōkaṁ:* this world; *pabhāsēti:* illumines

If the evil habits of behaviour of an individual get replaced by his good behaviour, he will illumine the world.

Commentary

This verse was pronounced with reference to Angulimāla. He is one of the most famous and extremely colourful of the disciples of the Buddha.

kusalēna pithīyati: One has to reap the effects of one's Kamma. But one is not bound to reap the effects of all actions one has done in the course of Saṁsāra. If one were, an escape from birth and death would be impossible. At times it is possible to obliterate one's evil kamma by performing powerful good kamma.

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Of this blind world only a handful escapes like birds escaping from a net.

174. *Andhabhūtō ayaṁ lōkō*
tanuk'ettha vipassati
sakuntō jālamuttō'va
appō saggāya gacchati. (13:8)

This world is blind-become
few are here who see within
as few the birds break free from net
so those who go to heavens.

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WITHOUT EYE OF WISDOM, THIS WORLD IS BLIND

13 (7) The Story of the Weaver-Girl (Verse 174)

While residing at the Monastery near Aggāḷava shrine in the country of Āḷavi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a young maid, who was a weaver.

At the conclusion of an alms-giving ceremony in Āḷavi, the Buddha gave a discourse on the impermanence of the aggregates (khandhās). The main points the Buddha stressed on that day may be expressed as follows: "My life is impermanent; for me death only is permanent. I must certainly die; my life ends in death. Life is not permanent; death is permanent." The Buddha also exhorted the audience to be always mindful and to strive to perceive the true nature of the aggregate. He also said, "As one who is armed with a stick or a spear is prepared to meet an enemy (e.g., a poisonous snake), so also, one who is ever mindful of death will face death mindfully. He would then leave this world for a good destination (sugati). Many people did not take the above exhortation seriously, but a young girl of sixteen who was a weaver clearly understood the message. After giving the discourse, the Buddha returned to the Jētavana Monastery.

After a lapse of three years, when the Buddha surveyed the world, he saw the young weaver in his vision, and knew that time was ripe for the girl to attain sōtāpatti fruition. So the Buddha came to Āḷavi to expound the Dhamma to the second time. When the girl heard that the Buddha had come again with five hundred monks, she wanted to go and listen to the discourse which would be given by the Buddha. However, her father had also asked her to wind some thread spools which he needed urgently, so she promptly wound some spools and took them to her father. On the way to her father, she stopped for a moment at the edge of the audience, assembled to listen to the Buddha.

Meanwhile, the Buddha knew that the young weaver would come to listen to his discourse; he also knew that the girl would die when she got to the weaving shed. Therefore, it was very important that she should listen to the Dhamma on her way to the weaving shed and not on her return. So, when the young weaver appeared on the fringe of the audience, the Buddha looked at her. When she saw him looking at her, she dropped her basket and respectfully approached the Buddha. Then, he put four questions to her and she answered all of them. Hearing her answers, the people thought that the young weaver was being very disrespectful. Then, the Buddha asked her to explain what she meant by her answers, and she explained. "Venerable! Since you know that I have come from my house, I interpreted that, by your first question, you meant to ask me from what past existence I have come here. Hence my answer, 'I do not know;' the second question means, to what future existence I would be going from here; hence my answer, 'I do not know;' the third question means whether I do know that I would die one day; hence my answer, 'Yes, I do know;' the last question means whether I know when I would die; hence my answer, 'I do not know.'" The Buddha was satisfied with her explanation and he said to the audience, "Most of you might not understand clearly the meaning of the answers given by the young weaver. Those who are ignorant are in darkness, they are unable to see."Then, she continued on her way to the weaving shed. When she got there, her father was asleep on the weaver's seat. As he woke up suddenly, he accidentally pulled the shuttle, and the point of the shuttle struck the girl at her breast. She died on the spot, and her father was broken-hearted. With eyes full of tears he went to the Buddha and asked the Buddha to admit him to the Sangha. So, he became a monk, and not long afterwards, attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 174)

ayaṁ lōkō andhabhūtō ettha tanukō vipassati jālamuttō sakuntō iva appō saggāya gacchati

ayaṁ lōkō: these worldly persons; *andhabhūtō:* are blind; *ettha:* of them; *tanuko:* a few; *vipassati:* are capable of seeing well; *jālamuttō:* escaped from the net; *sakuntō iva:* like a bird; *appō:* a few; *saggāya gacchati:* go to heaven

Most people in this world are unable to see. They cannot see reality properly. Of those, only a handful are capable of insight. Only they see well. A few, like a stray bird escaping the net, can reach heaven.

Commentary

andhabhūtō: blind. The worldly people, who cannot perceive the way to liberation are described here as the blind. The handful capable of "seeing" escape the net of worldliness and reach heaven.

Sagga: blissful states, not eternal heavens.

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Like geese in flight, the wise steadily move away from the world.

175. *Haṁsādiccapathē yanti*
ākāsē yanti iddhiyā
nīyanti dhīrā lōkamhā
jetvā māraṁ savāhiṇiṁ. (13:9)

Swans upon the sun's path fly,
the powerful through space,
conquering Māra and his host
away from the world the wise are led.

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THE WISE TRAVEL BEYOND THE WORLDLY

13 (8) The Story of Thirty Monks (Verse 175)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of monks.

For one day thirty monks residing in foreign parts came to visit the Buddha. Venerable Ānanda saw those monks just as he was approaching the Buddha to wait upon him. So he thought to himself, "I will wait until the Buddha has exchanged friendly greetings with these monks, and then I will wait upon the Buddha." Accordingly he waited at the gate. When the Buddha had exchanged friendly greetings with them, he preached the Dhamma to them in a pleasing manner. After listening to the Dhamma all those monks attained arahatship. Thereupon they soared aloft and departed through the air.

When they tarried, Venerable Ānanda approached the Buddha and said, "Venerable, thirty monks came here. Where are they?" "Gone, Ānanda." "By what path did they go, venerable?' "Through the air, Ānanda." "But have they already rid themselves of the depravities?" "Yes, Ānanda. After hearing me preach the Dhamma, they attained arahatship." Now at that moment some swans came flying through the air. Said the Buddha, "Ānanda, he who has fully developed the four grades of magical power, flies through the air like a swan."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 175)

haṁsā ādiccapathē yānti iddhiyā ākāsē yanti
dhīrā savāhiṇiṁ māraṁ jetvā lōkamhā nīyanti

haṁsā: the swans; *ādiccapathē:* in the sun's path (the sky); *yanti:* fly; *iddhiyā:* those with psychic powers; *ākāsē:* in the sky; *yanti:* roam; *dhīrā:* the wise; *savāhiniṁ māraṁ:* death with his retinue; *jetvā:* having defeated; *lōkamhā:* out of this world; *nīyanti:* exit (to Nibbāna)

The swans fly away in the sky — as the path of the sun. Those possessing psychic power travel through the sky. Those diligent, wise saints conquer death with his armies and leave the world and reach Nibbāna.

Commentary

iddhi: power, magical power. The magical powers constitute one of the six kinds of higher spiritual powers *(abhiññā)*. One distinguishes many kinds of magical powers, e.g., the power of determination *(adhitthāna iddhi)*; i.e., the power of becoming oneself manifold, i.e., the power of transformation *(vikūbbanā)*; i.e., the power of adopting another form; i.e., the power of spiritual creation *(manōmayā)*; i.e., the power of letting proceed from this body another mentally produced body; i.e., the power of penetrating knowledge *(ñāna-vipphāra)*; i.e., the power of inherent insight to remain unhurt in danger. The power of penetrating concentration *(samādhivipphāra)*, producing the same result.

Noble power *(ariyā-iddhi)* is the power of controlling one's ideas in such a way that one may consider something not repulsive as repulsive and something repulsive as not repulsive, and remain all the time imperturbable and full of equanimity. This training of mind is frequently mentioned in the suttas, but only once the name of *ariyā iddhi* is applied to it.

iddhi-pāda: roads to power, (or success) are the four following qualities, for as guides, they indicate the road to power connected therewith; and because they form, by way of preparation the roads to the power constituting the fruition of the path, namely the concentration of intention *(chanda-samādhi)* accompanied by effort of will *(padhāna-sankhāra-samannāgata)*, concentration of energy *(viriya)*, concentration of consciousness *(citta)*, and concentration of Investigation *(vīmaṁsa)* accompanied by effort of will. As such, they are supermundane *(lōkuttara)* i.e., connected with the path or the fruition of the path. But they are mundane *(lōkiya)*, as predominant factors, for it is said: because the monk, through making intention a predominant factor, reaches concentration, it is called the concentration of intention *(chanda-samādhi)*, etc."

These four roads of power lead to the attaining and acquiring of magical power, to the power of magical transformation, to the generation of magical power, and to mastery and skill therein.

Once the monk has thus developed and often practiced the four roads to power, he enjoys various magical powers — hears with the divine ear heavenly and human sounds — perceives with his mind the mind of other beings — remembers many a former existence — perceives with the Divine Eye beings passing away reappearing — attains, after the extinction of biases, deliverance of mind and deliverance through wisdom, free from biases.

Whosoever, O monks, has missed the four roads to Power, he has missed the right path leading to the extinction of suffering; but whosoever, O monks, has reached the Four Roads to Power, he has reached the right path leading to the extinction of suffering.

iddhiyā ākāsē yanti: those with psychic powers (arahats) travel through the sky. The arahat realizes that what was to be accomplished has been done, a heavy burden of sorrow has finally been relinquished, and all forms of craving and all shades of ignorance are totally annihilated. The happy pilgrim now stands on heights more than the celestial, far removed from uncontrolled passions and the defilements of the world, experiencing the unutterable bliss of Nibbāna.

Rebirth can no longer affect him since no more reproductive seeds are formed by fresh kammic activities. Though an arahat he is not wholly free from physical suffering, as this experience of the bliss of deliverance is only intermittent nor has he yet cast off his material body. An arahat is called an asēkha, one who does not undergo training, as he has lived the holy life and has accomplished his object. The other saints from the sōtāpatti stage to the arahat path stage are called *sēkhas* because they still undergo training.

It may be mentioned in this connection that Anāgāmis and arahats who have developed the *rūpa* and *arūpa jhānas* could experience the Nibbānic bliss uninterruptedly for as long as seven days even in this life. This, in Pāli, is known as *nirōdha-samāpatti*. An ariya, in this stage, is wholly free from pain, and his mental activities are all suspended. The stream of consciousness temporarily ceases to flow.

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There is no crime that a doubting, shameless liar cannot commit.

176. *Ēkaṁ dhammaṁ atītassa*
musāvādissa jantunō
vitiṇṇaparalōkassa
natthi pāpaṁ akāriyaṁ. (13:10)

For one who falsely speaks,
who disregards the Dhamma,
who other lives denies:
no evil this one will not do.

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A LIAR CAN COMMIT ANY CRIME

13 (9) The Story of Cincāmānavikā (Verse 176)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Cincāmānavikā.

As the Buddha went on teaching the Dhamma, more and more people came flocking to him, and the ascetics of other faiths found their following to be dwindling. So they made a plan that would harm the reputation of the Buddha. They called the very beautiful Cincāmānavikā, a devoted pupil of theirs, to them and said to her, "If you have our interests in your heart, please help us and put Samana Gōtama to shame." Cincāmānavikā agreed to comply.

That same evening, she took some flowers and went in the direction of the Jētavana Monastery. When people asked her where she was going, she replied, "What is the use of you knowing where I am going?" Then she would go to the place of other ascetics near the Jētavana Monastery and would come back early in the morning to make it appear as if she had spent the night at the Jētavana Monastery. When asked, she would reply, "I spent the night with Samana Gōtama in the perfumed chamber of the Jētavana Monastery." After three or four months had passed, she wrapped up her stomach with some cloth to make her look pregnant. Then, after eight or nine months, she wrapped up her stomach with a round piece of thin wooden plank; she also beat up her palms and feet to make them swollen, and pretended to be feeling tired and worn out. Thus, she assumed a perfect picture of a woman in an advanced stage of pregnancy. Then, in the evening, she went to the Jētavana Monastery to confront the Buddha.

The Buddha was then expounding the Dhamma to a congregation of monks and laymen. Seeing him teaching on the platform, she accused the Buddha thus: "O' you big Samana! You only preach to others. I am now pregnant by you, yet you do nothing for my confinement. You only know how to enjoy yourself!" The Buddha stopped preaching for a while and said to her, "Sister, only you and I know whether you are speaking the truth or not," and Cincāmānavikā replied, "Yes, you are right, how can others know what only you and I know?"

At that instant, Sakka, king of the dēvas, became aware of the trouble at the Jētavana Monastery, so he sent four of his dēvas in the form of young rats. Four rats got under the clothes of Cincāmānavikā and bit off the strings that fastened the wooden plank round her stomach. As the strings broke, the wooden plank dropped. Thus, the deception of Cincāmānavikā was uncovered, and many from the crowd cried out in anger, "Oh you wicked woman! A liar and a cheat! How dare you accuse Buddha!" Some of them spat on her and drove her out. She ran fast as she could, and when she had gone some distance the earth cracked and fissured and she was swallowed up.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 176)

ēkaṁ dhammaṁ atītassa musāvādissa vitiṇṇa paralōkassa jantunō akāriyaṁ pāpaṁ natthi

ēkaṁ dhammaṁ: that one virtue (truthfulness); *atītassa:* transgressing; *musāvādissa:* a person who utters lies; *vitiṇṇa paralōkassa:* has given up the next world; *jantunō:* by such a person; *akāriyaṁ pāpaṁ:* an evil act that cannot be done; *natthi:* there is not

The evil person who has given up the virtue of truthfulness has abandoned all hopes of the next world.

Commentary

musāvādissa: a person who utters lies. The counterpoint of lying is truthfulness. Learning of the two levels of truth, relative and ultimate, by the practice of Dhamma we become more aware of these, seeing the provisional nature of the first and striving to penetrate the second.

At the moment of Enlightenment, as in the case of the Buddha and other sages, there arises perfected knowledge of this ultimate truth which we may call the truly-so, or seeing-Dhammas-as-they-really-are, so that there is a thread of truth joining together all stages of the Buddhist way. After there has been the experience of Nibbāna then as the Buddha has said, "Truth is without a second." The practice of this perfection at a more humble stage is seen in the well-known birth story of Vidhura-paṇḍita who having been captured in the forest by a cannibal, so fearlessly set about making the ordered preparations for his own death as to rouse the curiosity of his captor. The latter permitted him to return to his city for a short time as a test of his veracity and although many others less worthy than himself offered themselves to satisfy the cannibal's craving, Vidhura-paṇḍita himself insisted on returning as promised. The reward of his truthfulness was that the cannibal was greatly moved by his nobility, released him from his obligations and was himself converted to the practice of the five precepts.

natthi pāpaṁ akāriyaṁ: An untruthful person, devoid of self-respect, who has no belief in an after life and who has no fear for the attendant consequences of evil, is liable to commit any evil. Such a person does not see earthly bliss or heavenly bliss or Nibbānic bliss (Commentary).

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The miserly indeed never praise giving and never make their way to heaven.

177. *Na vē kadariyā dēvalōkaṁ vajanti*
bālā havē nappasaṁsanti dānaṁ
dhīrō ca dānaṁ anumōdamānō
tēn'ēva sō hōti sukhī parattha. (13: 11)

To heavenly realms the mean don't fare,
fools magnanimity ne'er acclaim,
but the one of wisdom rejoices at giving
and happy will be in future lives.

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HAPPINESS THROUGH PARTAKING IN GOOD DEEDS

13 (10) The Story of the Unrivalled Alms-Giving (Verse 177)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the unrivalled alms-giving of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala.

Once, the king offered alms to the Buddha and other monks on a grand scale. His subjects, in competition with him, organized another alms-giving ceremony on a grander scale than that of the king. Thus, the king and his subjects kept on competing in giving alms. Finally, Queen Mallikā thought of a plan; to implement this plan, she asked the king to have a grand pavilion built. Next, she asked for five hundred white umbrellas and five hundred tame elephants; those five hundred elephants were to hold the five hundred white umbrellas over the five hundred monks. In the middle of the pavilion, they kept ten boats which were filled with perfumes and incense. There were also two hundred and fifty princesses, who kept fanning the five hundred monks. Since the subjects of the king had no princesses, nor white umbrellas, nor elephants, they could no longer compete with the king. When all preparations were made, alms-food was offered. After the meal, the king made an offering of all the things in the pavilion, which were worth fourteen billion.

At the time, two ministers of the king were present. Of those two, the minister named Junha was very pleased and praised the king for having offered alms so generously to the Buddha and his monks. He also reflected that such offerings could only be made by a king. he was very glad because the king would share the merit of his good deeds with all beings. in short, the minister Junhā rejoiced with the king in his unrivalled charity. The minister Kāla, on the other hand, thought that the king was only squandering, by giving away fourteen billion in a single day, and that the monks would just go back to the monastery and sleep. After the meal, the Buddha looked over at the audience and knew how Kāla the minister was feeling. Then, he thought that if he were to deliver a lengthy discourse of appreciation, Kāla would get more dissatisfied, and in consequence would have to suffer more in his next existence.

On seeing the king, the Buddha said, "Great King! You should rejoice that you have succeeded in making the offering of the unrivalled charity (asadisadāna). Such an opportunity comes very rarely; it comes only once during the appearance of each Buddha. But your minister Kāla had felt it was a waste, and was not at all appreciative. So, if I had given a lengthy discourse, he would get more and more dissatisfied and uncomfortable, and in consequence, he would suffer much more in the present existence as well as in the next. That was why I preached so briefly. Then the Buddha added, "Great King! Fools do not rejoice in the charities given by others and go to the lower worlds. The wise rejoice in other people's charities, and through appreciation, they share in the merit gained by others and go to the abode of the dēvas."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 177)

kadariyā vē dēvālōkaṁ na vajanti, bālā havē dānaṁ nappasaṁsanti dhīrō ca dānaṁ anumodamānō sō tēna ēva parattha sukhī hōti

kadariyā: the extreme misers; *vē:* certainly; *dēvālōkaṁ:* world of gods; *na vajanti:* do not reach; *bālā:* the ignorant ones; *havē:* certainly; *dānaṁ:* charity; *nappasaṁsanti:* do not praise; *dhīrō ca:* as for the wise noble one; *dānaṁ:* the act of charity; *anumōdamānō:* rejoicing over; *sō:* he (therefore); *tēna ēva:* through that approval itself; *parattha:* in the next birth; *sukhī:* an enjoyer of happiness; *hōti:* becomes

The extreme misers do not reach the heavenly worlds. The evil, ignorant ones do not approve acts of charity. But those wise noble ones approve and partake of charity. In consequence, they are happy in the next birth.

Commentary

dāna: act of charity; generosity. *Dāna* is the first perfection *(pārami)*. It confers upon the giver the double blessing of inhibiting immoral thoughts of selfishness, while developing pure thoughts of selflessness. "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." A Bōdhisatta is not concerned as to whether the recipient is truly in need or not, for his one object in practicing generosity, as he does, is to eliminate craving that lies dormant within himself. The joy of service, its attendant happiness, and the alleviation of suffering are other blessings of generosity.

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Being a stream-winner is a far greater achievement than a journey to heaven.

178. *Pathavyā ēkarajjēna*
saggassa gamanēna vā
sabbalōkādhipaccēna
sōtāpattiphalaṁ varaṁ. (13:12)

Than o'er the earth sole sovereignty,
than going untō heaven,
than lordship over all the worlds:
better the Stream-winner's Fruit.

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BEING STREAM-WINNER IS SUPREME

13 (11) The Story of Kāla, son of Anāthapindika (Verse 178)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Kāla, son of Anāthapiṇḍika, the well renowned rich man of Sāvatthi.

Kāla, son of Anāthapiṇḍika, always kept away whenever the Buddha and his company of monks came to their house. Anāthapiṇḍika was afraid that if his son kept on behaving in this way, he would be reborn in one of the lower worlds (apāyas). So, he enticed his son with the promise of money. He promised to give one hundred if the youth consented to go to the monastery and keep sabbath for one day. So, the youth went to the monastery and returned home early the next day, without listening to any religious discourses. His father offered him rice gruel, but instead of taking his food, he first demanded to have the money.

The next day, the father said to his son, "My son, if you learn a stanza of the text from the Buddha, I will give you one thousand on your return." So, Kāla went to the monastery again, and told the Buddha that he wanted to learn something. The Buddha gave him a short stanza to learn by heart; at the same time he willed that the youth would not be able to memorize it. Thus, the youth had to repeat a single stanza many times, but because he had to repeat it so many times, in the end, he came to perceive the full meaning of the Dhamma and attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Early next morning, he followed the Buddha and the monks to his own house. But on that day, he was silently wishing, "I wish my father would not give me the one thousand in the presence of the Buddha. I do not wish the Buddha to know that I kept the sabbath just for the sake of money." His father offered rice gruel to the Buddha and the monks, and also to him. Then, his father brought one thousand, and told Kāla to take the money but surprisingly he refused. His father pressed him to take it, but he still refused.

Then, Anāthapiṇḍika said to the Buddha, "Venerable, the demeanor of my son today pleases me." "How is that, great treasurer?" "Day before yesterday I sent him to the monastery, saying to him, 'I will give you a hundred pieces of gold.' Yesterday he refused to eat because I did not give him the money; but today, when I give him the money, he refuses to touch it." The Buddha replied, "It is even so, great treasurer. Today, in attaining the fruit of conversion, your son has attained that which surpasses the attainment of a universal monarch, the attainment of the world of the deities, the attainment of the world of Brahma."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 178)

pathavyā ēkarajjēna, saggassa gamanēna vā, sabbalōkādhipaccēna, sōtāpattiphalaṁ varaṁ

pathavyā: of the whole earth; *ēkarajjēna:* being the one king; *saggassa:* to the heavenly realms; *gamanēna vā:* going along; *sabbalōkādhipaccēna:* being universal king; *sōtāpattiphalaṁ:* the fruit of stream-winning; *varaṁ:* greater (than all those)

The achievement of the fruit of stream-winning is the primary stage in the attainment of spiritual success. That state is greater than being a universal monarch, or reaching heaven.

Commentary

pathavyā ēkarajjēna: being sole ruler over earth. In terms of traditional lore, in certain ages, a universal king appears. He holds sway over the whole earth. That status is considered the greatest and the most supreme on earth. Tradition has it that only an individual capable of enjoying the fruit of all the meritorious activities he has accumulated, all at once, will achieve this unparalleled supreme status. According to this lore, his appearance on Earth will be foretold by bands of gods, a century before his arising. He comes into the possession of seven great treasures. These universal kings symbolize the highest possible material and worldly luxury. The tradition states that no two of them will appear in the world at one and the same time. A Buddha will not appear when a universal king reigns, nor will a universal king arise when a Buddha has appeared on earth.

sōtāpatti: Here *Sōtā* means the stream that leads to Nibbāna. It is the noble Eightfold Path. 'Ā' means for the first time. *'Patti'* means attainment. *Sōtāpatti* means the attainment of the stream for the first time. It is the realization of Nibbāna for the first time. This is the first stage of Sainthood. The Stream-Winners are not born in woeful states, but the worldly great are not exempt from them.

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The Buddha

THE BUDDHA'S GREATNESS

I cannot myself feel that either in the matter of wisdom or in the matter of virtue Christ stands quite as high as some other people known to history - I think I should put Buddha above him in those respects.

Bertrand Russell, "Why I am not a Christian"

Embodiment of Virtues

Buddha was the embodiment of all the virtues he preached. During his successful and eventful ministry of 45 years he translated all his words into action; and in no place did he give vent to any human frailty, or any base passion. The Buddha's moral code is the most perfect which the world has even known.

Prof. Max Muller, German Scholar

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Chapter 14

BUDDHA VAGGA

The Buddha

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The triumph of Buddhahood is infallible, irreversible and unassailable.

179. *Yassa jitaṁ nāvajīyati*
jitam'assa nō yāti kōci lōkē
taṁ Buddhaṁ anantagōcaraṁ
apadaṁ kēna padēna nessatha? (14:1)

That Buddha traceless of infinite range
whose victory none may e'er undo,
whose vanquished follow to no world,
then by which track will you trace him?

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BUDDHA VAGGA (The Buddha)
THE BUDDHA CANNOT BE TEMPTED

14 (1) The Story of the Three Daughters of Māra (Verses 179 & 180)

While residing near the Bōdhi-tree, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the three daughters of Māra. He repeated these verses to the brahmin Māgandiya of the kingdom of Kurus. A brahmin named Māgandiya, dwelling in the kingdom of the Kurus, had a daughter likewise named Māgandiyā, who possessed surpassing beauty. Many men of wealth and social position, both brahmins and khattiyas, desired to have her as wife and sent word to Māgandiya, saying, "Give us your daughter." But he refused them all alike, saying, "You are not good enough for my daughter."

Now one day, as the Buddha surveyed the world at early dawn, he perceived that Māgandiya had entered the net of his knowledge. Now the brahmin tended the fire regularly every day outside the village; accordingly the Buddha took bowl and robe early in the morning and went to that very place. The brahmin surveyed the majestic form of the Buddha and thought to himself, "There is no man in this world comparable to this man; this man is suitable for my daughter; I will give my daughter to this man." So he said to the Buddha, "Venerable, I have a single daughter, and I have looked in vain to find a man suitable to be her husband. I have not given her to any one. But you are suitable for her. I wish to give you my daughter in marriage; wait right here until I fetch her." The Buddha listened to his words, but expressed neither approval nor disapproval.

So the brahmin had his daughter arrayed in her beautiful garments, and taking the daughter and his wife with him, went to the place where he had met the Buddha. The Buddha, instead of remaining in the place mentioned by the brahmin, moved away and stood in another place, leaving a footprint where he had stood before.

The brahmin's wife, who accompanied him, asked him, "Where is this man?" The brahmin replied, "I said to him, 'Remain in this place.'" Looking around, the brahmin saw the footprint and showed it to his wife, saying, "This is his footprint." Now the brahmin's wife was familiar with the verses relating to signs and immediately said to the brahmin, "Brahmin, this is no footprint of one who follows the five lusts." The brahmin replied, "Wife, you always see a crocodile in a drop of water. When I said to that monk, 'I will give you my daughter,' he accepted my proposal." The brahmin's wife replied, "Brahmin, you may say what you like, but this is the footprint only of one who is free from lust." Then said the brahmin to his wife, "Wife, do not rattle on thus; come with me in silence." Advancing a little way, he saw the Buddha, whereupon he pointed to him and said, "There is the man!" And approaching the Buddha, he said, "Venerable, I will give you my daughter to wife." The Buddha, instead of saying, "I have no need of your daughter," said, "Brahmin, I have something to say to you; listen to me." The brahmin replied, "Say it; I will listen." Thereupon the Buddha related to the brahmin the story of his past life, beginning with the Great Retirement. The Buddha, having renounced the glory of dominion, mounted his horse Kanthaka, and with Channa for companionship, proceeded forth on the Great Retirement. As he approached the gate of the city, Māra, who stood near, said to him, "Siddhattha, return upon your way; seven days hence the magic wheel of a universal monarch will be manifested to you." The Buddha replied, "I too know that, Māra, but I do not desire it." "Then for what purpose are you going forth on your renunciation?" "That I may acquire omniscience." "Well then, if from this day forth, you think a lustful or malevolent or cruel thought, I shall know what to do in your case."

And, from that time on, Māra pursued him for seven years, awaiting his opportunity. For six years the Buddha practiced austerities, and when, through his individual effort, he had attained omniscience at the foot of the Bōdhi-tree (Goatherd's Banyan-tree) experiencing the bliss of emancipation. At that time Māra sat down by the highway, overwhelmed with sorrow at the thought, "All this time I have pursued him, seeking my opportunity, but have found no flaw in him; now he has escaped from my power."

Now Māra's three daughters, Craving, Sex and Passion, asked him, "Dear father, why are you so downcast and depressed?" He told them what was the matter. Then they said to him, "Dear father, be not disturbed; we will bring him under our control and fetch him hither." Approaching the Buddha, they said to him, "We would be your humble slaves." The Buddha paid no attention to their words, nor did he so much as open his eyes and look at them. Said the daughters of Māra again, "Many and various are the tastes of men. Some like maidens, others like women in the prime of life, others like women who have reached mid-life, while still others like women who have passed mid-life. We will tempt him in various forms. So one after another, they assumed the forms of women of various ages, creating by superhuman power, each a hundred female forms, and said to him, "We would be your humble slaves."

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In Buddhahood is all craving routed. There is neither trapping nor being trapped.

180. *Yassa jālinī visattikā*
taṇhā natthi kuhiñci nētavē
taṁ Buddhaṁ anantagōcaraṁ
apadaṁ kēna padēna nessatha? (14:2)

That Buddha traceless of infinite range
in whom's no entangling craving
and no ensnaring not anywhere leading,
then by which track will you trace him?

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THE BUDDHA CANNOT BE BROUGHT UNDER SWAY

14 (1) The Story of the Three Daughters of Māra (Verses 179 & 180) (cont'd)

The Buddha said to them, "Depart; what do you see, that you strive thus? Such actions as these should be performed before those who have not released themselves of the lusts and other evil passions. The Tathāgata has rid himself of the lusts and other evil passions. Why would you try to bring me into your control?" When the Buddha had completed his biographical discourse, he said, "Māgandiyā, when long ago, I beheld these three daughters of Māra, possessed of bodies comparable to gold, free from phlegm and the other bodily impurities, even then I had no desire for sensual pleasures. But as for you daughter's body, it is a body filled with thirty-two impurities of the body as if it were a vessel filled with impurities, but painted beautifully outside."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 179)

yassa jitaṁ lōkē nā avajīyati assa jitaṁ kōci nō yāti anantagōcaraṁ apadaṁ taṁ Buddhaṁ kēna padēna nessatha

yassa: by that Enlightened One; *jitaṁ:* what was conquered; *lōkē nā avajīyati:* can never become conquered, in this world; *assa:* by that Buddha; *jitaṁ:* what has been conquered (in this world); *kōci:* by any other defilements; *nō yāti:* will not be followed; *anantagōcaraṁ:* his area of focus is endless; *apadaṁ:* he has no path left; *taṁ Buddhaṁ:* that Enlightened One; *kēna padēna:* by what path; *nessatha:* can you pursue?

The Buddha's victory has not been won incorrectly. No one can turn Buddha's victory into defeat. Nothing that he has conquered can return, or pursue him, because his conquest is so complete: His ken infinite. In what way can you tempt or ensnare him?

Explanatory Translation (Verse 180)

yassa kuhiñci nētavē jālinī visattikā taṇhā natthi, ananta gōcaraṁ apadaṁ taṁ Buddhaṁ kēna padēna nessatha

yassa: that Buddha; *kuhiñci nētavē:* to be captured; *jālinī:* net-like; *visattikā:* poison-like; *taṇhā:* craving; *natthi:* is not found; *ananta gōcaraṁ:* whose area of focus is endless; *apadaṁ:* who has no roots left; *taṁ Buddhaṁ:* that Buddha; *kēna padēna:* by what means; *nessatha:* can you tempt?

The Buddha, in whom there is no thirst *(tanhā)* for grasping to the net that lures, whose ken is infinite, in what way can you lure him away?

Commentary

The Buddha: The Enlightened One. After a stupendous struggle of six strenuous years, in His 35th year, unaided and unguided by any supernatural agency, and solely relying on His own efforts and wisdom, eradicated all defilements, ended the process of grasping, and, realizing things as they truly are, by His own super perceptive knowledge, became the *Buddha* — the Enlightened One.

Thereafter, he was known as Buddha Gōtama, one of a long series of Buddhas that appeared in the past and will appear in the future. He was not born a Buddha, but became a Buddha by His own efforts through a process of voluntary evolution of consciousness. The Pāli term Buddha is derived from *bōdhi*, to be awakened. As He fully experienced the four extraordinary realities and as He arose from the slumbers of unawareness. He underwent a complete transformation from a self-centred being to a literally, and in every sense, selfless non-being or non-person. He not only attained to that state but He also expounded the reality He experienced and enlightened others. He is called a *Sammā Sambuddha* — a harmoniously Awakened One — to distinguish Him from *Paccēka* (solitary) Buddhas who only experience the reality but are incapable of enlightening others.

Before His Awakening, He was called a bōdhisatta, which means one who is aspiring to attain Buddhahood. Every aspirant to Buddhahood passes through the bōdhisatta stage — a period of intensive practice and development of the qualities of generosity, discipline, renunciation, wisdom, energy, endurance, truthfulness, determination, benevolence, and perfect equanimity.

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Buddhas who opt renunciation and contemplative life are beloved even of the gods.

181. *Yē jhānapasutā dhīrā*
nekkhammūpasamē ratā
dēv'āpi tesaṁ pihayanti
sambuddhānaṁ satīmataṁ. (14:3)

E'er intent on concentration,
joyful in peace of letting go,
mindful, wise, the perfect Buddhas,
to even dēvas they are dear.

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GODS AND MEN ADORE THE BUDDHA

14 (2) The Story of the Buddha's Return from the Tāvatiṁsa Dēva World (Verse 181)

On return from the Tāvatiṁsa dēva world, the Buddha spoke this verse at Saṅkassanagara, in reply to Venerable Sāriputta's words of welcome.

On one occasion, while at Sāvatthi, the Buddha displayed the miracle of synchro-emanation in answer to the challenge of the ascetics of various sects. After this, the Buddha went to the Tāvatiṁsa dēva worlds; his mother who had been reborn in the Tusita dēva world as a dēva known as Santusita also came to the Tāvatiṁsa dēva world. There the Buddha expounded the Abhidhamma to the dēvas and the brahmas throughout the three months of the vassa. As a result, Santusita dēva attained sōtāpatti fruition; so did numerous other dēvas and brahmas.

When the Buddha was gone, the folks asked Moggallāna, "Where has the Buddha gone?" Although Venerable Moggallāna himself knew perfectly well where the Buddha had gone, he thought to himself, "Of others also let the wondrous powers become known," and therefore answered, "Ask the Venerable Anuruddha." So they asked Venerable Anuruddha, "Venerable, where has the Buddha gone?" Venerable Anuruddha replied, "He has entered upon residence in the world of the thirty-three, seated upon the Yellowstone Throne; he went thither to expound the Abhidhamma Pitaka to his mother."

During that period Venerable Sāriputta spent the vassa at Saṅkassanagara, thirty yōjanas away from Sāvatthi. During his stay there, as regularly instructed by the Buddha, he taught the Abhidhamma to the huge group of monks staying with him and covered the whole course by the end of the vassa.

Towards the end of the vassa, Venerable Moggallāna went to the Tāvatiṁsa dēva world to see the Buddha. Then, he was told that the Buddha would return to the human world on the full moon day at the end of the vassa to the place where Venerable Sāriputta was spending the vassa.

As promised, the Buddha came with the six coloured rays shining forth from his body to the city-gate of Saṅkassanagara, on the night of the full moon day of the month of Assayuja when the moon was shining brightly. He was accompanied by a large following of dēvas on one side and a large following of brahmas on the other. A large gathering headed by Venerable Sāriputta welcomed the Buddha back to this world; and the whole town was lit up. Venerable Sāriputta was awed by the grandeur and glory of the whole scene of the Buddha's return. He respectfully approached the Buddha and said, "Venerable! We have never seen or even heard of such magnificent and resplendent glory. Indeed, Venerable you are loved, respected and revered alike by dēvas, brahmas and men!" To him the Buddha said, "My son Sāriputta, the sages who are endowed with unique qualities are truly loved by men and dēvas alike."

At the end of the discourse, the group of monks, who were the pupils of Venerable Sāriputta, attained arahatship and a great many from the congregation attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 181)

yē dhīrā jhānapasutā nekkhammūpasamē ratā
satīmataṁ tēsaṁ sambuddhānaṁ dēvā api pihayanti

yē dhīrā: those noble ones; *jhānapasutā:* are intent on meditation; *nekkhammūpasamē ratā:* are bent on defilement-conquering (nibbāna); *satīmataṁ:* mindful; *tēsaṁ sambuddhānaṁ:* those enlightened ones; *dēvā api:* even gods; *pihayanti:* adore

Those noble and wise ones are intent on meditation. They are bent on conquering defilements — that is achieving Nibbāna. They are mindful; and such enlightened ones are beloved by everyone.

Commentary

dēvā: the radiant ones; heavenly beings, deities, celestials. They are beings who live in happy worlds, and who, as a rule, are invisible to the human eye. They are subject, however, just as all human and other beings, to ever-repeated rebirth, old age and death, and thus not freed from the cycle of existence, and not freed from misery. There are many classes of heavenly beings: (1) heavenly beings of the sensual sphere *(kāmā-vacara* or *kāma-lōka)*; (2) heavenly beings of the form sphere *(rūpāvacara* or *rūpalōka)* and (3) heavenly beings of the formless sphere *(arūpāvacara* or *arūpa-lōka)*.

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Human life is hard and rare. So is Buddha and dhamma rare.

182. *Kicchō manussapaṭilābhō*
kiccham maccāna'jīvitam
kiccham saddhammasavaṇam
kicchō Buddhānam uppādō. (14:4)

Human birth is hard to gain,
hard for mortals is their life,
to come to Dhamma True is hard,
rare the Buddhas' arising.

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FOUR RARE OPPORTUNITIES

14 (3) The Story of Ērakapatta the Nāga King (Verse 182)

While residing near Bārānasī the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Ērakapatta, a king of the nāgas.

Once there was a nāga king by the name of Ērakapatta. In one of his past existences during the time of Kassapa Buddha he had been a monk for a long time. Through worry over a minor offence he had committed during that time, he was reborn as a nāga. As a nāga, he waited for the appearance of a Buddha. Ērakapatta had a very beautiful daughter, and he made use of her as a means of finding the Buddha. He made it known that whoever could answer her questions could claim her for a wife. Twice every month, Ērakapatta made her dance in the open and sing out her questions. Many suitors came to answer her questions hoping to claim her, but no one could give the correct answer.

One day, the Buddha saw a youth named Uttara in his vision. He also knew that the youth would attain sōtāpatti fruition in connection with the questions put by the daughter of Ērakapatta the nāga. By then the youth was already on his way to see Ērakapatta's daughter. The Buddha stopped him and taught him how to answer the questions. While he was being taught, Uttara attained sōāpatti fruition. Now that Uttara had attained sōtāpatti fruition, he had no desire for the nāga princess. However, Uttara still went to answer the questions for the benefit of numerous other beings.

The first four questions were: (1) Who is a ruler? (2) Is one who is overwhelmed by the mist of moral defilements to be called a ruler? (3) What ruler is free from moral defilements? (4) What sort of person is to be called a fool?

The answers to the above questions were: (1) He who controls the six senses is a ruler. (2) One who is overwhelmed by the mist of moral defilements is not to be called a ruler; he who is free from craving is called a ruler. (3) The ruler who is free from craving is free from moral defilements. (4) A person who seeks for sensual pleasures is called a fool.

Having had the correct answers to the above, the nāga princess sang out questions regarding the floods *(ōghas)* of sensual desire, of renewed existence, of false doctrine and of ignorance, and how they could be overcome. Uttara answered these questions as taught by the Buddha. When Ērakapatta heard these answers he knew that a Buddha had appeared in this world. So he asked Uttara to take him to the Buddha. On seeing the Buddha, Ērakapatta related to the Buddha how he had been a monk during the time of Kassapa Buddha, how he had accidentally caused a grass blade to be broken off while travelling in a boat, and how he had worried over that little offence for having failed to do the act of exoneration as prescribed, and finally how he was reborn as a nāga. After hearing him, the Buddha told him how difficult it was to be born in the human world, and to be born during the appearance of the Buddhas or during the time of their teaching.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 182)

manussa paṭilābhō kicchō maccāna jīvitaṁ kiccaṁ saddhamma savanaṁ kiccaṁ Buddhānaṁ uppādō kicchō

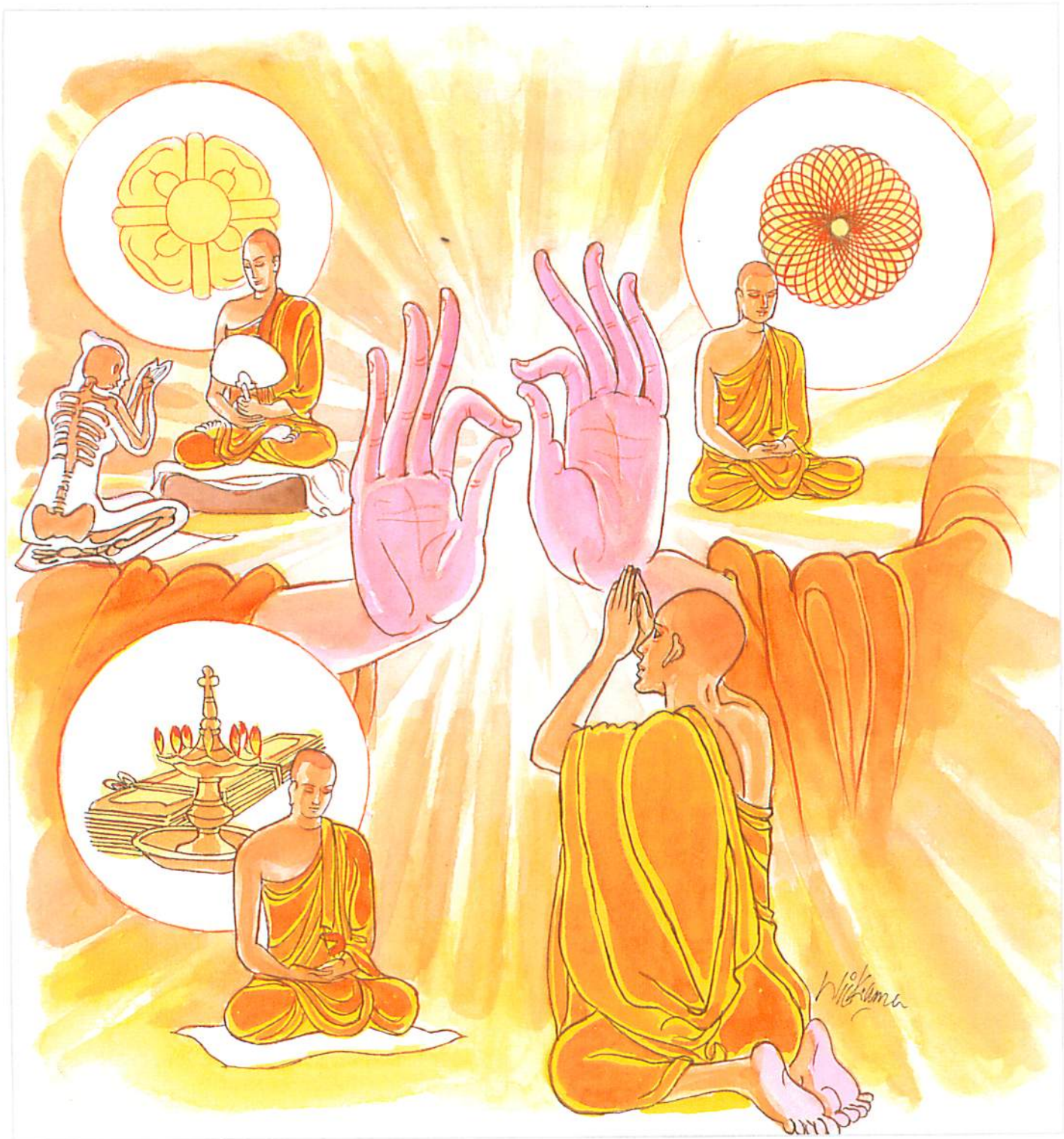
manussa paṭilābhō: winning human existence; *kicchō:* (is) difficult; *maccāna:* of mortals; *jīvitaṁ:* life; *kiccaṁ:* (is) difficult; *saddhamma savanaṁ:* hearing the Dhamma; *kiccaṁ:* (is) difficult; *Buddhānaṁ uppādō:* the birth of the Buddha; *kicchō:* is difficult and rare

It is rarely that one is born as a human being, in this cycle of rebirth. It is difficult and rare to get the opportunity to hear the good teaching. It is, indeed, rare for the birth of a Buddha to occur.

Commentary

maccāna jīvitam: life of a mortal. The word *macca* (mortal) is applied to a human being because he is subject to death. All forms of life are subject to death. But the term *macca* is especially significant to human beings; because, of all animals, the human beings are the only ones that can become aware of the inevitability of death.

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Refrain from all evil. Practise virtue. Cleanse the mind. This is the teaching of Buddhas.

183. *Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṁ*
kusalassa upasampadā
sacittapariyōdapanaṁ
ētaṁ Buddhāna'sāsanaṁ. (14:5)

Every evil never doing
and in wholesomeness increasing
and one's heart well-purifying:
this is the Buddhas' Teaching.

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THE INSTRUCTION OF THE BUDDHAS

14 (4) The Story of the Question Raised by Venerable Ānanda (Verses 183 — 185)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the question raised by Venerable Ānanda regarding fundamental instructions to monks by the previous Buddhas.

We are told that as the Venerable sat in his day-quarters, he thought to himself, "The Buddha has described the mothers and fathers of the seven Buddhas, their length of life, the tree under which they got enlightenment, their company of disciples, their chief disciples, and their principal supporter. All this the Buddha has described. But he has said nothing about their mode of observance of a day of fasting the same as now, or was it different?" Accordingly he approached the Buddha and asked him about the matter.

Now in the case of these Buddhas, while there was a difference of time, there was no difference in the stanzas they employed. The supremely enlightened Vipassi kept fast-day every seven years, but the admonition he gave in one day sufficed for seven years. Sikhī and Vessabhū kept fast-day every six years; Kakusandha and Kōnāgamana, every year; Kassapa, Possessor of the ten forces, kept fast-day every six months, but the admonition of the latter sufficed for six months. For this reason the Buddha, after explaining to the Venerable this difference of time, explained that their observance of a fast-day was the same in every case.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 183)

sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṁ kusalassa upasampadā
sacitta pariyōdapanaṁ ētaṁ Buddhāna sāsanaṁ

sabbapāpassa: from all evil actions; *akaraṇaṁ:* refraining; *kusalassa:* wholesome actions; *upasampadā:* generation and maintenance; *sacitta pariyōdapanaṁ:* purifying and disciplining one's own mind; *ētaṁ:* this is; *Buddhānaṁ:* of the Buddhas; *sāsanaṁ:* teaching.

Abandoning all evil, — entering the state of goodness, and purifying one's own mind by oneself — this is the Teaching of the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 184)

titikkhā khantī paramaṁ tapō, Buddhā nibbāṇaṁ paramaṁ vadanti, parūpaghātī pabbajitō na hi hōti paraṁ viheṭhayantō samaṇō na hi hoti

titikkhā: enduring; *khantī:* patience; *paramaṁ tapō:* (is the) highest asceticism; *Buddhā:* the Buddhas; *nibbāṇaṁ:* the imperturbability; *paramaṁ:* (is) supreme; *vadanti:* state; *parūpaghātī:* hurting others; *pabbajitō:* a renunciate; *na hi hōti:* is certainly not; *paraṁ vihēṭhayantō:* one who harms others; *samaṇō na hōti:* is certainly not a monk

Enduring patience is the highest asceticism. The Buddhas say that imperturbability *(Nibbāna)* is the most supreme. One is not a renunciate if he hurts another. Only one who does not harm others is a true saint *(samana)*.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 185)

anūpavādō anūpaghātō pātimokkhē saṁvarō ca
bhattasmiṁ mattñ̃ñutā ca pantharṁ sayanāsanaṁ
ca adhicittē āyōgō ca ētaṁ Buddhāna sāsanaṁ

anūpavādō: not finding fault with others; *anūpaghātō:* refraining from harassing others; *pātimokkhē:* in the main forms of discipline; *saṁvarō:* well restrained; *ca bhattasmiṁ:* in food; *mattñ̃ñutā:* moderate; *ca pantharṁ sayanāsanaṁ:* also taking delight in solitary places (distanced from human settlement); *adhicittē ca:* also in higher meditation; *āyōgō:* (and in) constant practice; *ētaṁ:* all this; *Buddhānaṁ:* of the Buddhas'; *sāsanaṁ:* (is) the teaching

To refrain from finding fault with others, to refrain from hurting others, to be trained in the highest forms of discipline and conduct; to be moderate in eating food; to take delight in solitude; and to engage in higher thought (which is meditation). *(cont'd on page 395)*

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Forbearance is the highest religiousness. A true recluse never harms another.

184. *Khantī paramaṁ tapō titikkhā*
nibbāṇaṁ paramaṁ vadanti Buddhā
na hi pabbajitō parūpaghātī
samaṇō hōti paraṁ vihēṭhayantō. (14:6)

Patience's the austerity supreme,
Nibbana's supreme the Buddhas say.
One who irks or others harms
is not ordained or monk become.

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PATIENCE IS A GREAT ASCETIC VIRTUE

14 (4) The Story of the Question Raised by Venerable Ānanda (Verses 183 — 185) (cont'd)

Commentary

Sabbapāpassa akaranaṁ: The religion of the Buddha is summarised in this verse.

What is associated with the three immoral roots of attachment *(lōbha)*, illwill *(dōsa)*, and delusion *(mōha)* is evil. What is associated with the three moral roots of generosity *(alōbha)*, goodwill or loving-kindness *(adōsa)*, and wisdom *(amōha)* is good.

Pabbajitō: one who casts aside his impurities, and has left the world.

Samaṇō: one who has subdued his passions, an ascetic.

khantī paramam tapō: patience is the highest austerity. It is the patient endurance of suffering inflicted upon oneself by others, and the forbearance of others' wrongs. A Bōdhisatta practises patience to such an extent that he is not provoked even when his hands and feet are cut off. In the Khantivādi Jātaka, it appears that not only did the Bōdhisatta cheerfully endure the tortures inflicted by the drunkard king, who mercilessly ordered his hands and feet, nose and ears to be cut off, but requited those injuries with a blessing. Lying on the ground, in a deep pool of His own blood, with mutilated limbs, the Bōdhisatta said, "Long live the king, who cruelly cut my body thus." Pure souls like mine such deeds as these with anger ne'er regard."

Of his forbearance it is said that whenever he is harmed he thinks of the aggressor — 'This person is a fellow-being of mine. Intentionally or unintentionally I myself must have been the source of provocation, or it may be due to a past evil kamma of mine. As it is the outcome of my own action, why should I harbour ill-will towards him?'

It may be mentioned that a Bōdhisatta is not irritated by any man's shameless conduct either. Admonishing His disciples to practise forbearance, the Buddha said in the *Kakacūpama Sutta* — "Though robbers, who are highway men, should sever your limbs with a two-handled saw yet if you thereby defile your mind, you would be no follower of my teaching. Thus should you train yourselves: Unsullied shall our hearts remain. No evil word shall escape our lips. Kind and compassionate with loving-heart, harbouring no ill-will shall we abide, enfolding even these bandits with thoughts of loving-kindness. And forth from them proceeding, we shall abide radiating the whole world with thoughts of loving-kindness, expansive, measureless, benevolent and unified."

Practicing patience and tolerance, instead of seeing the ugliness in others, a bōdhisatta tries to seek the good and beautiful in all.

khanti: patience; forbearance. This is an excellent quality much praised in Buddhist scriptures. It can only be developed easily if restlessness and aversion have already been subdued in the mind, as is done by meditation practice. Impatience which has the tendency to make one rush around and thus miss many good chances, results from the inability to sit still and let things sort themselves out, which sometimes they may do without one's meddling. The patient man has many a fruit fall into his lap which the go-getter misses. One of them is a quiet mind, for impatience churns the mind up and brings with it the familiar anxiety-diseases of the modern business world. Patience quietly endures — it is this quality which makes it so valuable in mental training and particularly in meditation. It is no good expecting instant enlightenment after five minutes practice. Coffee may be instant but meditation is not and only harm will come of trying to hurry it up. For ages the rubbish has accumulated, an enormous pile of mental refuse and so when one comes along at first with a very tiny teaspoon and starts removing it, how fast can one expect it to disappear? Patience is the answer and determined energy to go with it. The patient meditator really gets results of lasting value, the seeker after 'quick methods' or 'sudden enlightenment' is doomed by his own attitude to long disappointment.

Indeed, it must soon become apparent to anyone investigating the Dhamma that these teachings are not for the impatient. A Buddhist views his present life as a little span perhaps of eighty years or so, and the last one so far of many such lives. Bearing this in mind, he determines to do as much in this life for the attainment of Enlightenment as possible but he does not over-estimate his capabilities and just quietly and patiently gets on with living the Dhamma from day to day. Rushing into Enlightenment (or what one thinks it is) is not likely to get one very far, that is unless one is a very exceptional character who can take such treatment and most important, one is devoted to a very skilful master of meditation.

With patience one will not bruise oneself but go carefully step by step along the way. We learn that the Bōdhisatta was well aware of this and that he cultured his mind with this perfection so that it was not disturbed by any of the untoward occurrences common in this world. He decided that he would be patient with exterior conditions — not be upset when the sun was too hot or the weather too cold; not be agitated by other beings which attacked his body, such as insects. Neither would he be disturbed when people spoke harsh words, lies or abuse about him, either to his face or behind his back. His patience was not even broken when his body was subjected to torment, blows, sticks and stones, tortures and even death itself he would endure steadily, so unflinching was his patience. Buddhist monks are advised to practice in the same way.

sacitta pariyōdapanam: clearing one's mind. In the Buddhist system, the higher perceptions result from the purification of the mind. In consequence, mind-cultivation and meditation assumes an important place in the proper practice of Buddhism. The mental exercise known as meditation is found in all religious systems. Prayer is a form of discursive meditation, and in Hinduism the reciting of *slōkās* and *mantrās* is employed to tranquillise the mind to a state of receptivity. In most of these systems the goal is identified with the particular psychic results that ensue, such as the visions that come in the semi-trance state, or the sounds that are heard. This is not the case in the forms of meditation practiced in Buddhism.

Comparatively little is known about the mind, its functions and its powers, and it is difficult for most people to distinguish between self-hypnosis, the development of mediumistic states, and the real process of mental clarification and direct perception which is the object of Buddhist mental development called *bhāvanā* (translated as meditation). The fact that mystics of every religion have induced in themselves states wherein they see visions and hear voices that are in accordance with their own religious beliefs, indicates that their meditation has resulted only in bringing to the surface of the mind the concepts already embedded in the deeper strata of their minds due to cultural conditioning. The Christian sees and converses with the saints of whom he already knows, the Hindu visualises the gods of the Hindu pantheon, and so on. When Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the Bengali mystic, began to turn his thoughts towards

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Abstemious in food, zealous in quest, disciplined, inoffensive one fulfils Buddha's wish.

185. *Anūpavādō anūpaghātō*
pātimokkhē ca saṁvarō
mattaññutā ca bhattasmiṁ
panthaṁ'ca sayanāsanaṁ
adhicittē ca āyōgō
ētaṁ Buddhāna'sāsanaṁ. (14:7)

Not reviling, neither harming,
restrained to limit 'freedom's' ways,
knowing reason in one's food,
dwelling far in solitude,
and striving in the mind sublime:
this is the Buddhas' Teaching.

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NOBLE GUIDELINES

14 (4) The Story of the Question Raised by Venerable Ānanda (Verses 183 — 185) (cont'd)

Christianity, he saw visions of Jesus in his meditations, in place of his former eidetic images of the Hindu *Avatārs*.

Commentary

The practiced hypnotic subject becomes more and more readily able to surrender himself to the suggestions made to him by the hypnotiser, and anyone who has studied this subject is bound to see a connection between the mental state of compliance he has reached and the facility with which the mystic can induce whatever kind of experiences he wills himself to undergo. There is still another possibility latent in the practice of meditation: the development of mediumistic faculties by which the subject can actually see and hear beings on different planes of existence, the dēvalōkas and the realm of the unhappy ghosts, for example. These worlds being nearest to our own are the more readily accessible, and this could be the true explanation of the psychic phenomena of western spiritualism.

The object of Buddhist meditation, however, is none of these things. They may arise due to errors in meditation, but not only are they not its goal, but they are hindrances which have to be overcome. The Christian who has seen Jesus, or the Hindu who has conversed with Bhagavan Krishna may be quite satisfied that he has fulfilled the purpose of his religious life, but the Buddhist who sees a vision of the Buddha knows by that very fact that he has only succeeded in projecting a belief onto his own mental screen, for the Buddha after his Parinibbāna is, in his own words, no longer visible to any one.

There is an essential difference, then, between Buddhist meditation and that practiced in other systems. The Buddhist embarking on a course of meditation does well to recognise this difference and to establish in his own mind a clear idea of what it is he is trying to do.

The root-cause of rebirth and suffering is unawareness (avijjā) conjoined with thirst *(tanhā)*. These two causes form a vicious circle; on the one hand, concepts, produce emotions, and on the other hand, emotions produce concepts. The phenomenal world has no meaning beyond the meaning given to it by our own interpretation.

When that interpretation is based on past biases we are subject to what is known as *vipallāsa*, or distortions, *saññā-vipallāsa*, distortion of perception, *citta-vipallāsa*, distortion of temper and *diṭṭhi-vipallāsa*, distortion of concepts which cause us to regard that which is impermanent *(anicca)* as permanent; that which is painful *(dukkha)* as pleasurable, and that which is impersonal *(anatta)*, as personal. Consequently, we place a false interpretation on all the sensory experiences we gain through the six receptors of cognition, that is, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, sense of touch and mind *(cakkhu, sōta, ghāna, jivhā, kāya and manō āyatana)*. It is known that the phenomena we know through these channels of cognition, does not really correspond to the physical world. This has confirmed this Buddhist view. We are misguided by our own senses. Pursuing what we imagine to be desirable, an object of pleasure, we are in reality only following a shadow, trying to grasp a mirage. These phenomena are unstable, painful and impersonal. We ourselves, who chase the illusions, are also impermanent, subject to suffering and without any real personality; a shadow pursuing a shadow.

The purpose of Buddhist meditation, therefore, is to gain a more than intellectual understanding of this truth, to liberate ourselves from the delusion and thereby put an end both to unawareness and thirst. If the meditation does not produce results which are observable in the character of a person, and the whole attitude to life, it is clear that there is something wrong either with the system of meditation or with the method of practice. It is not enough to see lights, to have visions or to experience ecstasy. These phenomena are too common to be impressive to the Buddhist who really understands the purpose of Buddhist meditation.

In the Buddha's great discourse on the practice of mindfulness, the *Mahā-Satipatthāna Sutta*, both the object of meditation and the means of attaining it, are clearly set forth. Attentiveness to the movements of the body, and the ever changing states of the mind, is to be cultivated, in order that their real nature is known. Instead of identifying these physical and mental phenomena with the false concept of self, we are to see them as they really are; as movements of a physical body, subject to physical laws of casualty on the one hand, and as a successive series of sensations, emotional states and concepts, arising and passing away in response to external stimuli. They are to be viewed objectively, as though they were processes not associated with ourselves but as a series of impersonal phenomena.

From what can selfishness and egotism proceed if not from the concept of Self *(sakkāyadiṭṭhi)*? If the practice of any form of meditation leaves selfishness or egotism unabated, it has not been successful. A tree is judged by its fruits and a man by his actions; there is no other criterion. Particularly is this true in Buddhist psychology, because the man is his actions. In the truest sense it is only the continuity of kamma and Vipāka which can claim any persistent identity, not only through the different phases of one's life but also through the different lives in this cycle of birth and death called *saṁsāra*. Attentiveness with regard to body and mind serves to break down the illusion of self; and, not only that, it also eliminates craving and attachment to external objects, so that ultimately, there is neither the self that craves, nor any object of craving. It is a long and arduous discipline, and one that can only be undertaken in retirement. A temporary course of this discipline, can bear good results in that it establishes an attitude of mind which can be applied to some degree in the ordinary situations of life. Detachment and objectivity are an invaluable aid to clear thinking. They enable a man to sum up a given situation without bias, personal or otherwise, and to act in that situation with courage and discretion. Another gift it bestows is that of concentration — the ability to keep the mind on any subject. This is the great secret of success in any undertaking. The mind is hard to tame; it roams here and there restlessly as the wind, or like an untamed horse, but when it is fully under control, it is the most powerful instrument in the whole universe.

In the first place, he is without fear. Fear arises because we associate mind and body *(nāma — rūpa)* with self; consequently, any harm to either is considered to be harm done to oneself. But he who has broken down this illusion, by realising that the five *khandha* process is merely the manifestation of cause and effect, does not fear death or misfortune. He remains alike in success and failure, unaffected by praise or blame. The only thing he fears is demeritorious action, because he knows that no thing or person in the world can harm him except himself, and as his detachment increases, he becomes less and less liable to demeritorious deeds. Unwholesome action comes of an unwholesome mind, and as the mind becomes purified, healed of its disorders, negative kamma ceases to accumulate. He comes to have a horror of wrong action and to take greater and greater delight in those deeds which stem from *alōbha, adōsa* and *amōha* — generosity, benevolence and wisdom.

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They are unsatiated even with a rain of gold and equally so with sensual indulgence.

186. *Na kahāpaṇa vassēna*
titti kāmēsu vijjati
appassādā dukhā kāmā
iti viññāya paṇḍitō. (14:8)

Not by a rain of golden coins
is found desires' satiety,
desires are dukkha, of little joy,
thus a wise one understands.

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SENSUAL PLEASURES NEVER SATIATED

14 (5) The Story of a Discontented Young Monk (Veses 186 & 187)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a young monk who was discontented as a monk.

The story goes that after this monk had been admitted to the Sangha and had made his full profession, his preceptor sent him forth, saying, "Go to such and such a place and learn the Ordinances." No sooner had the monk gone there than his father fell sick. Now the father desired greatly to see his son, but found no one able to summon him. When he was at the point of death, he began to chatter and prattle for love of his son. Putting a hundred pieces of money in the hands of his youngest son, he said to him, "Take this money and use it to buy a bowl and robe for my son." In so saying, he died.

When the young monk returned home, his youngest brother flung himself at his feet, and rolling on the ground, wept and said, "Venerable, your father was praising you when he died and placed in my hand a hundred pieces of gold. What shall I do with it?" The young monk refused to take the money, saying, "I have no need of this money." After a time, however, he thought to himself, "What is the use of living if I am obliged to gain my living by going from house to house for alms? These hundred pieces are enough to keep me alive; I will return to the life of a layman."

Oppressed with discontent, he abandoned the recitation of the Sacred Texts and the Practice of Meditation, and began to look as though he had jaundice. The youths asked him, "What is the matter?" He replied, "I am discontented." So they reported the matter to his preceptor and to his teacher, and the latter conducted him to the Buddha and explained what was the matter with him.

The Buddha asked him, "Is the report true that you are discontented?" "Yes, Venerable," he replied. Again the Buddha asked him, "Why have you acted thus? Have you any means of livelihood?" "Yes, venerable." "How great is your wealth?" "A hundred gold pieces, venerable." "Very well; just fetch a few potsherds hither; we will count them and find out whether or not you have sufficient means of livelihood." The discontented monk brought the potsherds. Then the Buddha said to him, "Now then, set aside fifty for food and drink, twenty-four for two bullocks, and an equal number for seed, for a two-bullock-plow, for a spade, and for a razoradze." The result of the count proved that the hundred gold pieces would be insufficient.

Then said the Buddha to him, "Monk, the pieces of money which you possess are but few in number. How can you hope to satisfy your desire with so few as these? In times past lived men who exercised sway as universal monarchs, men who by a mere waving of the arms were able to cause a rain of jewels to fall, covering the ground for twelve leagues waist-deep with jewels; these men ruled as kings until thirty-six sakkas had died; and, although exercising sovereignty over the deities for so long, died, without having fulfilled their desires."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 186)

kahāpaṇa vassēna kāmēsu titti na vijjati paṇḍitō
kāmā appassādā dukhā iti viññāya

kahāpaṇa vassēna: even by a shower of golden coins; *kāmēsu:* desire of sensualities; *titti:* satiation; *na vijjati:* is not seen; *paṇḍitō:* a wise person; *kāmā:* sensual pleasures; *appassādā:* (considers) as unsatisfied; *dukhā:* (and) painful); *iti:* this way; *viññāya:* having understood

Insatiable are sensual desires. Sensual desire will not be satisfied even with a shower of gold. The wise knows that sensual pleasures bring but little satisfaction and much pain.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 187)

sō dibbēsu kāmēsu api ratim nādhigacchati sammāsambuddhasāvakō taṇhakkhayaratō hōti

sō: he; *dibbēsu:* (even in) heavenly; *kāmēsu api:* pleasures; *ratim..:* indulgence; *nādhigacchati:* will not approach; *sammāsambuddhasāvakō:* that disciple of the Enlightened One; *taṇhakkhayaratō:* mind fixed only on ending of desire; *hōti:* is he

The disciple of the Buddha does not even go after heavenly pleasures. The disciple of the Buddha has his mind fixed only on the process of ending cravings.

(cont'd on page 401)

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True disciples of the Buddha yearn not even for heavenly pleasures.

187. *Api dibbēsu kāmēsu*
ratiṁ sō nādhigacchati
taṇhakkhayaratō hōti
sammāsambuddhasāvakō. (14:9)

Even with pleasures heavenly
that one finds no delight,
the perfect Buddha's pupil
delights in craving's end.

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SHUN WORLDLY PLEASURES

14 (5) The Story of a Discontented Young Monk (Verses 186 & 187) (cont'd)

Commentary

sammā sambuddha sāvakā: the disciples of the Buddha. The long line of monk disciples of the Buddha started with the promulgation of the First Sermon of the Buddha — *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*. This was addressed to the five ascetics. Eventually all the five of them attained arahatship — the highest stage of spiritual attainment. The five learned monks who thus attained arahatship and became the Buddha's first disciples were the brahmins Koṇdañña, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahānāma, and Assaji.

Koṇdañña was the youngest and the cleverest of the eight brahmins who were summoned by King Suddhōdana to name the infant prince. The other four were the sons of those older brahmins. All these five retired to the forest as ascetics in anticipation of the Bōdhisatta while he was endeavouring to attain Buddhahood. When he gave up his useless penances and severe austerities and began to nourish the body sparingly to regain his lost strength, these favourite followers, disappointed at his change of method, deserted him and went to Isipatana. Soon after their departure the Bōdhisatta attained Buddhahood. The venerable Koṇdañña became the first arahat and the most senior member of the Sangha. It was Assaji, one of the five, who converted the great Sāriputta, the chief disciple of the Buddha. From then on the number of the brotherhood increased.

In Vārānasi, there was a millionaire's son, named Yasa, who led a luxurious life. One morning he rose early and, to his utter disgust, saw his female attendants and musicians asleep in a repulsive posture. The sight was so disgusting that the palace presented the gloomy appearance of a charnel house. Realizing the vanities of worldly life, he stole away from home, saying, "Distressed am I, oppressed am I", and went in the direction of Isipatana where the Buddha was temporarily residing after the five monks attain arahatship. At that particular time the Buddha, as usual, was pacing up and down in an open space. Seeing him coming from afar, the Buddha came out of His ambulatory and sat on a prepared seat. Not far from Him stood Yasa, crying, "O' distressed am I! Oppressed am I!" Thereupon the Buddha said, "Here there is no distress, O' Yasa! Here there is no oppression. O' Yasa! Come hither, Yasa! Take a seat. I shall expound the Dhamma to you." The distressed Yasa was pleased to hear the encouraging words of the Buddha. Removing his golden sandals, he approached the Buddha, respectfully saluted Him and sat on one side. The Buddha expounded the doctrine to him, and he attained the first stage of sainthood *(sōtāpatti)*. At first the Buddha spoke to him on generosity *(dāna)*, morality *(sīla)*, celestial states *(sagga)*, the evils of sensual pleasures *(kāmādīnava)*, the blessings of renunciation *(nekkhammānisaṁsa)*. When He found that his mind was pliable and was ready to appreciate the deeper teaching He taught the Four Noble Truths.

Yasa's mother was the first to notice the absence of her son and she reported this to her husband. The man immediately dispatched horsemen in four directions and he himself went towards Isipatana, following the imprint of the golden slippers. The Buddha saw him coming from afar and, by His psychic powers, willed that he should not be able to see his son. When he approached the Buddha and respectfully inquired whether He had seen his son Yasa, the Buddha answered, "Well, then, sit down here please. You would be able to see your son.". Pleased with the happy news, he sat down. The Buddha delivered a discourse to him, and he was so delighted that he exclaimed, "Excellent, O' Lord, excellent! It is as if a man were to set upright that which was overturned, or were to hold a lamp amidst the darkness, so that those who have eyes may see! Even so has the doctrine been expounded in various ways by the Buddha. "I take refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine and the Sangha. May Buddha receive me as a follower, who has taken refuge from this very day to life's end!" He was the first lay follower to seek refuge with the three-fold formula. On hearing the discourse delivered to his father, Yasa attained arahatship. Thereupon the Buddha withdrew His will-power so that Yasa's father may be able to see his son. He beheld his son and invited the Buddha and His disciples for alms on the following day. The Buddha expressed His acceptance of the invitation by His silence. After the departure of the millionaire Yasa begged the Buddha to grant him the Lesser and the Higher Ordination. "Come, O' Monks! Well taught is the Doctrine. Lead the religious life to make a complete end of suffering." With these words the Buddha conferred on him the Higher Ordination. With the Venerable Yasa, the number of arahats increased to six.

As invited, the Buddha visited the millionaire's house with His six disciples. Venerable Yasa's mother and his former wife heard the doctrine expounded by the Buddha and, having attained the first stage of Sainthood, became His first two lay female followers. Venerable Yasa had four distinguished friends named Vimala, Subhāhu, Puṇṇaji and Gavampati. When they heard that their noble friend shaved his hair and with a yellow robe, entered the homeless life, they approached Venerable Yasa and expressed their desire to follow. Venerable Yasa introduced them to the Buddha, and, on hearing the Dhamma, they also attained arahatship.

Fifty more worthy friends of Venerable Yasa, who belonged to leading families of various districts, also receiving instructions from the Buddha, attained arahatship and entered the Sangha. Hardly two months had elapsed since His Enlightenment when the number of arahats gradually rose to sixty. All of them came from distinguished families and were worthy sons of worthy fathers. The Buddha, who long before succeeded in enlightening sixty disciples, decided to send them as messengers of Truth to teach His new Dhamma to all without any distinction. Before dispatching them in various directions He exhorted them as follows:

"Freed am I, O' Monks, from all bonds, whether divine or human.

"You, too, O' Monks, are freed from all bonds, whether divine or human.

"Go forth, O' Monks, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit, and happiness of gods and men. Let not two go by one way: Preach, O' Monks, the Dhamma, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter. Proclaim the holy life, altogether perfect and pure."

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Men in fear seek refuge in rocks, forests, groves, trees and shrines.

188. *Bahuṁ vē saraṇaṁ yanti*
pabbatāni vanāni ca
ārāma rukkha cētyāni
manussā bhayatajjitā. (14:10)

Many a refuge do they seek
on hills, in woods, to sacred trees,
to monasteries and shrines they go,
folk by fear tormented.

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FEAR STRICKEN MASSES

14 (6) The Story of Aggidatta (Verses 188 — 192)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Aggidatta, a brahmin.

It appears that Aggidatta was the house-priest of Mahā Kōsala. When Mahā Kōsala died, his son, King Pasēnadi Kōsala, out of respect for Aggidatta, since he had been his father's house-priest, reappointed him to the same post. Whenever Aggidatta came to wait upon the king, the king would go forth to meet him and would provide him with a seat of equal dignity with himself and say to him, "Teacher, pray sit here." After a time, however, Aggidatta thought to himself, "This king pays me very great deference, but it is impossible to remain in the good graces of kings for good and all. Life in a king's household is very pleasant for one who is of equal age with the king. But I am an old man and therefore had best become a monk." Accordingly Aggidatta asked permission of the king to become a monk, caused a drum to be beaten throughout the city, spent all of his wealth by way of alms in the course of a week, and retired from the world, becoming a monk of an heretical order. A great number of men followed to become monks.

Aggidatta with his monks took up his residence on the frontier of the country of the Angas and Magadhas and the country of the Kurūs. Having so done, he addressed his monks as follows, "Friends, in case any one of you should be troubled with unlawful thoughts, whether lustful, malevolent, or cruel, let each one of you so troubled fill a jar with sand from the river and empty the same in this place." "Very well," said the monks, promising to do so. So, whenever they were troubled by unlawful thoughts, whether lustful, malevolent, or cruel, they did as he had commanded them to do. In the course of time there arose a great heap of sand, and Ahicchatta, king of the nāgas (dragons), took possession of it. The dwellers in Anga and Magadha and the dwellers in the kingdom of the Kurus, month by month, brought rich offerings in honour of those monks. Now Aggidatta admonished them as follows, "So surely as you seek refuge in a mountain, so surely as you seek refuge in a forest, so surely as you seek refuge in a grove, so surely as you seek refuge in a tree, even so surely will you obtain release from all suffering." With this admonition did Aggidatta admonish his disciples.

At this time the future Buddha, after going forth on the great retirement, and after attaining complete enlightenment, took up his residence at Jētavana Monastery near Sāvatthi. Surveying the world at dawn he perceived that the brahmin Aggidatta, together with his disciples, had entered the net of his knowledge. So he considered within himself, "Do all these living beings possess the faculties requisite for arahatship?" Perceiving that they possessed the requisite faculties, he said in the evening to Venerable Moggallāna, "Moggalāna, do you observe that the brahmin Aggidatta is urging upon the multitude a course of action other than the right one? Go and admonish them." "Venerable, these monks are very numerous, and if I go alone, I fear that they will prove to be untractable; but if you also go, they will be tractable." "Moggallāna, I will also go, but you go ahead."

As the Venerable proceeded, he thought to himself, "These monks are both powerful and numerous. If I say a word to them when they are all gathered together, they will all rise against me in troops." Therefore by his own supernatural power he caused great drops of rain to fall. When those great drops of rain fell, the monks arose, one after another, and each entered his own bower of leaves and grass. The Venerable went and stood at the door of Aggidatta's leafy hut and called out, "Aggidatta!" When Agidatta heard the sound of the Venerable's voice, he thought to himself, "There is no one in this world who is able to address me by name; who can it be that thus addresses me by name?" And in the stubbornness of pride, he replied, "Who is that?" "It is I, brahmin." "What have you to say?" "Show me a place here where I can spend this one night." "There is no place for you to stay here; here is but a single hut of leaves and grass for a single monk." "Aggidatta, men go to the abode of men, cattle to the abode of cattle, and monks to the abode of monks; do not so; give me a lodging." "Are you a monk?" "Yes, I am a monk." "If you are a monk, where is your alms vessel? What monastic utensils have you?" "I have utensils, but since it is inconvenient to carry them about from place to place, I procure them within and then go my way." "So you intend to procure them within and then go your way!" said Aggidatta angrily to the Venerable. The Venerable said to him, "Go away, Aggidatta, do not be angry; show me a place where I can spend the night." "There is no lodging here." "Well, who is it that lives on that pile of sand?" "A certain nāga-king." "Give the pile of sand to me." "I cannot give you the pile of sand; that would be a grievous affront to him." "Never mind, give it to me." "Very well; you alone seem to know."

(cont'd on page 405)

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This is no assuring refuge. This is no way to total release.

189. *N'ētaṁ khō saraṇaṁ khēmaṁ*
n'ētaṁ saraṇam uttamaṁ
n'ētaṁ saraṇam āgamma
sabbadukkhā pamuccati. (14:11)

Such refuge isn't secure,
such refuge isn't supreme.
From all dukkha one's not free
unto that refuge gone.

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THOSE REFUGES DO NOT OFFER HELP

14 (6) The Story of Aggidatta (Verses 188 — 192) (cont'd)

The Venerable started towards the pile of sand. When the nāga-king saw him approaching, he thought to himself. "Yonder monk approaches hither. Doubtless he does not know that I am here. I will spit fire at him and kill him." The Venerable thought to himself, "This nāga-king doubtless thinks, 'I alone am able to spit smoke; others are not able to do this.'" So the Venerable spit fire himself. Puffs of smoke arose from the bodies of both and ascended to the World of Brahma. The puffs of smoke gave the Venerable no trouble at all, but troubled the nāga-king sorely. The nāga-king, unable to stand the blasts of smoke, burst into flames. The Venerable applied himself to meditation on the element of fire and entered into a state of trance. Thereupon he burst into flames which ascended to the World of Brahma. His whole body looked as if it had been set on fire with torches. The company of sages looked on and thought to themselves, "The nāga-king is burning the monk; the good monk has indeed lost his life by not listening to our words." When the Venerable had over-mastered the nāga-king and made him quit his misdoing, he seated himself on the pile of sand. Thereupon the nāga-king surrounded the pile of sand with good things to eat, and creating a hood as large as the interior of a peak-house, held it over the Venerable's head.

Early in the morning the company of sages thought to themselves, "We will find out whether the monk is dead or not." So they went to where the Venerable was, and when they saw him sitting on the pile of sand, they did reverence to him and praised him and said, "Monk, you must have been greatly plagued by the nāga-king." "Do you not see him standing there with his hood raised over my head?" Then said the sages, "What a wonderful thing the monk did in conquering so powerful a nāga-king!" And they stood in a circle about the Venerable.

At that moment, the Buddha drew near. The Venerable, seeing the Buddha, arose and saluted him. Said the sages to the Venerable, "Is this man greater than you?" The Venerable replied, "This is the Buddha; I am only his disciple." The Buddha seated himself on the summit of the pile of sand. The company of sages said to each other, "If such is the supernatural power of a mere disciple, what must the supernatural power of this man like?" And, extending their clasped hands in an attitude of reverent salutation, they bestowed praise on the Buddha. The Buddha said to Aggidatta, "Aggidatta, in giving admonition to your disciples and supporters, how do you admonish them?" Aggidatta replied, "I admonish them thus, 'Seek refuge in this mountain, seek refuge in this forest, or grove, or tree. For he who seeks refuge in these obtains release from all suffering.'" The Buddha said, "No indeed, Aggidatta, he who seeks refuge in these does not obtain release from suffering. But he who seeks refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, he obtains release from the round of suffering."

At the conclusion of the lesson all those sages attained arahatship, together with the superhuman faculties. Thereupon they saluted the Buddha and asked to be admitted to the Sangha. The Buddha stretched out his hand from under his robe and said, "Come, monks! Lead the religious life." That very instant they were furnished with the eight requisites and became as it were monks of a hundred years.

Now this was the day when all the dwellers in Anga and in Magadha and in the country of the Kurus were accustomed to come with rich offerings. When, therefore, they approached with their offerings, and saw that all those sages had become monks, they thought to themselves, "Is our brahmin Aggidatta great, or is the monk Gōtama great?" And because the Buddha had but just arrived, they concluded, "Aggidatta alone is great." The Buddha surveyed their thoughts and said, "Aggidatta, destroy the doubt that exists in the minds of your disciples." Aggidatta replied, "That is the very thing I desire to do." So by superhuman power he rose seven times in the air, and descending to the ground, he saluted the Buddha and said, "Venerable, you are my Teacher and I am your disciple." Thus did Aggidatta speak, declaring himself the disciple of the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 188)

bhayatajjitā manussā pabbatāni vanāni ārāma
rukkha cētyāni ca vē bahuṁ saraṇaṁ yanti

bhayatajjitā: trembling in fear; *manussā:* human beings; *pabbatāni:* rocks; *vanāni:* forests; *ārāma:* parks; *rukkha:* trees; *cētyāni ca:* and shrines; *vē:* decidedly; *bāhuṁ saraṇaṁ:* many refuges; *yanti:* go to

Human beings who tremble in fear seek refuge in mountains, forests, parks, trees, and shrines.

(cont'd on page 407)

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Accepting refuge of Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and truly grasping Four Noble Truths.

190. *Yō ca Buddhañ ca Dhammañ ca*
Sanghañ ca saraṇaṁ gatō
cattāri ariyasaccāni
sammappaññāya passati. (14:12)

But going for refuge to Buddha,
to Dhamma and the Sangha too,
one sees with perfect wisdom
the tetrad of the Noble Truths:

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SEEING FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

14 (6) The Story of Aggidatta (Verses 188 — 192) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 189)

ētaṁ saraṇaṁ khō na khēmaṁ ētaṁ saraṇaṁ na uttamaṁ ētaṁ saraṇaṁ āgamma, sabbadukkhā na pamuccati

ētaṁ saranaṁ khō: this kind of refuge certainly; *na khēmaṁ:* is not secure; *ētaṁ saraṇaṁ:* this kind of refuge; *na uttamaṁ:* is not supreme; *ētaṁ saraṇaṁ āgamma:* coming to that refuge; *sabbadukkhā:* from all sufferings; *na pamuccati:* one is not released

These are not secure refuges. They are not the supreme refuge. One who takes refuge in them is not released from all sufferings.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 190)

yō ca Buddhañca Dhammañca Sanghañca saraṇaṁ gatō cattāri ariyasaccāni sammappaññāya passati

yō ca: if someone; *Buddhañca*: in the Buddha; *Dhammañca:* in the Dhamma; *Sanghañca:* and in the Sangha (Order); *saraṇaṁ gatō;* takes refuge; *cattāri ariyasaccāni:* four extraordinary realities; *sammā:* well; *paññāya:* with penetrative insight; *passati:* (he) will see

If a wise person were to take shelter in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, he will observe the four Noble Truths with high wisdom.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 191)

dukkhaṁ dukkhasamuppādaṁ dukkhassa atikkamaṁ ca dukkhūpasamagāminaṁ ariyaṁ aṭṭhaṅgikaṁ maggaṁ ca

dukkhaṁ: suffering; *dukkhasamuppādaṁ:* arisen of suffering; *dukkhassa atikkamaṁ:* ending suffering; *ca dukkhūpasamagāminaṁ:* and the way to the end of suffering; *ariyaṁ aṭṭhaṅgikaṁ maggaṁ:* (that is) the eight-fold path

The four extraordinary realities are: suffering; the arising of suffering; the ending of suffering; the eightfold path leading to the ending of suffering.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 192)

ētaṁ saraṇaṁ khō khēmaṁ ētaṁ saraṇaṁ uttamaṁ ētaṁ saraṇaṁ āgamma, sabbadukkhā pamuccati

ētaṁ saraṇaṁ khō: indeed this refuge is; *khēmaṁ:* secure; *ētaṁ saraṇaṁ:* this refuge; *uttamaṁ:* is supreme; *ētaṁ saraṇaṁ āgamma:* when you arrive in this refuge; *sabbadukkhā:* of all suffering; *pamuccati:* (you are) set free

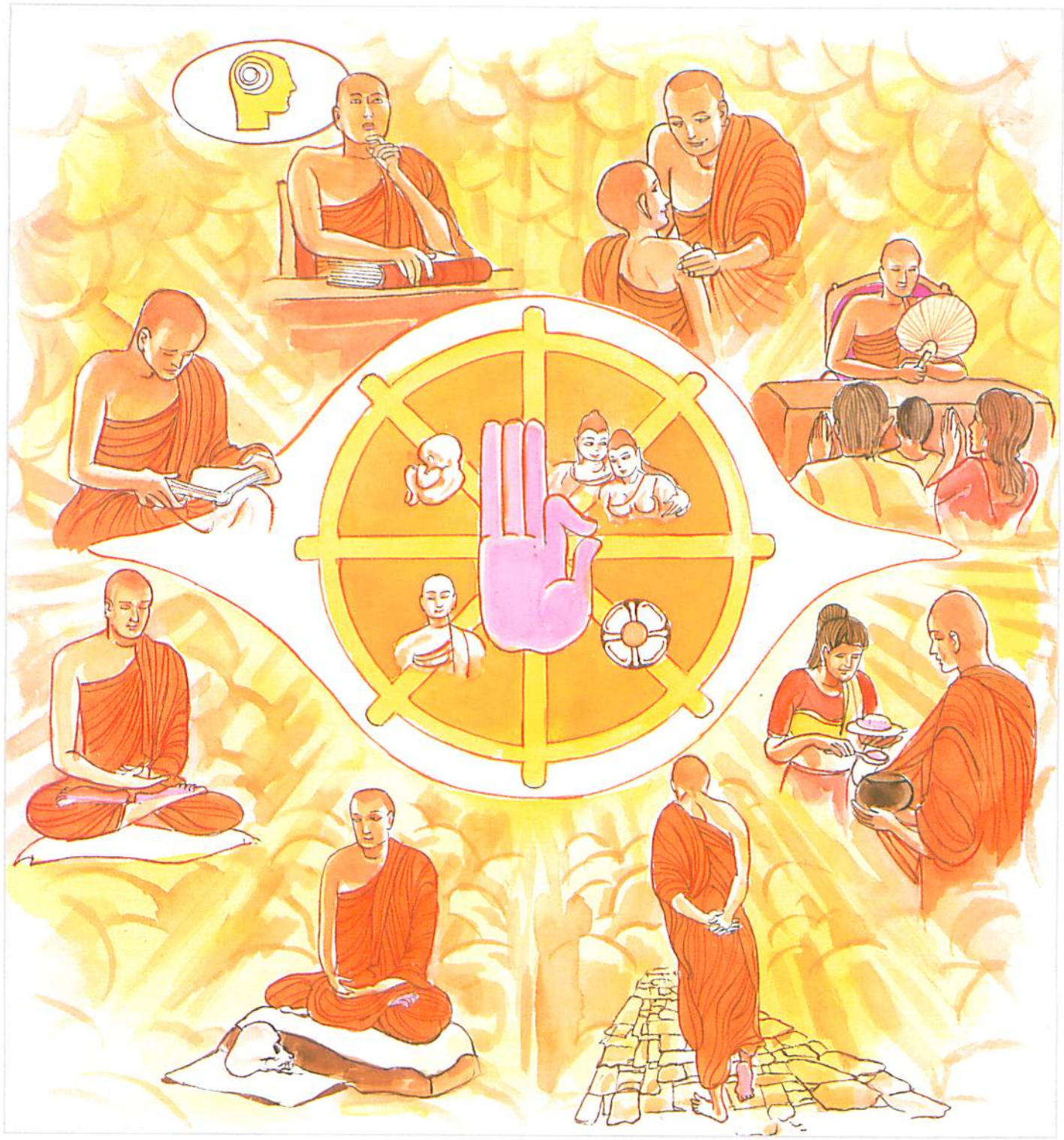
This refuge in the Triple Refuge is, of course, totally secure. This is the supreme refuge. Once you take this refuge you gain release from all your sufferings.

Commentary

N'ētaṁ khō saraṇaṁ khēmaṁ: One's best refuge is oneself. A Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṇgha as the Teacher, the Teaching and the Taught in order to gain his deliverance from the ills of life. The Buddha is the supreme teacher who shows the way to deliverance. The Dhamma is the unique way. The Saṇgha represents the Taught who have followed the way and have become living examples. One formally becomes a Buddhist by intelligently seeking refuge in this Triple Gem *(Tisaraṇa)*. A Buddhist does not seek refuge in the Buddha with the hope that he will be saved by a personal act of deliverance. The confidence of a Buddhist in the Buddha is like that of a sick person in a noted physician, or of a student in his teacher.

(cont'd on page 409)

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Suffering, the arising, the cessation and the Eightfold Path...

191. *Dukkhaṁ dukkhasamuppādaṁ*
dukkhassa ca atikkamaṁ
ariyaṁ c'aṭṭhaṇgikaṁ maggaṁ
dukkhūpasamagāminaṁ. (14:13)

Dukkha, its causal arising,
the overcoming of dukkha,
and the Eight-fold Path that's Noble
leading to dukkha's allaying.

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THE NOBLE PATH

14 (6) The Story of Aggidatta (Verses 188 to 192) (cont'd)

Commentary

yō ca Budhanca Dhammanca Sanghanca saranaṁ gatō: Those who take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Though the Sangha began its career with only sixty disciples, it expanded into thousands, and in those early days an adherent sought entry into it by pronouncing the three-fold formula known as the Three Refuges:

Buddhaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Saṅghaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Buddhaṁ Saranaṁ Gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Saṅghaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Buddhaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Saṅghaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi"

I go for refuge to the Buddha (the Teacher)
I go for refuge to the Dhamma (the Teaching)
I go for refuge to the Sangha (the Taught)
For the second time I go for refuge to the Buddha
For the second time I go for refuge to the Dhamma
For the second time I go for refuge to the Sangha
For the third time I go for refuge to the Buddha
For the third time I go for refuge to the Dhamma
For the third time I go for refuge to the Sangha

Here the Buddha lays special emphasis on the importance of individual striving for purification and deliverance from the daily ills of life. There is no efficacy in praying to others or in depending on others. One might question why Buddhists should seek refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, when the Buddha had explicitly advised His followers not to seek refuge in others. In seeking refuge in the Triple Gem. Buddhists only regard the Buddha as an instructor who merely shows the path of Deliverance, the Dhamma as the only way or means, the Sangha as the living examples of the way of life to be lived. Buddhists do not consider that they would gain their deliverance by merely reciting these words of commitment. One has to begin the practice of it.

cattāri ariyasaccāni: the four extraordinary realities. *Sacca* is the Pāli term for reality which means the reality that the Buddha awakened to, which is different from the ordinary and, therefore, is extraordinary. The Buddha enunciates a four-fold reality which provides foundation for His teaching, which is associated with the so-called existence or being. Whether the Buddhas arise or not, this reality remains and it is a Buddha who reveals it to the deluded world. It does not and cannot change with time, because it is available always. The Buddha was not indebted to anyone for his realization of it, as He Himself remarked in his discourse thus: "With regard to things unheard of before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the gnosis, the insight and the light." These words are very significant because they testify to the originality of His experience.

This reality, in Pāli, is termed *ariya saccāni*. They are so called because they were discovered by the Greatest Ariya, that is, one who has transcended the ordinary state and becomes extraordinary. The term *ariya*, usually translated noble, is here translated extraordinary, as opposed to the ordinary (*puthujjana*). We are making a distinction between ordinary or naive reality as seen by the common man on the street and the extraordinary reality experienced by the Buddha and his disciples.

The first part of the extraordinary reality deals with *dukkha* which, for need of a better English equivalent, is rendered suffering. As a feeling *dukkha* means pain. What is painful is, in short, the personality which is an impossible burden that we constantly carry. We are unable to maintain it because it is unrealistic. Unhappiness results from the attempt to do the impossible.

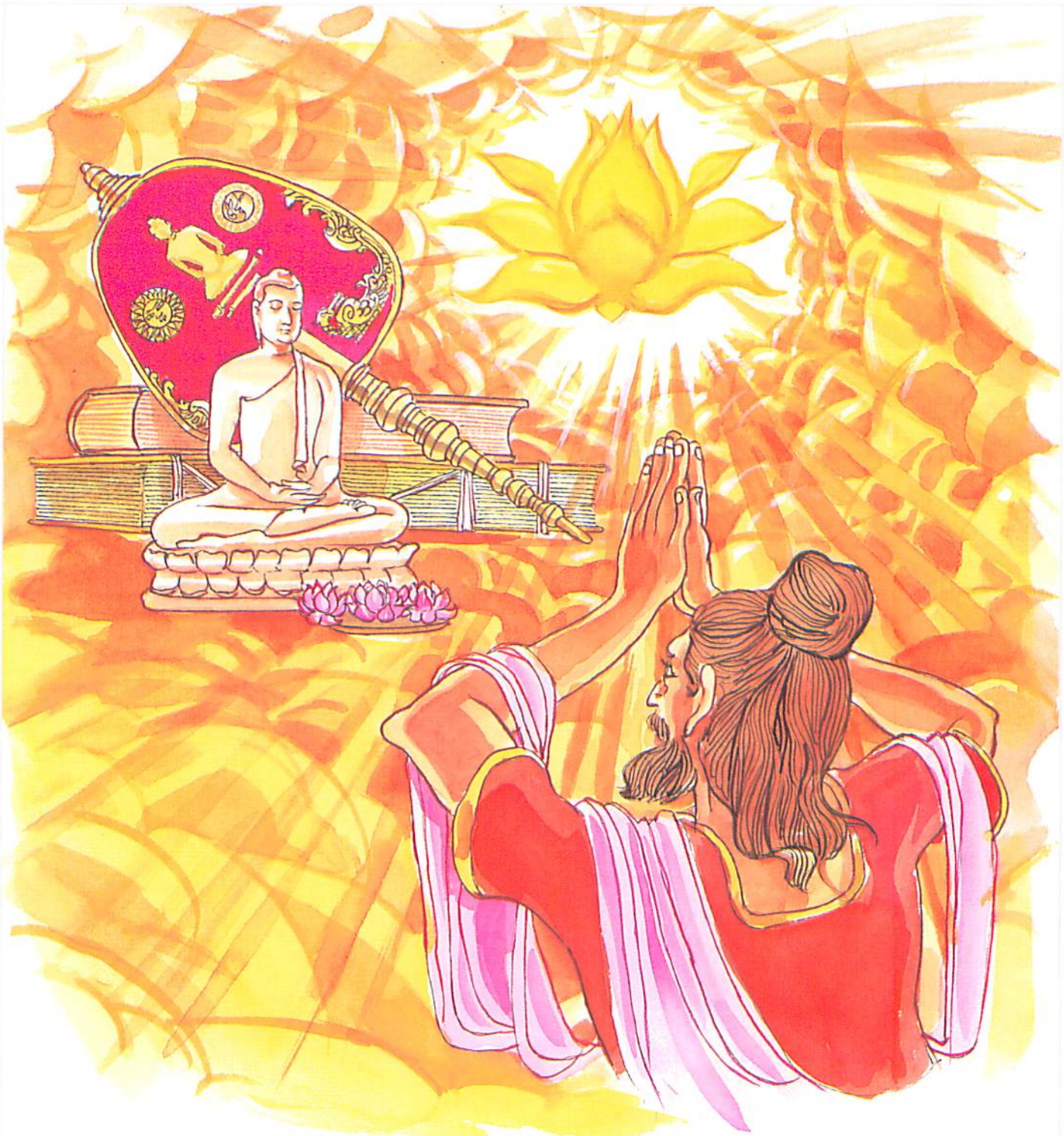
Average men are only surface-seers. An *ariya* sees things as they truly are. To an *ariya* life is suffering and he finds no real happiness in this world which deceives with illusory pleasures. Material happiness is merely the gratification of some desire.

All are subject to birth *(jāti)* and, consequently, to decay *(jarā)*, disease *(vyādhi)* and finally to death *(maraṇa)*. No one is exempt from these four phases of life. Life is not a static entity. It is a dynamic process of change. Self is a state concept that we try to maintain in a dynamic reality. This wish, when unfulfilled, is suffering. While trying to maintain this self one meets unfavourables or one is separated from things or persons. At times, what one least expects or what one least desires, is thrust on oneself. Such unexpected, unpleasant circumstances become so intolerable and painful that weak people sometimes commit suicide as if such an act would solve the problem.

The cause of this suffering is an emotional urge to 'personalise' what is experienced. The personality comes into being through this personalization.

(cont'd on page 411)

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These form the refuge supreme. Via these, the release from all grief and pain.

192. *ētaṁ khō saraṇaṁ khēmaṁ*
ētaṁ saraṇam uttamaṁ
ētaṁ saraṇam āgamma
sabbadukkhā pamuccati. (14:14)

Such refuge is secure,
such refuge is supreme.
From all dukkha one is free
unto that refuge gone.

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THE REFUGE THAT ENDS ALL SUFFERINGS

14 (6) The Story of Aggidatta (Verses 188 — 192) (cont'd)

Commentary

There are three kinds of urges. The first is the urge to enjoy sensual pleasures *(kāmataṇhā)*. The second is the urge to exist or be *(bhavataṇhā)*. The third is the urge to stop existing *(vibhavataṇhā)*. According to the commentaries, the last two urges are connected with the belief in eternalism *(sassatadiṭṭhi)* and the belief in annihilationism *(ucchēdadiṭṭhi)*. *Bhavataṇhā* may also be interpreted as attachment to realms of form and *vibhavataṇhā*, as attachment to formless realms since *rūparāga* and *arūparāga* are treated as two fetters *(samyōjanas)*.

This urge is a powerful emotional force latent in all, and is the chief cause of the ills of life. It is this urge which, in gross or subtle form, leads to repeated births in saṁsāra and that which makes one hold on to all forms of life and personality.

The grossest forms of this urge for pleasure are attenuated on attaining *sakadāgāmi*, the second stage of sainthood, and it is completely eradicated on attaining *anāgāmi*, the third stage of sainthood. The subtle forms of the urge for existence and non-existence are eradicated on attaining *arahatship*.

The third aspect of the extraordinary reality is the complete cessation of suffering which is Nibbāna, the ultimate goal of Buddhists. It can be achieved in this life itself by the total eradication of all urges. This Nibbāna is to be realized *(sacchikātabba)* by renouncing all attachment to the external world. This is the depersonalization of the aggregate of personalized phenomena (*pancupādānakkhanda*) which comprise the personality or self.

This third extraordinary reality has to be realized by developing (*bhāvētabba*) the extraordinary eight-fold path (*ariyaṭṭhaṇgika magga*). This unique path is the only straight way to Nibbāna. This is the fourth extraordinary reality.

ariyañchaṭṭhangikaṁ maggaṁ: the extraordinary eight-fold path. This unique way avoids the two extremes: self-mortification that weakens one's body and self-indulgence that retards one's mind. It consists of the following eight factors:

1) Harmonious perspective *(Sammā Diṭṭhi)*
2) Harmonious feeling *(Sammā Saṁkappa)*
3) Harmonious speech *(Sammā Vācā)*
4) Harmonious action *(Sammā Kammanta)*
5) Harmonious living *(Sammā Ajīva)*
6) Harmonious practice *(Sammā Vāyāma)*
7) Harmonious introspection *(Sammā Sati)*
8) Harmonious equilibrium *(Sammā Samādhi)*

1. Harmonious perspective is explained as the knowledge of the four extraordinary realities. In other words, it is the understanding of oneself as one really is, because, as the *Rōhitassa Sutta* states, these truths are concerned with the one-fathom long body of man. The key-note of Buddhism is this harmonious perspective which removes all conflicts within and without.

2. Clear vision leads to clear feeling. The second factor of the path is, therefore, *Sammā Saṁkappa*. The English renderings right resolutions, right aspirations do not convey the actual meaning of the Pāli term. Right feelings may be suggested as the nearest English equivalent.

It is the emotional state or feelings that either defiles or purifies a person. Feelings mould a person's nature and controls destiny. Evil feelings tend to debase one just as good feelings tend to elevate a person. Sometimes a single feeling can either destroy or save.

Sammā Saṁkappa serves the double purpose of eliminating bad feelings thoughts and developing good feelings. Right feelings, in this particular context, are three-fold. They consist of: (i) *Nekkhamma* — desire for renunciation of worldly pleasures, which is opposed to attachment, selfishness, and self-possessiveness; (ii) *Avyāpāda* — feelings of loving-kindness, goodwill, or benevolence, which is opposed to hatred, ill-will, or aversion, and (iii) *Avihiṁsā* — feelings of harmlessness or compassion, which is opposed to cruelty and callousness.

These evil and good feelings are latent in all. As long as we are ordinary people, bad feelings rise to the surface at unexpected moments in great strength. When they are totally eradicated, on attaining arahatship, one's stream of consciousness becomes pure.

Harmonious feelings automatically leads to harmonious speech and action, which results in a harmonious life.

These good feelings, however, have to be maintained only by constant practice in preventing and eliminating evil thoughts and the cultivation and maintenance of good thoughts. This leads to constant introspective awareness of the experience within. This results in the attainment of mental equilibrium. This undisturbed mind is aware of reality. This awareness maintains the peace that cannot be disturbed.

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The birth of that rare virtuous man leads all else to blissful happiness.

193. *Dullabhō purisājaññō*
na sō sabbattha jāyati
yattha sō jāyati dhīrō
taṁ kulaṁ sukhamēdhati. (14:15)

Hard to find the pure and noble
who isn't born just anywhere,
wherever one so wise is born
that family thrives happily.

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RARE INDEED IS BUDDHA'S ARISING

14 (7) The Story of the Question Raised by Venerable Ānanda (Verse 193)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the question raised by Venerable Ānanda.

One day, Venerable Ānanda pondered thus: "Our Teacher has told us that thoroughbreds of elephants are born only among Chaddanta and Upōsatha breeds, that thoroughbreds of horses are born only among the Sindh breed, that thoroughbreds of cattle are born only among the Usabha breed. Thus, he had talked to us only about the thoroughbreds of elephants, horses and cattles, but not of the noblest of men *(purisājannō)*."

After reflecting thus, Venerable Ānanda went to the Buddha, and put to him the question of the nobles of men. To him, the Buddha replied,"Ānanda, the noblest of men is not born everywhere, he is born among Khattiyamahāsāla and Brahmanamahāsāla, the wealthy clans of Khattiya and Brahmana."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 193)

purisājaññō dullabhō, sō sabbattha na jāyati sō dhīrō yattha jāyati taṁ kulaṁ sukhaṁ ēdhati

purisājaññō: a noble being among men (a Buddha); *dullabhō:* is rare; *sō:* that kind of rare being; *sabbattha:* in all places; *na jāyati:* is not born; *sō dhīrō:* that noble and wise person; *yattha:* if in some place; *jāyati:* if born; *taṁ kulaṁ:* that family; *sukhaṁ ēdhati:* to happiness comes

The Buddha is rare indeed. Such a rare person is not born everywhere. If such a noble and wise person were born in a clan, that clan will reap happiness.

Commentary

sabbattha na jāyati: not born everywhere. The reference is to the birth of the Buddha. The Buddha is not born just anywhere. The would-be-sage was in heaven when he was invited by the deities and brahmas to be born on Earth as the Buddha. But the Buddha, before assenting to their wish, made what is called the five great observations *(pañca mahâ-vilōkana)*. He observed, namely, the time, the continent, the country, the family, and the mother and her span of life. In the first of these observations, he asked himself whether it was the right time or not. "It is not the right time when the length of men's lives is more than a hundred thousand years. And why is it not the right time? For then the birth, ageing and dying of beings are not manifest, and there is no teaching of the Dhamma of Buddhas that is freed from the three characteristic marks, so that when they (Buddhās) are talking to these (people) about impermanence, anguish and no-self, they say, 'Whatever is this they are talking about?' and think it should neither be listened to nor believed. Consequently there is no penetration. This being so, it is a dispensation not leading out. Therefore, this is not the right time." "Also, it is not the right time when men's lives are less than a hundred years. And why is it not the right time? Then beings are abounding in defilements; and an exhortation given to those who are abounding in defilements makes no impression, but, like a mark drawn with a stick on the surface of the water, it immediately disappears. This, therefore, also is not the right time."

But when the length of men's lives is between a hundred years and a hundred thousand years, then it is the right time. Now at that time men's lives were a hundred years; accordingly, the Buddha observed that it was the right time for his birth.

Next, he made the observation concerning the continent. Looking over the four continents with the surrounding islands, he reflected, "In three of the continents the Buddhas are never born; only in Jambudīpa are they born." Thus, he decided on the continent. Next, he made the observation concerning the place. "The continent of Jambudīpa is large," thought he, "being ten thousand leagues around. In which of its countries are the Buddhas born?" And, observing the region, he decided on the middle country in the city of Kapilavatthu.

Then he made the observation concerning the family. "The Buddhas," thought he, "are never born either in a vessa (merchant) family or in suddha (labourer) family. But they are born either in a *khattiya* (noble) family or in a brāhmin (priest) family whichever is then of the higher repute in the world. At the present time the *khattiya* (noble) family is of the higher repute in the world. I will be born therein. The king named Suddhōdana will be my father." Thus, he decided on the family.

Then he made the observation concerning the mother. "The mother of a Buddha," thought he, "is never a wanton, nor a drunkard, but is one who had fulfilled perfections through a hundred thousand cycles, and has kept the five precepts unbroken from the day of her birth. Now this queen named Mahamāyā is such a one. She shall be my mother. But, what shall be her span of life?" And he perceived that it was to be ten months and seven days.

Having thus made the five great observations, he kindly promised the dēvas what they requested, saying, "Venerables, you are right. The time has come for my Buddhahood." Then, surrounded by the dēvas of the Tusita heaven, and dismissing all the other dēvas, he entered the Nandana Grove of the Tusita heaven, for in each of the heavens there is a Nandana Grove. And here, the dēvatās said, "Attain in your next existence your high destiny," and kept reminding him that he had already paved the way to it by his accumulated merit. Now it was while he was thus dwelling, surrounded by these deities, and continually reminded of his accumulated merit, that he died, and was conceived in the womb of queen Mahāmāyā. This event took place in the month of Esala (July, August), on the day of full-moon, early in the morning under the asterism *(nēkata)* of Uttarasālha.

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Buddha's birth, Dhamma's proclamation, Sangha's concord - are all equally blissful.

194. *Sukhō Buddhānaṁ uppādō*
sukhā saddhammadēsanā
sukhā saṅghassa sāmaggi
samaggānaṁ tapō sukhō. (14:16)

Blessed is the birth of Buddhas,
blest True Dhamma's Teaching,
blest the Sangha's harmony
and blessed is their striving.

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FOUR FACTORS OF HAPPINESS

14 (8) The Story of Many Monks (Verse 194)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to many monks.

Once, many monks were discussing the question "What constitutes happiness?" These monks realized that happiness meant different things to different people. Thus, they said, "To some people to have the riches and glory like that of a king's is happiness, to some people sensual pleasure is happiness, but to others to have good rice cooked with meat is happiness." While they were talking, the Buddha came in. After learning the subject of their talk, the Buddha said, "The pleasures that you have mentioned do not get you out of the round of rebirths. In this world, these constitute happiness: the arising of a Buddha, the opportunity to hear the Teaching of the Sublime Truth, and the harmony among monks." At the end of the discourse, those monks attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 194)

Buddhānaṁ uppādō sukhō, saddhammadēsanā sukhā, saṇghassa sāmaggi sukhā, samaggānaṁ tapō sukhō

Buddhānaṁ: of the Buddha; *uppādō:* arising; *sukhō:* (is) joyful; *saddhammadēsanā:* the proclamation of the Dhamma; *sukhā:* is joyful; *saṇghassa:* of the brotherhood; *sāmaggi:* concord (unity); *sukhā:* (is) joyful; *samaggānaṁ:* of those in concord; *tapō:* religious practice; *sukhō:* (is) joyful

The arising of the Buddhas is joyful. The proclamation of the Dhamma is joyful. The concord of the Sangha is joyful. Joyful indeed is spiritual practice in harmony.

Commentary

Buddhānaṁ uppādō sukhō: the arising of the Buddha is a blissful event. In the traditional lore regarding the birth of Prince Siddhattha, who was later to become Buddha, there is an indication of the happiness he would bring to the world later as the Buddha. Now other mortals on issuing from the maternal womb are disagreeable; but not so the Bōdhisatta. He issued from his mother's womb like a preacher descending from his pulpit, or a man coming down stairs, stretching out both hands and feet without any impurities like a jewel thrown upon a vesture of Vārānasi cloth.

There are further details about this blissful event.

Before the child touches the ground, he is received by four deities, and is presented to the mother, saying, "Be rejoiced, O' Queen, you have given birth to a great being."

Four great kings received the child from the deities into a soft leopard skin, and from them the child was received by the retinue of the Queen into a silken robe. The child set his feet on earth, and faced the Easterly direction. A white canopy was raised over him.

Innumerable universe appeared like one compound. Gods and men made offerings with flowers and incense, etc., and said, "O Great Being, there is none to equal you here; whence any superior." Looking on all sides the Buddha saw no equal of his, and took seven steps in the Northern direction. As the seventh step was taken, the Buddha declared, "I am the chief of the world. This is my last birth. There will be no more births for me." For, this is the birth of the Buddha, the unique and marvellous being, who is born in the world out of compassion for the world, for the good, the benefit and the happiness of gods and men.

As the Buddha was born, a limitless super radiance surpassing that of the gods traversed through the entire universe. Myriads of gods in the heaven of Tāvatiṁsa immensely rejoiced to hear of the birth of the future Buddha and engaged in much revelry and sport.

At the time of the birth of the Buddha, there were also born Bhaddhakaccānā (Yasōdharā), the Ministers Channa and Kāludāyi, and Kanthaka, the horse. The Bōdhi-tree and the four great treasures, too, arose at this time.

Sanghassa sāmaggi: Sangha is the oldest, democratically constituted, historic celibate Order, founded by the Buddha. Strictly speaking, the Sangha denotes those noble disciples who have realized the four Paths and four Fruits. The ordinary bhikkhus of the present day are merely their representatives.

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He who knows the worthy, Buddha or his disciples, who've transcended all grief...

195. *Pūjārahē pūjayatō*
Buddhē yadi va sāvakē
papañca samatikkantē
tiṇṇa sōkapariddavē. (14:17)

Who venerates the venerable -
the Buddhas or their hearkeners
who've overcome the manifold,
grief and lamentation left,

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WORSHIP THOSE WHO DESERVE ADORATION

14 (9) The Story of the Golden Stūpa of Kassapa Buddha (Verses 195 & 196)

While travelling from Sāvatthi to Vārānasī, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a brahmin and the Golden Stūpa of Kassapa.

One day Buddha departed from Savātthī, accompanied by a large company of monks and set out for Vārānasī. On his way thither he came to a certain shrine near the village Tōdeyya. There the Buddha sat down, sent forth Ānanda and bade him to summon a brahmin who was tilling the soil near by. When the brahmin came, he omitted to pay reverence to the Buddha, but paid reverence only to the shrine. Having so done, he stood there before the Buddha. The Buddha said, "How do you regard this place, brahmin?" The brahmin replied, "This shrine has come down to us through generations, and that is why I reverence it, Venerable Gōtama." Thereupon the Buddha praised him, saying, "In reverencing this place you have done well, brahmin."

When the monks heard this, they entertained misgivings and said, "For what reason did you bestow this praise?" So in order to dispel their doubts, the Buddha recited the *Ghatīkāra Suttanta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Then by the superhuman power, He created in the air a mountain of gold double the golden shrine of the Buddha Kassapa, a league in height. Then, pointing to the numerous company of His disciples, He said, "Brahmin, it is even more fitting to render honour to men who are so deserving of honour as these." Then, in the words of the Sutta of the Great Decease, He declared that the Buddhas and others, four in number, are worthy of shrines. Then He described in detail the three kinds of shrines: the shrine for bodily relics, the shrine for commemorative relics, and the shrine for articles used or enjoyed. At the conclusion of the lesson the brahmin attained the fruit of conversion.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 195)

papañca samatikkantē tiṇṇa sōkapariddavē
pūjārahē Buddhē yadi vā sāvakē pūjayatō

papañca samatikkantē: those who have gone beyond ordinary apperception; *tiṇṇa sōkapariddavē:* who have crossed over grief and lamentation; *pūjārahē:* who deserve to be worshiped; *Buddhē:* (namely) the Buddha; *yadi vā:* and also: *sāvakē:* the disciples of the Buddha; *pūjayatō:* if someone were to worship them

Those who have gone beyond apperception (the normal way of perceiving the world), who have crossed over grief and lamentation. They deserve to be worshipped; namely, the Buddhas and their disciples.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 196)

nibbutē akutōbhayē tādisē tē pūjayatō puññaṁ
imaṁ ettam. iti saṅkhātuṁ kēna ci api na sakkā

nibbutē: who have reached imperturbability; *akutōbhayē:* who does to tremble or fear; *tādisē:* that kind of being; *tē pūjayatō:* one who reveres; *puññaṁ:* merit; *imaṁ mattaṁ iti:* as this much or so much; *saṅkhātuṁ:* to quantify; *na sakkā:* not able; *kēnaci:* by anyone

One who worships those who have attained imperturbability and do not tremble or fear, earns much merit. The merit earned by such a person cannot be measured by anyone.

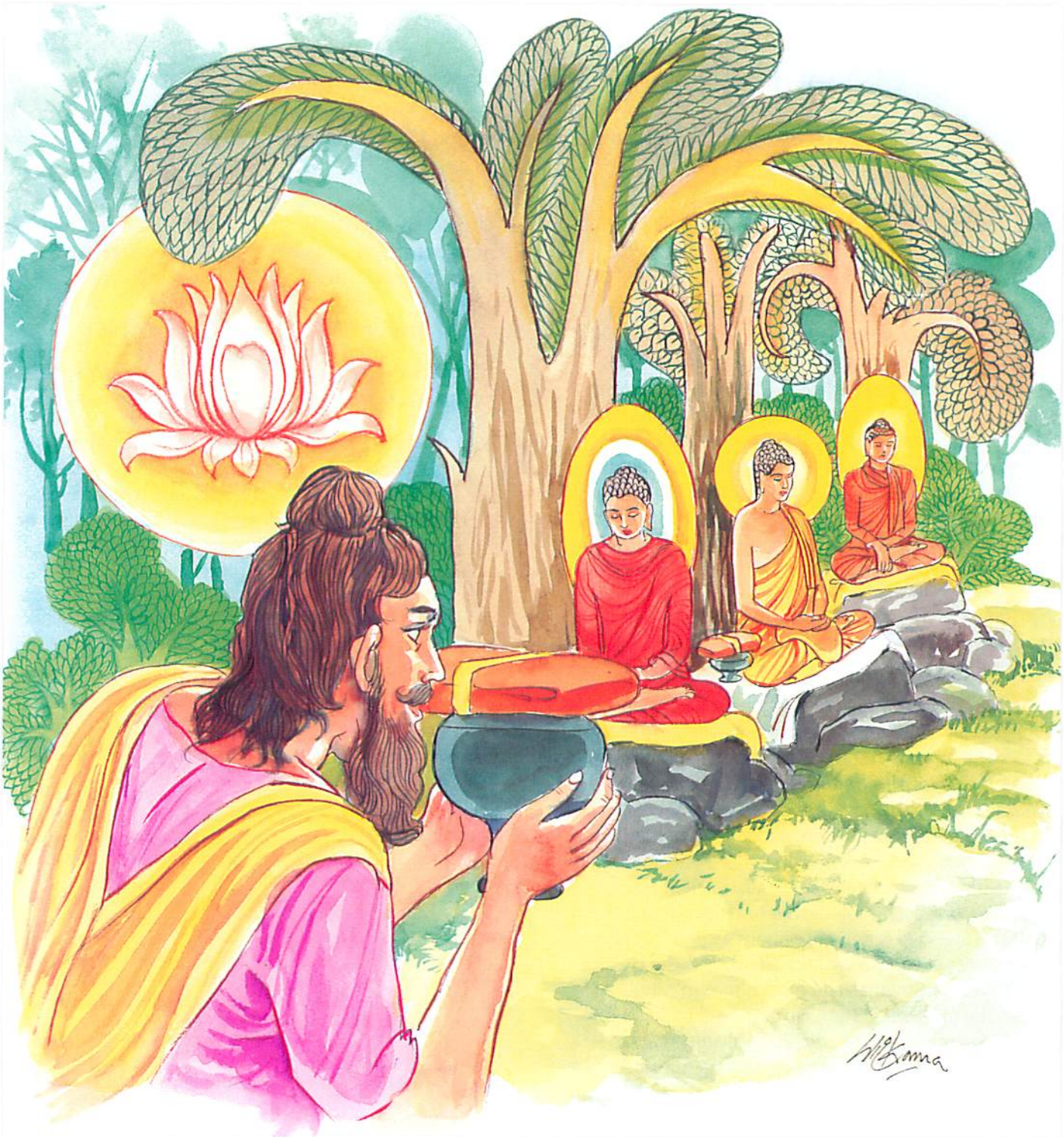
Commentary

pūjārahō pūjayatō, Buddhē yadiva sāvakē: worship those who deserved to be worshipped, the Buddhas and their disciples. Why is the Buddha to be worshipped? His attainment of Enlightenment and his mission will elucidate it. The Buddha lived in Jambudīpa over 2500 years ago, and was known as Siddhattha (in Sanskrit Siddhārtha, the one whose purpose has been achieved). Gōtama (in Sanskrit Gautama) was his family name. His father, Suddhōdana, ruled over the land of the Sākyas at Kapilavatthu on the Nepalese frontier. Mahāmāyā, princess of the Kōliyas, was Suddhōdana's queen.

On the full-moon day of May — vasanta-tide, when in Jambudīpa the trees were laden with leaf, flower, and fruit — and man, bird and beast were in joyous mood, Queen Mahāmāyā was travelling in state from Kapilavatthu to Dēvadaha, her parental home, according to the custom of the times, to give birth to her child. But that was not to be, for halfway between the two cities, in the Lumbini Grove, under the shade of a flowering Sal tree, she brought forth a son.

(cont'd on page 419)

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Who adores those who are tranquil and fearless, his merit gathered is incalculable.

196. *Tē tādisē pūjayatō*
nibbutē akutōbhayē
na sakkā puññaṁ saṅkhātuṁ
im' ettam'iti kēna ci. (14:18)

They who are 'Thus', venerable,
cool and free from every fear -
no one is able to calculate
their merit as 'just-so-much'.

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WORSHIP BRINGS LIMITLESS MERIT

14 (9) The Story of the Golden Stūpa of Kassapa Buddha (Verses 195 & 196)

Commentary

Queen Mahāmāyā, the mother, passed away on the seventh day after the birth of her child, and the baby was nursed by his mother's sister, Pajāpati Gōtami. The child was nurtured till manhood, in refinement, amidst an abundance of luxury. The father did not fail to give his son the education that a prince ought to receive. He became skilled in many a branch of knowledge, and in the arts of war and he easily excelled all others. Nevertheless, from his childhood, the prince was given to serious contemplation. When the prince grew up the father's fervent wish was that his son should marry, bring up a family and be his worthy successor; but he feared that the prince would one day give up home for the homeless life of an ascetic.

According to the custom of the time, at the early age of sixteen, the prince was married to his cousin Yasōdharā, the only daughter of King Suppabuddha and Queen Pamitā of the Kōliyas. The princess was of the same age as the prince. Lacking nothing of the material joys of life, he lived without knowing of sorrow. Yet all the efforts of the father to hold his son a prisoner to the senses and make him worldly-minded were of no avail. King Suddhodana's endeavours to keep life's miseries from his son's inquiring eyes only heightened Prince Siddhattha's curiosity and his resolute search for Truth and Enlightenment.

With the advance of age and maturity, the prince began to glimpse the problems of the world. As it was said, he saw four visions: the first was a man weakened with age, utterly helpless; the second was the sight of a man who was mere skin and bones, supremely unhappy and forlorn, smitten with some disease; the third was the sight of a band of lamenting kinsmen bearing on their shoulders the corpse of one beloved, for cremation. These woeful signs deeply moved him. The fourth vision, however, made a lasting impression. He saw a recluse, calm and serene, aloof and independent, and learnt that he was one who had abandoned his home to live a life of purity, to seek Truth and solve the riddle of life. Thoughts of renunciation flashed through the prince's mind and in deep contemplation he turned homeward. The heart-throb of an agonized and ailing humanity found a responsive echo in his own heart. The more he came in contact with the world outside his palace walls, the more convinced he became that the world was lacking in true happiness.

In the silence of that moonlit night (it was the full-moon of July) such thoughts as these arose in him: "Youth, the prince of life, ends in old age and man's senses fail him when they are most needed. The healthy and hearty lose their vigour when disease suddenly creeps in. Finally, death comes, sudden perhaps and unexpected, and puts an end to this brief span of life. Surely, there must be an escape from this unsatisfactoriness, from ageing and death." Thus the great intoxication of youth, of health, and of life left him. Having seen the vanity and the danger of the three intoxications, he was overcome by a powerful urge to seek and win the Deathless, to strive for deliverance from old age, illness and misery to seek it for himself and for all beings that suffer. It was his deep compassion that led him to the quest ending in Enlightenment, in Buddhahood. It was compassion that now moved his heart towards the renunciation and opened for him the doors of the supreme cage of his home life. It was compassion that made his determination unshakable even by the last parting glance at his beloved wife, asleep with their baby in her arms. Now at the age of twenty-nine, in the flower of youthful manhood, on the day his beautiful Yasōdharā, gave birth to his only son, Rāhula who made the parting more sorrowful, he tore himself away. The prince with a superhuman effort of will, renounced wife, child, father and the crown that held the promise of power and glory. In the guise of an indigent ascetic, he retreated into forest solitude, to seek the eternal verities of life, in quest of the supreme security from bondage — Nibbāna. Dedicating himself to the noble task of discovering a remedy for life's universal ill, he sought guidance from two famous sages, Alāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, hoping that they, being masters of meditation, would show him the way to deliverance. He practiced mental stillness and reached the highest meditative attainments possible thereby, but was not satisfied with anything short of enlightenment. Their range of knowledge, mystical experience, however, was insufficient to grant him what he earnestly sought. He, therefore, left them in search of the unknown truth. In his wanderings he finally reached Uruvēla, by the river Nērañjarā at Gayā. He was attracted by its quiet and dense groves and the clear waters of the river. Finding that this was a suitable place to continue his quest for enlightenment, he decided to stay. Five other ascetics who admired his determined effort waited on him. They were Kondañña, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahānāma and Assaji.

There was, and still is, a belief in Jambudīpa among many of her ascetics that purification and final deliverance from ills can be achieved by rigorous self-mortification, and the ascetic Gōtama decided to test the truth of it. And so there at Uruvēla he began a determined struggle to subdue his body, in the hope that his mind, set free from the physical body, might be able to soar to the heights of liberation. Most zealous was he in these practices. He lived on leaves and roots, on a steadily reduced pittance of food, he wore rags, he slept among corpses or on beds of thorns. He said, "Rigorous have I been in my ascetic discipline. Rigorous have I been beyond all others. Like wasted, withered reeds became all my limbs." In such words as these, in later years, having attained to full enlightenment, did the Buddha give an awe-inspiring description of his early penances. Struggling thus, for six long years, he came nearly death, but he found himself still away from his goal. The utter futility of self-mortification became abundantly clear to him, by his own experience; his experiment with self mortification, for enlightenment, had failed. But undiscouraged, his still active mind searched for new paths to the aspired-for goal. Then it happened that he remembered the peace of his meditation in childhood, under a rose-apple tree, and he confidently felt: "This is the path to enlightenment." He knew, however, that, with a body so utterly weakened as his, he could not follow that path with any chance of success. Thus he abandoned self-mortification and extreme fasting and took normal food. His emaciated body recovered its former health and his exhausted vigour soon returned. Now his five companions left him in their disappointment; for they thought that he had given up the effort to live a life of abundance instead.

Nevertheless with firm determination and complete faith in his own purity and strength, unaided by any teacher, accompanied by none, the Bōdhisatta (as he is known before he attained enlightenment) resolved to make his final search in complete solitude. Cross-legged he sat under a tree, which later became known as the Bōdhi-tree, the Tree of Enlightenment or Tree of Wisdom, on the bank of Nerañjarā River, at Gayā (now known as Buddha-Gayā) — at "a pleasant spot soothing to the senses and stimulating to the mind" making the final effort with the inflexible resolution: "Though only my skin, sinews, and bones remain, and my blood and flesh dry up and wither away, yet will I never stir from this seat until I have attained full enlightenment *(sammā-sam-bōdhi)*." So indefatigable in effort as he was, and so resolute to realize Truth and attain Full Enlightenment that he applied himself to the mindful in-and-out breathing *(āna + apāna sati)*, the meditation he had developed in his childhood, and the Bōdhisatta entered upon and dwelt in the first degree of meditative mental repose *(jhāna; sanskrit; dhyāna)*.

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Joyful religion

Buddhism is quite opposed to the melancholic, sorrowful, penitent and gloomy attitude of mind which is considered a hindrance to the realization of truth. On the other hand, it is interesting to remember here that joy is one of the seven "Factors of Illumination", the essential qualities to be cultivated for the realization of Nirvana.

Ven. Dr. W. Rahula, "What the Buddha Taught"

Challenge to other religions

It is Buddhism as we find it actually recorded, not a hypothetical primitive system, which still forms a challenge to other religions.

Bishop Gore, "Buddha and the Christ"

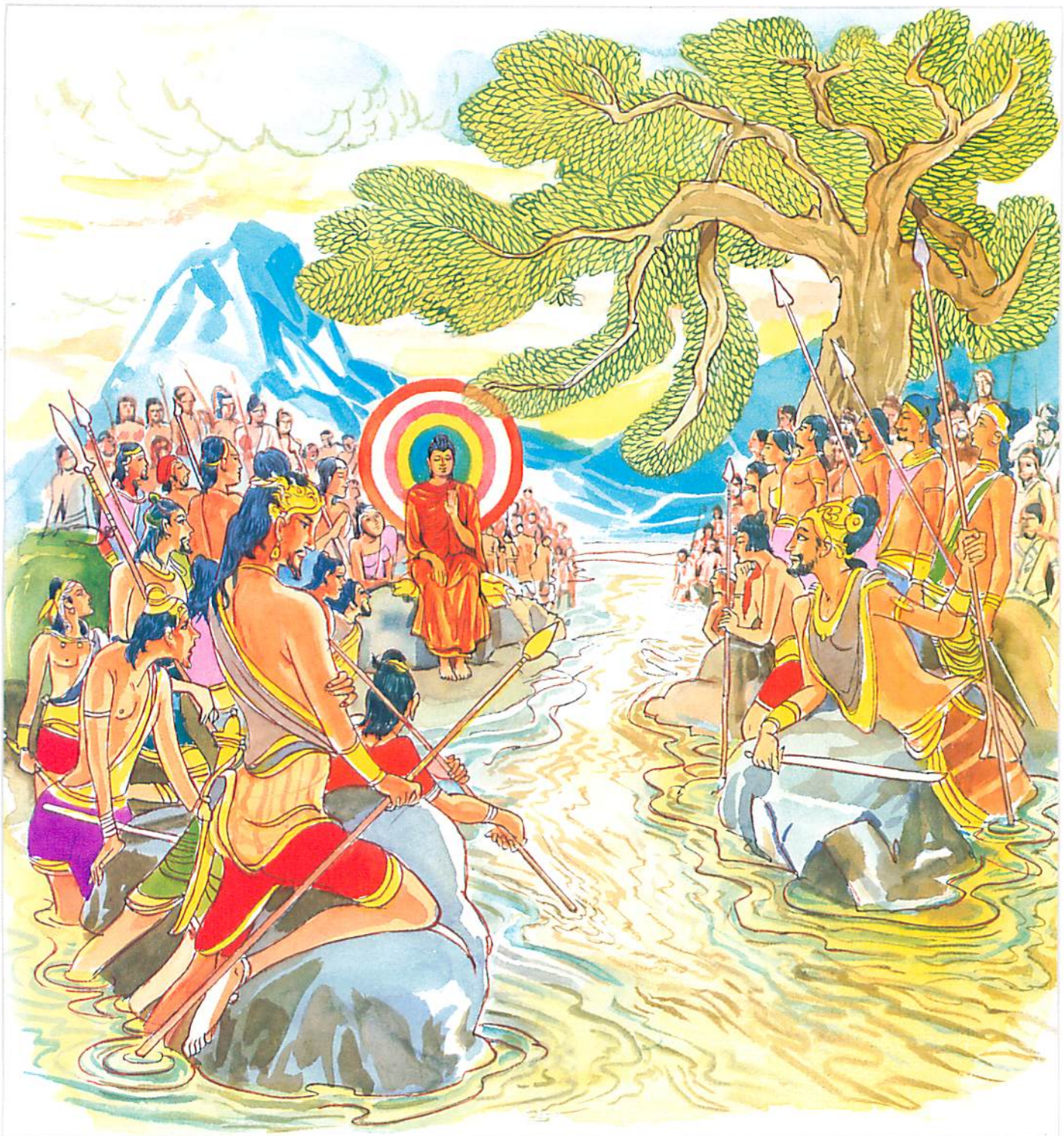
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Chapter 15

SUKHA VAGGA

Happiness

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For those who harbour no enmity it is blissful to live even among enemies.

197. *Susukhaṁ vata jīvāma*
vērinēsu avērinō
vērinēsu manussēsu
viharāma avērinō. (15:1)

We the unhating live
happily midst the haters,
among the hating humans
from hatred dwell we free.

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SUKHA VAGGA (HAPPINESS)

15 (1) The Story of the Pacification of the Relatives of the Buddha (Verses 197 — 199)

The Buddha spoke these verses in the country of Sākyan with reference to the relatives who were quarrelling over the use of the waters of the Rōhinī River.

The story goes that the Sākyas and the Kōliyas caused the water of the River Rōhinī to be confined by a single dam between the city of Kapilavatthu and the city of Kōliya, and cultivated the fields on both sides of the river. Now in the month Jeṭṭhamūla the crops began to fail, whereupon the labourers employed by the residents of both cities assembled. Said the residents of the city of Koliya, "If this water is diverted to both sides of the river, there will not be enough both for you and for us too. But our crops will ripen with a single watering. Therefore let us have the water."

The Sākyas replied, "After you have filled your storehouses, we shall not have the heart to take gold and emeralds and pennies, and, baskets and sacks in our hands, go from house to house seeking favours at your hands. Our crops also will ripen with a single watering. Therefore let us have this water." "We will not give it to you." "Neither will we give it to you." The talk waxed bitterly until finally one arose and struck another a blow. The other returned the blow and a general fight ensued, the combatants making matters worse by aspersions on the origin of the two royal families.

Said the labourers employed by the Kōliyas, "You who live in the city of Kapilavatthu, take your children and go where you belong. Are we likely to suffer harm from the elephants and horses and shields and weapons of those who, like dogs and jackals, have cohabited with their own sisters?" The labourers employed by the Sākyas replied, "You lepers, take your children and go where you belong. Are we likely to suffer harm from the elephants and horses and shields and weapons of destitute outcasts who have lived in the trees like animals?" Both parties of labourers went and reported the quarrel to the ministers who had charge of the work, and the ministers reported the matter to the royal households. Thereupon the Sākyas came forth armed for battle and cried out, "We will show what strength and power belong to those who have cohabited with their sisters." Likewise the Koliyas came forth armed for battle and cried out, "We will show what strength and power belong to those who dwell in the trees."

As the Buddha surveyed the world at dawn and beheld his kinsmen, he thought to himself, "If I refrain from going to them, these men will destroy each other. It is clearly my duty to go to them." Accordingly he flew through the air quite alone to the spot where his kinsmen were gathered together, and seated himself cross-legged in the air over the middle of the Rōhinī River. When the Buddha's kinsmen saw the Buddha, they threw away their weapons and did reverence to Him. Said the Buddha to His kinsmen, "What is all this quarrel about, great king?" "We do not know, Venerable." "Who then would be likely to know?" "The commander-in-chief of the army would be likely to know." The commander-in-chief of the army said, "The viceroy would be likely to know." Thus the Buddha put the question first to one and then to another, asking the slave-labourers last of all. The slave-labourers replied, "The quarrel is about water."

Then the Buddha asked the king, "How much is water worth, great king?" "Very little, Venerable." "How much are Sākyas worth, great king?" "Sākyas are beyond price, Venerable." "It is not fitting that because of a little water you should destroy Sākyas who are beyond price." They were silent. Then the Buddha addressed them and said, "Great kings, why do you act in this manner? Were I not here present today, you would set flowing a river of blood. You have acted in a most unbecoming manner. You live in enmity, indulging in the five kinds of hatred. I live free from hatred. You live afflicted with the sickness of the evil passions. I live free from disease. I live free from the eager pursuit of anything."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 197)

vērinēsu avērinō vata susukhaṁ jīvāma
manussēsu vērinēsu avērinō viharāma

vērinēsu: among those filled with hatred; *avērinō vata:* indeed without hatred; *susukhaṁ:* happily; *jīvāma:* we dwell; *manussēsu:* among people; *vērinēsu:* who are full of hatred; *avērinō:* without hatred; *viharāma:* (we) continue to live

Among those who hate, we live without hating. When they hate we live without hating. We live extremely happily among those who hate.

(cont'd on page 425)

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It is comfort indeed to live among the diseased for those with feelings of good health.

198. *Susukhaṁ vata jīvāma*
āturēsu anāturā
āturēsu manussēsu
viharāma anāturā. (15:2)

We who are healthy live
happily midst the unhealthy,
among unhealthy humans
from ill-health dwell we free.

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WITHOUT SICKNESS AMONG THE SICK

15 (1) The Story of the Pacification of the Relatives of the Buddha (Verses 197 — 199) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 198)

āturēsu anāturā vata susukhaṁ jīvāma
manussēsu āturēsu anāturā viharāma

āturēsu: among those who are sick (with defilements); *anāturā:* (we) free of sickness; *vata:* indeed; *susukhaṁ:* in extreme happiness; *jīvāma:* we live; *manussēsu āturēsu:* among those people who are sick; *anāturā:* without being sick; *viharāma:* we live

Among those who are sick, afflicted by defilements, we, who are not so afflicted, live happily. Among the sick we live, unafflicted, in extreme happiness.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 199)

ussukēsu anussukā vata susukhaṁ jīvāma
manussēsu ussukēsu anussukā viharāma

ussukēsu: among those who anxiously pursue worldly pleasures; *anussukā:* without such and effort; *vata susukhaṁ:* indeed extremely happily; *jīvāma:* we dwell; *manussēsu:* among those men; *ussukēsu:* who make an anxious effort; *anussukā:* without making such an effort; *viharāma:* (we) continue to live

Among those anxious men and women, who ceaselessly exert themselves in the pursuit of worldly things. We, who do not make such a feverish effort to pursue the worldly, live extremely happily. Among those who seek the worldly, among men who seek pleasure, we live without seeking pleasures.

Commentary

These verses were spoken by the Buddha, when he averted a conflict that would have escalated into a bloody war between clans who were His relations. The Buddha was born Prince Siddhattha, the son of King Suddhōdhana, a Sākya ruler. The Buddha's (Prince Siddhattha's) intimate relatives were closely linked with the Buddhist Sangha. Prince Siddhattha's mother, Queen Mahāmāyā died within a few days of the Prince's birth. Yasōddharā, Prince Siddhattha's wife, was a cousin of his. Princess Yasōddharā, also known as Rāhulamātā, Bimbā and Bhaddakaccānā, was the daughter of King Suppabuddha, who reigned over the Kōliya race, and Pamitā, sister of King Suddhōdana. She was of the same age as Prince Siddhattha, whom she married at the age of sixteen. It was by exhibiting his military strength that he won her hand. She led an extremely happy and luxurious life. In her twenty-ninth year, on the very day she gave birth to her only son, Rāhula, her wise and contemplative husband, whom she loved with all her heart, resolved to renounce the world to seek deliverance from the ills of life. Without even bidding farewell to his faithful and charming wife, he left the palace at night, leaving young Yasōddharā to look after the child by herself. She awoke as usual to greet her beloved husband, but, to her surprise, she found him missing. When she realized that her ideal prince had left her and the new-born baby, she was overcome with indescribable grief. Her dearest possession was lost forever. The palace with all its allurements was now a dungeon; the whole world appeared to be blank. Her only consolation was her infant son.
Though several Kshatriya princes sought her hand, she rejected all those proposals, and lived ever faithful to her beloved husband. Hearing that her husband was leading a hermit's life, she removed all her jewellery and wore a plain yellow garb. Throughout the six years during which the ascetic Gōtama struggled for enlightenment Princess Yasōddharā watched His actions closely and did likewise. When the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu after His Enlightenment and was being entertained by the king in the palace on the following day all but the Princess Yasōddharā came to pay their reverence to Him. She thought, "Certainly if there is any virtue in me, the Buddha will come to my presence. Then will I reverence Him."
After the meal was over the Buddha handed over the bowl to the king, and, accompanied by His two chief disciples, entered the chamber of Yasōddharā, and sat on a seat prepared for Him, saying, "Let the king's daughter reverence me as she likes. Say nothing." Hearing of the Buddha's visit, she bade the ladies in the court wear yellow garments. When the Buddha took His seat, Yasōddharā came swiftly to Him and clasping His ankles, placed her head on His feet and reverenced Him as she liked. Demonstrating her affection and respect thus, she sat down with due reverence. Then the king praised her virtues and, commenting on her love and loyalty, said, "Lord, when my daughter heard that you were wearing yellow robes, she also robed herself in yellow; when she heard that you were taking one meal a day, she also did the same; when she heard that you had given up lofty couches, she lay on a low couch; when she heard that you had given up garlands and scents, she also gave them up; when her relatives sent messages to say that they would maintain her,she did not even look at a single one. So virtuous was my daughter."
"Not only in this last birth, O' king, but in a previous birth, too, she protected me and was devoted and faithful to me," remarked the Buddha and cited the Candakinnara Jātaka. Recalling this past association with her, He consoled her and left the palace.
After the death of King Suddhōdana, when Pajāpatī Gotamī became a nun *(bikkhuni)*, Yasōddharā also entered the Sangha and attained arahatship.
Amongst women disciples she was the chief of those who attained great supernormal powers *(mahā abhiññā)*. At the age of seventy-eight she passed away. Her name does not appear in the *Therīgāthā* but her interesting verses are found in the *Apādana*.
Rāhula was the only son of Prince Siddhattha and Princess Yasōddharā. He was born on the day when Prince Siddhattha decided to renounce the world. The happy news of the birth of his infant son was conveyed to him when he was in the park in a contemplative mood. Contrary to ordinary expectations, instead of rejoicing over the news, he exclaimed, *"Rahu jātō, bandhanam jātam"* (Rahu is born, a fetter has arisen!) Accordingly, the child was named Rāhula by King Suddhōdana, his grandfather.

(cont'd on page 427)

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Unagitated we live in comfort in the midst of highly agitated worldlings.

199. *Susukhaṁ vata jīvāma*
ussukēsu anussukā
ussukēsu manussēsu
viharāma anussukā. (15:3)

We the unfrenzied live
happily midst the frenzied,
among the frenzied humans
from frenzy dwell we free.

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NOT ANXIOUS AMONG THE ANXIOUS

15 (1) The Story of the Pacification of the Relatives of the Buddha (Verses 197 — 199) (cont'd)

Rāhula was brought up as a fatherless child by his mother and grandfather. When he was seven years old, the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu for the first time after His Enlightenment. On the seventh day after His arrival Princess Yasōddharā gaily dressed up young Rāhula and pointing to the Buddha, said, "Behold, son, that ascetic, looking like Brahma, surrounded by twenty thousand ascetics! He is your father, and He had great treasures. Since His renunciation we do not see them. Go up to him and ask for your inheritance, and say, "Father, I am the prince. After my consecration I will be a universal monarch. I am in need of wealth. Please give me wealth, for the son is the owner of what belongs to the father."

Innocent Rāhula came to the Buddha's presence, and asking for his inheritance, as advised by his mother, very affectionately said, "O ascetic, even your shadow is pleasing to me." After the meal, the Buddha left the palace and Rāhula followed Him, saying, "Give me my inheritance" and uttering much else that was becoming. Nobody attempted to stop him. Nor did the Buddha prevent him from following Him. Reaching the park the Buddha thought, "He desires his father's wealth, but it goes with the world and is full of trouble. I shall give him the seven-fold noble wealth which I received at the foot of the Bodhi-tree, and make him an owner of a transcendental inheritance. He called Venerable Sāriputta and asked him to ordain little Rāhula.

Rāhula, who was then only seven years of age, was admitted into the Sangha.

King Suddhōdana was deeply grieved to hear of the unexpected ordination of his beloved grandson. He approached the Buddha and, in humbly requesting Him not to ordain any one without the prior consent of the parents, said, "When the Buddha renounced the world it was a cause of great pain to me. It was so when Nanda renounced and especially so in the case of Rāhula. The love of a father towards a son cuts through the skin, (the hide), the flesh, the sinew, the bone and the marrow. Grant the request that the Noble Ones may not confer ordination on a son without the permission of his parents." The Buddha readily granted the request, and made it a rule in the Vinaya. How a young boy of seven years could lead the religious life is almost inconceivable. But Sāmanēra (novice) Rāhula, cultured, exceptionally obedient and well-disciplined as he was, was very eager to accept instruction from his superiors. It is stated that he would rise early in the morning and taking a handful of sand throw it up, saying, "Today, may I receive from my instructors as much counsel as these grains of sand." One of the earliest discourses preached to him, immediately after his ordination, was the *Ambalatthika-rāhulovāda Sutta* in which He emphasized the importance of truthfulness.

One day, the Buddha visited the Venerable Rāhula who, upon seeing Him coming from afar, arranged a seat and supplied water for washing the feet. The Buddha washed His feet and leaving a small quantity of water in the vessel, said, "Do you see, Rāhula, this small quantity of water left in the vessel?" "Yes, Lord." "Similarly, Rāhula, insignificant, indeed, is the sāmanaship (monkhood) of those who are not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies." Then the Buddha threw away that small quantity of water, and said, "Discarded, indeed, is the sāmanaship of those who are not ashamed of deliberate lying." The Buddha turned the vessel upside down, and said, "Overturned, indeed is the sāmanaship of those who are not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies."

Finally the Buddha set the vessel upright and said, "Empty and void, indeed, is the Samanaship of those who are not ashamed of deliberate lying. I say of anyone who is not ashamed of uttering deliberate lies, that there is no evil that could not be done by him. Accordingly, Rāhula, thus should you train yourself. Not even in play will I tell a lie."

Emphasizing the importance of truthfulness with such homely illustrations, the Buddha explained to him the value of reflection and the criterion of morality in such a way as a child could understand.

"Rāhula, for what purpose is a mirror?" questioned the Buddha.

"For the purpose of reflecting, Lord." "Similarly, Rāhula, after reflecting and reflecting should bodily action be done; after reflecting should verbal action be done; after reflecting should mental action be done."

"Whatever action you desire to do with the body, of that particular bodily action you should reflect: 'No, this action that I desire to perform with the body — would this, my bodily action be conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to that of both myself and others?' Then, unskillful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and producing pain."

"If, when reflecting, you should realize: 'Now, this bodily action of mine that I am desirous of performing, would be conducive to my own harm or to the harm of others, or to that of both myself and others.' Then unskillful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and producing pain. Such an action with the body, you must on no account perform."

"If, on the other hand, when reflecting you realize: 'Now, this bodily action that I am desirous of performing, would conduce neither to the harm of myself, nor to that of others, nor to that of both myself and others.' Then skilful is this bodily action, entailing pleasure and producing happiness. Such bodily action you should perform."

Exhorting the Sāmanera Rāhula to use reflection during and after one's actions, the Buddha said, "While you are doing an action with the body, of that particular action should you reflect: 'Now, is this action that I am doing with my body conducive to my own harm, or to the harm of others or to that of both myself and others?' Then unskillful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and producing pain."

"If, when reflecting, you realize: 'Now, this action that I am doing with my body is conducive to my own harm, to the harm of others, and to that of both myself and others.' Then unskillful is this bodily action, entailing suffering and producing pain. From such a bodily action you must desist."

"If when reflecting, you should realize: 'Now, this action of mine that I am doing with the body is conducive neither to my own harm, nor to the harm of others, nor to that of both myself and others.' Then skilful is this bodily action, entailing pleasure and happiness. Such a bodily action you should do again and again." The Buddha said, "If, when reflecting, you should realize: 'Now, this action that I have done is unskillful.' Such an action should be confessed, revealed, and made manifest to the Buddha, or to the learned, or to your brethren of the religious life. Having confessed, you should acquire restraint in the future. These various links and the urge to avert a meaningless war made the Buddha settle the conflict between the Sākyas and the Kōliyas.

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Possessionless we live in great happiness. Sustained by joy are we like heavenly beings.

200. *Susukhaṁ vata jīvāma*
yēsaṁ nō natthi kiñcanaṁ
pītibhakkhā bhavissāma
dēvā ābhassarā yathā. (15:4)

We for whom there's nought
live indeed so happily,
joy-sustained we'll be
like resplendent gods.

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HAPPILY THEY LIVE — UNDEFILED

15 (2) The Story of Māra (Verse 200)

The Buddha spoke this verse in a brahmin village known as Pancasāla (village of five halls), with reference to Māra.

On one occasion, the Buddha saw in his vision that many maidens from Pancasāla village were due to attain sotāpatti fruition. So he went to stay near that village. The many maidens went to the riverside to have a bath; after the bath they returned to the village fully dressed up, because it was a festival day. About the same time, the Buddha entered Pancasāla village for alms-food but none of the villagers offered him anything because they had been possessed by Māra.

On his return the Buddha met Māra, who promptly asked him whether he had received much alms-food. The Buddha saw the hand of Māra in his failure to get any alms-food on that day and replied, "You wicked Māra! It was you who turned the villagers against me. Because they were possessed by you they did not offer any alms-food to me. Am I not right?" Māra made no reply to that question, but he thought that it would be fun to entice the Buddha back to the village and get the villagers to insult the Buddha. So he suggested, "O Buddha, why don't you go back to the village again? This time, you are sure to get some food."

Just then, the five hundred village maidens arrived on the scene and paid obeisance to the Buddha. In their presence, Māra taunted the Buddha, "O Buddha, since you received no alms-food this morning, you must be feeling the pangs of hunger!" To him the Buddha replied, "O wicked Māra, even though we do not get any food, like the Abhassara brahmas who live only on the delightful satisfaction *(pīti)* and bliss *(sukha)* of deep meditation *(jhāna)*, we shall live on the delightful satisfaction and bliss of the Dhamma."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 200)

yēsaṁ nō kiñcanaṁ natthi vata susukhaṁ jīvāma
ābhassarā dēvā yathā pītibhakkhā bhavissāma

yēsaṁ no: we who are like this; *kiñcanaṁ natthi:* do not possess anything; *vata susukhaṁ:* certainly happily; *jīvāma:* (we) live; *ābhassarā dēvā yathā:* like gods of Abhassara heaven; *pītibhakkhā:* feeding on joy; *bhavissāma:* (we) subsist.

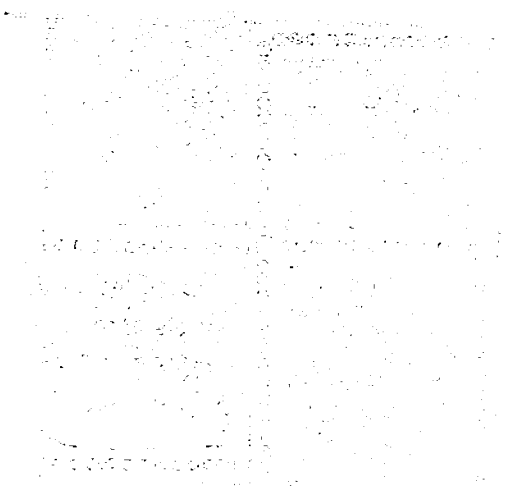
Happily do we live, who have no properties to worry about. Feeding on joy we live like deities of the Ābhassara Heaven of radiance.

Commentary

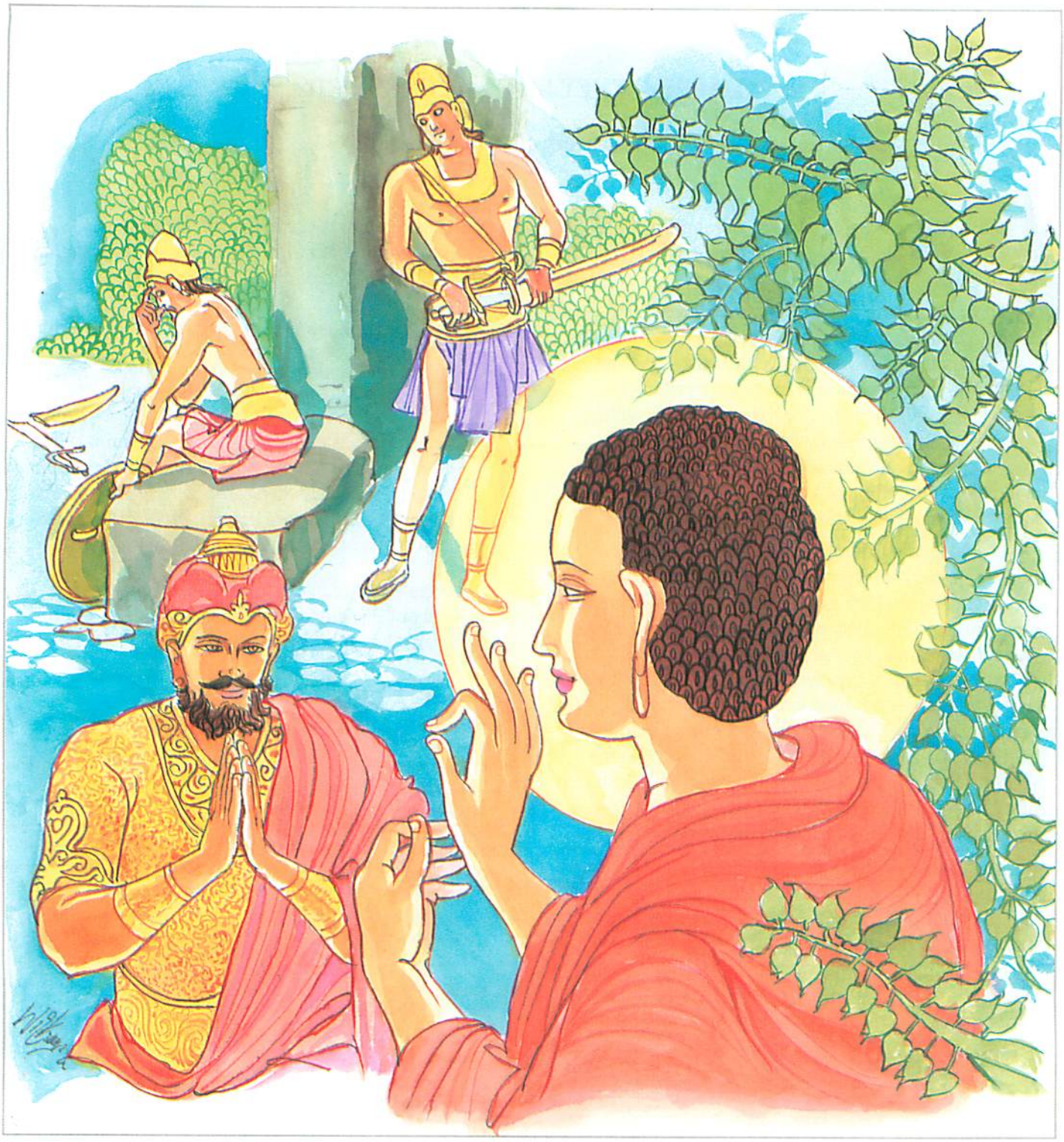
sukha: pleasant, happy; happiness, pleasure, joy, bliss. It is one of the three feelings *(vēdanā)* and may be either bodily or mental. The texts distinguish between the happiness of the senses and the happiness of renunciation, mundane (carnal; *sāmisa*) and supramundane (non-carnal; *nirāmisa*) happiness. Happiness as joy *(pīti)* is an indispensable constituent of early levels of meditative mental repose *(samādhi)*. It is one of the five constituents *(jhānanga)* of the first degree of repose (first *jhāna*) and is present up to the second degree of repose (second *jhāna*) inclusively.

sukha-saññā: The perception of pleasure in what is actually pain *(dukkhē sukha-saññā)* which is one of the four distortions *(vipallāsa)*.

ābhassarā: the radiant ones are a class of heavenly beings of the form world *(rūpa-lōka)*.



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Victory begets enmity. Vanquished lies in grief. Beyond both these lies bliss of equanimity.

201. *Jayaṁ vēraṁ pasavati*
dukkhaṁ sēti parājitō
upasantō sukhaṁ sēti
hitvā jayaparājayaṁ. (15:5)

Victory gives rise to hate,
those defeated lie in pain,
happily rest the Peaceful
surrendering victory-defeat.

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HAPPY ABOVE BOTH VICTORY AND DEFEAT

15 (3) The Story of the Defeat of the King of Kōsala (Verse 201)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the King of Kōsala who was defeated in battle by Ajātasattu, his own nephew.

In fighting against Ajātasattu, the King of Kōsala was defeated three times. Ajātasattu was the son of King Bimbisāra and Queen Vēdēhi, the sister of the King of Kōsala. The King of Kōsala was ashamed and very much depressed over his defeat. Thus his lamentation: "What a disgrace! I cannot even conquer this boy who still smells of mother's milk. It is better that I should die." Feeling depressed and very much ashamed, the king refused to take food, and kept to his bed. The news about the king's distress spread like wild fire and when the Buddha came to learn about it, he said, "Monks! In one who conquers, enmity and hatred increase; one who is defeated suffers pain and distress."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 201)

jayaṁ vēraṁ pasavati parājitō dukkhaṁ sēti upasantō jayaparājayaṁ hitvā sukhaṁ sēti

jayaṁ: victory; *vēraṁ pasavati:* generates hatred; *parājitō:* the defeated one; *dukkhaṁ:* in unhappiness; *sēti:* lives; *upasantō:* the tranquil person; *jayaparājayaṁ hitvā:* having risen above both victory and defeat; *sukhaṁ:* in happiness; *sēti:* dwells

Victory brings hatred into being. The defeated person lives in misery. But the person, whose mind is calm and tranquil, lives happily as he has risen above both victory and defeat.

Commentary

King Kōsala. This verse, which sums up the reality of victory and defeat was given by the Buddha, on the occasion of the defeat suffered by King Kōsala, at the hand of King Ajātasatta,his own nephew. King Pasēnadi Kōsala, the son of King Mahā Kōsala, who reigned in the kingdom of Kōsala with its capital at Sāvatthi, was another royal patron of the Buddha. He was a contemporary of the Buddha, and owing to his proficiency in various arts, he had the good fortune to be made king by his father while he was alive.
His conversion must probably have taken place during the very early part of the Buddha's ministry. In the Samyutta Nikāya it is stated that once he approached the Buddha and questioning Him about His Enlightenment referred to Him as being young in years and young in ordination.
The Buddha replied, "There are four objects, O' Mahārāja, that should not be disregarded or despised. They are Khattiya (a warrior), a snake, fire, and a mendicant monk. Then He delivered an interesting sermon on this subject to the King. At the close of the sermon the King expressed his great pleasure and instantly became a follower of the Buddha. Since then, till his death, he was deeply attached to the Buddha. It is said that on one occasion the king prostrated himself before Buddha and stroked His feet covering them with kisses.
His chief queen, Mallikā, a very devout and wise lady, well versed in the Dhamma, was greatly responsible for his religious enthusiasm. Like a true friend, she had to act as his religious guide on several occasions.
One day, the king dreamt sixteen unusual dreams and was greatly perturbed in mind, not knowing their true significance. His brahmin advisers interpreted them to be dreams portending evil and instructed him to make an elaborate animal sacrifice to ward off the dangers resulting therefrom. As advised, he made all necessary arrangements for this inhuman sacrifice which would have resulted in the loss of thousands of helpless creatures. Queen Mallikā, hearing of this barbarous act about to be carried out, persuaded the king to get the dreams interpreted by the Buddha whose understanding infinitely surpassed that of those worldly brahmins. The king approached the Buddha and mentioned the object of his visit. Relating the sixteen dreams he wished to know their significance, and the Buddha explained their significance fully to him.
Unlike King Bimbisāra, King Kōsala had the good fortune to hear several edifying and instructive discourses from the Buddha. In the Samyutta Nikāya there appears a special section called the Kōsala Samyutta in which are recorded most of the discourses and talks given by the Buddha to the king.
Once, while the king was seated in the company of the Buddha, he saw some ascetics with hairy bodies and long nails passing by, and rising from his seat respectfully saluted them calling out his name to them, "I am the king, your reverences, of the Kōsala, Pasēnadi." When they had gone he came back to the Buddha and wished to know whether they were arahats or those who were striving for arahatship. The Buddha explained that it was difficult for ordinary laymen enjoying material pleasures to judge whether others are arahats or not and made the following interesting observations: "It is by association *(samvāsēna)* that one's conduct *(sīla)* is to be understood, and that, too, after a long time and not in a short time, by one who is watchful and not by a heedless person, by an intelligent person and not by an unintelligent one. It is by converse *(samvōhārēna)* that one's purity *(sōceyyam)* is to be understood. It is in time of trouble that one's fortitude is to be understood. It is by discussion that one's wisdom is to be understood, and that, too, after a long time and not in a short time, by one who is watchful and not by a heedless person, by an intelligent person and not by an unintelligent one."



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No fire like passions, no loss like wrath, no misery like this self. Nibbāna's bliss supreme.

202. *Natthi rāgasamō aggi*
natthi dōsasamō kali
natthi khandhasamā dukkhā
natthi santiparaṁ sukhaṁ. (15:6)

There's no fire like lust,
no evil like aversion,
no dukkha like the aggregates,
no higher bliss than Peace.

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HAPPINESS TRANQUILIZES

15 (4) The Story of a Young Bride (Verse 202)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse at the house of a lay-disciple, with reference to a young bride.

On the day a young woman was to be wedded to a young man, the parents of the bride invited the Buddha and eighty of his disciples for alms-food. Seeing the girl as she moved about the house, helping with the offering of alms-food the bridegroom was very much excited, and he could hardly attend to the needs of the Buddha and the other monks. The Buddha knew exactly how the young bridegroom was feeling and also that time was ripe for both the bride and the bridegroom to attain sotāpatti fruition.

By his supernormal power, the Buddha willed that the bride would not be visible to the bridegroom. When the young man could no longer see the young woman, he could pay full attention to the Buddha, and his love and respect for the Buddha grew stronger in him. Then the Buddha said to the young man, "O young man, there is no fire like the fire of passion; there is no evil like anger and hatred; there is no ill like the burden of the five aggregates of existence (khandhās); there is no bliss like Nibbāna." At the end of the discourse, both the bride and bridegroom attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 202)

rāgasamō aggi natthi, dōsasamō kali natthi khandhasamā dukkhā natthi, natthi santiparaṁ sukhaṁ

rāgasamō: like lust; *aggi natthi:* (there is) no fire; *dōsasamō:* like anger; *kali natthi:* (there is) no crime; *khandhāsamā:* like physical being; *dukkhā natthi:* (there is) no pain; *santiparaṁ:* higher than peace of mind; *sukhaṁ natthi:* there is no happiness

There is no fire like passion. There is no crime like anger. There is no pain like the personalized aggregate of phenomena. There is no higher happiness than the supreme peace.

Commentary

khandhāsamādukkhā natthi: no pain like physical being. The five groups of existence or groups of clinging *(upādānakkhandha)*; alternative renderings: aggregates, categories of clinging's objects. These are the five aspects in which the Buddha has summed up all the physical and mental phenomena of existence, and which appear to the ignorant man as his ego, or personality, to wit: (1) the corporeality group *(rūpa-kkhandha)*; (2) the feeling *(vēdanā)*; (3) the perception *(saññā)*; (4) the mental-formation *(samkhāra)*; (5) the consciousness-group *(viññāna-khandha)*. "Whatever there exists of corporeal things, whether past, present or future, one's own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near, all that belongs to the corporeality group. Whatever there exists of feeling — of perception — of mental formations — of consciousness — all that belongs to the consciousness-group"

Another division is that into the two groups: mind and corporeality *(nāma-rūpa)*, whilst in Dhammasangani all the phenomena are treated by way of three groups. What is called individual existence is, in reality, nothing but a mere process of those mental and physical phenomena, a process that since time immemorial has been going on, and that also after death will still continue for unthinkably long periods of time. These five groups, however, neither singly nor collectively constitute any self-dependent real ego-entity, or personality *(atta)*, nor is there to be found any such entity apart from them. Hence the belief in such an ego-entity or personality, as real in the ultimate sense, proves a mere illusion.

> When all constituent parts are there,
> The designation cart is used;
> Just so, where the five groups exist,
> of living being do we speak.

The fact ought to be emphasized here that these five groups, correctly speaking, merely form an abstract classification by the Buddha, but that they as such, i.e., as just these five complete groups, have no real existence, since only single representatives of these groups, mostly variable, can arise with any state of consciousness. For example, with one and the same unit of consciousness only one single kind of feeling, say joy or sorrow, can be associated, and never more than one. Similarly, two different perceptions cannot arise at the same moment. Also of the various kinds of sense-cognition or consciousness, only one of them can be present at a time, for example, seeing, hearing or inner consciousness. Of the fifty mental formations, however, a smaller or larger number are always associated with every state of consciousness.

Some writers on Buddhism who have not understood that the five *khandhās* are just classificatory groupings, have conceived them as compact entities (heaps, bundles), while actually, as stated above, the Groups never exist as such, as they never occur in a simultaneous totality of all their constituents. Also those single constituents of a group which are present in any given body-and-mind process, are of an evanescent nature, and so also their varying combinations. Feeling, perception and mental formations are only different aspects and functions of a single unit of consciousness. They are to consciousness what redness, softness, and sweetness, are to an apple and have as little separate existence as those qualities.

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Hunger's the severest ailment. Samsaric life's an utter dismay. Beyond these is Nibbāna bliss.

203. *Jighacchā paramā rōgā*
sankhārā paramā dukhā
ētaṁ ñatvā yathābhūtaṁ
nibbānaṁ paramaṁ sukhaṁ. (15:7)

Hunger is the greatest ill,
the greatest dukkha - conditionedness,
knowing this really as it is:
Nibbāna bliss supreme.

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WORST DISEASES AND GREATEST HAPPINESS

15 (5) The Story of a Lay-Disciple (Verse 203)

The Buddha spoke this verse at the village of Ālavi, with reference to a lay-disciple.

One day, the Buddha saw in his vision that a poor man would attain sōtāpatti fruition at the village of Alavi. So he went to that village, which was thirty yojanas (leagues) away from Sāvatthi. It so happened that on that very day the man lost his ox. So, he had to be looking for the oxen. meanwhile, alms-food was being offered to the Buddha and his disciples in a house in the village of Ālavi. After the meal, people got ready to listen to the Buddha's discourse; but the Buddha waited for the young man. Finally, having found his oxen, the man came running to the house where the Buddha was. The man was tired and hungry, so the Buddha directed the donors to offer food to him. Only when the man had been fed, the Buddha gave a discourse, expounding the Dhamma step by step and finally leading to the Four Noble Truths. The lay-disciple attained sōtāpatti fruition at the end of the discourse.

Afterwards, the Buddha and his disciples returned to the Jētavana Monastery. On the way, the monks remarked that it was so surprising that the Buddha should have waited and directed those people to feed the young man before he gave the discourse. On hearing their remarks, the Buddha said, "Monks! What you said is true, but you do not understand that I have come here, all this distance of thirty yōjanas, because I knew that he was in a fitting condition to take in the Dhamma. If he were feeling very hungry, the pangs of hunger might have prevented him from talking in the Dhamma fully. That man had been out looking for his oxen the whole morning, and was very tired and also very hungry. Monks! After all, there is no ailment which is so difficult to bear as hunger."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 203)

rōgā jighacchā paramā dukhā sankhārā paramā ētaṁ yathābhūthaṁ ñatvā nibbānaṁ paramaṁ sukhaṁ

rōgā: of deceases; *jighacchā paramā:* hunger is the worst; *dukhā:* of pains; *sankhārā paramā:* component are the worst; *ētaṁ:* these; *yathābhūthaṁ:* (when) realistically; *ñatvā:* understood; *nibbānaṁ:* Deathlessness; *paramaṁ sukhaṁ:* is the highest bliss

The most severe of diseases is hunger. The worst of pain is in component things. If this is realistically appreciated, Nibbāna is the highest bliss.

Commentary

sankhārā paramā dukhā: components *(sankhārā)* the worst suffering. The term *sankhārā* has different shades of meaning, which should be carefully distinguished. To its most frequent usages the general term formation may be applied, with the qualifications required by the context. This term may refer either to the act of forming or to the passive state of having been formed or to both.

(1) As the second link of the formula of dependent origination, *(paticca-samuppāda), sankhāra* has the active aspect, forming, and signifies *Kamma* which is wholesome or unwholesome volitional activity *(cētanā)* of body *(kāya)*, speech *(vacī)* or mind *(citta* or *manō)*. For, in this sense, the word 'Karma-formation' has been coined by the author. In other passages, in the same context, *sankhārā* is defined by reference to (a) meritorious Karma-formations *(puññābhisankhāra)*, (b) demeritorious *(apuññābhisankhāra)*, (c) imperturbable *(āneñjābhisankhāra)*. This three-fold division covers *kammic* activity in all spheres of existence: the meritorious *kamma*-formations extend to the sensuous and the fine-material sphere, the demeritorious ones only to the sensuous sphere, and the imperturbable only to the immaterial sphere.

(2) The aforementioned three terms, *kāya-, vacī-* and *citta* (or *manō*), are sometimes used in quite a different sense, namely as (a) bodily function as in-and-out-breathing; (b) verbal function as thought-conception and discursive thinking; and (c) mental function as feeling, perception.

(3) It also denotes the fourth group of existence *(sankhārakkhandha)*, and includes all mental formations whether they belong to kammically forming consciousness or not.

(4) It occurs further in the sense of anything formed *(sankhata)* and conditioned, and includes all things whatever in the world, all phenomena of existence. This meaning applies to the well-known passage "All formations are impermanent...subject to suffering" *(sabbē sankhārā aniccā...dukhā)*. In that context, however, *sankhārā* is subordinate to the still wider and all-embracing term dhamma (thing); for *dhamma* includes also the unformed or unconditioned element *(asankhata-dhātu)*, i.e., Nibbāna (e.g., in *sabbe dhammā anattā*: all things are without a self).

Sankhārā also means 'volitional effort', e.g., in the formula of the Roads to Power *(iddhi-pāda)*; in *sasankhārā-* and *asankhāra-parinibbāyi (anāgāmī)*; and in the Abhidhamma terms *asankhārika* and *sasankhārika-citta*, i.e., without effort — spontaneously, and with effort — prompted.

Within the dependent origination, *sankhārā* is neither subconscious nor a mere tendency, but is a fully conscious and active karmic volition. In the context of the five groups of existence, a very few of the factors from the group of mental formations *(sankhārakkhandha)* are also present as concomitants of subconsciousness, but are not restricted to it, nor are they mere tendencies.

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Good health is the best gain. Contentment is the best wealth. In Nibbāna, the highest bliss.

204. *Ārōgyaparamā lābhā*
santuṭṭhīparamaṁ dhanaṁ
vissāsaparamā ñātī
nibbāṇaṁ paramaṁ sukhaṁ. (15:8)

Health's the greatest gain,
contentment, best of wealth,
trusting's best of kin,
Nibbāna bliss supreme.

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FOUR SUPREME ACQUISITIONS

15 (6) The Story of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala (Verse 204)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to King Pasēnadi of Kōsala. For at a certain period of his life King Pasēnadi Kōsala used to eat boiled rice cooked by the bucketful, and sauce and curry in proportion. One day after he had eaten his breakfast, unable to shake off the drowsiness occasioned by over-eating, he went to see the Buddha and paced back and forth before him with a very weary appearance. Overcome with a desire to sleep, but not daring to lie down and stretch himself out, he sat down on one side. Thereupon the Buddha said to him, "Did you come, great king, before you were well rested?" "Oh no, Venerable; but I always suffer greatly after eating a meal." Then said the Buddha to him, "Great king, over-eating just brings such suffering." So saying, the Buddha gave the following stanza:
"If a man gives way to indolence, eats too much,
spends his time in sleep, and lies and rolls about like a
great hog fed on grain, such a simpleton will endlessly
be reborn." After admonishing the king with this stanza, the Buddha continued,"Great king, one ought to observe moderation in eating, for in moderate eating there is comfort." And admonishing him further, the Buddha gave the following stanza: "If a man be ever mindful, if he observe moderation in taking food, his sufferings will be but slight; he will grow old slowly, preserving his life." The king was unable to memorize this stanza. So the Buddha said to the king's nephew, Prince Sudassana, who stood near, "Memorize this stanza." Sudassana asked the Buddha, "Venerable, after I have memorized this stanza, what shall I do with it?" The Buddha replied, "When the king eats his meal, just as he is about to take the last lump of boiled rice, you must recite this stanza. The king will understand its purport and will immediately throw away that lump of rice. When it is time to boil the rice for the king's next meal, you must fetch just as many grains of fresh rice as there were grains of boiled rice in that lump of rice." "Very well, Venerable," replied Sudassana. So both evening and morning, when the king ate his meal, his nephew would recite the stanza just as the king was about to take the last lump of boiled rice, and would fetch for his next meal just as many grains of fresh rice as there were grains of boiled rice in the lump of boiled rice which the king had thrown away. And every time the king heard that stanza recited, he gave away a thousand pieces of money in alms. The king contented himself with a pint-pot of boiled rice a day, never exceeding that amount. After a time he became cheerful and lean. One day the king went to pay his respects to the Buddha, and having saluted the Buddha, said to him, "Venerable, now I am happy. Once more I am able to follow the chase and to catch wild beasts and horses. I used to quarrel with my nephew. But recently, however, I gave my nephew my daughter, the Princess Vajirā, to wife. I have given her this village, that she may have a pool wherein to bathe. My quarrels with my nephew have ceased, and for this reason also I am happy. The other day a precious stone, the property of the royal household was lost; this has but recently returned to my hand, and for this reason also I am happy. Desiring to establish friendly relations with your disciples, I established the daughter of one of your kinsmen in our household, and for this reason also I am happy." The Buddha replied, "Great king, health is the greatest blessing one can ask for, contentment with whatever one has received is the greatest wealth, confidence the best relative. But there is no happiness that can be compared with Nibbāna."

Explanation Translation (Verse 204)

lābhā ārōgyaparamā dhanaṁ santutthi paramaṁ
ñātī vissāsaparaṁā nibbānaṁ paramaṁ sukhaṁ

lābhā: of all acquisitions; *ārōgyaparaṁā:* good health is the foremost; *dhanaṁ:* of all wealth; *santutthi paramaṁ:* happiness is the greatest; *ñātī:* of all relations; *vissāsāparaṁā:* the trustworthy are the best; *nibbānaṁ:* deathlessness; *paramaṁ sukhaṁ:* is the highest bliss

Of acquisitions, good health is the foremost. Of wealth, the greatest is peace of mind. Of kinsmen, the trustworthy are the supremest. The highest bliss is Nibbāna.

Commentary

vissāsā paramā ñāti: the trustworthy are the greatest relatives. Relatives are generally the most trusted. Relationship stands in the foundation of trust. The traditional commentary has this to say *Mātā vā hōtu pitā vā tēna saddhim vissāsō natthi, yēna aññatakēna pana saddhim vissāsō atthi sō asambandhōpi paramō uttamō ñāti.* If one has no trust even in one's mother, father or other relatives, they are not relatives in reality. But, on the other hand, if one can place one's trust in someone who may not be related, he is truly a great relation. Trust implies agreement, intimacy, and confidence. As it is difficult at times to fathom the motives of some people and, as some are vicious, trust placed in those types of person — whether related or unrelated — is likely to bring about evil results on one. This way, it is difficult to come upon a person who could be implicitly trusted. Good results ensue from true and genuine trust. There are three things that are conducive to one's downfall: *Lōbha pramāda vishvāsna purushō nashayatē thribhi: tasmā lōbhō nakartavyam pramādō na vishvasēt.* The three things that bring about man's downfall are miserliness, slothfulness and wrong trust.

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Through sweetness of solitude and joy of tranquility, via the Dhamma, to innocence and quiet.

205. *Pavivēkarasaṁ pitvā*
rasaṁ upasamassa ca
niddarō hōti nippāpō
dhammapītirasaṁ pibaṁ. (15:9)

Having drunk of solitude
and tasted Peace Sublime,
free from sorrow, evil-free,
one drinks of Dhamma's joy.

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THE FREE ARE THE PUREST
15 (7) The Story of Venerable Tissa (Verse 205)

The Buddha spoke this verse with reference to Venerable Tissa. When the Buddha declared that in four months' time he would realize parinibbāna (absolute Nibbāna), many puthujjana (worldly) monks were apprehensive. They were at a loss and did not know what to do, and so they kept close to the Buddha. but Venerable Tissa, having resolved that he would attain arahatship in the life-time of the Buddha did not go to him, but left for a secluded place to practice meditation. Other monks, not understanding his behaviour, took him to the Buddha and said, "Venerable! This monk does not seem to cherish and honour you; he only keeps to himself instead of coming to your presence." Venerable Tissa then explained to them that he was striving hard to attain arahatship before the Buddha realized parinibbāna, and that was the only reason why he had not come to see the Buddha. Having heard his explanation, the Buddha said to the monks, "Monks! Those who love and respect me should act like Tissa. You are not paying homage to me by just offering me flowers, perfumes and incense. You pay homage to me only by practicing the *lōkuttara* Dhamma such as insight meditation." At the end of the discourse, Venerable Tissa attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 205)

pavivēkarasaṁ upasamassa rasaṁ ca pītvā dhammapītirasaṁ pibaṁ niddarō nippāpō hōti

pavivēkarasaṁ: the taste of solitude; *upasamassa rasaṁ ca:* also the flavour of calmness resulting from the absence of blemishes; *pītvā:* having savoured; *dhammapītirasaṁ:* the sweetness of the joy of Dhamma; *pibaṁ:* tasting; *niddarō:* unaffected; *nippāpō:* blemishless; *hōti:* becomes

He has savoured the taste of solitude. He has also experienced the flavour of tranquility arising from the absence of blemishes. Enjoying the sweetness of the joy of realistic awareness he is unaffected by blemishes and is bereft of evil.

Commentary

Parinibbāna: Absolute Nibbāna. This stanza was pronounced on the declaration of his great demise by the Buddha. The Buddha's passing away — the great demise *(parinibbāna)* has been described in great detail in Buddhist literature. Venerable Subhadda, an arahat, was the last personal convert of the Buddha. The Venerable Ānanda desired to know what they should do with the body of Buddha. The Buddha answered, "Do not engage yourself in honouring my remains. Be concerned about your own welfare, (i.e., arahatship). Be heedful, be strenuous, and be intent on your own good. There are wise warriors, wise brahmins, wise householders who are firm believers in the Buddha. They will do honour to my remains." At the conclusion of these talks Venerable Ānanda went aside and stood weeping at the thought: 'Alas! I am still a learner with work yet to do. But my leader will finally pass away. He who is my sympathiser.' The Buddha, noticing his absence, summoned him to His presence and exhorted him thus: "Enough, O' Ānanda! Do not grieve, do not weep. Have I not already told you that we have to separate and divide and sever ourselves from everything that is dear and pleasant to us?" "O' Ānanda, you have done much merit. Soon be freed from defilements." The Buddha then paid a tribute to Venerable Ānanda, commenting on his salient virtues. After admonishing Venerable Ānanda in various ways, the Buddha ordered him to enter Kusinara and inform the Mallas of his impending death. The Mallas were duly informed, and came weeping with their wives, young men, and maidens, to pay their last respects to the Buddha. Then the Buddha addressed Ānanda and said, "It may be, Ānanda, that you will say thus: 'Without the teacher is the sublime teaching! There is no teacher for us...' Nay, Ānanda, you should not think thus. Whatever doctrine and discipline have been taught and promulgated by me, Ānanda, they will be your teacher when I am gone. Let the Sangha, O' Ānanda, if willing, abrogate the lesser and minor rules after my death." Instead of using the imperative form the Buddha has used the subjunctive in this connection. Had it been His wish that the lesser rules should be abolished, He could have used the imperative. The Buddha foresaw that Venerable Kassapa, presiding over the First Council, would, with the consent of the Sangha, not abrogate any rule — hence, His use of the subjunctive, states the commentator. As the Buddha has not clearly stated what these minor rules were and as the arahats could not come to any decision about them, they preferred not to alter any rule but to retain all intact. Again, the Buddha addressed the disciples and said, "If, O' disciples, there be any doubt as to the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Sangha, or the Path, or the Method, question me, and repent not afterwards thinking, 'We were face to face with the Teacher, yet we were not able to question the Buddha in His presence.'" When He spoke thus the disciples were silent. For the second and third time the Buddha addressed the disciples in the same way. And for the second and third time the disciples were silent. Then the Buddha addressed the disciples and said, "Perhaps it may be out of respect for the Teacher that you do not question me. Let a friend, O disciples, intimate it to another." Still the disciples were silent. Thereupon the Venerable Ānanda spoke to the Buddha as follows: "Wonderful, Lord! Marvelous, Lord! Thus am I pleased with the company of disciples. There is not a single disciple who entertains a doubt or perplexity with regard to the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, the Path and the Method." "You speak out of faith, Ānanda, with regard to this matter. There is knowledge in the Tathāgata, that in this company of disciples there is not a single disciple who entertains a doubt or perplexity with regard to the Doctrine, the Sangha, the Path and the Method. Of these five hundred disciples, Ānanda, he who is the last is a stream-winner, not subject to fall but certain and destined for enlightenment." Lastly, the Buddha addressed the disciples and gave His final exhortation: "Behold, O' disciples, I exhort you. Subject to change are all component things. Strive on with diligence. *(vayadhammā samkhārā appamādēna sampādētha.)* These were the last words of the Buddha. The Buddha attained to the first ecstasy *(jhāna)*. Emerging from it, He attained in order to the second, third, and fourth ecstasies. Emerging from the fourth ecstasy, He attained to the realm of the infinity of space *(ākāsānañcāyatana)*. Then the Buddha, emerging from the cessation of perceptions and sensations, attained to the realm of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from it, He attained to the realm of nothingness. Emerging from it, He attained to the realm of the infinity of consciousness. Emerging from it, He attained to the realm of the infinity of space.' Emerging from it, He attained to the fourth ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the third ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the second ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained to the first ecstasy. Emerging from it, He attained *Parinibbāna*.

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Being with worthy ones is constant happiness. Avoid the fool for perpetual peace.

206. *Sāhu dassanamariyānaṁ*
sannivāsō sadā sukhō
adassanēna bālānaṁ
niccam'ēva sukhī siyā. (15:10)

So fair's the sight of Noble Ones,
ever good their company,
by relating not to fools
ever happy one may be.

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PLEASANT MEETINGS

15 (8) The Story of Sakka (Verses 206 — 208)

While residing at the village of Vēluvana, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Sakka, the chief of deities.

For when the Buddha's aggregate of life was at an end and he was suffering from an attack of dysentery, Sakka king of deities became aware of it and thought to himself, "It is my duty to go to the Buddha and to minister to him in his sickness." Accordingly he laid aside his own body, three-quarters of a league in height, approached the Buddha, saluted him, and with his own hands rubbed the Buddha's feet. The Buddha said to him, "Who is that?" "It is I, Venerable, Sakka." "Why did you come here?" "To minister to you in your sickness, Venerable." "Sakka, to the gods the smell of men, even at a distance of a hundred leagues, is like that of carrion tied to the throat; depart hence, for I have monks who will wait upon me in my sickness." "Venerable, at a distance of eight-four thousand leagues I smelt the fragrance of your goodness, and therefore came I hither; I alone will minister to you in your sickness." Sakka permitted no other so much as to touch him and the vessel which contained the excrement of the Buddha's body; but he himself carried the vessel out on his own head. Moreover, he carried it out without the slightest contraction of the muscles of his mouth, acting as though he were bearing about a vessel filled with perfumes. Thus did Sakka minister to the Buddha. He departed only when the Buddha felt more comfortable.

The monks began a discussion, saying, "Oh, how great must be the affection of Sakka for the Buddha! To think that Sakka should lay aside such heavenly glory as is his, to wait upon the Buddha in his sickness! To think that he should carry out on his head the vessel containing the excrement of the Buddha's body, as though he were removing a vessel filled with perfumes, without the slightest contraction of the muscles of his mouth!" Hearing their talk, the Buddha said, "What say you, monks? It is not at all strange that Sakka king of gods should cherish warm affection for me. For because of me this Sakka king of gods laid aside the form of old Sakka, obtained the fruit of conversion, and took upon himself the form of young Sakka. For once, when he came to me terrified with the fear of death, preceded by the celestial musician Pañcasikha, and sat down in Indasāla Cave in the midst of the company of the gods, I dispelled his suffering by saying to him, "Vāsava, ask me whatever question you desire in your heart to ask; I will answer whatever question you ask me." "Having dispelled his suffering, I preached the Dhamma to him. At the conclusion of the discourse fourteen billion of living beings obtained comprehension of the Dhamma, and Sakka himself, even as he sat there, obtained the fruit of conversion and became young Sakka. Thus I have been a mighty helper to him, and it is not at all strange that he should cherish warm affection for me. For, monks, it is a pleasant thing to look upon the noble, and it is likewise a pleasant thing to live with them in the same place; but to have aught to do with simpletons brings suffering."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 206)

ariyānaṁdassanaṁ sādhu sannivāsō sadā sukhō
bālānaṁ adassanēna niccaṁ ēva sukhī siyā

ariyānaṁ: of noble beings; *dassanaṁ:* sight; *sādhu:* (is) good; *sannivāsō:* associating with them; *sadā:* (is) always; *sukhō:* happy; *bālānaṁ:* the ignorant; *adassanēna:* not seeing; *niccaṁ ēva:* always; *sukhī siyā:* is conducive to happiness

Seeing noble ones is good. living with them is always conducive to happiness. Not seeing the ignorant makes one always happy.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 207)

hi bālasaṅgatacārī dīghaṁ addhānaṁ sōcati
bālēhi saṁvāsō amittēna iva sabbadā dukkhō
dhīrō ca ñātīnaṁ samāgamō iva sukha saṁvāsō

hi: it is true; *bālasaṅgatacārī:* he who keeps the intimate company of the ignorant; *dīghaṁ addhānaṁ:* over a long period of time; *sōcati:* regrets (grieves); *bālēhi saṁvāsō:* associating with the ignorant; *amittēna iva sabbadā dukkhō:* is always as grievous as living with an enemy; *dhīrō ca:* (with) the wise indeed; *ñātīnaṁ samāgamō iva:* just like the warm company of relations; *sukha saṁvāsō:* is a get-together that is conducive to happiness

A person who keeps company with the ignorant will grieve over a long period of time. Association with the ignorant is like keeping company with enemies — it always leads to grief. Keeping company with the wise is like a reunion with ones's kinsfolk — it always leads to happiness.

(cont'd on page 443)

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No fanaticism

Of Buddhism alone can it be affirmed it is free from all fanaticism. Its aim being to produce in every man a thorough internal transforming by self-conquest, how can it have recourse to might or money or even persuasion for effecting conversion? The Buddha has only shown the way to salvation, and it is left to each individual to decide for himself if he would follow it.

~Prof. Lakshmi Narasu, *''The Essence of Buddhism''*

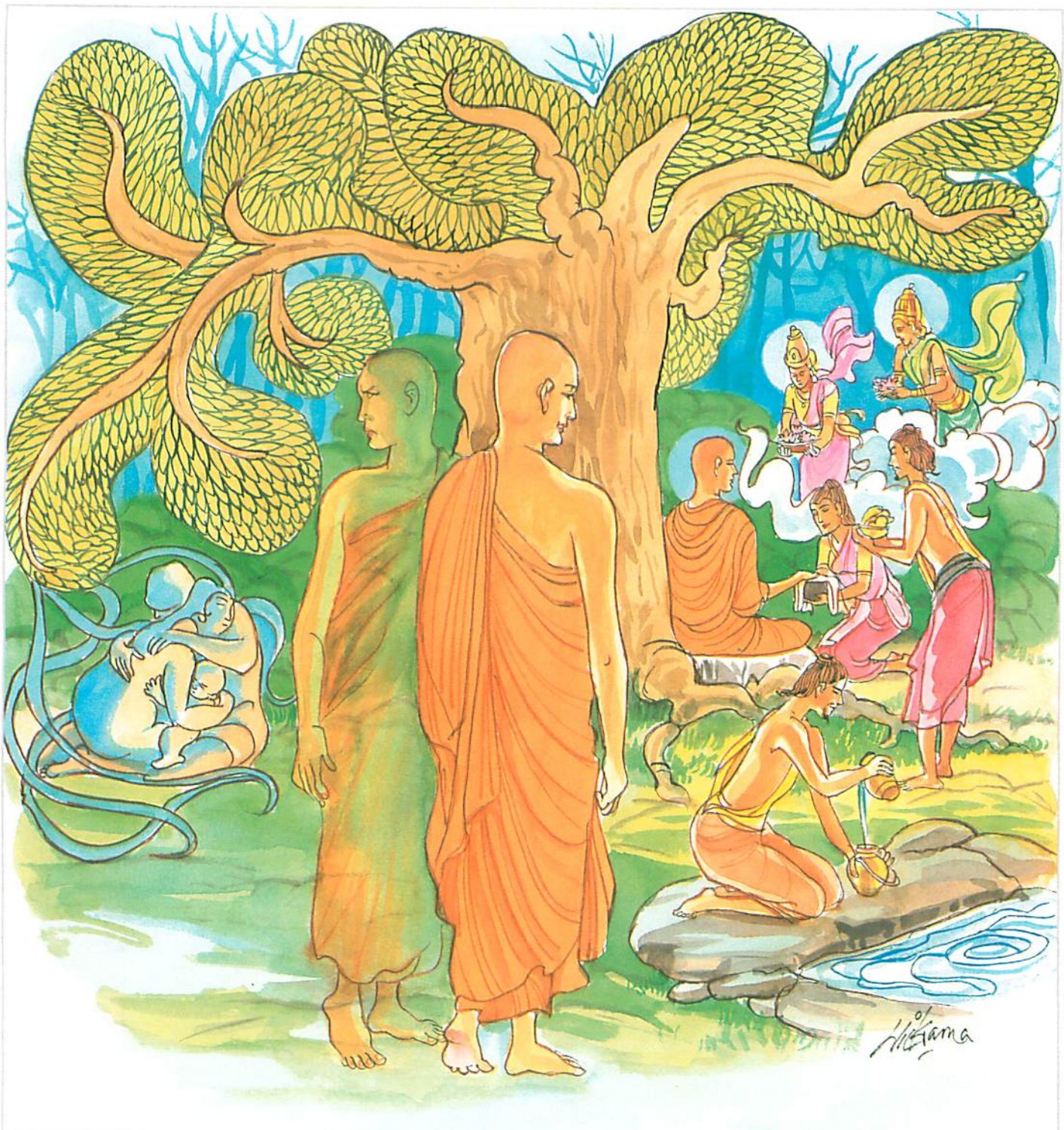
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Chapter 16

PIYA VAGGA

Affection

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With no application and misapplication, the pleasure-seeker envies the zealous one.

209. *Ayōgē yuñjam attānaṁ*
yōgasmiñ ca ayōjayaṁ
atthaṁ hitvā piyaggāhī
pihēt'attānuyōginaṁ. (16:1)

One makes an effort where none's due
with nothing done where effort's due,
one grasps the dear, gives up the Quest
envying those who exert themselves.

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PIYA VAGGA (AFFECTION)
ADMIRATION OF SELF-SEEKERS

16 (1) The Story of Three Ascetics (Verses 209 — 211)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a trio, consisting of a father, a mother, and a son.

The story goes that in a certain household at Sāvatthi there was an only son who was the darling and delight of his mother and father. One day, some monks were invited to take a meal at the house, and when they had finished, they recited the words of thanksgiving. As the youth listened to the words of the Dhamma, he was seized with a desire to become a monk, and straightaway asked leave of his mother and father. They refused to permit him to do so. Thereupon the following thought occurred to him, "When my mother and father are not looking, I will leave the house and become a monk."

Now whenever the father left the house, he committed the son to the care of his mother, saying, "Pray keep him safe and sound;" and whenever the mother left the house, she committed the son to the care of the father. One day, after the father had left the house, the mother said to herself, "I will indeed keep my son safe and sound." So she braced one foot against one of the door-posts and the other foot against the other door-post, and sitting thus on the ground, began to spin her thread. The youth thought to himself, "I will outwit her and escape." So he said to his mother, "Dear mother, just remove your foot a little; I wish to attend to nature's needs." She drew back her foot and he went out. He went to the monastery as fast as he could, and, approaching the monks, said, "Receive me into the Sangha, Venerables." The monks complied with his request and admitted him to the Sangha.

When his father returned to the house, he asked the mother, "Where is my son?" "Husband, he was here but a moment ago." "Where can my son be?" thought the father, looking about. Seeing him nowhere, he came to the conclusion, "He must have gone to the monastery." So the father went to the monastery, and, seeing his son garbed in the robes of a monk, wept and lamented and said, "Dear son, why do you destroy me?" But after a moment he thought to himself, "Now that my son has become a monk, why should I live the life of a layman any longer?" So of his own accord, he also asked the monks to receive him into the Sangha, and then and there retired from the world and became a monk.

The mother of the youth thought to herself, "Why are my son and my husband tarrying so long?" Looking all about, she suddenly thought, "Undoubtedly they have gone to the monastery and become monks." So she went to the monastery and, seeing both her son and her husband wearing the robes of monks, thought to herself, "Since both my son and my husband have become monks, what further use have I for the household life?" And, of her own accord, she went to the community of nuns and retired from the world.

But even after mother and father and son had retired from the world and adopted the religious life, they were unable to remain apart; whether in the monastery or in the convent of the nuns, they would sit down by themselves and spend the day chatting together. The monks told the Buddha what was going on. The Buddha sent for them and asked them, "Is the report true that you are doing this and that?" They replied in the affirmative. Then said the Buddha, "Why do you do so? This is not the proper way for monks and nuns to conduct themselves." "But it is impossible for us to live apart." "From the time of retirement from the world, such conduct is highly improper; it is painful both to the deprived of the sight of those who are dear, and to be obliged to look upon that which is not dear; for this reason, whether persons or material things be involved, one should take no account either of what is dear or of what is not dear."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 209)

attānaṁ ayōgē yuñjaṁ yōgasmiṁ ayōjayaṁ ca
atthaṁ hitvā piyaggāhi attānuyōginaṁ pihēti

attānaṁ: (where) one; *ayōgē:* should not get engaged; *yuñjaṁ:* who gets engaged; *yōgasmiṁ:* where one should get engaged; *ayōjayaṁ:* who does not engage; *ca atthaṁ:* what should be done; *hitvā:* neglecting; *piyaggāhi:* grasps only what appeals; *attānuyōginaṁ:* those who seek selfish ends; *pihēti:* desire

Being devoted to what is wrong, not being devoted to what is right, abandoning one's welfare, one goes after pleasures of the senses. Having done so, one envies those who develop themselves.

(cont'd on page 451)

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Not seeing dear ones is painful, so is seeing the disliked. Make no contact with both.

210. *Mā piyēhi samāgañchi*
appiyēhi kudācanaṁ
piyānaṁ adassanaṁ dukkaṁ
appiyānañ ca dassanaṁ. (16:2)

Don't consort with dear ones
at any time, nor those not dear,
'tis dukkha not to see the dear,
'tis dukkha seeing those not dear.

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NOT SEEING THE LIKED AND SEEING THE UNLIKED ARE BOTH PAINFUL

16 (1) The Story of Three Ascetics (Verses 209 — 211) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 210)

piyēhi appiyēhi kudācanaṁ mā samāgañchi piyānaṁ adassanaṁ appiyānaṁ dassanaṁ ca dukkhaṁ

piyēhi: the endearing ones; *appiyēhi:* those who are disliked; *kudācanaṁ:* never; *mā samāgañchi:* never associate closely; *piyānaṁ:* of the loved ones; *adassanaṁ:* not seeing; *appiyānaṁ dassanaṁ ca:* (and) also seeing disliked persons; *dukkhaṁ:* (are both) painful

Never associate with those whom you like, as well as with those whom you dislike. It is painful to part company from those whom you like. It is equally painful to be with those you dislike.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 211)

tasmā piyaṁ na kayirātha, hi piyāpāyō pāpako yēsaṁ piyāppiyaṁ natthi tēsaṁ ganthā na vijjanti

tasmā: therefore; *piyaṁ na kayirātha:* do not take a liking; *hi:* because; *piyāpāyō:* separating from those we like; *pāpakō:* is evil; *yēsaṁ:* for someone; *piyāppiyaṁ:* pleasant or unpleasant; *natthi:* there is not; *tēsaṁ:* to them; *ganthā:* knots of defilements; *na vijjanti:* are not seen

Therefore, one must not have endearments; because, separation is painful. For those who are free of bonds there are no endearments or non-endearments.

Commentary

dukkha: suffering. *Dukkha* is the first of the Four Noble Truths. As a feeling *dukkha* means that which is difficult to be endured (*du* - difficult; *kha* - to endure). As an abstract truth *dukkha* is used in the sense of contemptible *(du)* and emptiness *(kha)*. The world rests on suffering — hence, it is contemptible. The world is devoid of any reality — hence, it is empty or void. *Dukkha* means contemptible void.

Average men are only surface-seers. An *ariya* sees things as they truly are. To an *ariya* all life is suffering and he finds no real happiness in this world which deceived mankind with illusory pleasures. Material happiness is merely the gratification of some desire. No sooner is the desired thing gained than it begins to be scorned. Insatiate are all desires. All are subject to birth *(jāti)*, and consequently to decay *(jarā)*, disease *(vyādhi)*, and finally to death *(marana)*. No one is exempt from these four inevitable causes of suffering.

Impeded wish is also suffering. We do not wish to be associated with things or persons we detest, nor do we wish to be separated from things or persons we love. Our cherished desires are not, however, always gratified. What we least expect or what we least desire is often thrust on us. At times such unexpected unpleasant circumstances become so intolerable and painful that weak ignorant folk are compelled to commit suicide as if such an act would solve the problem.

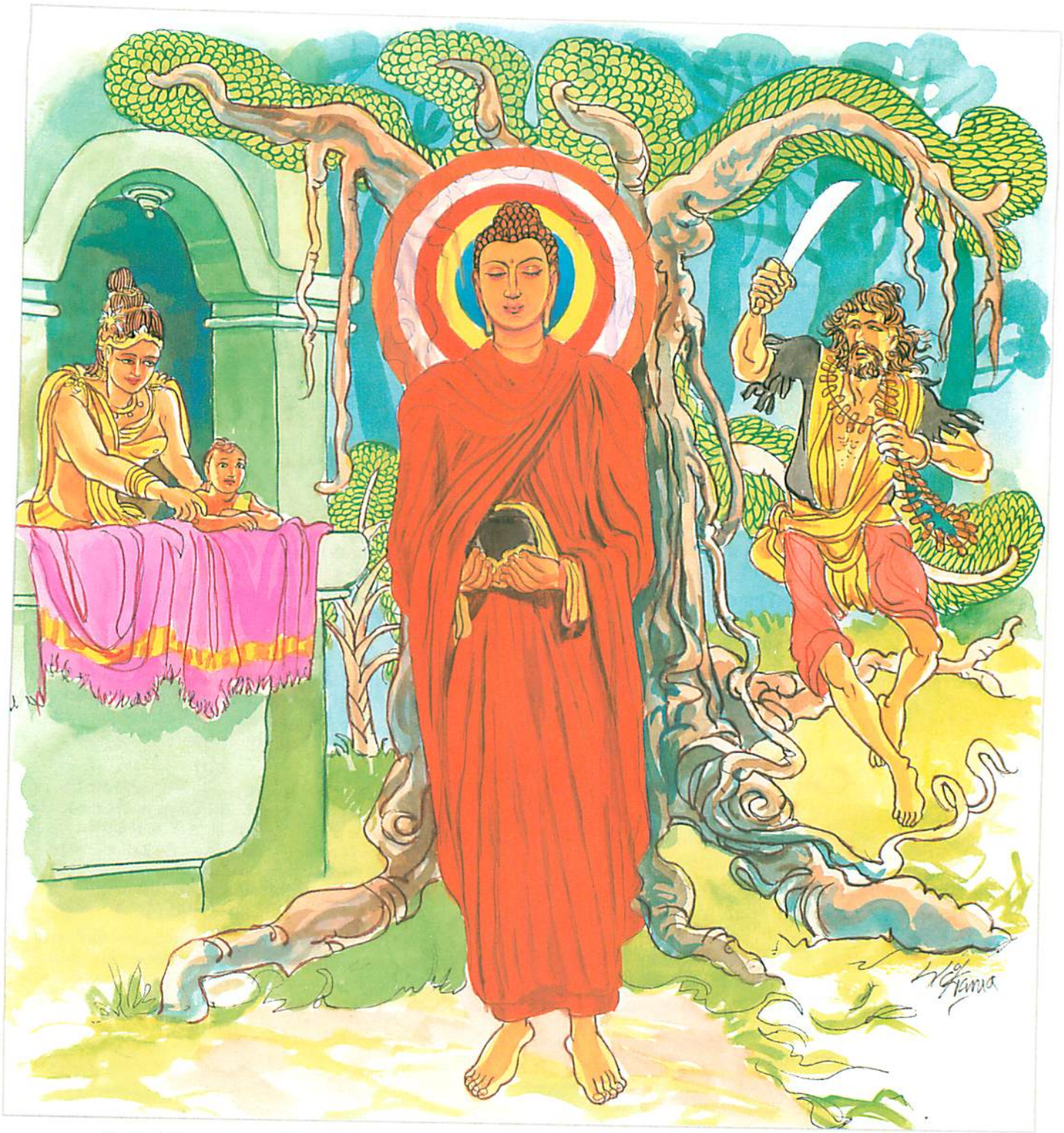
Real happiness is found within, and is not to be defined in terms of wealth, power, honours or conquests. If such worldly possessions are forcibly or unjustly obtained, or are misdirected, or even viewed with attachment, they will be a source of pain and sorrow for the possessors.

Ordinarily the enjoyment of sensual pleasures is the highest and only happiness to an average person. There is no doubt a momentary happiness in the anticipation, gratification, and recollection of such fleeting material pleasures, but they are illusory and temporary. According to the Buddha non-attachment *(virāgatā)* or the transcending of material pleasures is a greater bliss. In brief, this composite body itself is a cause of suffering.

This first truth of suffering which depends on this so-called being and various aspects of life, is to be carefully analyzed and examined. This examination leads to a proper understanding of oneself as one really is.

(cont'd on page 453)

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Reject thoughts of likes and dislikes. Freed of bonds, suffer ye no pain of separation.

211. *Tasmā piyaṁ na kayirātha*
piyāpāyō hi pāpakō
ganthā tēsaṁ na vijjanti
yēsaṁ natthi piyāppiyaṁ. (16:3)

Others then do not make dear
for hard's the parting from them.
For whom there is no dear, undear
in them no bonds are found.

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NOT BOUND BY TIES OF DEFILEMENTS

16 (1) The Story of Three Ascetics (Verses 209 — 211) (cont'd)

Commentary

Buddha has declared: Birth is *dukkha*. Birth means the whole process of life from conception to parturition. It is conception which is particularly meant here. Just to be caught up in a situation where one is tied down by bonds of craving to a solid, deteriorating, physical body — this is *dukkha*. By being lured into birth by craving or forced into it by *kamma*, one must experience *dukkha*. Then the whole operation of birth is so painful that if it goes wrong in some way, as modern psychology has discovered, a deep mental scar, a kind of trauma, maybe left upon the infant's mind. Lord Buddha, however, has declared from his own memories of infinite births, that to be born is a terrifying experience, so much so that most people prefer to forget it. There is another sense in which birth is really *dukkha*, for, in Buddha's Teachings, birth-and-death are different phases of existence from moment to moment. Just as in the body new cells are being produced to replace old ones which are worn out, so in the mind, new objects are being presented, examined and dying down. This constant flow goes on day and night, on and on, so that if it is examined carefully, (with insight), it will be seen to be an experiential disease giving no peace, ensuring no security, and resulting in no lasting satisfaction. In a moment of experience events arise, subsist and pass away but this is a meaning of birth-and-death only to be really understood with the aid of deep meditation and insight.

Old age is *dukkha*. This is perhaps more obvious. Teeth fall out, one's nice glossy hair becomes thin and white, the stomach refuses to digest one's favourite food, joints ache and creak and muscles grow weak; more serious than these physical afflictions are such manifestations as failing sight or difficulty in hearing — pages might be covered with them all. Most terrible of all is the mind's declining ability to understand or to react intelligently, the increasing grip of habits and prejudices, the disinclination to look ahead (where death lies in wait) but to gaze back at the fondly remembered and increasingly falsified past. Lastly, one might mention that softness of the mind, which is politely called 'second childhood', and accurately, 'senility'. Not all beings, not all people will be subject to all of these conditions, but growing old surely entails experiencing some of them, experience which can only be distasteful.

Sickness is *dukkha*. Again, not all will be affected by diseases during life though it is certainly common enough. Consider this body: how intricate it is, how wonderful that it works smoothly even for five minutes, let alone for eight years. One little gland or a few little cells going wrong somewhere, marching out of step, and how much misery can be caused! Most people, again, prefer not to think about this and so suffer the more when they are forced to face it. To be convinced of the commonness of illness, one has only to look into hospitals, talk to doctors and nurses, or open a medical textbook. The diseases about which one can learn are enormous in number and fade off into all sorts of nasty conditions for which science has not yet been able to discover the causes. Mental diseases, brought on by a super-strong root of delusion variously mixed with greed and aversion, are also included here.

In the First Sermon of the Buddha, the central concept is the notion of suffering. Said the Buddha: "The noble truth of suffering is this: Birth itself is suffering; old age is suffering; sickness is suffering; death is suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; separation from the beloved ones is suffering; non-acquisition of the desired objects is suffering. In brief, all the five aggregates of envelopment are suffering."

"The noble truth of the cause of suffering is this: It is this craving which causes rebirth, which is attended with enjoyment. It takes delight here and there, namely, in sensual desires, in existence and in destruction."

"The noble truth of the cessation of suffering is this: It is the complete avoidance, cessation, giving up, abandonment, release and detachment of that craving."

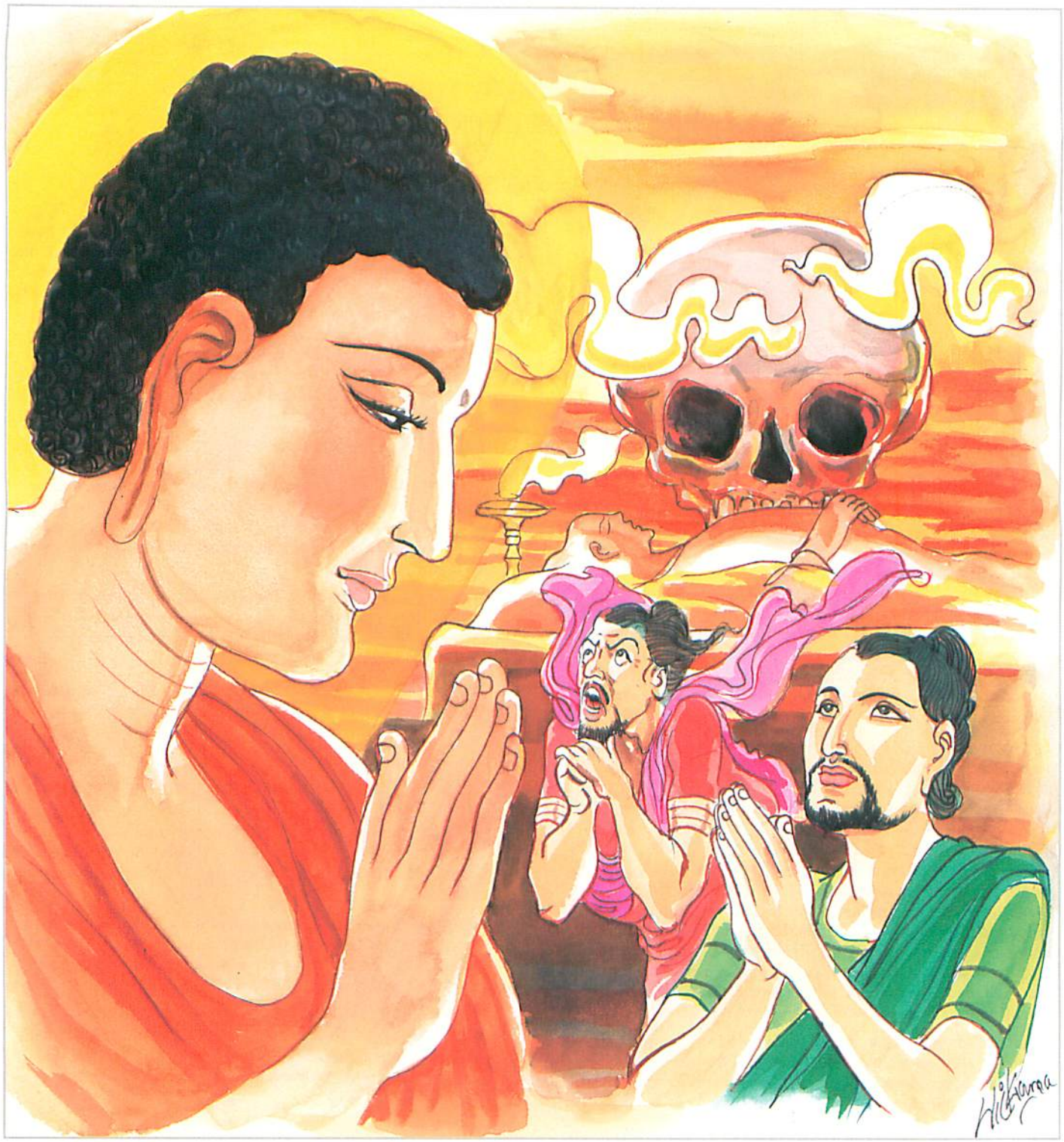
"The noble truth of the way to the cessation of this suffering is the noble Eight-fold Path consisting of proper vision and proper thought."

"This noble truth of suffering is a theory not heard of by me earlier, and in which arose my perception, insight, wisdom, knowledge and illumination. This noble truth of suffering, O monks, must be fully understood."

"This noble truth of the cause of suffering is a theory not heard of by me earlier, and in which arose my perception, insight, wisdom, knowledge and illumination. This cause of suffering, O monks, must in fact be given up; and it has been give up by me."

"This noble truth of the cessation of suffering is a theory not heard of by me earlier, and in which arose my perception, insight, wisdom, knowledge and illumination. This noble truth, O monks, must indeed, be developed; and it has been developed by me."

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From endearment, grief and fear arise. No endearment, no grief or fear.

212.	*Piyatō jāyatī sōkō* *piyatō jāyatī bhayaṁ* *piyatō vippamuttassa* *natthi sōkō, kutō bhayaṁ?* (16:4)	From endearment grief is born, from endearment fear, one who is endearment-free has no grief — how fear?

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THE OUTCOME OF ENDEARMENT

16 (2) The Story of a Rich Householder (Verse 212)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a rich householder who had lost his son.

The story goes that this layman, on losing his son, was so overwhelmed with grief that he went every day to the burning-ground and wept, being unable to restrain his grief. As the Buddha surveyed the world at dawn, he saw that the layman had the faculties requisite for conversion. So when he came back from his alms-round, he took one attendant monk and went to the layman's door. When the layman heard that the Buddha had come to his house, he thought to himself, "He must wish to exchange the usual compliments of health and civility with me." So he invited the Buddha into his house, provided him with a seat in the house-court, and when the Buddha had taken his seat, approached him, saluted him, and sat down respectfully on one side.

At once the Buddha asked him, "Layman, why are you sad?" "I have lost my son; therefore I am sad," replied the layman. Said the Buddha, "Grieve not, layman. That which is called death is not confined to one place or to one person, but is common to all creatures who are born into this world. Not one of the elements of being is permanent. Therefore one should not give himself up to sorrow, but should rather take a reasonable view of death, even as it is said, 'Mortality has suffered mortality, dissolution has suffered dissolution.'

"For wise men of old sorrowed not over the death of a son, but applied themselves diligently to meditation upon death, saying to themselves, 'Mortality has suffered mortality, dissolution has suffered dissolution.' In times past, wise men did not do as you are doing on the death of a son. You have abandoned your wonted occupations, have deprived yourself of food, and spend your time in lamentation. Wise men of old did not do so. On the contrary, they applied themselves diligently to meditation upon death, would not allow themselves to grieve, ate their food as usual, and attended to their wonted occupations. Therefore grieve not at the thought that your dear son is dead. For whether sorrow or fear arises, it arises solely because of one that is dear."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 212)

piyatō sōkō jāyatī piyatō bhayaṁ jāyatī piyatō vippamuttassa sōkō natthi bhayaṁ kutō

piyatō: because of endearment; *sōkō:* sorrow; *jāyatī:* is born; *piyatō:* because of endearment; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *jāyatī:* arises; *piyatō vippamuttassa:* to one free of endearment; *sōkō natthi:* there is no sorrow; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *kutō:* how can there be

From endearment arises sorrow. From endearment fear arises. For one free of endearment, there is no sorrow. Therefore how can there be fear for such a person?

Commentary

The Buddha's daily routine. According to the story that gave rise to this stanza, and to many others, the Buddha, each morning, contemplates the world, looking for those who should be helped. The Buddha can be considered the most energetic and the most active of all religious teachers that ever lived on earth. The whole day He was occupied with His religious activities except when He was attending to His physical needs. He was methodical and systematic in the performance of His daily duties. His inner life was one of meditation and was concerned with the experiencing of Nibbanic Bliss, while His outer life was one of selfless service for the moral upliftment of the world. Himself enlightened, He endeavoured His best to enlighten others and liberate them from the ills of life. His day was divided into five parts, namely, (1) The forenoon session, (2) The afternoon session, (3) The first watch, (4) The middle watch and (5) The last watch. Usually, early in the morning, He surveys the world with His divine eye to see whom he could help. If any person needs His spiritual assistance, uninvited He goes, often on foot, sometimes by air using His psychic powers, and converts that person to the right path. As a rule He goes in search of the vicious and the impure, but the pure and the virtuous come in search of Him. For instance, the Buddha went of His own accord to convert the robber and murderer Angulimāla and the wicked demon Ālavaka, but pious young Visākhā, generous millionaire Anathāpindika, and intellectual Sāriputta and Moggallāna came up to Him for spiritual guidance. While rendering such spiritual service to whomsoever it is necessary, if He is not invited for alms-giving by a lay supporter at some particular place, He, before whom kings prostrated themselves, would go in quest of alms through alleys and streets, with bowl in hand, either alone or with His disciples. Standing silently at the door of each house, without uttering a word, He collects whatever food is offered and placed in the bowl and returns to the monastery. Even in His eightieth year when He was old and in indifferent health, He went on His rounds for alms in Vēsāli. Before midday He finishes His meals. Immediately after lunch He daily delivers a short discourse to the people, establishes them in the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts and if any person is spiritually advanced, he is shown the path to sainthood. At times He grants ordination to them if they seek admission to the Sangha and then retires to His chamber.

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From affection, grief and fear arise. No affection, no grief or fear.

213. *Pēmatō jāyatī sōkō*
pēmatō jāyatī bhayaṁ
pēmatō vippamuttassa
natthi sōkō, kutō bhayaṁ? (16:5)

From affection grief is born,
from affection fear,
one who is affection-free
has no grief — how fear?

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SORROW AND FEAR ARISE DUE TO LOVED ONES

16 (3) The Story of Visākhā (Verse 213)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Visākhā, the renowned donor of the Pubbārāma Monastery. The story goes that Visākhā used to permit her son's daughter, a maiden named Dattā, to minister to the monks in her house when she was absent. After a time Dattā died. Visākhā attended to the deposition of her body, and then, unable to control her grief, went sad and sorrowful to the Buddha, and having saluted Him, sat down respectfully on one side. Said the Buddha to Visākhā, "Why is it, Visākhā, that you sit here sad and sorrowful, with tears in your eyes, weeping and wailing?" Visākhā then explained the matter to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable, the girl was very dear to me and she was faithful and true; I shall not see the likes of her again." "But, Visākhā, how many inhabitants are there in Sāvatthi?" "I have heard you say, Venerable, that there are seventy million." "But suppose all these persons were as dear to you as was Dattā; would you like to have it so?" "Yes, Venerable." "But how many persons die every day in Sāvatthi?" "A great many, Venerable." "In that case it is certain that you would lack time to satisfy your grief; you would go about both by night and by day, doing nothing but wail." "Certainly, Venerable; I quite understand." Then said the Buddha, "Very well, do not grieve. For whether it be grief or fear, it springs solely from affection."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 213)

pēmatō sōkō jāyatī pēmatō bhayaṁ jāyatī pēmatō vippamuttassa sōkō natthi bhayaṁ kutō?

pēmatō: because of affection; sōkō: sorrow; jāyatī: is born; pēmatō: because of affection; bhayaṁ: fear; jāyatī: arises; pēmatō vippamuttassa: to one free of affection; sōkō natthi: there is no sorrow; bhayaṁ: fear; kutō: how can there be

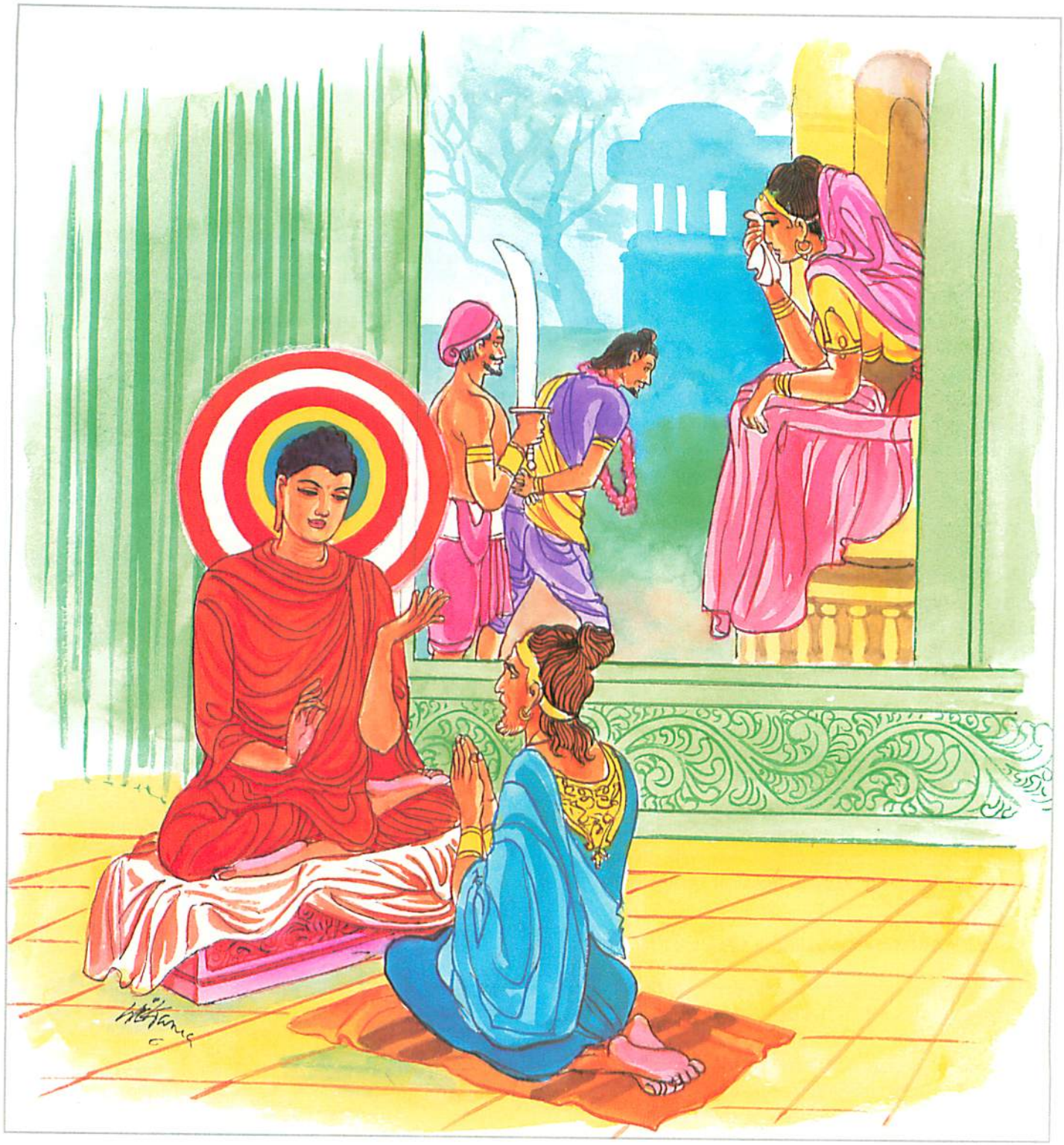
From affection arises sorrow. From affection fear arises. To one free of affection there is no sorrow. Therefore, how can there be fear for such a person?

Commentary

Visākhā's grief: The Buddha spoke this verse to pacify Visākhā, the greatest female lay supporter of the Buddha in the early days of Buddhasāsana (The Dispensation of the Buddha). Visākhā's life is intimately interwoven with the early history of Buddhism. There is an incident in her life which reveals her dutiful kindness even towards animals. Hearing that her well-bred mare gave birth to a foal in the middle of the night, she immediately repaired to the stable with her female attendants bearing torches in their hands, and attended to all the mare's needs with the greatest care and attention.

As her father-in-law was a staunch follower of Niganṭhanātaputta, he invited a large number of naked ascetics to his house for alms. On their arrival Visākhā was requested to come and render homage to these so-called arahats. She was delighted to hear the word arahat and hurried to the hall only to see naked ascetics devoid of all modesty. The sight was too unbearable for a refined lady like Visākhā. She reproached her father-in-law and retired to her quarters without entertaining them. The naked ascetics took offence and found fault with the millionaire for having brought a female follower of the ascetic Gōtama to his house. They asked him to expel her from the house immediately. The millionaire pacified them. One day he sat on a costly seat and began to eat some sweet milk rice-porridge from a golden bowl. At that moment a monk entered the house for alms. Visākhā was fanning her father-in-law and without informing him of his presence she moved aside so that he might see him. Although he saw him he continued eating as if he had not seen him. Visākhā politely told the monk, "Pass on, Venerable, my father-in-law is eating stale fare *(purānam)*." The ignorant millionaire misconstruing her words, was so provoked that he ordered the bowl to be removed and Visākhā to be expelled from the house. Visākhā was the favourite of all the inmates of the house, and so nobody dared to touch her. But Visākhā, disciplined as she was, would not accept without protest such treatment even from her father-in-law. She politely said, "Father, this is no sufficient reason why I should leave your house. I was not brought here by you like a slave girl from some ford. Daughters, whose parents are alive, do not leave like this. It is for this very reason that my father, when I set out to come here, summoned eight clansmen and entrusted me to them, saying, 'If there be any fault in my daughter, investigate it.' Send word to them and let them investigate my guilt or innocence."The millionaire agreed to her reasonable proposal and summoning them; said, "At a time of festivity, while I was sitting and eating sweet milk rice-porridge from a golden bowl, this girl said that what I was eating was unclean. Convict her of this fault and expel her from the house." Visākhā proved her innocence stating, "That is not precisely what I said. When a certain Monk was standing at the door for alms, my father-in-law was eating sweet milk rice-porridge, ignoring him. Thinking to myself that my father, without performing any good deed in this life, is only consuming the merits of past deeds, I told the Monk, 'Pass on, Venerable, my father-in-law is eating stale fare.' What fault of mine is there in this?" She was acquitted of the charge, and the father-in-law himself agreed she was not guilty. But the spiteful millionaire charged her again for having gone behind the house with male and female attendants in the middle watch of the night. When she explained that she actually did so in order to attend on a mare in travail, the clansmen remarked that their noble daughter had done an exemplary act which even a slave-girl would not do. She was thus acquitted of the second charge too. But the revengeful millionaire would not rest until she was found guilty. Next time he found fault with her for no reason. He said that before her departure from home her father gave her ten admonitions. For instance, he said to her, "The indoor fire is not to betaken out of doors. Is it really possible to live without giving fire even to our neighbours on both sides of us?" questioned the millionaire. She availed herself of the opportunity to explain all the ten admonitions in detail to his entire satisfaction. The millionaire was silenced and he had no other charges to make. Having proved her innocence, self-respecting Visākhā now desired to leave the house as she was ordered to do so in the first place. The millionaire's attitude towards Visākhā was completely changed, and he was compelled to seek pardon from her daughter-in-law for what he had uttered through ignorance.

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From attachment, grief and fear arise. No attachment, no grief or fear.

214. *Ratiyā jāyatī sōkō*
Ratiyā jāyatī bhayaṁ
Ratiyā vippamuttassa
natthi sōkō, kutō bhayaṁ? (16:6)

From lustfulness arises grief,
from lustfulness springs fear,
one wholly free of lustfulness
has no grief — how fear?

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THE OUTCOME OF PASSION

16 (4) The Story of Licchavi Princes (Verse 214)

While residing at the Kūtāgāra Monastery in Vēsāli, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the Licchavi princes.

The story goes that on a certain festival day, the Licchavi princes, adorned with adornments of the greatest possible variety, departed from the city to go to the pleasure garden. As the Buddha entered the city for alms, he saw them and addressed the monks, "Monks, just look at those Licchavi princes! Those of you who have never seen the thirty-three deities, take a look at those princes!" So saying, the Buddha entered the city.

On the way to the pleasure garden the princes saw a certain courtesan and took her with them. Becoming jealous of each other over the courtesan, they fell to fighting with each other and set flowing as it were a river of blood. Men laid them on frame-mattresses, lifted them up, and carried them off. After the Buddha had eaten his meal, he departed from the city.

When the monks saw the Licchavi princes thus borne along, they said to the Buddha, "Venerable, early in the morning the Licchavi princes departed from the city adorned and beautified like gods. Now, however, all because of a single woman, they have come to this sad plight. Said the Buddha, "Monks, whether sorrow or fear arises, it arises solely because of lust."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 214)

ratiyā sōkō jāyatī ratiyā bhayaṁ jāyatī ratiyā vippamuttassa sōkō natthi bhayaṁ kutō?

ratiyā: because of lust; *sōkō:* sorrow; *jāyatī:* is born; *ratiyā:* because of lust; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *jāyatī:* arises; *ratiyā vippamuttassa:* to one free of lust; *sōkō natthi:* there is no sorrow; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *kutō:* how can there be

From passion arises sorrow. From passion fear arises. To one free of passion there is no sorrow. In such a person how can there be fear?

Commentary

The Licchavi princes: This verse was spoken by the Buddha to mark an incident in which the Licchavi princes figured. The Licchavis, whose capital was Vēsāli — one of the greatest cities of India in the Buddha's day — were a very proud dynasty. The following incident illustrates it.

The Licchavis of Vēsāli heard that the Buddha had come to Vēsāli and was dwelling at the mango grove of Ambapāli. They got into a fleet of valuable vehicles and proceeded towards the mango grove. Some of them were dark blue in complexion, and they were dressed in dark blue garments and decked in dark blue ornaments. Some of them were yellowish in complexion. They were dressed in yellowish garments and decked in yellowish ornaments. Some of the Licchavis were reddish in complexion, and they were dressed in reddish garments and decked in reddish ornaments. Some of them were pale in complexion, and they were dressed in pale garments and decked in pale ornaments.

Ambapāli drove her vehicles against those of the young Licchavis, axle to axle, wheel to wheel and yoke to yoke. Then the Licchavis addressed Ambapāli.

"Why do you, Ambapāli, drive like this, axle to axle, wheel to wheel and yoke to yoke against the young Licchavis."

"That is simply because I have invited the Blessed One with the fraternity of monks to alms tomorrow at my residence," said Ambapāli.

"Will you give that chance to us, Ambapāli, for a hundred thousand gold coins?" asked the Licchavis.

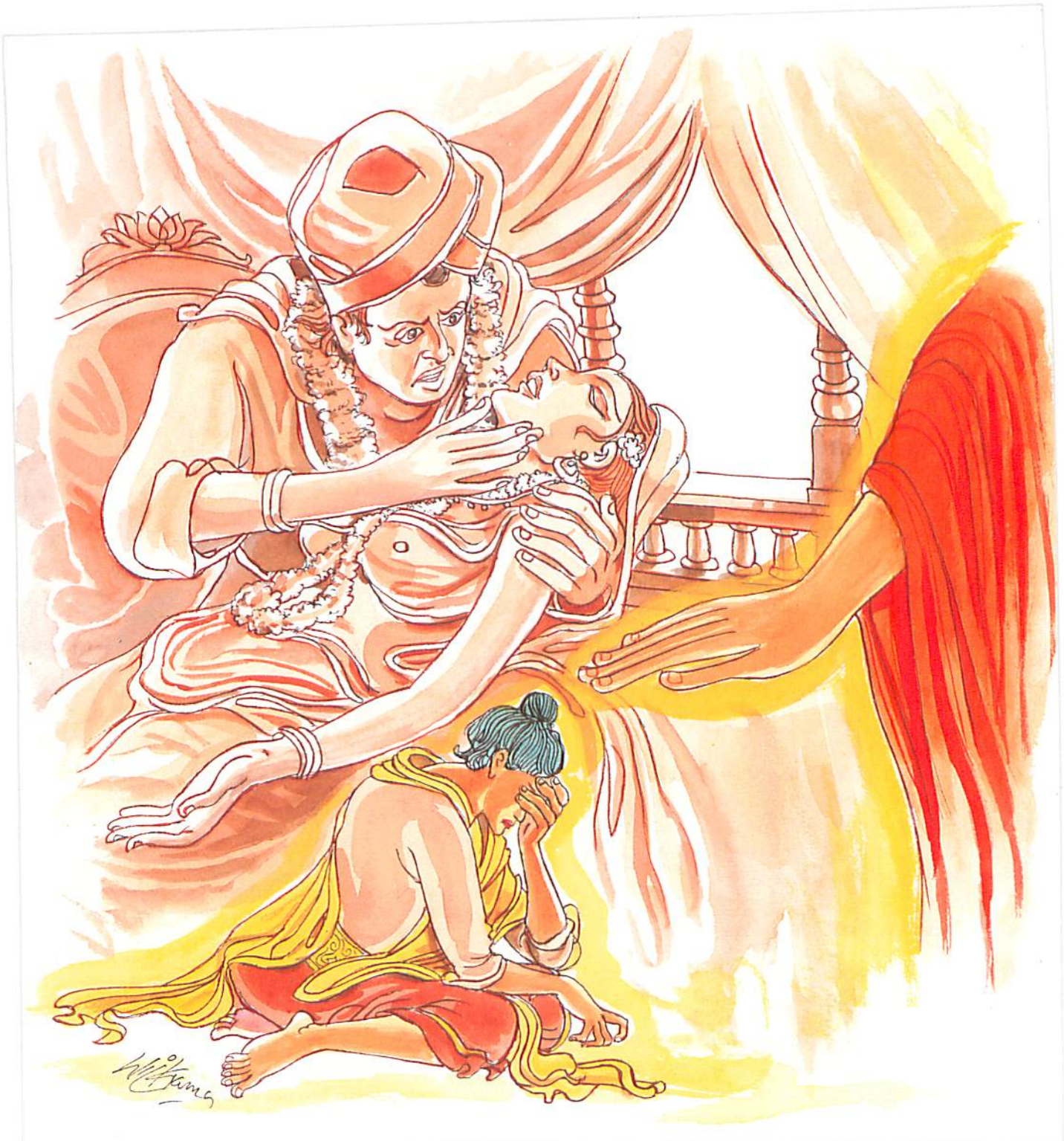
"No, my lords, even if you were to offer me the entire Vēsāli with all its colonies, I will not give you this chance of offering the meal."

The Licchavis snapped their fingers, and said, "We have been outdone by this woman of the mango grove. We have been beaten by this woman of the mango grove."

They, however, proceeded towards the mango grove, and the Buddha, seeing them at a distance, said to the fraternity of monks, "Those of you monks who have not seen gods of the Tāvatiṁsa world may look at these Licchavi princes, and think of them as quite comparable to gods of the Tāvatiṁsa."

The Licchavi princes got down from their vehicles, and walked up to the place where the Buddha was seated. They sat aside and listened to the admonition of the Buddha. Although they invited the Buddha and the fraternity of monks to alms next day, the Buddha said that He had already accepted an invitation to alms from Ambapāli. The Licchavi princes snapped their fingers, and said, "We have been outdone, and we have been beaten by the woman of the mango grove."

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From lust, grief and fear arise. To the lust-less, no grief or fear.

215. *Kāmatō jāyatī sōkō*
Kāmatō jāyatī bhayaṁ
Kāmatō vippamuttassa
natthi sōkō, kutō bhayaṁ? (16:7)

From attachment grief is born,
from attachment fear,
one who is attachment-free
has no grief — how fear?

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THE OUTCOME OF LUST

16 (5) The Story of Anitthigandha Kumāra (Verse 215)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a youth named Anitthigandha.

Anitthigandha, we are told, passed from the World of Brahma and was reborn in Sāvatthi in a family possessed of great wealth. From the day of his birth he refused to go near a woman. When he reached manhood, his mother and father said to him, "Son, we wish to arrange a marriage for you." The youth replied, "I have no use for a woman." Time and again they asked him, and time and again he refused. Finally he caused five hundred goldsmiths to make a solid image of beaten gold in the form of a woman of surpassing beauty and said to his parents, "If you will bring me such a maiden as that, I will do your bidding." So saying, he pointed to the image of gold. So his mother and father summoned several noted Brahmins and sent them forth, saying, "Our son possesses great merit; there must certainly be a maiden who wrought works of merit with him. Take this image of gold with you, go abroad, and bring back with you a maiden of equal beauty." "Agreed," said the Brahmins, and they travelled from place to place until they came to the city Sāgala in the kingdom of Madda.

Now there lived in this city a certain maiden of about sixteen years of age, and she was exceedingly beautiful. The Brahmins set the golden image down by the side of the road leading to the bathing-place. When the nurse of that maiden saw the image, she said to herself,"I thought this was my own daughter; pray what can this be?" Then the Brahmins asked her, "Woman, does your daughter look like this image?" "What does this image amount to, compared with my daughter?" "Well then, show us your daughter." The nurse accompanied the Brahmins to the house. The mistress and master of the household exchanged friendly greetings with the Brahmins, and then caused their daughter to come down and stand on the lower floor of the palace beside the golden image. So great was the beauty of the maiden, that the image no longer seemed beautiful. The Brahmins gave them the image, took the maiden, and went to inform the mother and father of Anitthigandha Kumāra. Delighted at heart, they said to the Brahmins, "Go fetch this maiden hither with all speed." So saying, they were sent forth with rich offerings. When Anitthigandha Kumāra heard the report he said, "Let them fetch the maiden hither with all speed." The maiden entered a carriage, but so delicate was she that as she was being conveyed along the road, the jolting of the carriage gave her cramps, and she died. When the death was reported to the youth, he exclaimed, "Alas, to think that I should have failed to meet so beautiful a woman!" Profound melancholy came over him, and he was overwhelmed with grief and pain.

The Buddha, seeing that he was ripe for conversion, stopped at the door of his house on his round for alms. He was invited in for a meal by the youth's parents. At the end of the meal, the Buddha asked of the youth, "Youth, you seem to be very sad." "Yes, Venerable," replied the youth, "a most beautiful woman just died upon the road, and the news of her death has made me very sad; so great is my sadness that even my food does not agree with me." Then said the Buddha to him, "But, youth, do you know the cause of the intense sorrow which has afflicted you?" "No, Venerable, I do not." "Youth, because of love, intense sorrow has come upon you; sorrow and fear both spring from love."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 215)

kāmatō sōkō jāyatī kāmatō bhayaṁ jāyatī kāmatō vippamuttassa sōkō natthi bhayaṁ kutō

kāmatō: because of passion; *sōkō:* sorrow; *jāyatī:* is born; *kāmatō:* because of passion; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *jāyatī:* arises; *kāmatō vippamuttassa:* to one free of passion; *sōkō natthi:* there is no sorrow; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *kutō:* how can there be

From desire arises sorrow. From desire fear arises. To one free of desire there is no sorrow. For such a person how can there be fear?

Commentary

Special Note: The story of Prince Anitthigandha has a remarkable similarity to the story of King Kusa. In this story, unlike in the Kusa story though, the prince is extremely handsome. The parallel occurs in the making of a golden image of a woman depicting the ideal of feminine beauty, in terms of the prince's vision. In this story, as well as in the Kusa episode, the prince seeking the ideal bride, sends out Brahmins with a golden effigy. But, in this story though a beauty is discovered matching the golden image, the episode ends in tragedy — as the bride dies on the way to see the prince.

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From craving, grief and fear arise. No craving, no grief or fear.

216. *Taṇhāya jāyatī sōkō*
taṇhāya jāyatī bhayaṁ
taṇhāya vippamuttassa
natthi sōkō, kutō bhayaṁ? (16:8)

Out of craving grief is born,
out of craving fear,
one fully freed of craving
has no grief — how fear?

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SORROW AND FEAR ARISE DUE TO MISERLINESS

16 (6) The Story of a Brāhmin (Verse 216)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a Brāhmin who was a farmer.

The story goes that this Brāhmin, who holds false views, went one day to the bank of the river to clear his field. The Buddha, seeing that he was ripe for conversion, went to him. The Brāhmin, although he saw the Buddha, paid him no mark of respect, but remained silent. The Buddha was the first to speak and said, "Brāhmin, what are you doing?" "Clearing my field, Venerable." The Buddha said no more and went on his way. On the following day, the Brāhmin went to plough his field. The Buddha went to him and asked, "Brāhmin, what are you doing?" "Plowing my field, Venerable." The Buddha, hearing his reply, went on his way. On several days in succession the Buddha went to the Brāhmin and asked the same question. Receiving the answers, "Venerable, I am planting my field, I am weeding my field, I am guarding my field," the Buddha went on his way. One day, the Brāhmin said to the Buddha, "Venerable, you have been coming here ever since I cleared my field. If my crop turns our well, I will divide it with you. I will not myself eat without giving to you. Henceforth you shall be my partner."

As time went on, his crop flourished. One day, he said to himself, "My crop has flourished; tomorrow I will set the reapers to work." So he made ready for the reaping. But a severe rainstorm raged that night and swept away his crops; the field looked as if it had ben cut clean. The Buddha, however, knew from the very first that his crop would not flourish. Early in the morning when the Brāhmin saw that the field had been swept clean, he thought with deep grief, "The monk Gōtama has visited this field from the day when I first cleared it, and I have said to him, 'If this crop of mine turns out well, I will divide it with you. I will not myself eat without giving to you. Henceforth you shall be my partner.' But the desire of my heart has not been fulfilled. " And so he refused to eat and went to bed. Now the Buddha stopped at the door of his house. When the Brāhmin heard that the Buddha had arrived, he said, "Bring my partner in and give him a seat here." His servants did so. When the Buddha had taken his seat, he asked, "What is the matter, Brāhmin?" "Venerable, you have visited me from the day when I first cleared my field, and I have said to you, 'If my crop turns out well, I will divide it with you.' But the desire of my heart has not been fulfilled. Therefore, sorrow has come upon me, and my food no longer agrees with me." Then the Buddha said to him, "But, Brāhmin, do you know what causes this sorrow that has come upon you?" "No, Venerable, that I do not know. But you know." The Buddha replied, "Yes, Brāhmin. Whether sorrow or fear arises, it arises solely from desire."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 216)

taṇhāya sōkō jāyatī, taṇhāya bhayaṁ jāyatī
taṇhāya vippamuttassa sōkō natthi bhayaṁ kutō

taṇhāya: because of desire; *sōkō:* sorrow; *jāyatī:* is born; *taṇhāya:* because of desire; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *jāyatī:* arises; *taṇhāya vippamuttassa:* to one free of desire; *sōkō natthi:* there is no sorrow; *bhayaṁ:* fear; *kutō:* how can there be

From craving arises sorrow. From craving fear arises. To one free of craving there is no sorrow. For such a person how can there be fear?

Commentary

taṇhā: thirst; craving. Craving is the chief root of suffering, and of the ever continuing cycle of rebirths. "What, O monk, is the origin of suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to fresh rebirth and, bound up with pleasure and lust, here and there, finds ever fresh delight. It is the sensual craving *(kāma-taṇhā)*, the craving for existence *(bhava-taṇhā)*, the craving for non-existence *(vibhava-taṇhā)*. *Taṇhā* is the eighth link in the formula of the dependent origination *(paticca-samuppāda)*.

Corresponding to the six sense-objects, there are six kinds of craving: craving for visible objects, for sounds, odours, tastes, bodily impressions, mental impressions *(rūpa-taṇhā, sadda, gandha, rasa, phottabba, dhamma)*. Corresponding to the three-fold existence, there are three kinds: craving for sensual existence *(kāma-taṇhā)*, for fine-material existence *(rūpa)*, for immaterial existence *(arūpa)*.

There are eighteen thought-channels of craving *(taṇhā-vicarita)* induced internally, and eighteen induced externally; and as occurring in past, present and future, they total one hundred and eight. According to the dependent origination, craving is conditioned by feeling. Of craving for existence *(bhava-taṇhā)*, it is said: "No first beginning of the craving for existence can be perceived, O' monks, before which it was not and after which it came to be. But it can be perceived that craving for existence has its specific condition. I say, O' monks, that also craving for existence has its condition that feeds it *(sāhāram)* and is not without it. And what is it? Ignorance, one has to reply." craving for existence and ignorance are called the outstanding causes that lead to happy and unhappy destinies (courses of existence).

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Perfect in virtue and insight and mindful of one's obligations. Such a one is liked by people.

217. *Sīladassanasampannaṁ*
dhammaṭṭhaṁ saccavēdinaṁ
attanō kamma kubbānaṁ
taṁ janō kurutē piyaṁ. (16:9)

Perfect in virtue and insight,
firm in Dhamma, knower of Truth,
dear to the people's such a one
who does what should be done.

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BELOVED OF THE MASSES

16 (7) The Story of Five Hundred Boys (Verse 217)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to five hundred boys.

For one day, on the occasion of a certain festival, as the Buddha, accompanied by the eight chief elders and a retinue of five hundred monks, was entering Rājagaha for alms, he saw five hundred youths with baskets of cakes on their shoulders come out of the city on their way to a pleasure garden. When they saw the Buddha, they saluted him and continued on their way without so much as saying to a single monk, "Have a cake." When they have gone, the Buddha said to the monks, "Monks, would you not like to eat some cakes?" "Venerable, where are my cakes?" "Do you not see those youths passing by with baskets of cakes on their shoulders?" "Venerable, such youths as they never give cakes to anybody." "Monks, although these youths have not invited you or me to share their cakes, yet a monk, the owner of the cakes, follows in the rear. You must eat some cakes before yo go on." Now the Buddhas cherish no sentiments of ill-will or hatred towards any man; therefore the Buddha spoke thus. And having thus spoken, he went with the congregation of monks, and sat down at the foot of a certain tree in the shade.

When the youths saw Venerable Mahā Kassapa following in the rear, they immediately took a liking to him. In fact, their bodies were pervaded with a thrill of pleasure at seeing him. Forthwith they set down their baskets, saluted the elder with the five rests, held up the cakes, baskets and all, and saluting the elder, said to him, "Have some cakes, Venerable." In reply the elder said to them, "There is the Buddha with the congregation of monks, sitting at the foot of a tree. Take your offerings and go and share with the congregation of monks." "Very well, Venerable," replied the youths. However, they turn around and went back to the elder, gave the elder the cakes, stood on one side watching him, and at the end of the repast, gave him water. The monks were offended and said, "These youths have shown favouritism in giving alms; they never asked either the Buddha or the chief elders to accept alms, but when they saw Venerable Mahā Kassapa, they took their baskets and went and went to offer him cakes." The Buddha, hearing their words, said, "Monks, a monk like my son Mahā Kassapa is dear to deities and men alike; such a man they delight to honour with the four requisites."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 217)

sīladassana sampannaṁ dhammaṭṭhaṁ saccavādinaṁ attanō kamma kubbānaṁ taṁ janō piyaṁ kurutē

sīladassana sampannaṁ: endowed with discipline and insight; *dhammaṭṭhaṁ:* well established in the dhamma; *saccavādinaṁ:* truthful; *attanō:* one's own; *kamma kubbānaṁ:* looking after activities; *taṁ:* that kind of being; *janō:* the masses; *piyaṁ kurutē:* love (hold in affection)

He is endowed with discipline and insight. He is firmly established on the laws of righteousness. He speaks the truth. He looks after his worldly and spiritual responsibilities. The masses adore that kind of person.

Commentary

Saccavādinaṁ: having realized the truth. The Teachings of the Buddha rest firmly on the Four Noble Truths in which he has discovered as the eternal human condition. Truthfulness *(sacca)* is the seventh perfection. By *sacca* is here meant the fulfillment of one's promise. This is one of the salient characteristics of a Bodhisatta, for he is no breaker of his word. He acts as he speaks, he speaks as he acts *(yathāvādi tathākāri yathākāri tathāvādi)*. According to the Hārita Jātaka a Bodhisatta, in the course of his life's wanderings, never utters an untruth although at times he may violate the other four precepts. Truth he hides not even to be polite. He makes truth his guide, and holds it his bounden duty to keep his word. He ponders well before he makes his promise, but once made the promise is fulfilled at any cost, even that of his life.

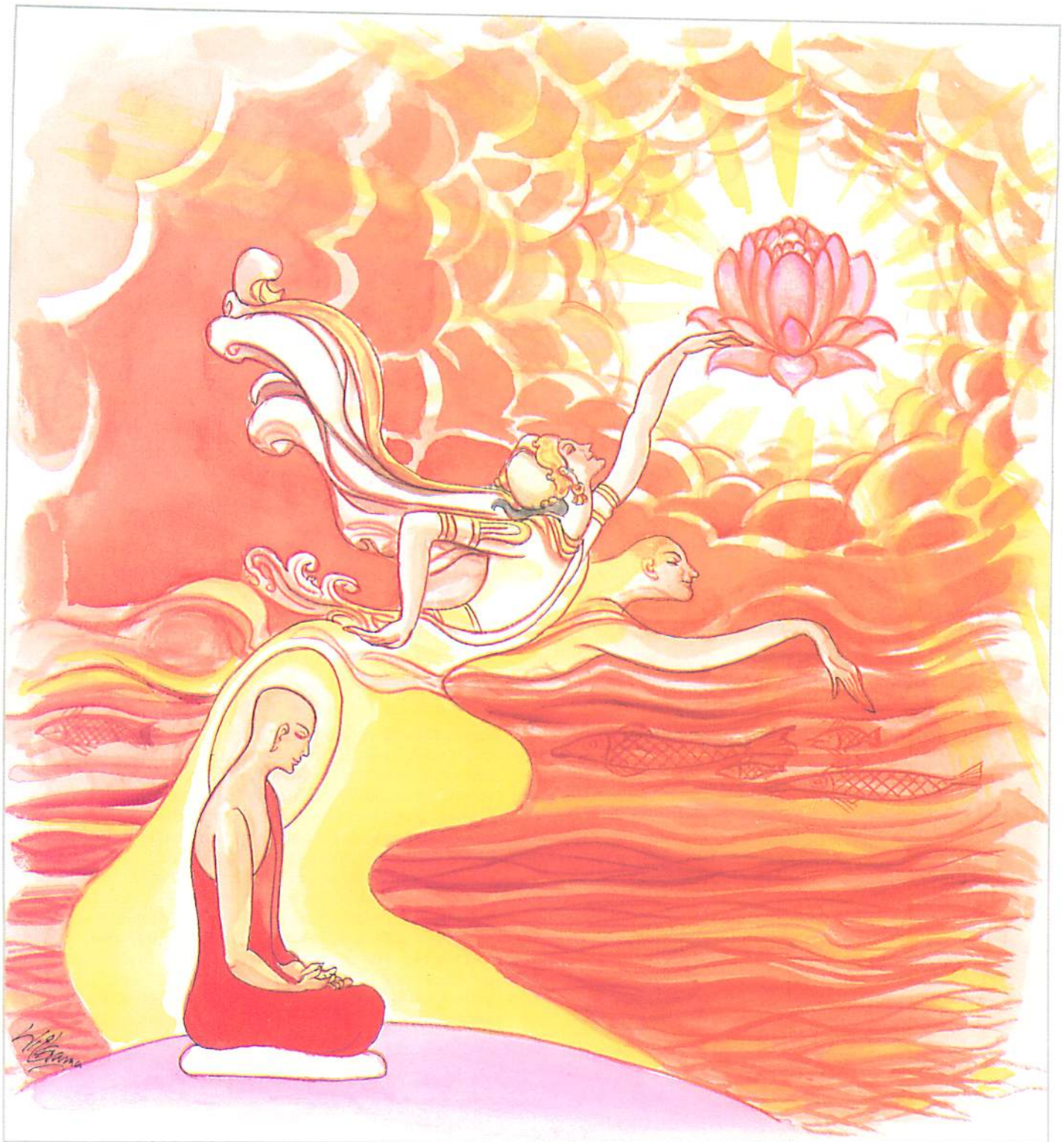
In the *Hiri Jātaka* the Bodhisatta advises: "Be thou in deed to every promise true, Refuse to promise what thou cannot do; Wise men on empty braggarts look askew."

Again, the *Mahā Sutasōma Jātaka* recounts that to fulfil a promise the Bōdhisatta was prepared even to sacrifice his life. "Just as the morning star on high in balanced course doth ever keep, And through all seasons, times, and years, so likewise he in all wise speech swerves never from the path of truth."

A Bōdhisatta is trustworthy, sincere and honest. What he thinks, he speaks. There is perfect harmony in his thoughts, words and deeds. He is consistent and straightforward in all his dealings. He is no hypocrite since he strictly adheres to his high principles. There is no difference between his inner self and his outward utterance. His private life accords with his public life.

He does not use flattery to win the hearts of others, does not exalt himself to win their admiration, does not hide his defects or vainly exhibit his virtues. The praiseworthy he praises without malice, the blameworthy he blames judiciously, not with contempt but out of compassion. (However, the truth he does not always utter.) Should such utterance not be conducive to the good and happiness of others, then he remains silent. If any truth seems beneficial to others, he utters it, however detrimental to himself it may be. And he honours the word of others as he honours his own.

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Keenly on Nibbana bent, from worldly pleasures freed. He is said to be upstream bound.

218. *Chandajātō anakkhātē*
manasā ca phuṭo siyā
kāmēsu ca appaṭibaddhacittō
uddhaṁsōtō'ti vuccati. (16:10)

One with a wish for the Undeclared,
with mind so well-pervaded,
a mind not bound in pleasures of sense,
an 'upstream-goer's' called.

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THE PERSON WITH HIGHER URGES

16 (8) The Story of an Anāgāmi Venerable (Verse 218)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to an elder who was an *anāgāmi*.

On one occasion, the pupils of the elder asked him whether he had attained any of the maggas; but he did not say anything although he had attained the *anāgāmi magga*, the third magga. He kept silent because he had resolved not to talk about his attainment until he had attained arahatship. But the thera passed away without attaining arahatship, and also without saying anything about his attainment of *anāgāmi magga* insight.

His pupils thought their teacher had passed away without attaining any of the *maggas* and they felt sorry for him. They went to the Buddha and asked him where their teacher was reborn. The Buddha replied, "Monks! Your teacher, who was an *anāgāmi* before he passed away, is now reborn in the abodes of the Brāhmins *(suddhāvāsa Brāhmalōka)*. He did not reveal his attainment of *anāgāmi magga* because he felt ashamed that he had achieved only that much, and he was ardently striving to attain arahatship. Your teacher is now freed from the attachment to the sensual world *(kāmalōka)* and would certainly rise to higher realms."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 218)

anakkhātē chandajātō manasā phuṭo ca siyā kāmesu appaṭibaddhacittō ca uddhaṁsōtō iti vuccati

Glossary

anakkhātē: (in whom) in the undefinable (Nibbāna); *chandajātō:* yearning has arisen; *manasā:* in mind; *phuṭo ca siyā:* has also touched (Nibbāna); *kāmesu:* in desires; *appaṭibaddhacittō ca:* also unattached; *uddhaṁsōtō iti:* (such a person) is called; *vuccati:* upstream-bound

In that person a deep yearning for the undefined — for Nibbāna — has arisen. He has already touched it mentally. He is called a swimmer against the current — an upstream-bound person. He has already started the process towards Nibbāna.

Commentary

Anāgāmi: the non-returner. The elder of this stanza had attained the path to *anāgāmi* (non-returner status), but did not reveal it. *Anāgāmi* is a noble disciple *(ariya-puggala)* on the third stage of holiness. There are five classes of non-returners and it is said: "A being through the disappearing of the five lower fetters *(samyōjana)* reappears in a higher world (amongst the devas of the pure abodes, *suddhāvāsa*), and without returning from that world (into the sensuous sphere) he there reaches Nibbāna.

(1) "He may, immediately after appearing there (in the 'Pure Abodes') or without having gone beyond the half life-time, attain the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters. Such a being is called one who reaches Nibbāna within the first half of the life *(antarā-parinibbāyi)*.

(2) "Or, whilst living beyond the half life-time, or at the moment of death, he attains the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters. Such a being is called one who reaches Nibbāna after crossing half the life-time *(upahacca-parinibbāyi)*.

(3) "Or, with exertion he attains the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters. Such a being is called one who reaches Nibbāna with exertion" *(sasankhāra-parinibbāyi)*.

(4) "Or, without exertion he attains the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters. Such a being is called one who reaches Nibbāna without exertion *(asankhāra-parinibbāyi)*.

(5) "Or, after vanishing from the heaven of the aviha-gods, *(suddhāvāsa)*, he appears in the heaven of the unworried *(ātappa)* gods. After vanishing from there he appears in the heaven of the clearly-visible *(sudassa)* gods, from there in the heaven of the clear-visioned *(sudassi)* gods, from there in the heaven of the highest *(akaniṭṭha)* gods. There he attains the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters. Such a being is called one who passes upstream to the highest gods *(uddhaṁsōta-akaniṭṭha-gāmi)*."

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Doers of merit are received in heaven as long-absentees are welcomed by kinsmen.

219. *Cirappavāsiṁ purisaṁ*
dūratō sotthimāgataṁ
ñātimittā suhajjā ca
abhinandanti sāgataṁ. (16:11)

One who's long away from home
returns in safety from afar,
then friends, well-wishers, kinsmen too
are overjoyed at his return.

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THE FRUITS OF GOOD ACTION

16 (9) The Story of Nandiya (Verses 219 & 220)

While residing at Isipatana Wood, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Nandiya. The story goes that at Benāres, there lived a youth named Nandiya, son of a family endowed with faith. He was all that his mother and father wished him to be, faithful, believing, a servitor of the Sangha. When he came of age, his mother and father desired that he should marry his maternal uncle's daughter Rēvati, who lived in the house opposite. But Rēvati was an unbeliever and was not accustomed to give alms, and therefore, Nandiya did not wish to marry her. So Nandiya's mother said to Rēvati, "Dear daughter, sweep the floor neat and sweep in this house where the congregation of monks are to sit, prepare seats, set stands in their proper places, and when the monks arrive, take their bowls, invite them to sit down, and strain water for them with a straining-cup; when they have finished their meal, wash their bowls. If you will so do, you will win the favour of my son." Rēvati did so. Nandiya's mother said to her son, "Rēvati is now patient of admonition." Nandiya then gave his consent, the day was set, and they were married. Said Nandiya to his wife, "If you will minister faithfully to the congregation of monks and to my mother and father, on this condition you will be privileged to dwell in this house; therefore be heedful." "Very well," said Rēvati, promising to do so. In a few days she learned to conduct herself like a true believer. She rendered true obedience to her husband, and in the course of time gave birth to two sons. When Nandiya's mother and father died, she became sole mistress of the household. Nandiya, having come into great wealth on the death of his mother and father, established alms for the congregation of monks, and likewise established at the door of his house regular distribution of cooked food to poor folk and travellers. Somewhat later, after hearing the Buddha preach the Dhamma, considering within himself the blessings which would accrue to him through the gift of a dwelling to the monks, he caused a quadruple hall, a four chambered hall to be erected and furnished at the Great Monastery of Isipatana. And having caused beds and couches to be spread, presented this dwelling to the congregation of monks presided over by the Buddha, giving alms, and pouring water of donation into the right hand of the Buddha. As the water of donation fell into the right hand of the Buddha, there arose in the world of the thirty-three a celestial mansion extending twelve leagues in all directions, a hundred leagues high, made of the seven kinds of jewels, and filled with celestial nymphs. One day when Venerable Mahā Moggallāna went on a pilgrimage to the world of the deities, he stopped near this palace and asked some deities who approached him, "Through whose merit came into existence this celestial mansion filled with a company of celestial nymphs?" Then those deities informed him who was lord of the mansion, saying, "Venerable, a householder's son named Nandiya caused a monastery to be erected at Isipatana and gave it to the Buddha, and through his merit this celestial mansion came into existence." Thereupon the company of celestial nymphs descended from that palace and said to the elder, "Venerable, we would be the slaves of Nandiya. Although we have been reborn here, we are exceedingly unhappy because we do not see him; pray tell him to come here. For putting off human estate and taking the estate of a deity, is like breaking a vessel of clay and taking a vessel of gold." The elder departed thence, and approaching the Buddha, asked him, "Venerable, is it true that while men yet remain in the world of men, they attain heavenly glory as the fruit of the good works which they have performed?" The Buddha replied, "Moggallāna, you have seen with your own eyes the heavenly glory which Nandiya has attained in the world of the deities; why do you ask me such a question?" Said the elder, "Then it is really true, Venerable!" Said the Buddha, "Moggallāna, why do you talk thus? If a son or a brother who has long been absent from home, returns from his absence, whoever at the village-gate sees him hurries home and says, 'So-and-so is back.' And straightaway his kinsfolk, pleased and delighted, will hasten forth and greet him, saying, 'Dear friend, you have returned at last!' Even so, when either a woman or a man who has done works of merit here, leaves this world and goes to the next, the heavenly deities take presents of ten sorts and go forth to meet him and to greet him, saying, 'Let me be first! Let me be first!"

Explanatory Translation (Verse 219)

cirappavāsiṁ purisaṁ dūratō sotthiṁ āgataṁ
ñātimittā suhajjā ca, sāgataṁ abhinandanti

cirappavāsiṁ purisaṁ: an individual who had lived away from home for a long time; *dūratō:* from afar; *sotthiṁ āgataṁ:* when returns home safely; *ñātimittā:* friends and relations; *suhajjā ca:* well wishers; *sāgataṁ:* his safe return; *abhinandanti:* welcome

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Effects of good living welcome the doer hereafter, like kinsmen a relative returning home.

220. *Tathēva katapuññam'pi*
asmā lōkā paraṁ gataṁ
puññāni paṭigaṇhanti
piyaṁ ñātiṁ'va āgataṁ. (16:12)

In the same way, with merit done
when from this world to another gone
those merits then receive one there
as relatives a dear one come.

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GOOD ACTIONS LEAD TO GOOD RESULTS

16 (9) The Story of Nandiya (Verses 219 & 220) (cont'd)

When a person, who had lived away from home for a long while, returns home safely, his friends, relations and well-wishers welcome him back.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 220)

tathā ēva kata puññaṁ api asmā lōkā paraṁ gataṁ puññāni gataṁ piyaṁ ñātiṁ iva paṭiganhanti

tathā ēva: similarly; *kata puññaṁ api:* one who has done merits (here); *asmā lōkā paraṁ gataṁ:* leaving this world has gone to the next; *puññāni:* merits; *gataṁ piyaṁ ñātiṁ iva:* like a close relative who has returned from a journey; *paṭiganhanti:* welcome him

In the same way, when those who have done meritorious deeds in this world go to the next world, their meritorious actions welcome them, like relatives welcoming back relatives returning from a long journey.

Commentary

puññāni patiganhanti: welcomed by their meritorious actions *(puñña)*.

puñña: merit; meritorious. *Puñña* is a popular term for kammically wholesome *(kusala)* action. Opposite terms: *apuñña*, demerit; *pāpa*, bad, evil. The value of meritorious action is often stressed, e.g., in the Treasure-Store Sutta. The community of holy monks *(ariya-sangha)*, the third refuge is said to be the incomparable field of merit in the world *(anuttaram puññakkhettam lōkassa)*.

There are ten kinds of such meritorious actions *(kusalakamma)* — namely, (1) Generosity *(dāna)*, (2) Morality *(sīla)*, (3) Meditation *(bhāvanā)*, (4) Reverence *(apacāyana)*, (5) Service *(veyyāvacca)*, (6) Transference of merit *(pattidāna)*, (7) Rejoicing in others' good actions *(anumōdanā)*, (8) Hearing the doctrine *(dhamma savana)*, (9) Expounding the doctrine *(dhammadēsanā)*, and (10) Straightening one's own views *(diṭṭhijjukamma)*. Sometimes, these ten moral actions are regarded as twelve by introducing sub-divisions to (7) and (10).

Praising of others' good actions *(pasamsā)* is added to rejoicing in others' merit *(anumōdanā)*. Taking the Three Refuges *(sarana)* and mindfulness *(anussati)* are substituted for straightening of one's views.

Generosity yields wealth. Morality gives birth in noble families and in states of happiness. Meditation gives birth in realms of form and formless realms, and helps to gain higher knowledge and emancipation. Transference of merit acts as a cause to give in abundance in future births. Rejoicing in others' merit is productive of joy wherever one is born. Both expounding and hearing the Dhamma are conducive to wisdom. Reverence is the cause of noble parentage. Service produces large retinue. Praising others good works results in getting praise to oneself. Seeking the Three Refuges results in the destruction of passion. Mindfulness is conducive to diverse forms of happiness.

Kusala kamma which may ripen in the realms of form. These are the following five kinds of *(rūpa-jhānas)* or ecstasies which are purely mental:

(1) The first *jhāna* moral consciousness which consists of initial application *(vitakka)*, sustained application *(vicāra)*, pleasurable interest *(pīti)*, happiness *(sukkha)*, and one-pointedness *(ēkaggatā)*; (2) The second *jhāna* moral consciousness which consists of sustained application, pleasurable interest, happiness, and one-pointedness; (3) The third *jhāna* moral consciousness which consists of pleasurable interest, happiness and one-pointedness; (4) The fourth *jhāna* moral consciousness which consists of happiness and one-pointedness; and (5) The fifth *jhāna* moral consciousness which consists of equanimity *(upekkhā)* and one-pointedness. These *jhānas* have their corresponding effects in the realms of form.

Kusala Kamma which may ripen in the formless realms: These are the four *arūpa jhānas* which have their corresponding effects in the formless realms — namely, (1) Moral consciousness dwelling in the infinity of space *(akāsānañcāyatana)*; (2) Moral consciousness dwelling on the infinity of consciousness *(viññānañcāyatana)*; (3) Moral consciousness dwelling on nothingness *(akiñcaññāyatana)*; and (4) Moral consciousness wherein perception neither is nor is not *(n'eva saññānāsaññāyatana)*.

The Buddha indicated to Anathapindika the various gradations of meritorious activities. Once, the Buddha, discoursing on generosity, reminded Anathapindika that alms given to the Sangha together with the Buddha is very meritorious; but more meritorious than such alms is the building of a monastery for the use of the Sangha; more meritorious than such monasteries is seeking refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha; more meritorious than seeking refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha is the observance of five precepts; more meritorious than such observance is meditation on loving-kindness *(Mettā)* for a moment; and most meritorious of all is the development of Insight as to the fleeting nature of things *(vipassanā)*.

It is evident from this discourse that generosity is the first stage on the way of Buddhist life. More important than generosity is the observance of at least the five rules of regulated behaviour which tend to the disciplining of words and deeds. Still more important and more beneficial is the cultivation of such ennobling virtues like loving-kindness which lead to self-development. Most important and most beneficial of all self-discipline is the sincere effort to understand things as they truly are.

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No unkind word

There was never an occasion when the Buddha flamed forth in anger, never an incident when an unkind word escaped his lips.

~Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Practise of wisdom and compassion

It seemed that the kindly aesthetic, eternally young, seated cross-legged on the lotus of purity with his right hand raised in admonition, answered in these two words: ''If you wish to escape from suffering from fear, practise wisdom and compassion.''

~Anatole France

No Persecution

There is no record known to me in the whole of the long history of Buddhism throughout the many centuries where its followers have been for such lengthened periods supreme, of any persecution by the Buddhists of the followers of any other faith.

~Prof. Rhys Davids

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Chapter 17

KŌDHA VAGGA

Anger

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Shun pride, shun anger, get beyond all fetters. You shall then suffer no pain of mind.

221. *Kōdhaṁ jahē vippajaheyya mānaṁ*
saññōjanaṁ sabbamatikkameyya
taṁ nāmarūpasmiṁ asajjamānaṁ
akiñcanaṁ nānupatanti dukkhā. (17:1)

Anger and pride should one forsake,
all fetters cast aside,
dukkha's none where no desire,
no binding to body or mind.

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KŌDHA VAGGA (Anger)
HE WHO IS NOT ASSAULTED BY SORROW

17 (1) The Story of Princess Rōhini (Verse 221)

While residing at the Nigrōdhārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Princess Rōhini, sister of Venerable Anuruddha.

On one occasion, Venerable Anuruddha visited Kapilavatthu. While he was staying at the Monastery there, all his relatives, with the exception of his sister Rōhini, came to see him. On learning from them that Rōhini did not come because she was suffering from leprosy, he sent for her. Covering her head in shame, Rōhini came when she was sent for. Venerable Anuruddha told her to do some meritorious deed and he suggested that she should sell some of her clothing and jewellery; and with the money raised, to build a refectory for the monks. Rōhini agreed to do as she was told. Venerable Anuruddha also asked his other relatives to help in the construction of the hall. Further, he told Rōhini to sweep the floor and fill the water-pots every day even while the construction was still going on. She did as she was instructed and she began to get better.

When the hall was completed, the Buddha and his monks were invited for alms-food. After the meal the Buddha asked for the donor of the building and alms-food, but Rōhini was not there. So the Buddha sent for her and she came. The Buddha asked her whether she knew why she was inflicted with this dreaded disease and she answered that she did not know. So the Buddha told her that she had the dreadful disease because of an evil deed she had done out of spite and anger, in one of her past existences. As explained by the Buddha, Rōhini was, at one time, the chief queen of the king of Bārānasi. It so happened that the king had a favourite dancer and the chief queen was very jealous of her. So the queen wanted to punish the dancer. Thus one day, she had her attendants put some itching powder in the dancer's bed and blankets. Next, they called the dancer, and as though in jest, they threw some itching powder on her. The girl itched all over and was in great pain and discomfort. Thus itching unbearably, she ran to her room and her bed, which made her suffer even more.

As a result of that evil deed Rōhini had become a leper in this existence. The Buddha then exhorted the congregation not to act foolishly in anger and not to bear any ill will towards others. At the end of the discourse, many in the congregation attained sōtāpatti fruition. Princess Rōhini also attained sōtāpatti fruition, and at the same time her skin disease disappeared, and her complexion became fair, smooth and very attractive.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 221)

kōdhaṁ jahē mānaṁ vippajahēyya sabbaṁ saññojanaṁ atikkameyya nāmarūpasmiṁ asajjamānaṁ akiñcanaṁ taṁ dukkhā nā anupatanti

kōdhaṁ: anger; *jahē:* abandon; *mānaṁ:* pride; *vippajaheyya:* give up fully; *sabbaṁ:* all; *saññōjanaṁ:* fetters; *atikkameyya:* get rid of; *nāmarūpasmiṁ:* in name and form; *asajjamānaṁ:* non attached; *akiñcanaṁ:* free of appendages; *taṁ:* on that person; *dukkhā nā anupatanti:* pains and sorrows do not befall

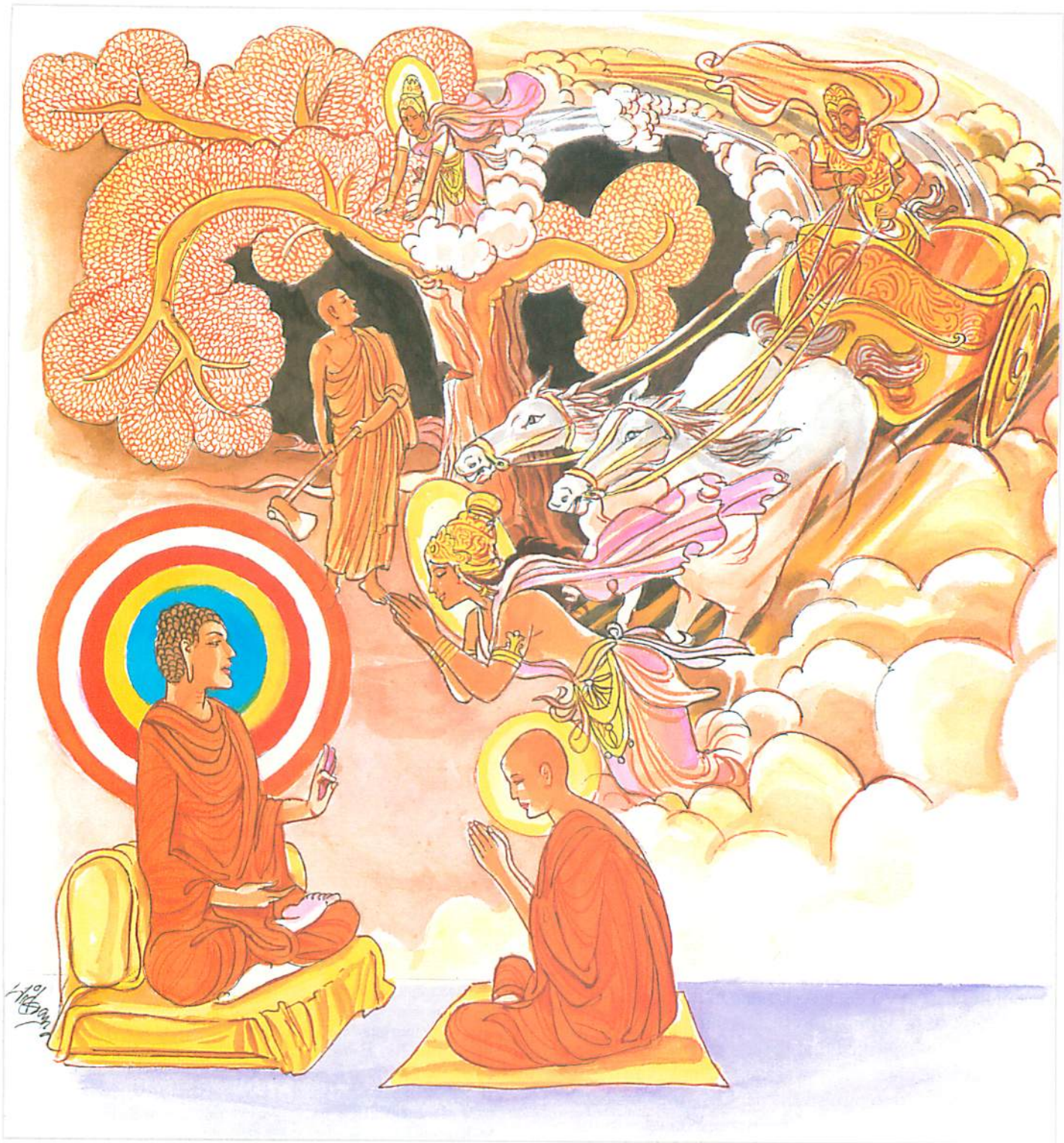
Abandon anger. Give up pride fully. Get rid of all clingings. To that person, who is not attracted to name and form, and is free of appendages, no sufferings befall.

Commentary

kōdha: anger. Of all emotions that affect a personality adversely, anger is the worst. Anger grows ten-fold if met with anger, but if met calmly it often ends quickly in a sense of shame which is stronger by contrast. It is the most illogical of all passions. At the moment of intense anger a man is no longer really human; he has become a destructive animal. Even anger at injustice done to others is not a state of mind which is conducive to a right solution. But in dealing with oneself, this mood of anger cannot outlast a calm analysis. Obviously, the two attitudes are antithetical, and at first the anger, if already a habit, is likely to brush all else aside. But with practice, all things can be achieved, and we can look at ourselves and say, "Who is it that is annoyed? What is the cause of this anger? Anger soon subsides and often is forgotten in the interest of discovering the cause. Afterwards, conscious of having avoided the probably foolish action that would have followed if anger had taken its course, we are glad that we observed such self-control.



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He who restrains an emerging anger pilots himself with perfect command.

222. *Yō vē uppatitaṁ kōdhaṁ*
rathaṁ bhantaṁ va dhārayē
tam'ahaṁ sārathiṁ brūmi
rasmiggāhō itarō janō. (17:2)

Who checks arising anger
as with chariot away,
that one I call a charioteer,
others merely grip the reins.

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THE EFFICIENT CHARIOTEER

17 (2) The Story of a Monk (Verse 222)

While residing at the Aggāḷava Stupa in the city of Ālavi, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk.

For after the Buddha had given permission to the congregation of monks to lodge outside the walls of the Monastery, and while the treasurer of Rājagaha and others were busy providing such lodgings, a certain monk of Ālavi decided to build himself a lodging, and seeing a tree which suited him, began to cut it down. Thereupon a certain spirit who had been reborn in that tree, and who had an infant child, appeared before the monk, carrying her child on her hips, and begged him not to cut down the tree, saying, "Master, do not cut down my home; it will be impossible for me to take my child and wander about without a home." But the monk said, "I shall not be able to find another tree like this," and paid no further attention to what she said. The tree-spirit thought to herself, "If he but look upon this child, he will desist," and placed the child on a branch of the tree. The monk, however, had already swung his axe, was unable to check the force of his upraised axe, and cut off the arm of the child. Furious with anger, the tree-spirit raised both her hands and exclaimed, "I will strike him dead." In an instant, however, the thought came to her, "This monk is a righteous man; if I kill him, I shall go to hell. Moreover, if other tree-spirits see monks cutting down their own trees, they will say to themselves, 'Such and such a tree-spirit killed a monk under such circumstances,' and will follow my example and kill other monks. Besides, this monk has a master; I will therefore content myself with reporting this matter to his master."

Lowering her upraised hands, she went weeping to the Buddha, and having saluted him, stood on one side. Said the Buddha, "What is the matter, tree-spirit?" The tree-spirit replied, "Venerable, your disciple did this and that to me. I was sorely tempted to kill him, but I thought this and that, refrained from killing him, and came here." So saying, she told him the story in all its details. When the Buddha heard her story, he said to her, "Well done, well done, spirit! You have done well in holding in, like a swift-speeding chariot, your anger when it was thus aroused."

At the conclusion of the lesson the tree-spirit was established in the fruit of conversion; the assembled company also profited by it. But even after the tree-spirit had obtained the fruit of conversion, she stood weeping. The Buddha asked her, "What is the matter, tree-spirit?" "Venerable," she replied, "my home has been destroyed; what am I to do now?" Said the Buddha, "Enough, tree-spirit; be not disturbed; I will give you a place of abode." With these words he pointed out near the perfumed chamber of Jētavana a certain tree from which a tree-spirit had departed on the preceding day and said, "In such and such a place is a tree which stands by itself; enter therein." Accordingly the tree-spirit entered that tree. Thenceforth, because the tree-spirit had received her place of abode as a gift from the Buddha, although spirits of great power approached that tree, they were unable to shake it. The Buddha took this occasion to lay down and enjoin upon the monks the observance of the precept regarding the injuring of plants and trees.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 222)

yō vē uppatitaṁ kōdhaṁ bhantaṁ rathaṁ iva
dhāraye taṁ ahaṁ sārathiṁ brūmi itarō janō rasmiggāhō

yō: if a person; *vē:* certainly; *uppatitaṁ kōdhaṁ:* arisen anger; *bhantaṁ rathaṁ iva:* like an uncontrolled chariot; *dhārayē:* restrains; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *sārathiṁ brūmi:* call a charioteer; *itarō janō:* the other (kind of charioteer); *rasmiggāhō:* is a mere reins-holder

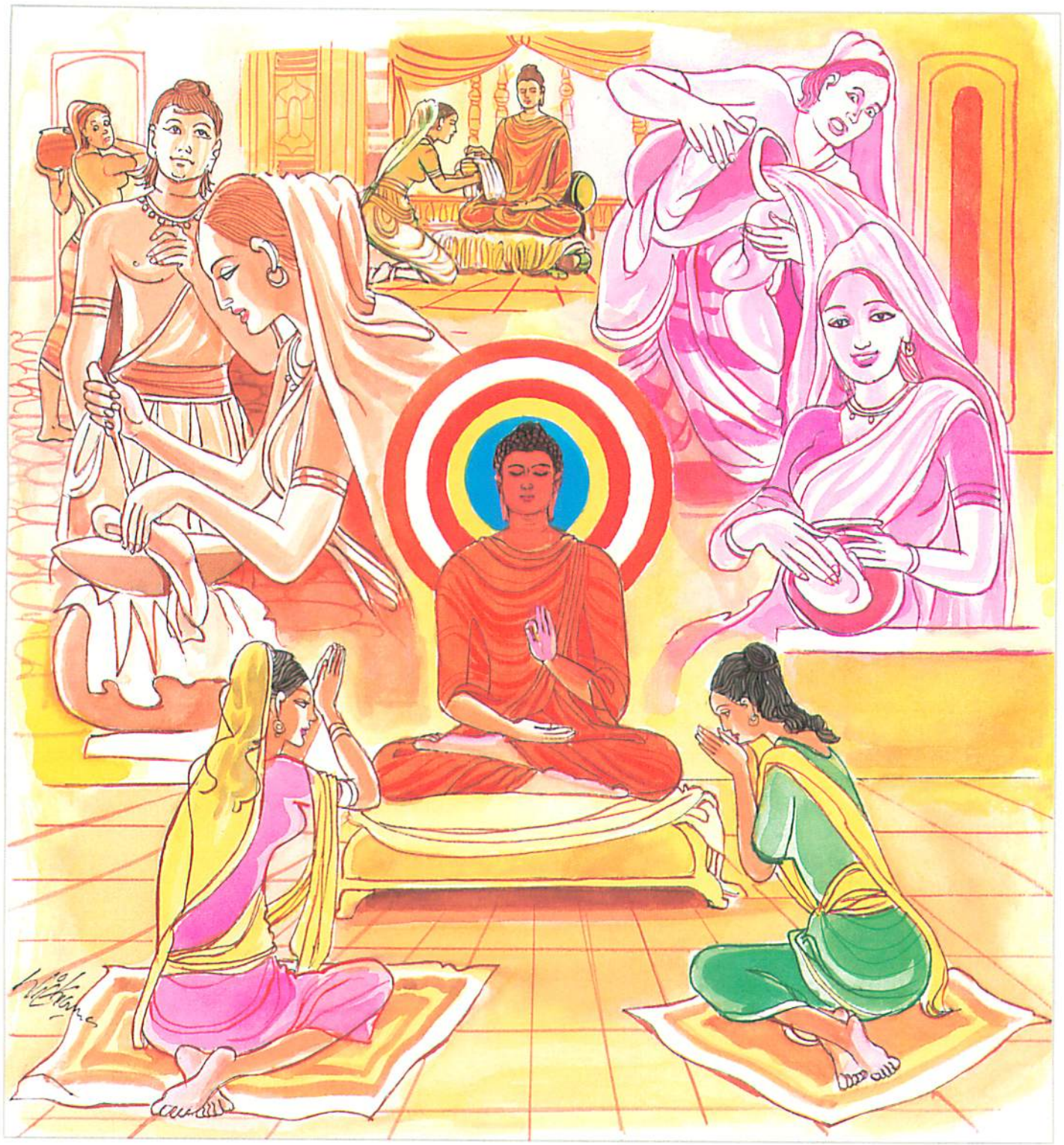
That person who is capable of curbing sudden anger is like the expert charioteer who restrains a chariot rushing out of control. That person I describe as a true charioteer. The other type of charioteer is a mere holder of the reins.

Commentary

uppatitaṁ kōdhaṁ: arisen anger. most men are prone to anger. Their tendency to become angry stems from a variety of sources. All men have suffered wrong treatment themselves, and all bear the scars. Many people have had their childhood marred and their characters warped. We are striving for health of mind ourselves from a similarly imperfect past. Health of mind will spread to others as readily as wrong thought. In any case, the Path can never be trodden to the goal until all such wrong attitudes of mind have been superseded, therefore, however often we fail, let us freely admit the failure and go on striving.

Certain creatures cannot see in the day time whilst some others are blind at night. But a man driven to great heights of hatred does not observe anything, either by day or night. Buddha says: "Conquer anger by love, evil by good, the miserly by generosity and the liar by truth." With whom and with what do you fight when you are angry. You fight with yourself, for you are the worst enemy of yourself. Mind is your best friend and worst foe. You must try to kill the passion of lust, hatred and ignorance that are latent in your mind by means of morality, concentration and wisdom.

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Conquer anger with love, evil with good, greed with charity and falsehood with truth.

223. *Akkōdhēna jinē kōdhaṁ*
asādhuṁ sādhunā jinē
jinē kadariyaṁ dānēna
saccēna alikavādinaṁ. (17:3)

Anger conquer by amity,
evil conquer with good,
by giving conquer the miserly,
with truth the speakers of falsity.

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FOUR FORMS OF VICTORIES

17 (3) The Story of Uttarā the Lay-Disciple (Verse 223)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Uttarā, a female lay-disciple.

Uttarā was the daughter of a farm labourer named Puñña and his wife. Puñña worked for a rich man named Sumana, in Rājagaha. One day, Puñña and his wife offered alms-food to Venerable Sāriputta soon after his arising from sustained deep mental absorption *(nirōdha samāpatti)*, and as a result of that good deed they suddenly became very rich. Puñña came upon gold in the field he was ploughing, and the king officially declared him a royal banker. On one occasion, the family of Puñña offered alms-food to the Buddha and the monks for seven days, and on the seventh day, after hearing the Buddha's discourse, all the three members of the family attained sōtāpatti fruition. Later, Uttarā, the daughter of Puñña, married the son of the rich man Sumana. That family being non-Buddhist, Uttarā did not feel happy in her husband's home. So, she told her father, "My father, why have you put me in this cage? Here, I do not see any monk and I have no chance to offer anything to any monk." Her father felt sorry for her and sent her fifteen thousand in cash. With this money, after getting permission from her husband, Uttarā engaged a courtesan to look to the needs of her husband. So it was arranged that Sirimā, a well-known and very beautiful courtesan, was to take her place as a wife for fifteen days.

During that time, Uttarā offered alms-food to the Buddha and the monks. On the fifteenth day, as she was busy preparing food in the kitchen, her husband saw her from the bedroom window and smiled, and then muttered to himself, "How foolish she is! She does not know how to enjoy herself. She is tiring herself out with this alms-giving ceremony!" Sirimā saw him smile, and forgetting that she was only a paid substitute wife felt very jealous of Uttarā. Being unable to control herself, Sirimā went into the kitchen and got a ladleful of boiling butter with the intention of pouring it over the head of Uttarā. Uttarā saw her coming, but she bore no ill will towards Sirimā. She reflected that because Sirimā had stood in for her, she had been able to listen to the dhamma, make offerings of alms-food for fifteen days, and perform other acts of charity. Thus she was quite thankful to Sirimā. Suddenly, she realized that Sirimā had come very close to her and was going to pour boiling-hot butter over her; so she made this asseveration: "If I bear any ill will towards Sirimā may this boiling-hot butter burn me; if I have no ill will towards her may it not burn me." The boiling-hot butter did not harm her a bit.

Sirimā then expressed her wish to see the Buddha. So it was arranged that Sirimā should offer alms-food to the Buddha and the monks on the following day at the house of Uttarā. After the meal, the Buddha was told everything that had happened between Sirimā and Uttarā. Sirimā then owned up that she had done wrong to Uttarā and entreated the Buddha that she should be forgiven, for otherwise Uttarā would not forgive her. The Buddha then asked Uttarā how she felt in her mind when Sirimā poured boiling butter on her head, and Uttarā answered, "Venerable, because I owed so much to Sirimā I had resolved not to lose my temper, not to bear any ill will towards her. I sent forth my love towards her." The Buddha then said, "Well done, well done, Uttarā! By not bearing any ill will you have been able to conquer one who has done you wrong through hate. By not abusing, you should conquer one who is a miser; by speaking the truth you should conquer one who tells lies."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 223)

kōdhaṁ akkōdhēna jinē asādhuṁ sādhunā jinē
kadariyaṁ dānēna alikavādinaṁ saccēna jinē

kōdhaṁ: the angry person; *akkōdhēna:* with non-anger; *jinē:* conquer; *asādhuṁ:* unvirtuous person; *sādhunā:* with goodness; *jinē:* conquer; *kadariyaṁ:* the miserly; *dānēna:* through charity (conquer); *alikavādinaṁ:* the liar; *saccēna:* by truth; *jinē:* conquer

Let anger be conquered by non-anger. Let bad ones be conquered by good. Let miserliness be overcome by charity. Let the liar be conquered by the truth.

Commentary

nirōdha samāpatti: attainment of the quiescence of cessation. Puñña became exceedingly rich according to this story because he offered alms to Venerable Sāriputta immediately after he arose from *nirōdha samāpatti* (also described as deep mental rest). cessation of feeling and perception *(saññā vēdayita nirōdha)* is the temporary suspension of all consciousness and mental activity.

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In speech be true, feel no anger. Give even out of a little when asked. This is the godly way.

224. *Saccaṁ bhaṇē na kujjheyya*
dajjāppasmiṁ'pi yācitō
ētēhi tīhi ṭhānēhi
gacchē dēvāna santikē. (17:4)

Speak truth and be not angry,
from little give to one who asks,
by these conditions three to go
unto the presence of the gods.

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THREE FACTORS LEADING TO HEAVEN

17 (4) The Story of the Question Raised by Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verse 224)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the question raised by Venerable Mahā Moggallāna.

Once, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna visited the dēva world and found many dēvas living in luxurious mansions. He asked them for what good deed they were reborn in the dēva world and they gave him different answers. One of them was reborn in the dēva world not because he gave away much wealth in charity or because he had listened to the Dhamma, but just because he always spoke the truth. The second one was a female dēva who was reborn in the dēva world because she did not get angry with her master and had no ill will towards him even though he often beat her and abused her. For keeping her temper and abandoning hatred she was reborn in the dēva world. Then, there were others who were reborn in the dēva world because they had offered little things like a stick of sugar cane, a fruit, or some vegetables to a monk or to someone else.

On his return from the dēva world, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna asked the Buddha whether it was possible to gain such great benefits by just speaking the truth, or by restraining one's actions, or by giving small amounts of such trifling things like fruits and vegetables. To him the Buddha answered, "My son, why do you ask? Have you not seen for yourself and heard what the dēvas said? Have you not seen for yourself and heard what the dēvas said? You should not have any doubt. Little deeds of merit surely lead one to the world of the dēvas."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 224)

saccaṁ bhaṇē na kujjheyya yācitō āppasmiṁ api
dajjā ētēhi tīhi ṭhānēhi dēvanaṁ santikē gacchē

saccaṁ: the truth; *bhaṇē:* speak; *na kujjheyya:* do not get angry; *yācitō:* when asked; *āppasmiṁ api:* even a little; *dajjā:* give; *ētēhi:* in these; *tīhi ṭhānēhi:* three factors; *dēvānaṁ santikē:* to the presence of gods; *gacchē:* reach

Speak the truth. Do not get angry. When asked, give even a modicum. These three factors will ensure that you will reach the deities.

Commentary

na kujjheyya: do not get angry. *Krōdha* (anger) is the harshness that arises in some minds. The feeling of anger tends to fluctuate, especially as it escalates through a variety of stages. The process of de-stabilization of a human being, that comes about with the onset of anger, escalates from an initial disturbance of mind until it climaxes in the disastrous use of weapons. This kind of anger may, at times, end with loss of life — either one's own or someone else's

The traditional commentary has this to say about the ways of anger:

Kōdhanō dubbannōhōti — athō dukkhampi sēti sō
athō attham gahētāvna — anattham adhigacchati.

(The person given to anger will suffer less of complexion, how well he eats or drinks. Though he sits down and lies down in luxury, he is full of misery. He slides into deterioration, while looking on at profitable, wholesome things.)

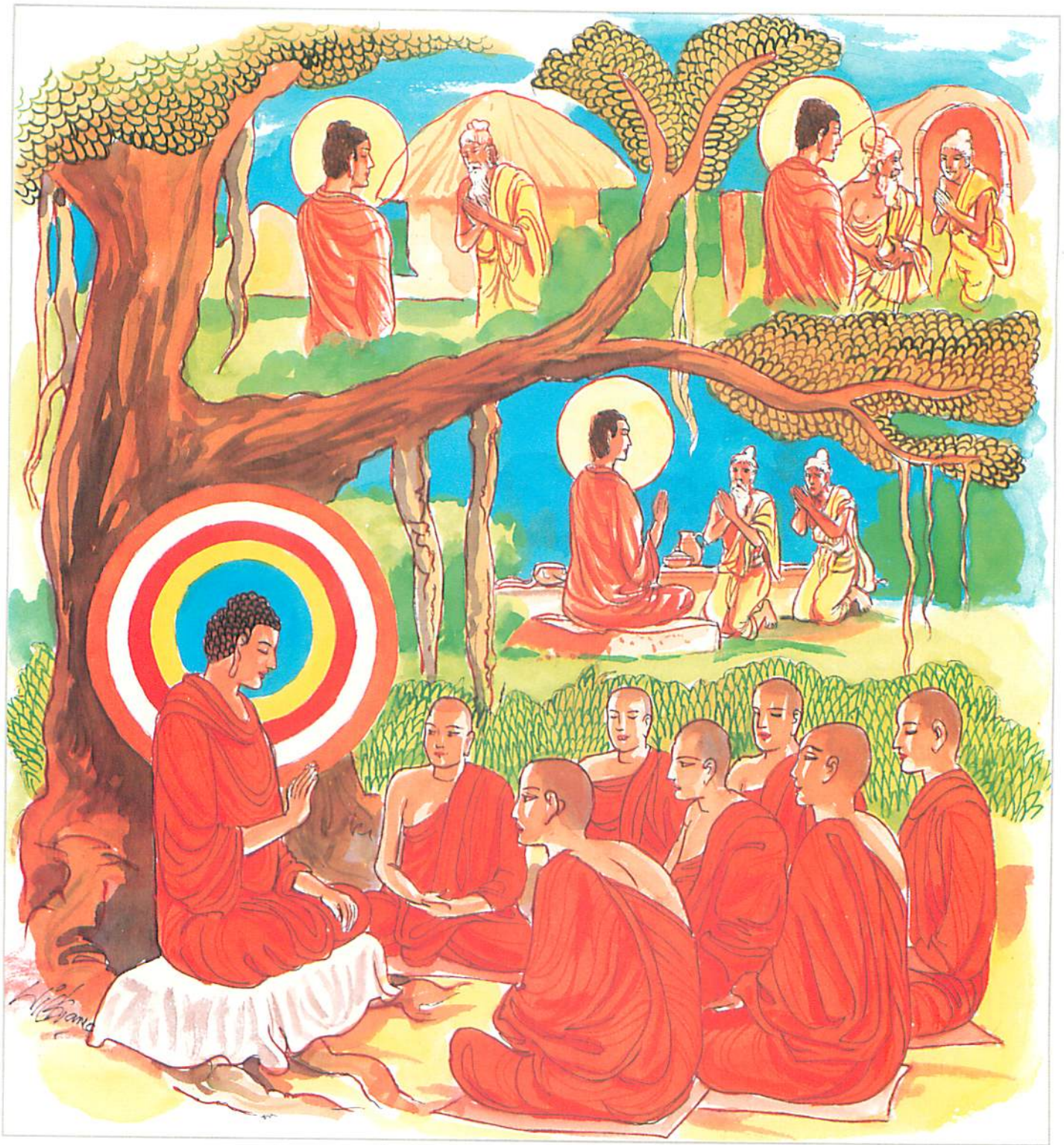
Tatō kāyēna vācāya — vadham katvāna kōdhanō
kodhābhibhūtō purisō — dhanajānim nigacchūti.

(The person who is caught in the grip of anger will destroy life physically, verbally and mentally. In the end, he will suffer erosion of wealth, destroying life.)

Dummankuyaṁsa dassētā — dhūmaggiviya pāvakō
Yatō patāyati kōdhō — yēna kujjhanti mānavā.

(Once angered his face is deformed like a smouldering fire. Whatever the cause of anger, once angered men and women are shameless. The words they utter are incoherent and meaningless. A person in anger is totally helpless.)

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With constant restraint in body and harmless, to deathless Nibbāna's grieflessness they go.

225. *Ahiṁsakā yē munayō*
niccaṁ kāyēna saṁvutā
tē yanti accutaṁ ṭhānaṁ
yattha gantvā na sōcarē. (17:5)

Those sages inoffensive
in body e'er restrained
go unto the Deathless State
where gone they grieve no more.

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THOSE HARMLESS ONES REACH THE DEATHLESS

17 (5) The Story of the Brahmin who had been the 'Father of the Buddha' (Verse 225)

While residing at the Anjana Wood, near Sākēta, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brāhmin, who claimed that the Buddha was his son. Once, the Buddha accompanied by some monks entered the town of Sakēta for alms-food. The old brāhmin, seeing the Buddha, went to him and said, "O son, why have you not allowed us to see you all this long time? Come with me and let your mother also see you." So saying, he invited the Buddha to his house. On reaching the house, the wife of the brāhmin said the same things to the Buddha and introduced the Buddha as "Your big brother" to her children, and made them pay obeisance to him. From that day, the couple offered alms-food to the Buddha every day, and having heard the religious discourses, both the brāhmin and his wife attained *anāgāmi* fruition in due course. The monks were puzzled why the brāhmin couple said the Buddha was their son; so they asked the Buddha. The Buddha then replied, "Monks, they called me son because I was a son or a nephew to each of them for one thousand five hundred existences in the past." The Buddha continued to stay there, near the brāhmin couple, for three more months and during that time, both the brāhmin and his wife attained arahatship, and then realized parinibbāna. The monks, now knowing that the brāhmin couple had already become arahats, asked the Buddha where they were reborn. To them the Buddha answered: "Those who have become arahats are not reborn anywhere; they have realized Nibbāna."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 225)

yē munayō ahiṁsakā niccaṁ kāyēna saṁvutā tē
yattha gantvā na sōcarē accutaṁ ṭhānaṁ yanti

yē munayō: those sages; *ahiṁsakā:* (are) harmless; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *kāyēna saṁvutā:* restrained in body; *tē:* they; *yattha:* to some place; *gantvā:* gone; *na sōcarē:* do not grieve; *accutaṁ ṭhānaṁ:* that deathless place; *yanti:* reach

Those harmless sages, perpetually restrained in body, reach the place of deathlessness, where they do not grieve.

Commentary

accutam ṭhānām: the unchanging place. This is yet another definition of Nibbāna — the deathless. Every thing changes, but this rule does not apply to Nibbāna. In contra-distinction to *samsāra*, the phenomenal existence, Nibbāna is eternal *(dhuva)*, desirable *(subha)*, and happy *(sukha)*.

According to Buddhism all things, mundane and supramundane, are classified into two divisions, namely, those conditioned by causes *(samkhata)* and those not conditioned by any cause *(asamkhata)*. "These three are the features of all conditioned things *(samkhatalakkhanāni)*:- arising *(uppāda)*, cessation *(vaya)*, and change of state *(thitassa aññathattam)*." Arising or becoming is an essential characteristic of everything that is conditioned by a cause or causes. That which arises or becomes is subject to change and dissolution. Every conditioned thing is constantly becoming and is perpetually changing. The universal law of change applies to everything in the cosmos — both mental and physical — ranging from the minutest germ or tiniest particle to the highest being or the most massive object. Mind, though imperceptible, changes faster even than matter.

Nibbāna, a supramundane state, realized by Buddhas and arahats, is declared to be not conditioned by any cause. Hence it is not subject to any becoming, change and dissolution. It is birthless *(ajāta)*, decayless *(ajara)*, and deathless *(amara)*. Strictly speaking, Nibbāna is neither a cause nor an effect. Hence it is unique *(kēvala)*. Everything that has sprung from a cause must inevitably pass away, and as such, is undesirable *(asubha)*.

Life is man's dearest possession, but when he is confronted with insuperable difficulties and unbearable burdens, then that very life becomes an intolerable burden. Sometimes, he tries to seek relief by putting an end to his life as if suicide would solve all his individual problems. Bodies are adorned and adored. But those charming, adorable and enticing forms, when disfigured by time and disease, become extremely repulsive. Men desire to live peacefully and happily with their near ones, surrounded by amusements and pleasures, but, if by some misfortune, the wicked world runs counter to their ambitions and desires, the inevitable sorrow is then almost indescribably sharp.

The following beautiful parable aptly illustrates the fleeting nature of life and its alluring pleasures. A man was forcing his way through a thick forest beset with thorns and stones. Suddenly, to his great consternation, an elephant appeared and gave chase. He took to his heels through fear, and, seeing a well, he ran to hide in it. But to his horror, he saw a viper at the bottom of the well. However, lacking other means of escape, he jumped into the well, and clung to a thorny creeper that was growing in it. Looking up, he saw two mice, a white one and a black one, gnawing at the creeper. Over his face there was a beehive from which occasional drops of honey trickled. This man, foolishly unmindful of this precarious position, was greedily tasting the honey. A kind person volunteered to show him a path of escape. But the greedy man begged to be excused till he had enjoyed himself.

The thorny path is *samsāra*, the ocean of life. It is beset with difficulties and obstacles to overcome, with opposition and unjust criticism, with attacks and insults to be borne. Such is the thorny path of life. The elephant here resembles death; the viper, old age; the creeper, birth; the two mice, night and day. The drops of honey correspond to the fleeting sensual pleasures. The man represents the so-called being. The kind person represents the Buddha. The temporary material happiness is merely the gratification of some desire. When the desired thing is gained, another desire arises. Insatiate are all desires. Sorrow is essential to life, and cannot be evaded. Nibbāna, being non-conditioned, is eternal, *(dhuva)*, desirable *(subha)*, and happy *(sukha)*. The happiness of Nibbāna should be differentiated from ordinary worldly happiness. Nibbāna bliss grows neither stale nor monotonous. It is a form of happiness that never wearies, never fluctuates. It arises by allaying passions *(vūpasama)* unlike that temporary worldly happiness which results from the gratification of some desire *(vēdayita)*.

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For ever vigilant, seeking training day and night, Nibbāna-seekers are freed of defiling traits.

226. *Sadā jāgaramānānaṁ*
ahōrattānusikkhinaṁ
nibbāṇaṁ adhimuttānaṁ
atthaṁ gacchanti āsavā. (17:6)

For the ever-vigilant
who train by day and night
upon Nibbāna e'er intent
pollutions fade away.

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YEARNING FOR NIBBĀNA

17 (6) The Story of Puṇṇā the Slave Girl (Verse 226)

While residing at the Gijjhakūta Mountain, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a slave girl in Rājagaha.

The story goes that one day they gave her much rice to pound. She pounded away until late at night, lighting a lamp to work by; finally, she became very weary and, in order to rest herself, stepped outside and stood in the wind with her body moist with sweat. Now at that time Dabba the Malla was steward of lodgings for the monks. Having listened to the Dhamma, that he might show the monks the way to their respective lodgings, he lighted his finger, and preceding the monks, created by supernatural power a light for them. The light enabled Puṇṇā to see the monks making their way along the mountain. She thought to herself, "As for me, I am oppressed by my own discomfort, and so, even at this time, am unable to sleep. Why is it that the reverend monks are unable to sleep?" Having considered the matter, she came to the following conclusion, "It must be that some monk who resides there is sick, or else is suffering from the bite of some reptile." So when it was dawn, she took some rice-dust, placed it in the palm of her hand, moistened it with water, and having thus mixed a cake, cooked it over a bed of charcoal. Then, saying to herself, "I will eat it on the road leading to the bathing-place on the river," she placed the cake in a fold of her dress, and taking a water-pot in her hand, set out for the bathing-place on the river.

The Buddha set out on the same path, intending likewise to enter that village for alms. When Puṇṇā saw the Buddha, she thought to herself, "On other days when I have seen the Buddha, I have had no alms to give him, or if I have had alms to give him, I have not seen him; today, however, not only do I meet the Buddha face to face, but I have alms to give him. If he would accept this cake without considering whether the food is of inferior or superior quality, I would give it to him." So setting her water-pot down on one side, she saluted the Buddha and said to him, "Venerable, accept this coarse food and bestow your blessing upon me." The Buddha looked at Venerable Ānanda, whereupon the Venerable drew from under a fold of his robe and presented to the Buddha a bowl which was an offering to the Buddha from a great king. The Buddha held out the bowl and received therein the offering of the cake. When Puṇṇā had placed the cake in the Buddha's bowl, she saluted him with the five rests and said to him, "Venerable, may the truth which you have beheld be of avail also to me." The Buddha replied, "So be it." Thought the Buddha to himself, "What was the thought in the mind of this woman?" Perceiving what was in her mind, the Buddha looked at Venerable Ānanda and intimated that he wished to sit down. The Venerable spread out a robe and offered the Buddha a seat. The Buddha sat down and ate his breakfast. When the Buddha had finished his breakfast, he addressed Puṇṇā and said, "Puṇṇā, why have you blamed my disciples?" "I do not blame your disciples, Venerable." "Then what did you say when you saw my disciples?" "Venerable, the explanation is very simple. I thought to myself, 'As for me I am oppressed by my own discomfort, and so am unable to sleep; why is it that the Venerables are unable to sleep? It must be that some monk who resides there is sick, or else is suffering from the bite of some reptile.'" The Buddha listened to her words and then said to her, "Puṇṇā, in your own case it is because you are afflicted with discomfort that you are unable to sleep. But my disciples are assiduously watchful and therefore sleep not."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 226)

sadā jāgaramānānaṁ ahōrattaṁ anusikkhinaṁ
nibbāṇaṁ adhimuttānaṁ āsavā atthaṁ gacchanti

sadā: always; *jāgaramānānaṁ:* wakeful; *ahōrattaṁ:* day and night; *anusikkhinaṁ:* given to discipline; *nibbāṇaṁ adhimuttānaṁ:* bent on nibbana; *āsavā:* (of that person) taints; *atthaṁ gacchanti:* get extinguished

Of those who are perpetually wakeful — alert, mindful and vigilant — who are given to disciplining themselves and studying day and night, intent upon the attainment of Nibbāna, the taints and cankers get extinguished.

Commentary

āsavā: taints; blemishes. Striving for enlightenment, the Buddha understood the *āsavās*; their arising and their cessation. With that knowledge his mind was liberated from the *āsavas* (taints): of *kāmāsava* (sense-pleasures); of *bhavāsava* (becoming); and of *avijjāsava* (ignorance). In this way he was liberated.

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There never was and will never be one who is totally blamed or praised.

228. *Na cāhu naca bhavissati*
na cētarahi vijjati
ēkantaṁ ninditō pōsō
ēkantaṁ vā pasaṁsitō. (17:8)

There never was, there'll never be
nor now is ever found
a person blamed perpetually
or one who's wholly praised.

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NO ONE IS EXCLUSIVELY BLAMED OR PRAISED

17 (7) The Story of Atula the Lay Disciple (Verses 227 – 230) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 228)

ēkantaṁ ninditō pōsō vā ēkantaṁ pasaṁsitō na cā āhu na ca bhavissati ētarahi ca na vijjati

ēkantaṁ: exclusively; *ninditō pōsō:* blamed persons; *vā:* or; *ēkantaṁ pasaṁsitō:* exclusively praised ones; *na ca āhu:* there never were; *na ca bhavissati:* there will never be; *ētarahi ca:* even today; *na vijjati:* (such) are not seen

There was never a person who was wholly, totally and exclusively blamed. Nor was there any time a person who was wholly, totally and exclusively praised. And, there never will be such persons. Even today one cannot find such a person.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 229)

cē viññū acchiddavuttiṁ mēdhāviṁ paññā sīlasamāhitaṁ yaṁ anuvicca suvē suvē pasaṁsanti

cē: therefore; *viññū:* the wise person; *acchiddavuttiṁ:* of faultless conduct; *mēdhāviṁ:* intelligent; *paññā sīlasamāhitaṁ:* possessed of wisdom of restraint; *yaṁ:* who; *anuvicca:* after enquiry; *suvē suvē:* day by day; *pasaṁsanti:* is praised

But those whom the wise praise, after a daily scrutiny, are persons whose conduct is blameless, who are intelligent, well endowed with insight and discipline.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 230)

taṁ jambonadassa nēkkhaṁ iva kō ninditum arahati taṁ dēva api pasaṁsanti Brāhmuṇā api pasaṁsitō

taṁ: him; *jambōnadassa nēkkhaṁ iva:* like a coin of pure gold; *ninditum:* to blame; *kō:* who; *arahati:* is capable? *taṁ:* him; *dēva api:* even gods; *pasaṁsanti:* praise; *Brāhmuṇā api:* even by Brāhma; *pasaṁsitō:* is praised

A person of that distinction is beyond blame and fault finding — like a coin of pure gold — no one can find fault with such a person. Deities praise him.

(cont'd on page 491)

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With scrutiny, the wise praise those of flawless character endowed with virtue and wisdom.

229. *Yaṅ'cē viññū pasaṁsanti*
anuvicca suvē suvē
acchiddavuttiṁ mēdhāviṁ
paññāsīlasamāhitaṁ. (17:9)

But those who are intelligent
praise one of flawless conduct, sage,
in wisdom and virtue well-composed,
having observed him day by day.

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NO ONE IS EXCLUSIVELY BLAMED OR PRAISED

17 (7) The Story of Atula the Lay Disciple (Verses 227 – 230) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 228)

ēkantaṁ ninditō pōsō vā ēkantaṁ pasaṁsitō na cā āhu na ca bhavissati ētarahi ca na vijjati

ēkantaṁ: exclusively; *ninditō pōsō:* blamed persons; *vā:* or; *ēkantaṁ pasaṁsitō:* exclusively praised ones; *na ca āhu:* there never were; *na ca bhavissati:* there will never be; *ētarahi ca:* even today; *na vijjati:* (such) are not seen

There was never a person who was wholly, totally and exclusively blamed. Nor was there any time a person who was wholly, totally and exclusively praised. And, there never will be such persons. Even today one cannot find such a person.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 229)

cē viññū acchiddavuttiṁ mēdhāviṁ paññā sīlasamāhitaṁ yaṁ anuvicca suvē suvē pasamsanti

cē: therefore; *viññū:* the wise person; *acchiddavuttiṁ:* of faultless conduct; *mēdhāviṁ:* intelligent; *paññā sīlasamāhitaṁ:* possessed of wisdom of restraint; *yaṁ:* who; *anuvicca:* after enquiry; *suvē suvē:* day by day; *pasamsanti:* is praised

But those whom the wise praise, after a daily scrutiny, are persons whose conduct is blameless, who are intelligent, well endowed with insight and discipline.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 230)

taṁ jambonadassa nēkkhaṁ iva kō ninditum arahati taṁ dēva api pasaṁsanti Brāhmuṇā api pasaṁsitō

taṁ: him; *jambōnadassa nēkkhaṁ iva:* like a coin of pure gold; *ninditum:* to blame; *kō:* who; *arahati:* is capable? *taṁ:* him; *dēva api:* even gods; *pasaṁsanti:* praise; *Brāhmuṇā api:* even by Brāhma; *pasaṁsitō:* is praised

A person of that distinction is beyond blame and fault finding — like a coin of pure gold — no one can find fault with such a person. Deities praise him.

(cont'd on page 491)

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With scrutiny, the wise praise those of flawless character endowed with virtue and wisdom.

229. *Yañ'cē viññū pasaṁsanti*
anuvicca suvē suvē
acchiddavuttiṁ mēdhāviṁ
paññāsīlasamāhitaṁ. (17:9)

But those who are intelligent
praise one of flawless conduct, sage,
in wisdom and virtue well-composed,
having observed him day by day.

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PERSON WHO IS ALWAYS PRAISE-WORTHY

17 (7) The Story of Atula the Lay Disciple (Verses 227 – 230) (cont'd)

Commentary

The Buddha's Routine: In the course of His long mission, the Buddha followed a routine with the intention of looking after the spiritual welfare of the many in the most supreme manner possible. He met a variety of persons such as kings, ministers, men of business, traders and men and women who could be described as ordinary. He expounded the Dhamma according to the need and the capacity of those persons he met, as in the instance of Atula in these verses. How he spent his days is recounted in Buddhist literature at some length.

During the first twenty years of His ministry, the Buddha spent the rainy seasons at the following places:

1st — Isipatana in Benāres;

2nd — Vēluvana in Rājagaha;

3rd — Vēluvana in Rājagaha;

4th — Vēluvana in Rājagaha;

5th — Mahāvana in Vēsali, at the Great Hall;

6th — Mankula Pabbata;

7th — Tāvatimsa heaven;

8th — Bhēsakāla Vana near Sumsumāra Giri in Bhagga District;

9th — kōsambi;

10th — Pārileyyaka forest;

11th — Nāla, a brāhmin village;

12th — Vēranjā;

13th — Cāliya Pabbata;

14th — Jētavana in Sāvatthi;

15th — Kapilavatthu;

16th — Ālavi;

17th — Rājagaha;

18th — Cāliya Pabbata;

19th — Cāliya Pabbata;

20th — Rājagaha.

From the twenty-first year of His ministry, the Buddha spent the rainy seasons *(vassa)* until His last year at the Jētavana Monastery and the Pubbārāma Monastery in Savātthi due to the great virtues of Anathāpindika and Visākhā, the respective donors of the two places. The last year was spent at Vēsāli.

When the Buddha spent the night at Jētavana the next morning He would, in the company of the fraternity of monks, enter the city of Savātthi from the southern gate for the alms-round and depart from the eastern gate. Then He would enter the Pubbārāma to spend the day. When the night is spent at the Pubbārāma, the Buddha would next morning enter the city through the eastern gate for His alms-round and depart from the southern gate to spend the day at the Jētavana Monastery.

As for the Buddha, He had no fruitless pursuit, for, such fruitless pursuits, if any, were over with the attainment of enlightenment at the foot of the Bōdhi-tree. So the day was divided by the Buddha into five parts for His activities, namely, the morning, the afternoon, the first watch of the night, the second watch of the night, and the last watch of the night.

The Buddha rose early in the morning and attended to His bodily needs, such as washing the face. He waited in retirement until the time to go on the alms-round and when it is the time to go out, He would put on the robes and the belt, and taking the bowl, would set out from the monastery to a village or a suburb. Sometimes, the Buddha went alone, and sometimes He was accompanied by monks. Some days, the journey was ordinary.

Thus, in front of the Buddha there were fragrant breezes and clouds come down as mist to stop the rising of dust, and sometimes to form canopies. The road was strewn with flowers by the winds. Elevations and depressions of the road were levelled up for the comfort of the feet of the Buddha.

(cont'd on page 493)



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Even dēvas and Brāhma praise one of such sterling qualities. None could ever censure him.

230. *Nēkkhaṁ jambōnadass'ēva*
kō taṁ ninditum arahati
dēvā pi taṁ pasaṁsanti
Brāhmuṇā'pi pasaṁsitō. (17:10)

Who's to blame that one so fine
as gem from Jambu stream?
Even the dēvas that one praise,
by Brāhma too is praised.

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PERSON WHO IS LIKE SOLID GOLD

17 (7) The Story of Atula the Lay Disciple (Verses 227 – 230) (cont'd)

Commentary

As the Buddha sets his right foot on the city, six rays that emanated from His body that would pervade through the city illuminating the mansions and other buildings. Elephants, horses, and birds sent forth sweet sounds. Melodious notes issue forth from musical instruments such as drums and flutes, and from the ornaments of the people.

By those signs the people come to know of the arrival of the Buddha, and they dressed themselves well, and came out on to the streets from their houses with flowers and perfumes in hand. They gave their respect to the Buddha and ask for a certain number of monks, such as ten, twenty or a hundred to be treated. They take the bowl of the Buddha and conduct Him to a seat and offer alms.

After the meal, the Buddha preached to them the doctrine according to the respective states of mind of the people. Some of them took refuge in the Triple Gem; some people observed the Five Precepts; and others reach the different higher paths. Some entered the Sangha and attained sanctification. Then the Buddha went back to the monastery and sat on the seat prepared for Him. Until the monks finish taking their meals, the Buddha waited in the perfumed chamber. This is His daily routine for the morning.

After entering the perfumed chamber, the Buddha would wash His feet, and standing on the stage at the gem-set staircase, would admonish the monks thus: "Monks, provide for your salvation earnestly. Rare is the birth of a Buddha in this world; rare is the birth as a human being; rare is the birth as an accomplished man; rare is ordination; and rare is the opportunity to learn the doctrine."

Some monks asked for meditation topics. The Buddha gives them subjects according to their character. All the monks saluted the Buddha and proceeded to their respective places of stay for the day and for the night. Some went to the forest. Some went to the feet of trees. Some went to mountains, and there are some who went to dēva worlds.

The Buddha remained in the perfumed chamber, and if He wishes, He would like down for a while on His right side in the pose of a lion, conscious and mindful. After the body is relaxed, He would get up and survey the world. The people who offered alms in the morning would fit themselves neatly, and come to the monastery with flowers and perfumes. The Buddha would go to the preaching hall and preach discourse to suit the time and the occasion. After the discourse was over, the audience would salute the Buddha and depart. Thus the Buddha's afternoon.

When the teaching in the afternoon was over, if the Buddha wished to bathe, He would enter the bath room, and wash His body with water supplied by an attendant. Then the attendant prepared the seat of the Buddha in His study in the perfumed chamber. The Buddha dressed Himself in a red robe, and occupied the seat. There, He remained in silence for a moment, before the monks come to Him with their problems. Some of them asked questions; some asked for meditation topics; some wished to hear a discourse, and the Buddha would comply with their requests. Thus was spent the first watch of the night.

After the monks took leave of the Buddha, in the middle watch of the night, the deities of the universes came to the Buddha and asked questions according to their needs, with some asking even questions of four lines. The Buddha spent the middle watch of the night answering their questions and solving their riddles.

The last watch of the night is divided into three. In the first part, the Buddha relaxed by walking up and down. In the second part, He laid down in the perfumed chamber, conscious and mindful in the pose of a lion. In the last part of the last watch of the night the Buddha would sit up and surveyed the world with the awakened eye to see the individuals who had accomplished meritorious acts such as morality and charity during the times of the earlier Buddhas.

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Shun misconduct indeed. Live a life of perfect bodily conduct.

231. *Kāyappakōpaṁ rakkheyya*
kāyēna saṁvutō siyā
kāyaduccaritaṁ hitvā
kāyēna sucaritaṁ carē. (17:11)

Rough action one should guard against,
be with the body well-restrained,
bad bodily conduct having shed
train oneself in good.

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THE PERSON OF BODILY DISCIPLINE

17 (8) The Story of A Group of Six Monks (Verses 231 – 234)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a group of six monks.

For one day the monks of a band of six monks put wooden shoes on their feet, and taking staves of wood in their two hands, walked up and down on the surface of a flat rock. The Buddha hearing the clatter, asked Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, what is that noise?" The Venerable replied, "A band of six monks are walking about in wooden shoes; they are making the clatter you hear." When the Buddha heard this, he promulgated the following precept, "A monk should control his deeds, his words, and his thoughts."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 231)

kāyappakōpaṁ rakkheyya, kāyēna saṁvutō siyā,
kāya duccaritaṁ hitvā kāyēna sucaritaṁ carē.

kāyappakōpaṁ: excitement of body; *rakkheyya:* guard one's self; *kāyēna saṁvutō siyā:* be disciplined in body; *kāya duccaritaṁ:* bodily misconduct; *hitvā:* having given up; *kāyēna:* with the body; *sucaritaṁ carē.:* behave virtuously

Guard against the physical expression of emotions. Be restrained in physical behaviour. Give up physical misconduct. Practice wholesome physical behaviour.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 232)

vacīpakōpaṁ rakkheyya vācāya saṁvutō siyā
vacīduccaritaṁ hitvā vācāya sucaritaṁ carē

vacīpakōpaṁ: excitement of speech; *rakkheyya:* guard one's self; *vācāya saṁvutō siyā:* be disciplined in speech; *vacīduccaritaṁ:* misconduct in speech; *hitvā:* having given up; *vācāya:* with your speech; *sucaritaṁ carē:* behave virtuously

Guard against the verbal expression of emotions. Be restrained in your speech behaviour. Give up speech misconduct. Practise wholesome speech behaviour.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 233)

manōpakōpaṁ rakkheyya, manasā saṁvutō siyā,
manōduccaritaṁ hitvā manasā sucaritaṁ carē

manōpakōpaṁ: excitement of mind; *rakkheyya:* guard one's self; *manasā saṁvutō siyā:* be disciplined in mind; *manōduccaritaṁ:* misconduct of mind; *hitvā:* having given up; *manasā:* with mind; *sucaritaṁ carē:* practise good behaviour

Guard against the mental expression of emotions. Be restrained in the behaviour of your mind. Give up mental misconduct. Practise wholesome mental behaviour.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 234)

dhīrā kāyēna saṁvutā athō vācāya saṁvutā
manasā saṁvutā te dhīrā vē suparisaṁvutā

dhīrā: those wise beings; *kāyēna:* in body; *saṁvutā:* are disciplined; *athō:* again; *vācāya:* in speech; *saṁvutā:* are restrained; *manasā:* in mind; *saṁvutā:* are disciplined; *tē dhīrā:* those wise beings; *vē:* certainly; *suparisaṁvutā:* perfectly restrained

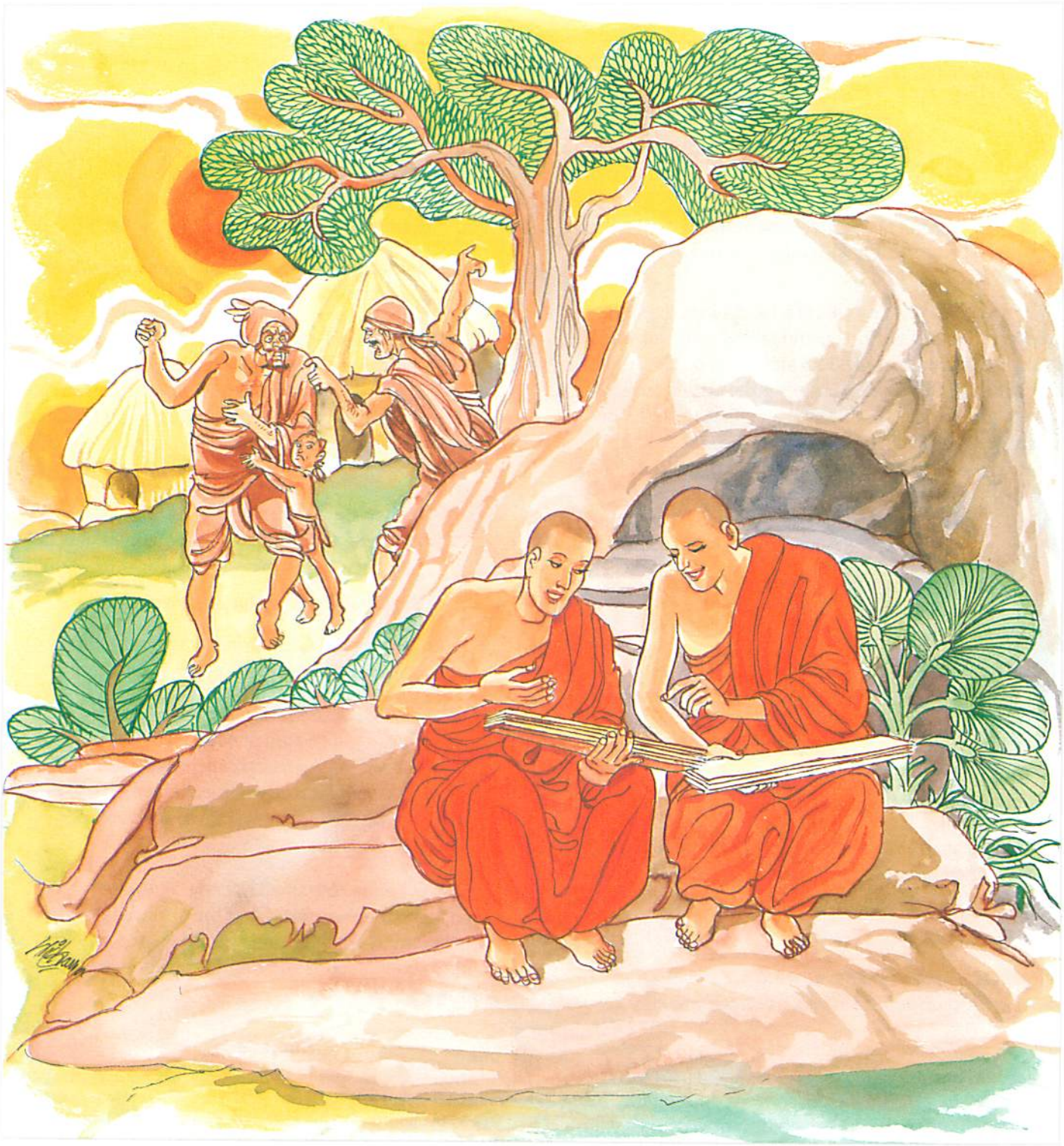
The wise are restrained in body. They are restrained in speech as well. They are also well disciplined in mind. They, who have safe-guarded the three doors — body, speech and mind — are supremely restrained.

Commentary

kāyappakōpam vacīpakōpam manōpakōpam rakkheyya: guard against misdeed of body, speech, and mind. These stanzas were spoken by the Buddha to admonish a group of six monks whose behaviour was not in keeping with the discipline of monks. The Buddha asked them to guard themselves against misdeeds. The Buddhist system lays down strict rules to ensure that the monks restrain themselves duly. If the monks are to attain the higher stages of spiritual progress regulated behaviour is essential.
These elementary principles of regulated behaviour are essential to one who treads the path to Nibbāna, chiefly because they tend to control both deeds and words. Violation of them introduces obstacles that hinder his moral progress on the path. Observance of them means smooth and steady progress along the path.

(cont'd on page 497)

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Shun misconduct in speech. Live a life of perfect restraint in speech.

232. *Vacīpakōpaṁ rakkheyya*
vācāya saṁvutō siyā
vacīduccaritaṁ hitvā
vācāya sucaritaṁ carē. (17:12)

Rough speaking one should guard against,
be in speaking well-restrained,
bad verbal conduct having shed
train oneself in good.

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VIRTUOUS VERBAL BEHAVIOUR

17 (8) The Story of A Group of Six Monks (Verses 231 – 234) (cont'd)

Commentary

Having progressed a step further in his gradual advance, the aspirant now tries to control his senses. To control craving for food and to promote meaning of mind and body, and fasting a day in the month is advisable. Simple living is preferable to a luxurious life which makes one a slave to passions. A life of celibacy is recommended, as one's valuable energy thus conserved could then be utilised wholly for the intellectual and moral welfare of oneself and others. In such a life one is detached from additional worldly bonds that impeded moral progress. Almost all spiritual teachers, it would appear, have nourished their bodies sparingly and have led a life of strict celibacy, simplicity, voluntary poverty, and self-control.
While he progress slowly and steadily, with regulated word and deed and sense-restraint, the kammic force of the striving aspirant compels him to renounce worldly pleasures and adopt the ascetic life. To him then comes the idea that:

> A den of strife is household life,
> And filled with toil and need,
> But free and high as the open sky
> Is the life the homeless lead.

Thus realizing the vanity of sensual pleasures, he voluntarily forsakes all earthly possessions, and donning the ascetic garb tries to lead a sagely life.
It is not, however, the external appearance that makes a man holy but internal purification and an exemplary life. Transformation should come from within, not from without. It is not absolutely necessary to retire to solitude and lead the life of an ascetic to realize Nibbāna. The life of a monk no doubt expedites and facilitates spiritual progress, but even as a layman sainthood may be attained. He who attains arahatship as a layman in the face of all temptations is certainly more praiseworthy than a monk who attains arahatship living amidst surrounds that are not distracting.
Concerning a minister who attained arahatship while seated on an elephant decked in his best apparel, the Buddha remarked:

> Even though a man be richly adorned, if he walks in peace,
> If he be quiet, subdued, certain and pure,
> And if he refrains from injuring any living being,
> That man is a Brāhmin, that man is a hermit, that man is a monk.

There have been several such instances of laymen who realized Nibbāna without renouncing the world. The most devout and generous lay-follower Anāthapiṇḍika was a sotāpanna, the Sākya Mahānāma was a Sakadāgami, the potter Ghatīkāra was an anāgāmi and King Suddhōdana, the Buddha's father, died as an arahat.

A monk is expected to observe the four kinds of higher morality — namely:

> *Pātimokkha sīla* — The Fundamental moral code,
> *Indriyasamvara sīla* — Morality pertaining to sense-restraint,
> *Ājīvapārisuddhi sīla* — Morality pertaining to purity of livelihood,
> *Paccayasannissita sīla* — Morality pertaining to the use of the necessaries of life.

These four kinds of morality are collectively called *sīla-visuddhi* (purity of virtue), the first of the seven stages of purity on the way to Nibbāna. When a person enters the order and receives his higher ordination *(upasampadā)*, he is called a *bhikkhu*. There is no English equivalent that exactly conveys the meaning of this Pāli term *bhikkhu*. Mendicant monk may be suggested as the nearest translation, not in the sense of one who is begging but as one who lives on alms.
There are no vows for a monk. Of his own accord he becomes a monk to lead a religious life. He is at liberty to leave the Sangha. A monk is bound to observe 227 rules laid out in the Vinaya, apart from several other minor ones. The four major rules which deal with perfect celibacy, stealing, murder, and false claims to higher spiritual powers, must be strictly observed. If he violates any one of them, he becomes defeated *(pārājikā)* and automatically ceases to be a monk. If he wishes, he can re-enter the Sangha and remain as a sāmanēra (novice). In the case of other rules, which he violates, he has to make amends according to the gravity of the offence.
Among the salient characteristics of a monk are purity, perfect celibacy, voluntary poverty, humility, simplicity, selfless service, self-control, patience, compassion, and harmlessness.
The life of a monk or, in other words, renunciation of worldly pleasures and ambitions, is only an effective means to attain Nibbāna, but is not an end in itself.
Securing a firm footing on the ground of morality, the aspirant then embarks upon the higher practice of *samādhi*, the control and culture of the mind, the second stage of the path of purity.
Samādhi is equilibrium of the mind. It is stillness of the mind or the resting of mental activity. According to Buddhism, there are forty meditation topics *(kammaṭṭhāna)* which differ according to the temperaments of individuals. They are:

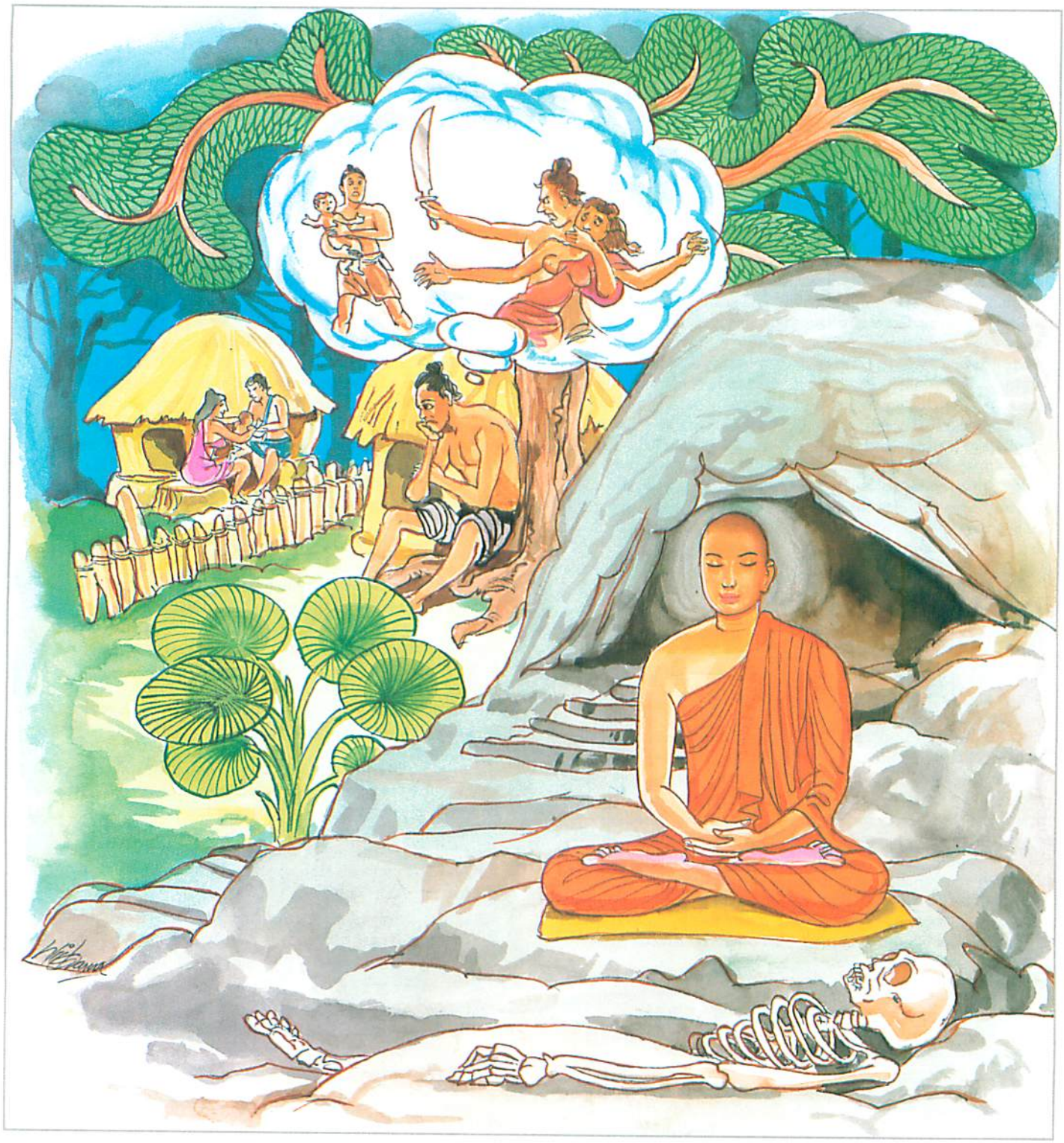
(1) The ten expansions *(kasinas)*, namely: (a) earth *kasina*, (b) water *kasina*, (c) fire *kasina*, (d) air *kasina*, (e) blue *kasina*, (f) yellow *kasina*, (g) red *kasina*, (h) white *kasina*, (i) light *kasina* and (j) space *kasina*.

(2) The ten disagreeables *(asubha)*, namely ten corpses which are respectively: (a) bloated *(uddhumātaka)*, (b) discoloured *(vinīlaka)*, (c) festering *(vipubbaka)*, (d) dissected *(vicchiddaka)*, (e) gnawed-to-pieces *(vikkhāyitaka)*, (f) scattered-in-pieces *(vikkhittaka)*, (g) mutilated and scattered-in-pieces *(hata-vikkhittaka)*, (h) bloody *(lōhitaka)*, (i) worm-infested *(pulavaka)*, and (j) skeleton *(aṭṭhika)*.

(3) The ten reflections *(anussati)*, namely, eight reflections on: (a) the Buddha *(Buddhānussati)*, (b) the Doctrine *(Dhammānussati)*, (c) the Sangha *(Sanghānussati)*, (d) virtue *(silānussati)*, (e) liberality *(cāgānussati)*, (f) dēvas *(dēvātānussati)*, (g) peace *(upasamānussati)*, (h) death *(maranānussati)*, respectively, together with (i) mindfulness regarding the body *(kāyagatāsati)* and (j) mindfulness regarding respiration *(ānāpānasati)*.

(cont'd on page 499)

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Shun misconduct in thought. Live a life of perfect mental restraint.

233. *Manōpakōpaṁ rakkheyya*
manasā saṁvutō siyā
manōduccaritaṁ hitvā
manasā sucaritaṁ carē. (17:13)

Rough thinking one should guard against,
be in thinking well-restrained,
bad mental conduct having shed
train oneself in good.

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DISCIPLINE YOUR MIND

17 (8) The Story of A Group of Six Monks (Verses 231 – 234) (cont'd)

Commentary

(4) The four immeasurables or the four modes of divine conduct *(brāhmavihāra)*, namely, loving-kindness *(mettā)*, compassion *(karunā)*, appreciative joy *(muditā)*, and equanimity *(upēkkhā)*.

(5) The one perception, i.e., the perception of the loathsomeness of material food *(āhāre patikkūlasaññā)*.

(6) The one analysis, i.e., the analysis of the four elements *(catudhātuvivatthāna)*.

(7) The four *arūpa jhānas*, namely, the realm of the infinity of space *(akāsānañcāyatana)*, the realm of the infinity of consciousness *(viññānañcāyatana)*, and the realm of neither perception nor non-perception *(n'ēva saññā n'āsaññāyatana)*.

According to the texts of the ten impurities and the mindfulness regarding the body such as the thirty-two parts are suitable for those of a lustful temperament because they tend to create a disgust for the body which fascinates the senses.

The four illimitables and the four coloured *kasinas* are suitable for those of a hateful temperament. The reflections on the Buddha and so forth are suitable for those of a devout temperament. The reflections on death and peace, perception on the loathsomeness of material food, and analysis of the four elements are suitable for those of an intellectual temperament. the remaining objects, chiefly reflection on the Buddha, meditation on loving-kindness, mindfulness regarding the body and reflection on death are suitable for all, irrespective of temperament.

There are six kinds of temperaments *(carita)*. They are:

(1) Lustful temperament *(rāgacarita)*,

(2) Hateful temperament *(dōsacarita)*,

(3) Ignorant temperament *(mōhacarita)*,

(4) Devout temperament *(saddhācarita)*,

(5) Intellectual temperament *(buddhicarita)*, and

(6) Discursive temperament *(vitakkacarita)*.

Carita signifies the intrinsic nature of a person which is revealed when one is in normal state without being preoccupied with anything. The temperaments of people differ owing to the diversity of their actions or *kamma*. Habitual actions tend to form particular temperaments.

Rāga or lust is predominant in some while *dōsa* or anger, hatred, ill-will in others. Most people belong to these two categories. there are a few others who lack intelligence and are more or less ignorant *(mōhacarita)*. Akin to ignorant are those whose minds oscillate unable to focus their attention deliberately on one thing *(vitakkacarita)*. By nature some are exceptionally devout *(saddhācarita)*, while others are exceptionally intelligent *(buddhicarita)*.

Combining these six with one another, we get sixty-three types. With the inclusion of speculative temperament *(diṭṭhicarita)* there are sixty-four types. The subjects of meditation are variously adapted to these different temperaments and types of people.

Before practicing Samādhi, the qualified aspirant should give a careful consideration to the subject of meditation. In ancient days it was customary for pupils to seek the guidance of a competent teacher to choose a suitable subject according to their temperaments. But, today if no competent teacher is available, the aspirant must exercise his own judgement and choose one he thinks most suited to his character.

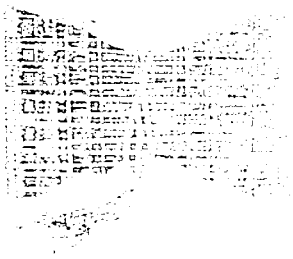
When the subject has been chosen, he should withdraw to a quiet place where there are the fewest distractions. The forest, a cave, or any lonely place is most desirable, for there one is least liable to interruption during the practice.

It should be understood that solitude is within us all. If our minds are not settled, even a quiet forest would not be a congenial place. But if our minds are settled, even the heart of a busy town may be congenial. The atmosphere in which we live acts as an indirect aid to tranquillize our minds. Next to be decided by the aspirant is the most convenient time when he himself and his surroundings are in the best possible condition for the practice.

Early in the morning, when the mind is fresh and active, or before bedtime, if one is not overtired, is generally the most appropriate time for meditation. But whatever the time selected, it is advisable daily to keep to that particular hour, for our minds then become conditioned to the practice.

The meditating posture, too, serves as a powerful aid to concentration. Meditators generally sit cross-legged, with the body erect. They sit placing the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh. This is the full position. If this posture is difficult, as it certainly is to many, the half position may be adopted, that is, simply placing the right foot on the left thigh or the left foot on the right thigh. When this triangular position is assumed, the whole body is well balanced. The right hand should be placed on the left hand, the neck straightened so that the nose is in a perpendicular line with the navel. the tongue should rest on the upper palate. The belt should be loosened, and clothes neatly adjusted. Some prefer closed eyes so as to shut out all unnecessary light and external sights. Although there are certain advantages in closing the eyes, it is not always recommended as it tends to drowsiness. Then the mind gets out of control and wanders aimlessly, vagrant thoughts arise, the body loses its erectness, quite unconsciously the mouth opens itself, saliva drivels, and the head nods. The Buddha usually sat with half closed eyes looking through the tip of the nose and not more than a distance of four feet away.

(cont'd on page 501)



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Those restrained in thought, word and deed, they are the true perfectly trained.

234. *Kāyēna saṁvutā dhīrā*
athō vācāya saṁvutā
manasā saṁvutā dhīrā
tē vē suparisaṁvutā. (17:14)

Restrained in body are the wise,
in speech as well they are restrained,
likewise are they restrained in mind,
they're perfectly restrained.

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SAFEGUARD THE THREE DOORS

17 (8) The Story of A Group of Six Monks (Verses 231 – 234) (cont'd)

Commentary

Those who find the cross-legged posture too difficult may sit comfortably in a chair or any other support, sufficiently high to rest the feet on the ground. It is of no great importance what posture one adopts provided it is easy and relaxed. The aspirant who is striving to gain one-pointedness of the mind should endeavour to control any unwholesome thoughts at their very inception.

As mentioned in the *Sutta Nipāta* he may be attacked by: (a) sensual desires *(kāma)*, (b) dissatisfaction *(arati)*, (c) hunger and thirst *(khuppipāsā)*, (d) urge *(tanhā)*, (e) sloth and torpor *(thīnamiddha)*, (f) fear *(bhaya)*, (g) doubt *(vicikicchā)*, (h) detraction and stubbornness *(makkha, thambha)*, (i) gain, praise, honour and ill-gotten fame *(lābha, silōka, sakkāra, micchāyasa)*, and (j) self-praise and contempt for others *(attukkamsana paravambhana)*.

On such occasions the following practical suggestions were given by the Buddha to be of benefit:

(1) Harbouring a good thought opposite to the encroaching one: loving-kindness in cases of hatred.

(2) Reflecting upon possible evil consequences: anger that results in ill-will.

(3) Simple neglect or becoming wholly inattentive to them.

(4) Tracing the cause which led to the arising of the unwholesome thoughts and thus forgetting them in the retrospective process.

(5) Direct physical force.

Just as a strong man overpowers a weak person, so one should overcome evil thoughts by bodily strength. "With teeth clenched and tongue pressed to the palate," advises the Buddha, "a man by main force must constrain and coerce his mind."

The essence of Buddhism: These stanzas, in which the Buddha provided practical guidelines to a group of unruly monks, establish the essential quality of the Buddha's Teaching. The central focus of Buddhism is practice. One must live the Teachings if one is to achieve the highest spiritual goals of Buddhism.

Buddhism is neither a metaphysical path nor a ritualistic path:

It is neither skeptical nor dogmatic.

It is neither eternalism nor nihilism.

It is neither self-mortification nor self-indulgence.

It is neither pessimism nor optimism but realism.

It is neither absolutely this-worldly nor other-worldly.

It is not extrovert but introvert.

It is not theo-centric but ego-centric.

It is a unique Path of Enlightenment.

The original Pāli term for Buddhism is *Dhamma*, which, literally, means that which upholds or sustains (he who acts in conformity with its principles and thus prevents him from falling into woeful states).

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A Plan for Living

Buddhism is a plan for living in such a way as to derive highest benefit from life. It is a religion of wisdom where knowledge and intelligence predominate. The Buddha did not preach to win converts but to enlighten listeners.

A Western Writer

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Chapter 18

MALA VAGGA

Impurities



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Unprepared for death, thou art, like a withering leaf. Empty-handed, to depart.

235. *Paṇḍupalāsō'va'dāni'si*
yamapurisā'pi ca taṁ upaṭṭhitā
uyyōgamukhē ca tiṭṭhasi
pātheyyam'pi ca tē na vijjati. (18:1)

Now a withered leaf you are
and now Death's men draw near,
now you stand at the parting gates
but waybread you have none.

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MALA VAGGA (IMPURITIES)
MAN AT THE DOOR OF DEATH

18 (1) The Story of the Son of a Butcher (Verses 235 – 238)

While residing at Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the son of a butcher.

At Sāvatthi, so we are told, lived a certain butcher. He would kill cows, select the choicest portions of their flesh for his own table, cause the same to be cooked, and then sit down with son and wife and eat the same; the rest he sold for a price. For fifty-five years he kept up this practice of killing cows. During all this time, although the Buddha resided at a neighbouring monastery, on no occasion did he give the Buddha so much as a spoonful of rice-gruel or boiled rice by way of alms. Unless he had meat to eat, he never ate rice. One day while it was still light, after selling some beef, he gave his wife a piece of beef to cook for his supper, and then went to the pool to bathe.

While he was absent, a friend of his came to the house and said to his wife, "Let me have a little of the beef which your husband has for sale; a guest has come to my house." "We have no beef for sale. Your friend has sold all his beef and has gone to the pool to bathe." "Do not refuse my request; if you have a piece of beef in the house, give it to me." "There is not a piece of beef in the house, except a piece which your friend has set aside for his own supper, and if he will not eat unless he can have meat to eat, he will certainly not give me this piece of beef." So he took the piece of beef himself and went off with it.

After the butcher had bathed, he returned home. When his wife set before him rice which she had boiled for him, seasoned with leaves of her own cooking, he said to her, "Where is the meat?" "Husband, there is none." "Did I not give you meat to cook before I left the house?" "A friend of yours came to the house and said to me, 'A guest has come to my house; let me have a little of the beef which you have for sale.' I said to him, 'There is not a piece of beef in the house, except a piece which your friend has set aside for his own supper, and he will not eat unless he can have meat to eat.' But in spite of what I said to him, he took the piece of beef himself and went off with it." "Unless I have meat to eat with it, I will not eat rice; take it away." "What is to be done, husband? Pray eat the rice." "That I will not." Having caused his wife to remove the rice, he took a knife in his hand and left the house.

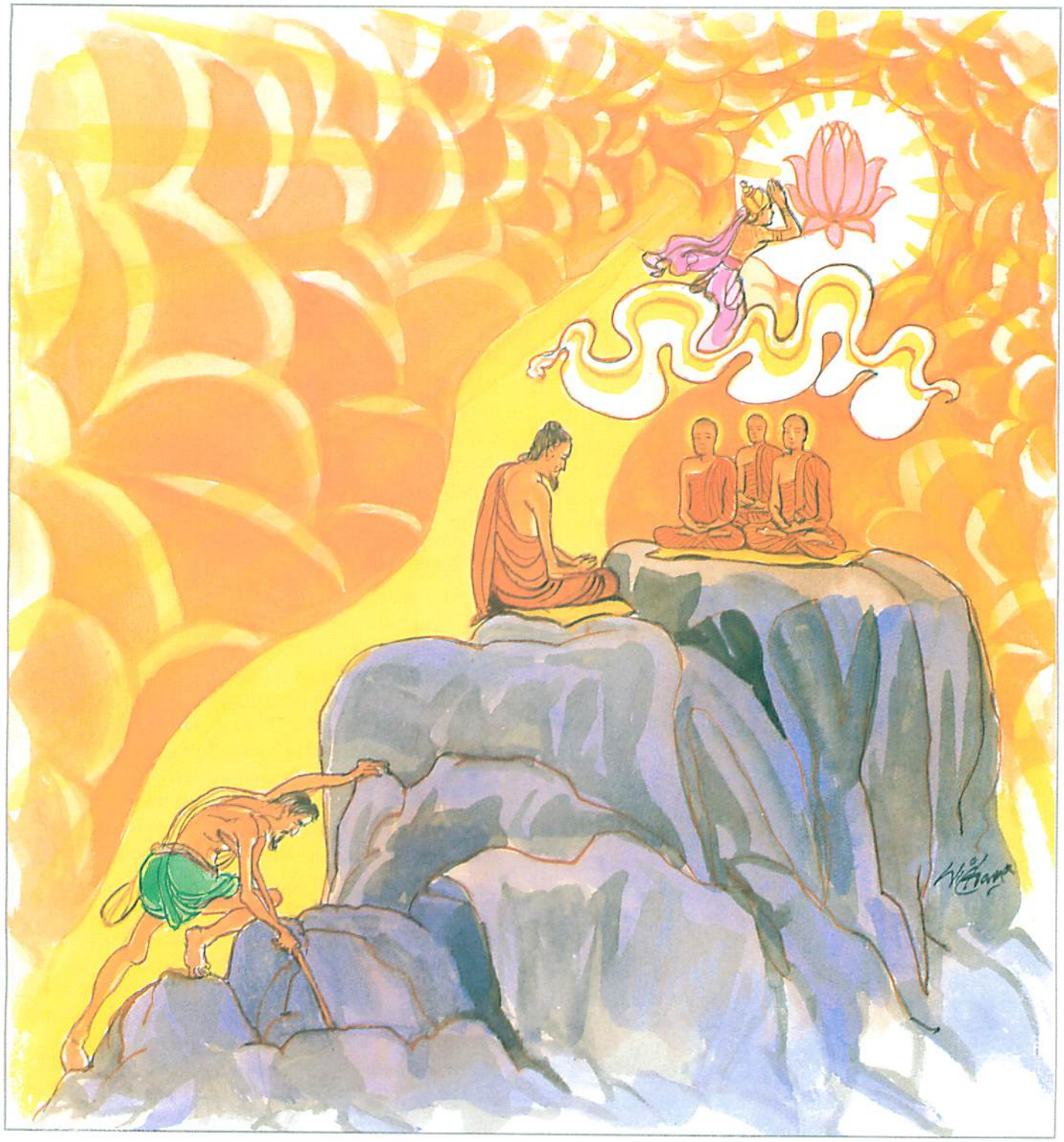
Now an ox was tethered in the rear of his house. The man went up to the ox, thrust his hand into the mouth of the ox, jerked out his tongue, cut it off at the root with his knife, and returned to the house with it. Having had it cooked on a bed of coals, he placed it on the boiled rice and sat down to eat his supper. He first ate a mouthful of rice, and then placed a piece of meat in his mouth. That very moment his own tongue was cleft in twain and fell out of his mouth into the dish of rice. That very moment he received retribution similar in kind to the sin which he had committed. With a stream of blood flowing from his mouth, he entered the court of his house and crawled about on his hands and knees, bellowing just like an ox.

At this time his son stood close by, watching his father. His mother said to him, "Son, behold this butcher crawling about the court of the house on his hands and knees, bellowing like an ox. This punishment is likely to fall upon your own head. Pay no attention to me, but seek safety in flight." The son, terrified by the fear of death, bade farewell to his mother and fled. Having made good his escape, he went to Takkasilā. As for the cow-killer, after he had crawled about the court of the house for a time, bellowing like an oxen, he died, and was reborn in the Avīci Hell. The oxen also died.

Having gone to Takkasilā, the butcher's son became apprenticed to a goldsmith. One day his master, as he set out for the village, said to him, "You are to make such and such an ornament." So saying, his master departed. The apprentice made the ornament according to the directions he received. When his master returned and looked at the ornament, he thought to himself, "No matter where this youth may go, he will be able to earn his living anywhere." So when the apprentice came of age, the goldsmith gave him his daughter in marriage. He increased with sons and daughters. When his sons came of age, they acquired the various arts and subsequently going to Sāvatthi to live, established households of their own, and became faithful followers of the Buddha. Their father remained in Takkasilā, spent his days without performing a single work of merit, and finally reached old age. His sons thought to themselves, "Our father is now an old man," and sent for him to come and live with them.

(cont'd on page 507)

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Be wise and strive in earnest. An island for yourself, make. To the āriyan place you shall go.

236. *Sō karōhi dīpam attanō*
khippaṁ vāyama paṇḍitō bhava
niddhantamalō anaṅgaṇō
dibbaṁ ariyabhūmiṁ ēhisi. (18:2)

Make an island of yourself,
quickly strive and wise become,
freed from stain and passionless
to go to the pure Abodes.

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GET IMMEDIATE HELP

18 (1) The Story of the Son of a Butcher (Verses 235 – 238) (cont'd)

Then they thought to themselves, "Let us give alms in behalf of our father." Accordingly they invited the congregation of monks presided over by the Buddha to take a meal with them. On the following day they provided seats in their house for the congregation of Monks presided over by the Buddha, served them with food, showing them every attention, and at the conclusion of the meal said to the Buddha, "Venerable, this food which we have presented to you is the food whereby our father lives; render thanks therefore to our father." The Buddha thereupon addressed him and said, "Lay disciple, you are an old man. Your body has ripened and is like a withered leaf. You have no good works to serve as provisions for the journey to the world beyond. Make for yourself a refuge. Be wise; be not a simpleton." Thus spoke the Buddha, pronouncing the words of thanksgiving.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 235)

idāni paṇḍupalāsō iva asi taṁ yamapurisā api ca upaṭṭhitā uyyōgamukhē ca tiṭṭhasi tē pātheyyaṁ api ca na vijjati

idāni: now; *paṇḍupalāsō iva:* like a leaf withered and yellow; *asi:* you are; *taṁ:* for you; *yamapurisā api ca:* death's forces too; *upaṭṭhitā:* have come; *uyyōgamukhē ca:* (at) death's door; *tiṭṭhasi:* you stand; *tē:* for you; *pātheyyaṁ api ca:* even provision for the road; *na vijjati:* is not seen

Now you are like a withered, yellowed dried leaf. The first breath of wind will make you fall. Forces of Death have come for you. You are now at death's door. You do not even have any provision for the road.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 236)

sō attanō dīpaṁ karōhi khippaṁ vāyama paṇḍitō bhava niddhantamalō anaṅgaṇō dibbaṁ ariyabhūmiṁ ēhisi

sō: (therefore) you; *attanō:* to your own self; *dīpaṁ:* a lamp; *karōhi:* become; *khippaṁ:* earnestly (quickly); *vāyama:* strive; *paṇḍitō bhava:* become a wise person; *niddhantamalō:* bereft of blemishes; *anaṅgaṇō:* devoid of pains; *dibbaṁ:* heavenly; *ariyabhūmiṁ:* realm of the noble ones; *ēhisi:* reach

As things are, be a lamp, an island, a refuge unto yourself. Strive earnestly and diligently and become a wise person. Bereft of blemishes, devoid of defilements reach the heavenly realm of the Noble ones.

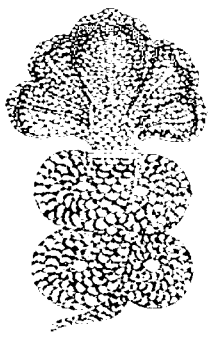
Explanatory Translation (Verse 237)

idāni upanītavayō ca asi yamassa santikē sampayātō asi tē antarā vāsō api ca natthi tē pātheyyaṁ api ca na vijjati

idāni: now; *upanītavayō ca:* of spent life span; *asi:* are you; *yamassa:* of the king of Death; *santikē:* the presence; *sampayātō asi:* you have come; *tē:* for you; *antarā:* in between; *vāsō api ca:* even a shelter; *natthi:* there is not; *tē:* for you; *pātheyyaṁ api ca:* even provisions for the road; *na vijjati:* are not seen

Now, your allotted span of life is spent. You have reached the presence of the king of death (Yama). You do not have a resting place in between. You do not seem to have any provisions for the road either.

(cont'd on page 509)



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At life's end, at death's door you strive. With nothing for the way and no stop in between.

237. *Upanītavayō'ca'dāni'si*
sampayātō'si Yamassa santikē
vāsō'pi ca tē natthi antarā
pātheyyam'pi ca tē na vijjati. (18:3)

Even now the end draws near,
to the presence of death you've fared,
along the path's no place for rest
and waybread you have none.

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IN THE PRESENCE OF KING OF DEATH

18 (1) The Story of the Son of a Butcher (Verses 235 – 238) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 238)

sō attanō dipaṁ karōhi khippaṁ vāyama paṇḍitō bhava niddhantamalō anaṅgaṇō puna jātiṁ jaraṁ na upēhisi.

sō: (therefore) you; *attanō:* for your own self; *dipaṁ:* a lamp; *karōhi:* become; *khippaṁ:* earnestly (quickly); *vāyama:* make an effort; *paṇḍitō bhava:* become a wise person; *niddhantamalō:* bereft of blemishes; *anaṅgaṇō:* devoid of defilements; *puna:* once again; *jātiṁ jaraṁ:* the cycle of birth and decay; *na upēhisi:* do not enter

Therefore, become a lamp, an island, a refuge to your own self. Strive earnestly and become a wise person. Bereft of blemishes, devoid of defilements, you will not enter the cycle of birth and decay any more.

Commentary

upanītavayō: of spent life span. These stanzas have the death theme as their central focus. the need to be aware that life will end is embodied in these stanzas. The Buddha admonishes the aged person to be aware of the possibility of death and accommodate provision to end suffering. This, in effect, is an effort to make him alert and mindful to the ever present threat of death. In the Buddhist system of meditation, the awareness of death, and being mindful of it, form a crucial field of meditation. A practical guide to this meditative contemplation of death is an essential for all men. This form of meditation is *maraṇānussati bhāvanā* — meditation on being mindful of death. *Maranānussati* means the constant reflection on death. The form of meditation that one practises while reflecting on death is called *maraṇānussati bhāvanā*. Like the sun which moves on without a stop from sunrise to sunset, the life of all beings of this world, too, goes on from birth to death. There is no one who is immortal in this world. the life of a being is as impermanent as a drop of dew at the end of a blade of grass at dawn. It is evanescent as a line drawn on water or a bubble on the surface of water. Life comes to an end with death during any of the states — childhood, youth or old age.

Death is a legacy that all beings , be they humans, animals, deities or brahmas, have acquired. It is the very nature of this world that whatever comes into existence should someday cease to be. This impermanence characterized by coming into being and cessation, is common to all animate and inanimate objects of the world.

We should bear in mind the fact that trees, mountains, rivers, cities, oceans, the sun and the moon, machinery and other equipment — all these are subject to change and decay. All beings of the world have to confront a three-fold fear someday or other, namely, old age *(jarā)*, disease *(vyādhi)* and death *(maraṇa)*. It is not possible to ward off these fears by such factors as wealth, position, power or learning. Therefore, we cannot consider life as something satisfactory or comfortable.

A person who does not think of death cannot grasp the impermanent nature of life. The mind of such a person is susceptible to evil and dangerous thoughts as enmity, revenge, avarice, selfishness and excessive pride. The practice of *maraṇānussati bhāvanā* is of immense help to ward off the above-mentioned evil thoughts and to cultivate such virtues as kindness, sympathetic joy, honesty, equality, non-violence and generosity.

The Buddha has shown us that there are three divine messengers in society who teach us three important lessons. they are the old, the diseased and the dead. We meet these messengers frequently. When you see someone who is disabled through old age, reflect on the fact that you yourself would be subject to such a state someday; when you see a sick person, think of the possibility of being diseased yourself; when you attend a funeral or when you see a dead body or hear of a death, reflect on the fact that you too would die someday. By doing so you will necessarily begin to honour elders, help the poor and the afflicted and lead a virtuous life. Furthermore, it will help you to lead a life of comfort and solace by giving up the pride that arises out of wealth, position, power clan, learning and youth.

By practicing the *maranānussati bhāvanā* daily you could gradually get rid of the fear of death. Furthermore, you will not be struck with excessive grief even at the death of your parents, brothers, sisters or other loved ones. This fact becomes clear from the ancient stories of Mallikā, Patācārā and Kisāgōtamī or from the Jātaka stories like the *Uraga Jātaka*. Therefore, always consider the great benefits you would gain by the practice of *maraṇānussati* meditation.

Before you commence the practice of *maraṇānussati bhāvanā*, you should clean yourself, make offerings of flowers, etc., and seek refuge in the Triple Gem and observe the five-fold precepts, as mentioned earlier in the case of the other types of meditation. Thereafter, be seated in a suitable posture in a place conducive to meditation. Now, you should commence the practice of meditation by reflecting on the following facts again and again.

1) I am subject to old age, disease and death. Like me all beings of the world are subject to old age disease and death.

   Now you can go into the second stage by reflecting on the following again and again from beginning to end.

(1) My life is impermanent. Death is certain. I am subject to old age,
(2) disease and death.
(3) The life of my parents is impermanent. Their death is certain.
(4) They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(5) The life of my teachers is impermanent. their death is certain.
(6) They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(7) The life of my brothers and sisters is impermanent. their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(8) The life of my relatives is impermanent. Their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(9) The life of my dear ones is impermanent. Their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(10) The life of my neighbours is impermanent. Their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(11) The life of those who are ill-disposed towards me is impermanent. Their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.
(12) The life of all beings in this world is impermanent. Their death is certain. They are subject to old age, disease and death.

(cont'd on page 511)

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Quick and wise, an island to yourself make. Stainless, free from death and decay.

238. *Sō karōhi dīpamattanō*
khippaṁ vāyama paṇḍitō bhava
niddhantamalō anaṅganō
na puna jātijaraṁ upēhisi. (18:4)

Make an island of yourself,
quickly strive and wise become,
freed from stain and passionless
you'll not return, take flesh, decay.

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AVOID THE CYCLE OF EXISTENCE

18 (1) The Story of the Son of a Butcher (Verses 235 – 238) (cont'd)

Commentary

When you practice this meditation for a long period, your body, words and mind will become pure. You will not be the cause of any harm to society. Your actions, words and thoughts will be for the benefit of all.

The life of a person who practises this meditation constantly will indeed be a happy one and he will be able to face death without any fear whatsoever. Furthermore, it will help him to obtain the comforts of Gods and men in the next world and to attain Nibbāna in the end.

To the average man, death is by no means a pleasant subject for talk or discussion. It is something dismal and oppressive — a veritable kill-joy, a fit topic for a funeral house only. The average man immersed as he is in the self, ever seeking after the pleasurable, ever pursuing that which excites and gratifies the senses, refuses to pause and ponder seriously that these very objects of pleasure and gratification will some day reach their end. If wise counsel does not prevail and urge the unthinking pleasure-seeking man to consider seriously that death can knock at his door also, it is only the shock of a bereavement under his own roof, the sudden and untimely death of a parent, wife or child that will rouse him up from his delirious round of sense-gratification and rudely awaken him to the hard facts of life. then only will his eyes open, then only will he begin to ask himself why there is such a phenomenon as death. Why is it inevitable? Why are there these painful partings which rob life of its joys?

To most of us, at some moment or another, the spectacle of death must have given rise to the deepest of thoughts and profoundest of questions. What is life worth, if able bodies that once performed great deeds now lie flat and cold, senseless and lifeless? What is life worth, if eyes that once sparkled with joy, eyes that once beamed with love are now closed forever, bereft of movement, bereft of life? Thoughts such as these are not to be repressed. It is just these inquiring thoughts, if wisely pursued, that will ultimately unfold the potentialities inherent in the human mind to receive the highest truth.

According to the Buddhist way of thinking, death, far from being a subject to be shunned and avoided, is the key that unlocks the seeming mystery of life. It is by understanding death that we understand life; for death is part of the process of life in the larger sense. In another sense, life and death are two ends of the same process, and if you understand one end of the process, you also understand the other end. Hence by understanding the purpose of death, we also understand the purpose of life. It is the contemplation of death, the intensive thought that it will someday come upon us, that softens the hardest of hearts, binds one to another with cords of love and compassion, and destroys the barriers of caste, creed and race among the peoples of this earth, all of whom are subject to the common destiny of death. Death is a great leveller. Pride of birth, pride of position, pride of wealth, pride of power must give way to the all-consuming thought of inevitable death. It is this levelling aspect of death that made the poet say,:

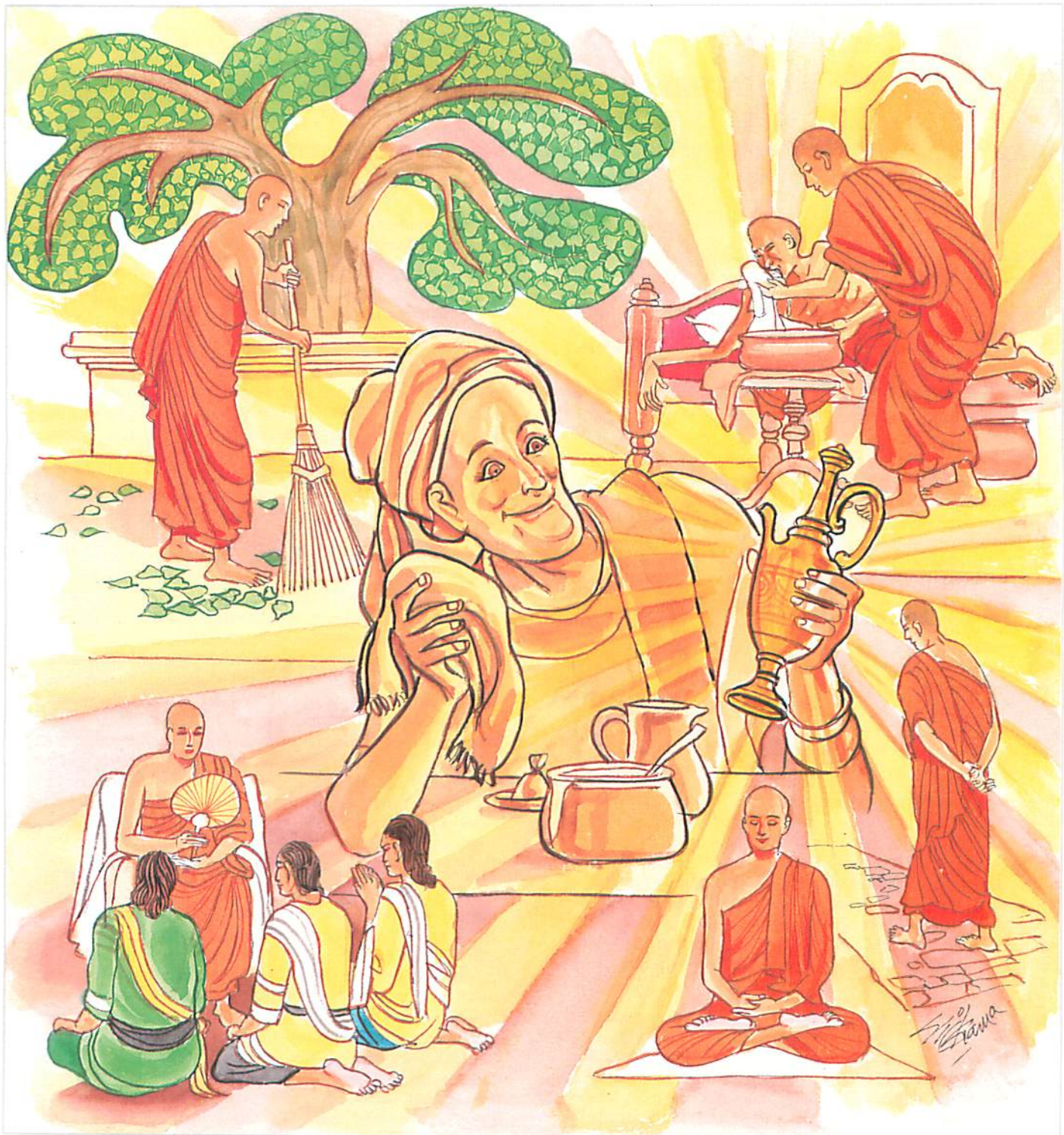
> Sceptre and crown
> Must tumble down
> And in the dust be equal made
> With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

It is the contemplation of death that helps to destroy the infatuation of sense-pleasure. It is the contemplation of death that destroys vanity. It is the contemplation of death that gives balance and a healthy sense of proportion to our highly over-wrought minds with their misguided sense of values. It is the contemplation of death that gives strength and steadiness and direction to the erratic human mind, now wandering in one direction, now in another, without an aim, without a purpose. It is not for nothing that the Buddha has, in the very highest terms, commended to His disciples the practice of mindfulness regarding death. This is known as *maraṇānussati bhāvanā*. One who wants to practice it must, at stated times, and also every now and then, revert to the thought *maraṇaṁ bhavissati* — 'death will take place'. This contemplation of death is one of the classical meditation-subjects treated in the *visuddhi magga* (path of purification) which states that in order to obtain the fullest results, one should practice this meditation in the correct way, that is, with mindfulness *(sati)*, with a sense of urgency *(saṁvēga)* and with understanding *(māna)*. For example, suppose a young disciple fails to realize keenly that death can come upon him at any moment, and regards it as something that will occur in old age in the distant future, his contemplation of death will be lacking strength and clarity, so much so that it will run on lines which are not conducive to success.

How great and useful is the contemplation of death can be seen from the following beneficial effects enumerated in the *visuddhi magga* — The disciple who devotes himself to this contemplation of death is always vigilant, takes no delights in any form of existence, gives up hankering afterlife, censures evil doings, is free from craving as regards the requisites of life; his perception of impermanence becomes established, he realizes the painful and soulless nature of existence and at the moment of death he is devoid of fear, and remains mindful and self-possessed. Finally, if in this present life he fails to attain to Nibbāna, upon the dissolution of the body, he is bound for a happy destiny." Thus, it will be seen that mindfulness of death not only purifies and refines the mind, but also has the effect of robbing death of its fears and terrors, and helps one at that solemn moment when he is gasping for his last breath, to face that situation with fortitude and calm. He is never unnerved at the thought of death, but is always prepared for it. It is such a man that can truly exclaim, O' death, where is thy sting?"



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Gradually, and bit by bit, remove your rusty rot like a silversmith.

239. *Anupubbēna mēdhāvi*
thōkathōkaṁ khaṇē khaṇē
kammārō rajatassēva
niddhamē malamattanō. (18:5)

Little by little, time after time,
successively then let the sage
blow away all blemishes
just as a smith with silver.

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PURIFY YOURSELF GRADUALLY

18 (2) The Story of a Brahmin (Verse 239)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brahmin.

The story goes that early one morning this brahmin went out of the city, stopped at the place where the monks put on their robes, and stood and watched them as they put on their robes. Now this place was thickly overgrown with grass. As one of the monks put on his robe, the skirt of the robe dragged through the grass and became wet with drops of dew. Thought the brahmin, "The grass should be cleared away from this place." So on the following day he took his mattock, went thither, cleared the place, and made it as clean and smooth as a threshing-floor. The day after, he went to that place again. As the monks put on their robes, he observed that the skirt of the robe of one of the monks dropped to the ground and dragged in the dust. Thought the brahmin, "Sand should be sprinkled here." So he brought sand sprinkled it on the ground.

Now one day before breakfast the heat was intense. on this occasion he noticed that as the monks put on their robes, sweat poured from their bodies. Thought the brahmin, "Here I ought to cause a pavilion to be erected." Accordingly he caused a pavilion to be erected. Again one day, early in the morning, it rained. On this occasion also, as the brahmin watched the monks, he noticed that their robes were wetted by the drops of rain. Thought the brahmin, "Here I ought to cause a hall to be erected." So there he caused a hall to be erected. When the hall was finished, he thought to himself, "Now I will hold a festival in honour of the completion of the hall." Accordingly he invited the congregation of monks presided over by the Buddha, seated the monks within and without the hall, and gave alms.

At the conclusion of the meal he took the Buddha's bowl to permit him to pronounce the words of thanksgiving. "Venerable," said he, "as I stood in this place when the monks were putting on their robes and watched them, I saw this and that, and I did this and that." And beginning at the beginning, he told the Buddha the whole story. The Buddha listened to his words and then said, "Brahmin, a wise man by doing good works, time after time, little by little, gradually removes the stains of his own evil deeds."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 239)

mēdhāvi anupubbēna khaṇē khanē thōkathōkaṁ
rajatassa kammārō iva attanō malaṁ niddhamē

mēdhāvi: the wise persons; *anupubbēna:* gradually; *khaṇē khaṇē:* every moment; *thōkathōkaṁ:* little by little; *rajatassa:* of silver; *kammārō iva:* like the smith; *attanō malaṁ:* one's own blemishes; *niddhamē:* cleanse

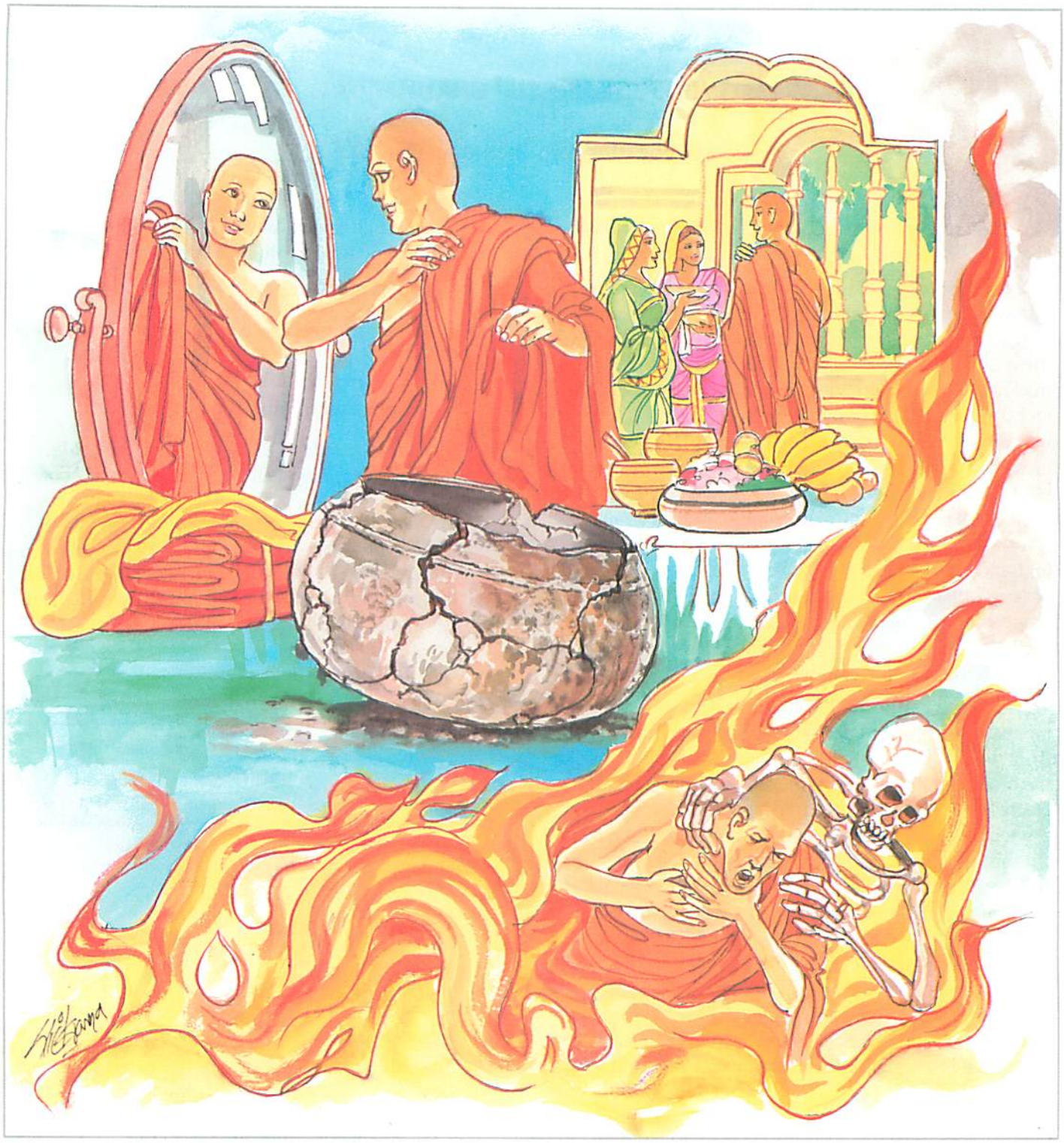
Wise persons, moment after moment, little by little, remove the blemishes off their own selves, just like smiths removing blemishes off silver.

Commentary

Malam: stain, blemish, taint. Usually, these are referred to as *kilesas. Kilēsa*, defilements, are mind-defiling, unwholesome qualities. There are ten defilements, thus called because they are themselves defiled, and because they defile the mental factors associated with them. They are:

(1) Greed *(lōbha)*;
(2) Hate *(dōsa)*;
(3) Delusion *(mōha)*;
(4) Conceit *(māna)*;
(5) Speculative views *(diṭṭhi)*;
(6) Skeptical doubt *(vicikicchā)*;
(7) Mental torpor *(thīna)*;
(8) Restlessness *(uddhacca)*;
(9) Shamelessness *(ahirika)*;
(10) Lack of moral dread or conscientiousness *(anottappa)*.

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Rust born of iron eats it up. So does evil deeds the man who transgresses.

240. *Ayasā'va malaṁ samuṭṭhitaṁ*
taduṭṭhāya tam'ēva khādati
ēvaṁ atidhōnacārinaṁ
sakakammāni nayanti duggatiṁ. (18:6)

As rust arisen out of iron
itself that iron eats away,
so kammas done beyond what's wise
lead to a state of woe.

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ONE'S EVIL RUINS ONE'S OWN SELF

18 (3) The Story of Venerable Tissa (Verse 240)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Tissa.

The story goes that a certain youth of respectable family, who lived at Sāvatthi, retired from the world, became a monk, and made his full profession, becoming known as Venerable Tissa. Subsequently, while he was in residence at a monastery in the country, he received a coarse cloth eight cubits in length. Having completed residence, he celebrated the Terminal Festival, and taking his cloth with him, went home and placed it in the hands of his sister. Thought his sister, "This robe-cloth is not suited to my brother." So with a sharp knife she cut it into strips, pounded them in a mortar, whipped and beat and cleaned the shoddy, and, spinning fine yarn, had it woven into a robe-cloth. The Venerable procured thread and needles, and assembling some young monks and novices who were skilled makers of robes, went to his sister and said, "Give me that cloth; I will have a robe made out of it." She took down a robe-cloth nine cubits in length and placed it in the hands of her youngest brother. He took it, spread it out, and said, "My robe-cloth was a coarse one, eight cubits long, but this is a fine one, nine cubits long. this is not mine; it is yours. I don't want it. Give me the same one I gave you." "Venerable, this cloth is yours; take it." He refused to do so. Then his sister told him everything she had done and gave him the cloth again, saying, "Venerable, this one is yours; take it." Finally, he took it, went to the monastery and set the robe-makers to work. His sister prepared rice-gruel, boiled rice, and other provisions for the robe-makers, and on the day when the cloak was finished, gave them an extra allowance. Tissa looked at the robe and took a liking to it. Said he, "Tomorrow I will wear this robe as an upper garment." So he folded it and laid it on the bamboo rack.

During the night, unable to digest the food he had eaten, he died, and was reborn as a louse in that very robe. When the monks had performed the funeral rites over his body, they said, "Since there was no one to attend him in his sickness, this robe belongs to the congregation of monks; let us divide it among us." Thereupon that louse screamed, "These monks are plundering my property!" And thus screaming, he ran this way and that. The Buddha, even as he sat in the Perfumed Chamber, heard that sound by Supernatural Audition, and said to Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, tell them to lay aside Tissa's robe for seven days." The Venerable caused this to be done. At the end of seven days that louse died and was reborn in the Abode of the Tusita gods. On the eighth day the Buddha issued the following order, "Let the monks now divide Tissa's robe and take their several portions." The monks did so and, amongst themselves, discussed as to why the Buddha had caused Tissa's robes to be put aside for seven days. When the Buddha was told of their discussion, he said, "Monks, Tissa was reborn as a louse in his own robe. When you set about to divide the robe among you, he screamed, 'They are plundering my property.' Had you take his robe, he would have cherished a grudge against you, and because of this sin would have been reborn in Hell. That is the reason why I directed that the robe should be laid aside. But now he has been reborn in the Abode of the Tusita gods, and for this reason, I have permitted you to take the robe and divide it among you." The Buddha continued, "Craving is, indeed, a grievous matter among living beings here in the world. Even as rust which springs from iron eats away the iron and corrodes it and renders it useless, so also this thing which is called craving, when it arises among living beings here in the world, causes these same living beings to be reborn in Hell and plunges them to ruin."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 240)

ayasā ēva samuṭṭhitaṁ malaṁ taduṭṭhāya tamēva khādati, ēvaṁ atidhōnacārinaṁ sakakammāni duggatiṁ nayanti

ayasā ēva: out of the iron itself; *samuṭṭhitaṁ malaṁ:* rust that has arisen; *taduṭṭhāya:* originating there itself; *tamēva:* that itself; *khādati:* eats (erodes); *ēvaṁ:* thus; *atidhōnacārinaṁ:* monks who transgress the limits; *sakakammāni:* one's own (evil) actions; *duggatiṁ:* to bad state; *nayanti:* lead (the evil doer)

The rust springing from iron, consumes the iron itself. In the same way, bad actions springing out of an individual, destroy the individual himself.

Commentary

duggati: bad state; woeful state; woeful course of existence. The word derives from *du* + *gati*.

gati: course of existence, destiny, destination. There are five courses of existence: hell, animal kingdom, ghost-realm, human world, heavenly world. Of these, the first three count as woeful courses *(duggati, apāya)*, the latter two as happy courses *(sugati)*.

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No-revision destroys learning. Lethargy ruins family life. Apathy a danger to one's beauty.

241. *Asajjhāyamalā mantā*
anuṭṭhānamalā gharā
malaṁ vaṇṇassa kōsajjaṁ
pamādō rakkhatō malaṁ. (18:7)

For oral tradition, non-recitation,
in household life, non-exertion,
the fair of form when slovenly,
a sentry's sloth: all blemishes.

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CAUSES OF STAIN

18 (4) The Story of Kāludāyi (Verse 241)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Kāludāyi. At Sāvatthi, we are told, a multitude of noble disciples gave alms before breakfast, and after breakfast, taking ghee, oil, honey, molasses, garments, and other requisites, went to the monastery and listened to the Dhamma. When they departed, after listening to the Dhamma, they praised the virtues of Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna. The Venerable Udāyi overheard their talk and said to them, "It is because you have heard only these Venerables preach the Dhamma that you talk as you do; I wonder what you would say if you were to hear me preach the Dhamma." Those who heard his remark thought to themselves, "This must be some preacher of the Dhamma; we ought without fail to hear this Venerable also preach the Dhamma." So one day they made the following request of the Venerable, "Venerable, today is the day when we are wont to go and listen to the Dhamma. After we have presented alms to the congregation of monks, be good enough, Venerable, to preach the Dhamma to us by day." The Venerable accepted the invitation. When it was time for them to listen to the Dhamma, they went to the Venerable and said, "Venerable, preach the Dhamma to us." So Venerable Udāyi sat down in the seat, took a painted fan in his hand, waved it back and forth, but not knowing a single word of the Dhamma, said, "I will intone the Sacred Word; let some one else preach the Dhamma." So saying, he descended from the seat. The disciples caused someone else to preach the Dhamma, and again assisted him to mount the seat to intone the Sacred Word. But again the second time, the Venerable, who knew no more about intoning than he did about preaching, said, "I will recite the Sacred Word at night; let some one else intone the Sacred Word now." The disciples therefore caused another to intone the Sacred Word and at night brought the Venerable in again. But at night also he knew as little how to intone, and said, "I will recite at dawn; let some one else recite at night." So saying, he descended from the seat. The disciples caused another to recite the sacred word at night and at dawn brought the Venerable in again. But once more he failed. Thereupon the multitude took up clods of earth, sticks, and other missiles, and threatened him, saying, "Simpleton, while we were talking about the virtues of Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna, you said this and that. Why don't you say something now?" The Venerable took to flight, and the multitude ran after him. As he ran, he fell into a certain cesspool. The multitude talked over the incidents of the day, saying, "As Kāludāyi listened to our praise of the virtues of Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna, he became jealous, declared himself to be a preacher of the Dhamma, and when people rendered him honour and said to him, 'We would hear the Dhamma,' he sat down in the Seat of the Dhamma four times, although he knew not a single word suitable to recite. Then, when we said to him, 'Yet you put yourself on an equality with our noble Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna,' and took up clods of earth, sticks, and other missiles, and threatened him, he ran away and fell into a cesspool." The Buddha drew near and asked them, "Monks, what are you talking about now, as you sit here all gathered together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, this is not the first time he has wallowed in a cesspool; he did the same thing in a previous state of existence also." After relating this Jātaka in detail, the Buddha said, "At that time the lion was the Venerable Sāriputta and the boar was Kāludāyi." Having finished the lesson, the Buddha said, "Monks, Udāyi had learned only the merest fragment of the Dhamma, but he never repeated the Texts. No matter how much or how little one may learn of the Sacred Word, not to repeat it is a grievous fault."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 241)

mantā asajjhāyamalā gharā anuṭṭhānamalā
vaṇṇassa kōsajjaṁ malaṁ rakkhatō pamādō
malaṁ

mantā: chants and formulas; *asajjhāyamalā:* have the non-practice as their rust; *gharā:* houses; *anuṭṭhānamalā:* have the lethargy of inmates as their rust; *vaṇṇassa:* the complexion; *kōsajjaṁ malaṁ:* non caring is the rust; *rakkhatō:* for one who guards; *pamādō:* heedlessness; *malaṁ:* is the rust

For formulas that have to be memorized, non repetition is the rust. For houses the neglect of the inmates is the rust. For complexion non-caring is the rust. For a guard heedlessness is the rust.

Commentary

pamādō: heedlessness. The Buddha always advocated a life of heedfulness. Even the Buddha's last words reflect this concern for heedfulness. In his final admonition, the Buddha said, "Behold, O' monks, now I speak to you. Transient are all conditioned things. Strive on with diligence. The passing away of the Buddha will take place before long. At the end of three months from now the Buddha will pass away."

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Inchastity's a woman's ruin. Miserliness is so to a giver. Evil ways a ruin here and hereafter.

242. *Malitthiyā duccaritaṁ*
macchēraṁ dadatō malaṁ
malā vē pāpakā dhammā
asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca. (18:8)

In woman, conduct culpable,
with givers, avariciousness,
all blemishes these evil things
in this world or the next.

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TAINTS ARE EVIL THINGS
IGNORANCE IS THE GREATEST TAINT

18 (5) The Story of a Man Whose Wife Committed Adultery (Verses 242 & 243)

While residing at Vēluvana, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a certain youth of respectable family.

The story goes that this youth married a young woman of equal birth. From the day of her marriage his wife played the adulteress. Embarrassed by her adulteries, the youth had not the courage to meet people face to face. After a few days had passed, it became his duty to wait upon the Buddha. So he approached the Buddha, saluted him, and sat down on one side. "Disciple, why is it that you no longer let yourself be seen?" asked the Buddha. The youth told the Buddha the whole story. Then said the Buddha to him, "Disciple, even in a former state of existence I said, 'Women are like rivers and the like, and a wise man should not get angry with them.' But because rebirth is hidden from you, you do not understand this." In compliance with a request of the youth, the Buddha related the following Jātaka:

> Like a river, a road, a tavern, a hall, a shed,
> Such are women of this world: their time is never known.

"For," said the Buddha, "lewdness is a blemish on a woman; niggardliness is a blemish on the giver of alms; evil deeds, because of the destruction they cause, both in this world and the next, are blemishes on all living beings; but of all blemishes, ignorance is the worst blemish."

Explanatōry Translation (Verse 242)

itthiyā duccaritaṁ malaṁ dadatō macchēraṁ malaṁ pāpakā dhammā asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca vē malā

itthiyā: to a woman; *duccaritaṁ:* evil behaviour; *malaṁ:* is a blemish; *dadatō:* to giver; *macchēraṁ:* miserliness; *malaṁ:* is a blemish; *pāpakā dhammā:* for evil actions; *asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca:* this world and the next world (are both); *vē malā:* certainly are blemishes

For women, misconduct is the blemish. For charitable persons, miserliness is the stain. Evil actions are a blemish both here and in the here-after.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 243)

bhikkhavō, tatō malā malataraṁ avijjā paramaṁ malaṁ ētaṁ malaṁ pahatvāna nimmalā hōtha

bhikkhavō: oh monk: *tatō malā malataraṁ:* above all those stains (there is) a worst stain; *avijjā:* ignorance; *paramaṁ malaṁ:* is the worst stain; *ētaṁ malaṁ:* this stain; *pahatvāna:* having got rid of; *nimmalā hōtha:* become stainless

O Monks, There is a worse blemish than all these stains. The worst stain is ignorance. Getting rid of this stain become stain-less — blemishless.

Commentary

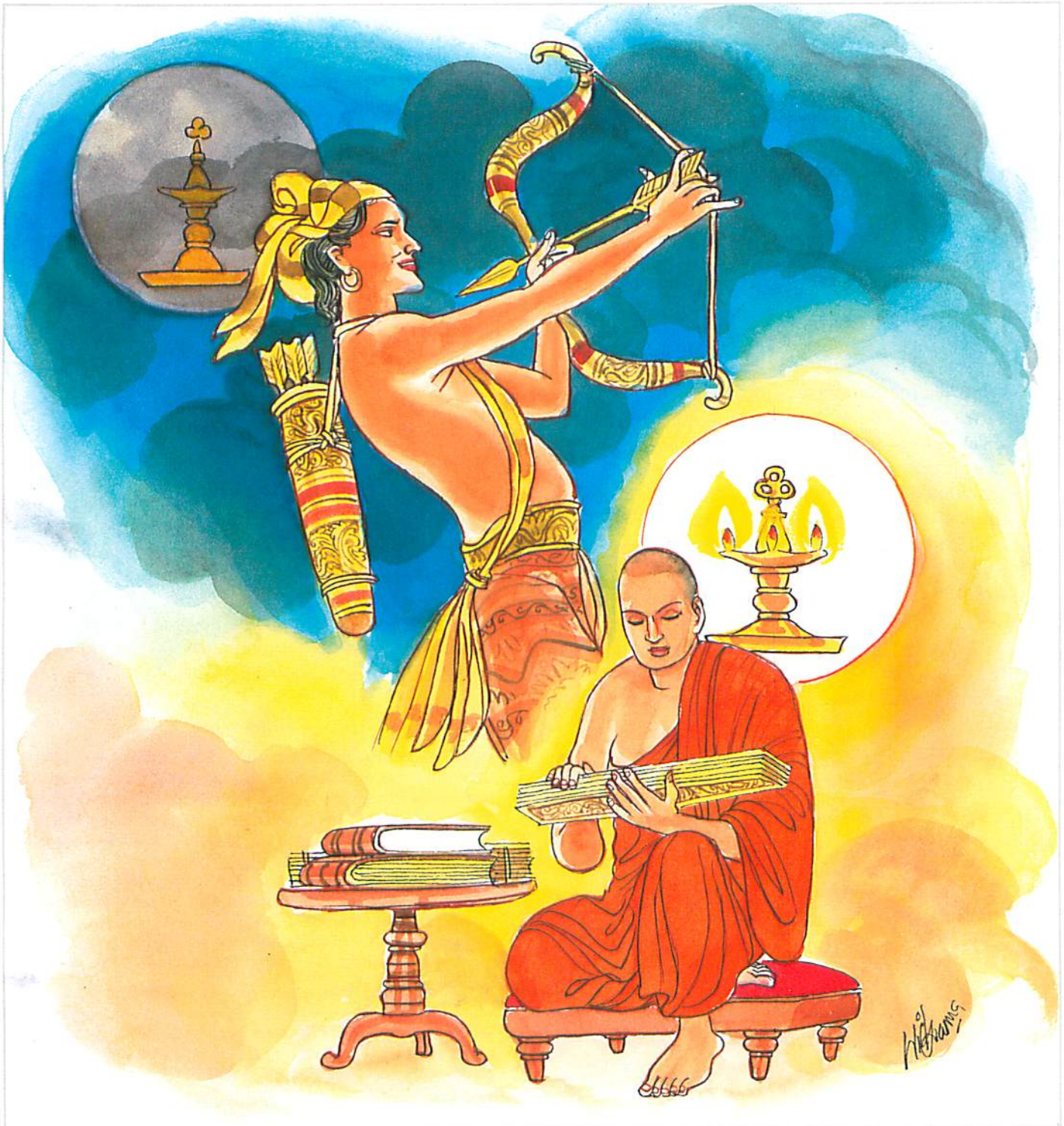
itthiyā duccaritam malaṁ: to a woman evil behaviour is a blemish. the Buddha, of all the contemporary religious leaders, had the most liberal attitude to women. It was also the Buddha who raised the status of women and brought them to a realization of their importance to society. Before the advent of the Buddha, women in India were not held in high esteem. One Indian writer, Hēmacandra, looked down upon women as the torch lighting the way to hell — *narakamārgadvārasya dīpikā*. The Buddha did not humiliate women, but only regarded them as feeble by nature. He saw the innate good of both men and women and assigned to them their due places in His teaching. Sex is no barrier for purification or service.

Sometimes the Pāli term used to connote women is *mātugāma* which means 'mother-folk' or 'society of mothers'. As a mother, a woman holds an honourable place in Buddhism. The mother is regarded as a convenient ladder to ascend to heaven, and a wife is regarded as the best friend *(paramā sakhā)* of the husband.

Although at first the Buddha refused to admit women into the Sangha on reasonable grounds, yet later He yielded to the entreaties of Venerable Ānanda and His foster-mother, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, and founded the order of bhikkhunis (nuns). It was the Buddha who thus founded the first society for women with rules and regulations.

(cont'd on page 521)

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Ignorance is the worst of stains. Discarding it, O Bhikkhūs, be ye all stainless.

243. *Tatō malā malataraṁ*
avijjā paramaṁ malaṁ
ētaṁ malaṁ pahatvāna
nimmalā hōtha bhikkhavō. (18:9)

More basic than these blemishes
is ignorance, the worst of all.
Abandoning this blemish then,
be free of blemish, monks!

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IGNORANCE THE WORST TAINT

18 (5) The Story of a Man Whose Wife Committed Adultery (Verses 242 & 243) (cont'd)

Just as arahats Sāriputta and Moggallāna were made the two chief disciples in the Sangha, the oldest democratically constituted celibate Sangha, even so the arahats khēmā and Uppalavannā were made the two chief female disciples in the Order of the Nuns. Many other female disciples, too, were named by the Buddha Himself as amongst most distinguished and pious followers. Amongst the Vajjis, too, freedom to women was regarded as one of the causes that led to their prosperity. Before the advent of the Buddha women did not enjoy sufficient freedom and were deprived of an opportunity to exhibit their innate spiritual capabilities and their mental gifts. In ancient India, as is still seen today, the birth of a daughter to a family was considered an unwelcome and cumbersome addition.

On one occasion while the Buddha was conversing with King kōsala, a messenger came and informed the king that a daughter was born unto him. Hearing it, the king was naturally displeased. But the Buddha comforted and stimulated him, saying, "A woman child, O Lord of men, may prove even better offspring than a male."

To women who were placed under various disabilities before the appearance of the Buddha, the establishment of the Order of Nuns was certainly a blessing. In this Order queens, princesses, daughters of noble families, widows, bereaved mothers, helpless women, courtesans, all despite their caste or rank met on a common footing, enjoyed perfect consolation and peace, and breathed that free atmosphere which was denied to those cloistered in cottages and palatial mansions. Many, who otherwise would have fallen into oblivion, distinguished themselves in various ways and gained their emancipation by seeking refuge in the Sangha.

khēmā, the first chief female disciple, was the beautiful consort of King Bimbisāra. She was at first reluctant to see the Buddha as she heard that the Buddha used to refer to external beauty in disparaging terms. One day she paid a casual visit to the monastery merely to enjoy the scenery of the palace. Gradually she was attracted to the hall where the Buddha was preaching. The Buddha, who read her thoughts, created by His psychic powers a handsome young lady, standing aside fanning Him. khēmā was admiring her beauty. The Buddha made this created image change from youth to middle age and old age, till it finally fell on the ground with broken teeth, grey hair, and wrinkled skin. Then only did she realize the vanity of external beauty and the fleeting nature of life. She thought, "Has such a body come to be wrecked like that? Then so will my body also." The Buddha read her mind and said:

> They who are slaves to lust drift down the stream,
> Like to a spider gliding down the web
> He of himself wrought. But the released,
> Who all their bonds have snap in twain,
> With thoughts elsewhere intent, forsake the world,
> And all delight in sense put far away.

khēmā attained arahatship and with the king's consent entered the Order. She was ranked foremost in insight amongst the nuns. Patācārā, who lost her two children, husband, parents and brother, under very tragic circumstances, was attracted to the Buddha's presence by His will-power. Hearing the Buddha's soothing words, she attained the first stage of sainthood and entered the Sangha. One day, as she was washing her feet she noticed how first the water trickled a little way and subsided, the second time it flowed a little further and subsided, and the third time it flowed still further and subsided. "Even so do mortals die," she pondered, "either in childhood, or in middle age, or when old." The Buddha read her thoughts and, projecting His image before her, taught her the Dhamma. She attained arahatship and later became a source of consolation to many a bereaved mother.

Dhammadinnā and Bhaddā Kāpilāni were two nuns who were honoured exponents of the Dhamma.

In answer to Māra, the evil one, it was Nun Sōmā who remarked: "What should the woman-nature count in her who, with mind well-set and knowledge advancing, has right to the Dhamma? To one who entertains doubt with the question" 'Am I a woman in these matters, or am I a man, or what then am I?' — the Evil One is fit to talk."

Amongst the laity, too, there were many women who were distinguished for their piety, generosity, devotion, learning and loving-kindness.

Visākhā, the chief benefactress of the Order, stands foremost amongst them all. Suppiyā was a very devout lady who, being unable to procure some flesh from the market, cut a piece of flesh from her thigh to prepare a soup for a sick monk.

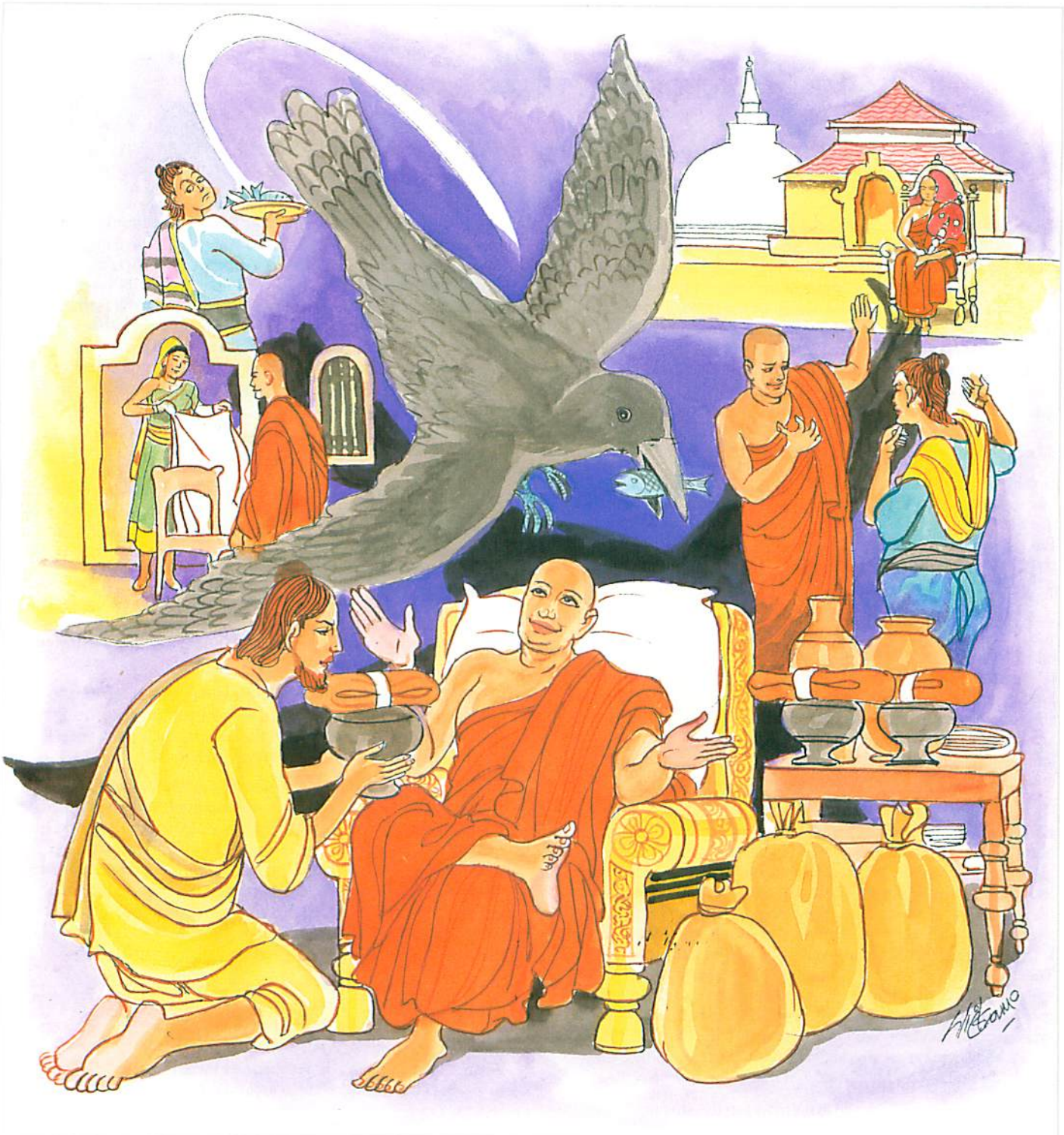
Nakulamātā was a faithful wife who, by reciting her virtues, rescued her husband from the jaws of death. Sāmāwati was a pious and lovable queen who, without any ill-will, radiated loving-kindness towards her rival even when she was burnt to death through her machination. Queen Mallikā, on many occasions, counselled her husband, King Pāsenadi. A maid-servant, Khujjuttarā, secured many converts by teaching the Dhamma. Punabbasumātā was so intent on hearing the Dhamma that she hushed her crying child thus:

> O silence, little Uttarā! Be still,
> Punabbasu, that I may hear the Norm
> Taught by the Master, by the Wisest Man.
> Dear unto us is our own child, and dear
> Our husband; dearer still than these to me
> Is't of this Doctrine to explore the Path.

A contemplative mother, when questioned why she did not weep at the loss of her only child, said: "Uncalled he hither came, unbidden soon to go; E'en as he came, he went. What cause is here for woe?"

Sumanā and Subhaddā were two sisters of exemplary character who had implicit faith in the Buddha. These few instances will suffice to illustrate the great part played by women in the time of the Buddha especially under the guidance of the Buddha.

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Shamelessly like a crow a man easily lives. In his arrogance, avarice and ambition he stinks.

244. *Sujīvaṁ ahirikēna*
kākasūrēna dhaṁsinā
pakkhandinā pagabbhēna
saṅkiliṭṭhēna jīvitaṁ. (18:10)

Easy the life for a shameless one
who bold and forward as a crow,
is slanderer and braggart too:
this one's completely stained.

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SHAMELESS LIFE IS EASY

18 (6) The Story of Culla Sārī (Verses 244 & 245)

While residing at Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to a monk named Culla Sārī who practiced medicine.

The story goes that one day this monk administered medical treatment, in return for which he received a portion of choice food. As he went out with this food, he met a Venerable on the road and said to him, "Venerable, here is some food which I received for administering medical treatment. Nowhere else will you receive food like this. Take it and eat it. Henceforth, whenever I receive such food as this in return for administering medical treatment, I will bring it to you." The Venerable listened to what he said, but departed without saying a word. The monks went to the monastery and reported the matter to the Buddha. Said the Buddha, "Monks, he that is shameless and impudent like a crow, he that practises the twenty-one varieties of impropriety, lives happily. But he that is endowed with modesty and fear of mortal sin, lives in sorrow."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 244)

ahirikēna kākasūrēna dhaṁsinā pakkhandinā pagabbhēna saṇkiliṭṭhēna jīvitaṁ sujīvaṁ

ahirikēna: by a shameless person; *kākasūrēna:* sly as a crow; *dhaṁsinā:* slandering; *pakkhandinā:* slippery; *pagabbhēna:* slick; *saṇkiliṭṭhēna:* corrupt; *jīvitaṁ:* living; *sujīvaṁ:* could be led easily

If an individual possesses no sense of shame, life seems to be easy for him since he can live whatever way he wants with no thought whatsoever for public opinion. He can do any destruction he wishes to do with the skill of a crow. Just as that of the crow, the shameless person's life, too, is unclean. He is boastful and goes ahead utterly careless of others.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 245)

hirimatā ca niccaṁ sucigavēsinā alīnēna appagabbhēna suddhājīvēna passatā dujjīvaṁ

hirimatā ca: for a modest person; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *sucigavesinā:* pursuing what is pure; *alīnēna:* non-attached; *appagabbhēna:* not slick; *suddhājīvēna:* leading a pure life; *passatā:* possessing insight; *dujjīvaṁ:* the life is not easy

The life is hard for a person who is modest, sensitive and inhibited, constantly pursuing what is pure, not attached, who is not slick and impudent, who is leading a pure life and is full of insight.

Commentary

kākasūrēna: crafty as a crow. The attitude of the shameless person is compared to that of a crafty crow, lurking until opportunity is ripe for it to snatch whatever it can. The Stanza says that life is easy for such crafty person, but that is not the right attitude for a member of the Sangha (Brotherhood) to adopt. The Brotherhood is the last of the Three Gems of Buddhism.

The last of the Three Refuges, the Jewel of the Sangha is still to be considered. It has been left over for this section as it is more appropriate to consider it under practice. The Teachings of the Buddha are for everyone. No one has ever been excluded from becoming a Buddhist by sex, race or colour. It depends upon the individual Buddhist (and his circumstances) whether he remains a layman or becomes a monk (or nun). The benefit which each class derives from the other is mutual: the laymen give robes, food, shelter and medicines to the monks and these are a monk's supports for his life. The monks (and nuns) on their part, give something most precious to the laity: the Dhamma as they have studied, practiced and realized it. Thus lay Buddhists can easily find advice and help in a monastery from one of the teachers there or perhaps from a son, uncle or some other relative who is practicing either permanently or for some time as a novice, monk or nun. And so, a balance is preserved, each group giving to the other something necessary for right livelihood.

(cont'd on page 525)

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Guarded by shame, 'tis difficult living, being care-free and pure in one's ways.

245. *Hirīmatā ca dujjīvaṁ*
niccaṁ sucigavēsinā
alīnēn'appagabbhēna
suddhājīvēna passatā. (18:11)

But hard the life of a modest one
who always seeks for purity,
who's cheerful though no braggart,
clean-living and discerning.

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FOR A MODEST PERSON LIFE IS HARD

18 (6) The Story of Culla Sārī (Verses 244 & 245) (cont'd)

Commentary

Monks and novices have sets of rules to guide them in their life and these, being voluntarily observed as ways of self-training, may be equally voluntarily relinquished, as when a monk becomes a novice again or reverts to the state of a layman. In some countries, it is a common practice for laymen to spend some time as a novice or monk, (the latter ordination is only given to persons over the age of twenty years). Usually, this is done when a school or college education is done, before taking up work, and for a period of three or four months from approximately July to October or November. This period, when monks must reside in one monastery is known the Rains Residence and is meant to be a period devoted to learning, the practice of meditation or some other intensified spiritual activity. After this yearly Rains Residence is over, monks are free to go to other monasteries or into the forest as they wish. In the Buddhist Sangha, monks should not possess money and to live their lives with few possessions.

As monks, they must, of course, refrain from any sort of sexual intercourse, thus observing 'chastity'. But they have not the rule to observe unquestioning 'obedience' though they have obligations as disciples of a teacher and all good monks honour these strictly. When, after at least five years, they have some learning and experience, knowing their rules well, they are free to wander here and there as they choose, seeking good teachers, or practicing by themselves.

Mention should be made of the four most important precepts in the monk's code, for breaking which he is expelled from the Sangha, never being able in this life to become a monk again. These four rules are: 1) Never to have any sexual relations; 2) Never deliberately to kill a man, or to order other persons to kill, either other human beings or themselves; 3) Never to take anything that does not belong to one with the intention of possessing it oneself; 4) Never to claim falsely any spiritual attainment, powers, or degree of Enlightenment (he is excused if he is mad, conceited or not serious).

A monk's actual possessions are very few and any other objects around him should be regarded by him as on loan from the Sangha. He has only eight Requisites: an outer double-thick 'cloak', an upper-robe, an under-robe, a bowl to collect food, a needle and thread to repair his robes, a waistband for his under-robe, a razor, and a water-strainer to exclude small creatures from his drinking water so that neither they nor himself, are harmed.

As to his duties, they are simple but not easy to perform. He should endeavour to have wide learning and deep understanding of all that his Teacher the Enlightened One, has taught: he should practice the Teaching, observing Virtue, strengthening Collectedness and developing Wisdom; he will then realize the Buddha's Teachings according to his practice of them; and finally, depending upon his abilities, he may teach accordingly by his own example, by preaching, by writing books, etc.

When going for Refuge to the Sangha, one should not think of Refuge-going to the whole body of monks for though some of them are Noble, the true nobility experienced after the fire of Supreme Wisdom has burnt up the defilements, a good number are still worldlings practicing Dhamma. Among the laity too, there may be those who are Noble. The Noble monks and laity together form the Noble Sangha which, as it is made up of those who are freeing and have freed themselves from the bondage of all worlds, is truly a secure Refuge. That lay-people may attain this supermundane Nobility should be sufficient to prove that this Teaching is meant also for them, though to do this they must practice thoroughly.

The Jewel of the Sangha has known many great teachers from the immediate disciples of Lord Buddha, such as the Venerables Aññā-Koṇḍañña, Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahākassapa, Ānanda; and Venerable Nuns such as Mahāpajāpati, Khēmā, Uppalavannā, Dhammadinnā, with laymen such as the benevolent Anathapindika and famous laywomen as was Visākhā and this great procession of Enlightened disciples still continues down the ages to the present day.

Although one may go for Refuge to the exterior Noble Sangha, one should seek for the real Refuge within. This is the collection of Noble Qualities (such as the Powers of Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Collectedness and Wisdom) which will lead one, balanced and correctly cultured, also to become a member of the Noble Sangha.

After describing Buddhist beliefs and their basis in the Triple Gem or Three-fold Refuge, it is now time to outline what Buddhists practice in order to realize the Teachings of the Enlightened One and so substantiate within their own experience, the doctrines which initially they believed.

As a frame for the vast mass of teachings which would qualify to be considered here, an ancient three-fold summary of the Teaching is used: virtue, collectedness and wisdom. Lord Buddha has concisely formulated them in a verse famous in all Buddhist lands:

> Never doing any kind of evil, (refers to virtue)
> The perfecting of profitable skill, (to collectedness)
> Purifying of one's heart as well, (to wisdom)
> This is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

These are known as the three training but since the last one, Wisdom, is both mundane and Supermundane, four sections have been devised as comprising the range (though far from the full substance) of the Dhamma: mundane wisdom, virtue, collectedness and supermundane wisdom.

Special Note: There is a strange idea current in some places that Buddhism is only for monks. Nothing could be further from the truth. As we hope to show here, there is something for everyone to do, whether monks or laity. It is true that many of the Buddha's discourses are addressed to monks but this does not preclude the use of their contents by the laity. how much of Buddhist Teaching one applies to one's life, while to some extent depending on environment: work, family, etc., in the case of lay people, does to a greater extent depend on one's keenness and determination. The monk is in surroundings more conducive to the application of the Buddha's Teachings as he should have less distractions than do the laity. Even among monks, ability and interest naturally vary. The word 'priest' should never be used for a *bhikkhu*, the best translation being 'monk'.

Buddhist monks and nuns do not beg for their food nor are they beggars. A strict code of conduct regulates a monk's round to collect food. He may not for instance, make any noise — cry out or sing — in order to attract people's attention. He walks silently and in the case of meditating monks, with a mind concentrated on his subject of meditation, and accepts whatever people like to give him. Lord Buddha once gravely accepted the offering of a poor child who had nothing else to give except a handful of dust: the child had faith in the Great Teacher. From this, one learns that it is not what is given that is important, but rather, how a thing is given. The monk is to be content with whatever he is given, regarding the food or a medicine to keep the mind-body continum going on.

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He destroys life, in theft he indulges. A liar and adulterer, he is.

246. *Yō pāṇaṁ atipātēti*
musāvādaṁ ca bhāsati
lōkē adinnaṁ ādiyati
paradāraṁ ca gacchati. (18:12)

In the world who life destroys,
who words of falsity speaks,
who takes what is not freely given
or to another's partner goes.

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WRONG DEEDS TO AVOID

18 (7) The Story of Five Hundred Lay Disciples (Verses 246 — 248)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to five lay disciples.

For of these five hundred lay disciples, one kept only the precept of abstinence from the taking of life; another, another precept, and so on. One day, they fell into a dispute, each of them saying, "It is a hard thing I have to do; it is a hard precept I have to keep." And going to the Buddha, they saluted him and referred the whole matter to him. The Buddha listened to what they had to say, and then, without naming a single precept as of lesser importance, said, "All of the precepts are hard to keep." So saying, the Buddha pronounced these stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 246)

yō pāṇaṁ atipātēti musāvādaṁ ca bhāsati lōkē adinnaṁ ādiyati, paradāraṁ ca gacchati

yō: if someone; *pāṇaṁ atipātēti:* takes life; *musāvādaṁ ca bhāsati:* utters lies; *lōkē:* in this world; *adinnaṁ:* what was not given; *ādiyati:* takes; *paradāraṁ ca gacchati:* commits adultery

If in this world a person destroys life; speaks untruth; takes what is not given and commits adultery goes to another man's wife.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 247)

yō narō surāmērayapānaṁ ca anuyuñjati ēsō idha lōkasmiṁ ēva attanō mūlaṁ khaṇati

yō narō: if someone; *surāmērayapānaṁ ca:* taking intoxicating drinks; *anuyuñjati:* indulges; ēsō: he; *idha lōkasmiṁ ēva:* here in this world itself; *attanō:* one's own; *mūlaṁ:* root; *khaṇati:* digs up

A man who is given to taking intoxicating drinks, uproots himself in this world itself.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 248)

bhō purisa pāpadhammā asaññatā ēvaṁ jānāhi lōbhō ca adhammō ca taṁ ciraṁ dukkhāya mā randhayuṁ

bhō purisa: oh you man!; *pāpadhammmā:* evil action; *asaññatā:* is bereft of restraint; *ēvaṁ:* this way; *jānāhi:* (you must) know; *lōbhō:* greed; *adhammō ca:* and evil ways; *taṁ:* (these two) you; *ciraṁ:* for a long period of time; *dukkhāya:* in suffering; *mā randhayuṁ:* do not allow to keep you

O' You man, evil actions do not have restraint or discipline. This way, you must appreciate that greed and the evil action of anger should not be allowed to inflict suffering you for a long while.

(cont'd on page 529)

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...and living in drunkenness steeped, ends up here in calamitous ruin.

247. *Surāmērayapāna ca*
yō narō anuyuñjati
idh' ēvaṁ ēsō lōkasmiṁ
mūlaṁ khaṇati attanō. (18:13)

Or has distilled, fermented drinks:
Who with abandon follows these
extirpates the roots of self
even here in this very world.

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PRECEPTS THE LAY MAN SHOULD FOLLOW

18 (7) The Story of Five Hundred Lay Disciples (Verses 246 — 248) (cont'd)

Commentary

These three stanzas dwell upon the five Precepts that lay men should observe initially. The following is an analysis of these five.

Among the items of right behaviour the lowest are the *pañcasīla*, the five precepts for training, the ABC of Buddhist ethics. these are the basic principles for the lay follower. They are:

(1) I undertake the training precept to abstain from killing anything that breathes;

(2) I undertake the training precept to abstain from taking what is not given.

(3) I undertake the training precept to abstain from sexual misconduct.

(4) I undertake the training precept to abstain from speaking falsehood.

(5) I undertake the training precept to abstain from liquor that causes intoxication and heedlessness.

Sir Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia* states the five Precepts in these words:

> Kill not — for pity's sake — lest ye slay
> The meanest thing upon its ward way.
>
> Give freely and receive, but take from none
> By greed, or force, or fraud, what is his own.
>
> Bear not false witness, slander not nor lie;
> Truth is the speech of inward purity.
>
> Shun drugs and drinks, which work the wit abuse;
> Clear minds, clean bodies, need no Sōma juice.
>
> Touch not thy neighbour's wife, neither commit
> Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

These *sīlas* are to be kept and acted on in one's daily life, they are not for mere recitation, for lip-service or for applying to others.

> He who knoweth the Precepts by heart, but faileth to practice them,
> Is like unto one who lighten a lamp and then shutteth his eyes.

Buddhism does not demand of the lay follower all that a member of the Sangha is expected to observe. But whether monk or layman, moral habits are essential to the upward path. One who becomes a Buddhist by taking the three refuges is expected, at least, to observe the five basic precepts which is the very starting point on the path. They are not restricted to a particular day or place, but are to be practiced throughout life everywhere, always. there is also the possibility of their violated by all save those who have attained at least the first stage of sanctity *(sōtāpatti)*. Nevertheless when a transgression occurs it is useless to repent for one's weaknesses and shortcomings, for repentance will not do any good to or help oneself or others. It will only disturb one's mind. Again, it may be observed that, according to Buddhism, wrongdoing is not regarded as a 'sin', for that word is foreign to the teaching of the Buddha. There is no such thing as 'breaking the Buddha's laws', for he was not a lawgiver or an arbitrator who punished the bad and rewarded the good deeds of beings, hence there is no repentance, sorrow or regret for 'sin'. The doer of the deed is responsible for his actions; he suffers or enjoys the consequences, and it is his concern either to do good, or to be a transgressor. It must also be stated that all actions, good or ill, do not necessarily mature. One's good kamma may suppress the evil kamma and vice versa.

As the formula clearly shows, there are no laws or commandments. Voluntarily you promise to observe the training precepts and there is no compulsion or coercion; you yourself are responsible for your actions. If you violate what you have undertaken to keep, it is very necessary then to make a firm determination not to repeat but to correct your weakness and try hard not to lapse again. A careful thinker ought to realize that the sole purpose of keeping these precepts is to train oneself, to control one's impulses, evil inclinations and wrong acts, and thus pave the path to purification and happiness, give security to society and promote cordiality. On close analysis we know that the observance of these precepts is the only way to lessen our lust (greed), hate and delusion, the root causes of all evil in society. For instance, the first precept cannot be transgressed without entertaining thoughts of hate and cruelty, in the case of the third it is specifically lust, the second and the fourth maybe due to both greed and hate, and the fifth to greed, while delusion is behind all the five precepts.

(cont'd on page 531)

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Know ye that evil ways are hard to restrain. Let no greed or evil ways ever drag you to pain.

248. *Ēvaṁ bhō purisa jānāhi*
pāpadhammā asaññatā
mā taṁ lōbhō adhammō ca
ciraṁ dukkhāya randhayuṁ. (18:14)

Therefore friend remember this;
Hard to restrain are evil acts,
don't let greed and wickedness
down drag you long in dukkha.

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THESE PRECEPTS PREVENT SUFFERING

18 (7) The Story of Five Hundred Lay Disciples (Verses 246 — 248) (cont'd)

It is important to note that to take intoxicating liquor causes delusion. It prevents clear thinking, lessens one's power of reasoning and brings about negligence, infatuation and a host of other evils. A drunkard is not responsible for his actions and may commit any crime. Hence, the violation of this one precept may lead a man to break all the others. Says the Buddha:

> Give up this base of all evil
> Which lead to madness,
> To abuse of mind.

Now one may argue that to drink in moderation is harmless, but there is a saying:

> First a man takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes the man.

And so it is always better to bear in mind the Buddha's warning: "Be mindful, self-controlled and serene." Let us shun drugs and drinks which blind one to both the truths of life and the path to deliverance.

Remember that the third and fifth precepts have an affinity, they support each other and both bring enjoyment (rasassāda). Sometimes in the Pāli canon the fifth precept is omitted thus including it in the third as in the case of the moral code mentioned in the eightfold path. Then there are the ten precepts, or items for training which are meant for the novices *(sāmanēras)*. They are formed by adding five to those already mentioned.

Sīla: moral purity. The five bhikkhus referred to in these verses, were practicing a discipline leading to *sīla* - Moral purity.

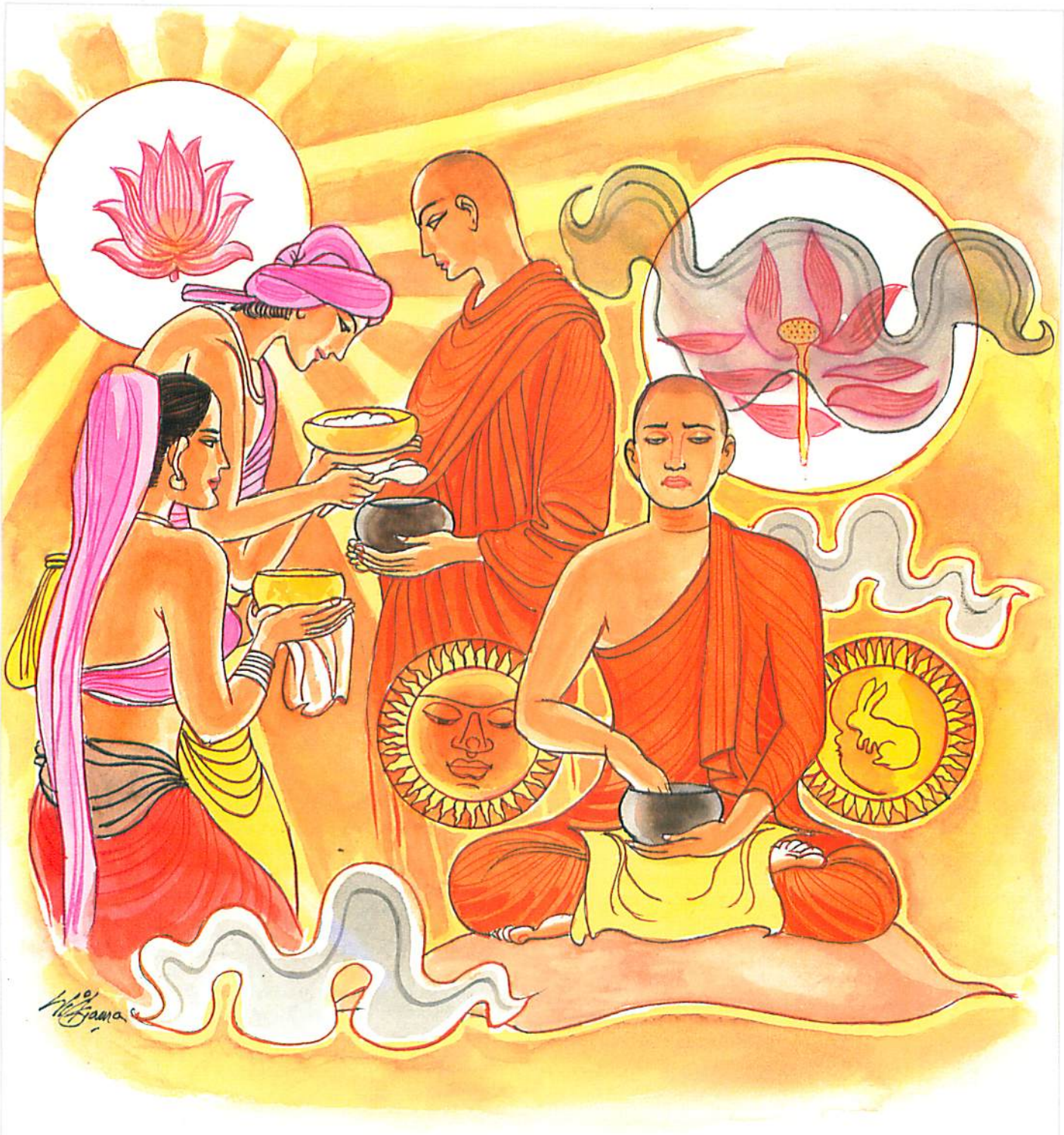
Meditation as a means of mental purification presupposes the possession of moral purity *(sīla-visuddhi)* which forms its essential foundation. The intrinsic value of morality in Buddhist teaching lies in the fact that it purges the mind of its inferior tendencies and leaves it clear for the production of the inward illumination of true knowledge. The mind, which in its ordinary, lowly condition is wayward and accustomed to submit to the demands of every worldly impulse and passion of the lower instincts, is with difficulty controlled when the higher incentive makes its appearance for the first time as a mere stranger of no authority. Since meditation is the means of transmuting the ordinary consciousness to the higher state it is necessary that some previous training and discipline should be imposed upon the lower consciousness regulating and restricting its usual activities until it is in complete submission to the direction of the higher mind. To this end the mind must first be well equipped with such higher moral qualities as faith, mindfulness, energy, and wisdom, and must establish them in such a position that they cannot be crushed by their adversaries. In all the schemes of Buddhist training therefore we find that training in morality *(sīla)* is an essential preliminary to further progress. Therefore the disciple should first have completely perfected this preliminary training in Sīla, for it is the beginning of the higher religious culture. In the words of the *Saṁyutta Nikāya:* What is the beginning of higher states? Sīla of perfect purity.

Sīla is of paramount importance in meditation because it is the antidote of remorse and mental waverings which are inimical to the concentration of the mind. To this effect it has been said: Ānanda, the benefit and advantage of moral virtues is the absence of remorse. Furthermore, we read in the *Ākankeyya Sutta*:

Monk, should a monk desire to attain the *jhānas* which are sublime, superhuman, the higher states of consciousness, conducive to a happy life, let him fulfil the moral virtues... should he desire tranquility... psychic powers... higher knowledge... complete cessation of the āsavas let him fulfil the moral virtues.

Sīla being thus a fundamental feature of Buddhism, implies all good qualities which are included in the category of its moral and ethical teachings. Strictly speaking it comprises first the consciousness built up by abstinence from immoral conduct, and secondly, the thought associated with the observance of the positive rules enacted for moral purity. Its two salient characteristics are: (1) *samādhāna*, the firm establishing of mind and thoughts together in harmony, and (2) *upadhārana*, the supporting and holding together of all good qualities. The two aspects of *sīla*, negative and positive, are very distinctly marked in every department of religious and ethical life. The negative aspect emphasises abstinence from sins (which are *vāritta*, prohibitions), and the positive aspect the necessity of accumulating good and fulfilling one's duty *(cāritta)*. Every formula laid down in connection with the precepts has these two aspects. For instance, (i) he refrains from killing, lays aside the cudgel and the sword; (ii) full of kindness and compassion he lives for the welfare and happiness of all living things.

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Jealous of others' receipt of gifts made in faith, tranquility of mind one will never attain.

249. *Dadāti vē yathāsaddhaṁ*
yathā pasādanaṁ janō
tattha yō maṅku bhavati
parēsaṁ pānabhōjanē
na sō divā vā rattiṁ vā
samādhiṁ adhigacchati. (18:15)

People give as they have faith,
as they are bright with joyfulness.
Who's troubled over gifts received,
the food and drink that others get,
neither in daytime nor by night
will come to a collected mind.

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THE ENVIOUS ARE NOT AT PEACE

18 (8) The Story of Tissa (Verses 249 & 250)

While residing at Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to Tissa, a young monk.

It is said of the novice Tissa that he used to go about finding fault with the gifts of the householder Anathapindika, and of the female lay disciple Visākhā, and even of the multitude of noble disciples; he even went so far as to find fault with the Gifts beyond Compare. Whenever he received cold food in their refectory, he would complain because it was cold; whenever he received hot food, he would complain because it was hot. Whenever they gave but a little, he would blame them, saying, "Why do they give so very little?" And whenever they gave abundant alms, he would also blame them, saying, "I suppose they had no place in their house to put it;" or, "Surely they should give the monks only so much as they require to support life; so much gruel and boiled rice as this is absolutely wasted." But with reference to his own kinsfolk, he would say, "Oh, the house of our kinsfolk is a veritable tavern for all the monks who come from all the four quarters!" Thus did he sing the praises of his kinsfolk.

Now Tissa was in reality the son of a certain gatekeeper. While accompanying some carpenters on a journey through the country, he retired from the world on his arrival at Sāvatthi and became a monk. When the monks observed that he was thus finding fault with the gifts and other good works of men, they thought to themselves, "Let us find out the truth about him." So they asked him, "Brother, where do your kinsfolk live?" "In such and such a village," replied Tissa. The monks accordingly sent a few novices there to investigate. The novices went there and asked the villagers who provided them with seats and food in the rest-house, "There is a novice named Tissa who came from this village and retired from the world; who are his kinsfolk?" Thought the villagers, "There is no youth who has left any gentleman's household in this village and retired from the world; what are these novices saying?" So they said to the novices, "Venerables, we have heard of a certain gatekeeper's son who travelled with a company of carpenters and retired from the world; without doubt he is the novice you refer to." When the young monks learned that Tissa had no kinsfolk of consequence there, they returned to Sāvatthi and informed the monks what they had learned, saying, "Venerable, Tissa goes aröund chattering without sufficient cause." The monks reported the matter to the Buddha. Said the Buddha, "Monks, this is not the first time he has gone about uttering words of disparagement and empty boasting; in a previous state of existence also he was a braggart." The Buddha continued, "Monks, if any man is annoyed because others give either little or much, or coarse or fine food, or because they give nothing to him when he has given to others, such a man will not attain Trance or Insight or the Paths and the Fruits." So saying, the Buddha preached the Dhamma by pronouncing these stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 249)

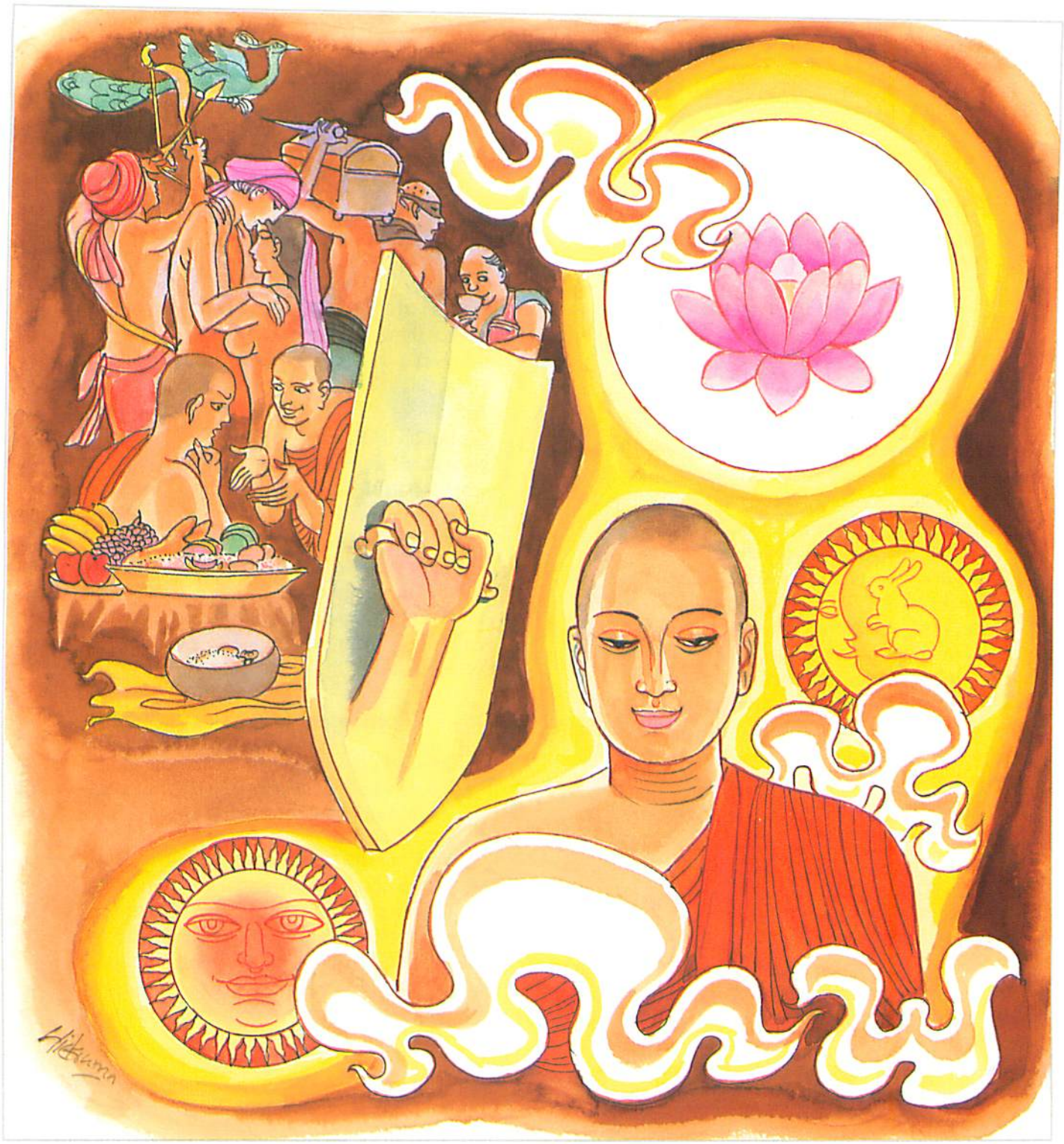
janō vē yathā saddhaṁ yathā pasādanaṁ dadāti
yō paresaṁ tattha pānabhōjanē maṅku bhavati sō
vē divā vā rattiṁ vā samādhiṁ na adhigacchati

janō: people; *vē:* undoubtedly; *yathā saddhaṁ:* in terms of one's faith; *yathā pasādanaṁ:* according to one's pleasure; *dadāti:* give; *yō:* if someone; *parēsaṁ:* others; *tattha pānabhōjanē:* deserved food and drink; *maṅku bhavati:* becomes jealous of; *sō:* he; *vē:* certainly; *divā vā rattiṁ vā:* day or night; *samādhiṁ:* tranquility of mind; *na adhigacchati:* will not have

The people give in terms of the faith they have in the recipient. They give in terms of their pleasure. If one were to be jealous when they receive, food and drink, he will never attain tranquility of mind day or night.

(cont'd on page 535)

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Whoever totally eliminates the aforesaid envy his mind will be tranquil by day and night.

250. *Yassa c'ētaṁ samucchinnaṁ*
mūlaghaccaṁ samūhataṁ
sa vē divā vā rattiṁ vā
samādhiṁ adhigacchati. (18:16)

But who has severed envy's mind,
uprooted it, destroyed entire,
indeed in daytime and by night
will come to a collected mind.

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THE UNENVIOUS ARE AT PEACE

18 (8) The Story Of Tissa (Verses 249 & 250) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 250)

yassa ētaṁ samūcchinnaṁ ca mūlaghaccaṁ
samūhataṁ, sa ve divā vā rattiṁ vā samādhiṁ ad-
higacchati

yassa: if one's; *ētaṁ:* this (jealousy); *samuc-*
chinnaṁ: uproots fully; *ca:* also; *mūlaghaccaṁ:*
eradicates totally; *samūhataṁ:* destroys it; *sa:* he;
divā vā rattiṁ vā: day and night; *samādhiṁ:* tran-
quility; *adhigacchati:* will attain

If someone were to fully uproot and totally eradicate this jealousy, and if it is absolutely destroyed, he will, without any doubt, attain tranquility day or night.

Commentary

samādhim: tranquility of mind. Right concentration *(samādhi)* is a step in the Eight-fold Noble Path. Having the mind fixed to a single object (*cittēkaggatā*, literally means one-pointedness of mind): this is concentration. Right concentration' *(sammāsamādhi)*, in its widest sense, is that kind of mental concentration which is present in every wholesome state of consciousness *(kusala-citta)*, and hence is accompanied by at least right thought (2nd Step), right effort (6th Step) and right mindfulness (7th Step). Wrong concentration is present in unwholesome states of consciousness, and hence is only possible in the sensuous, not in a higher sphere. *Samādhi*, used alone, always stands in the Suttas for *sammā-samādhi*, or right concentration.

The four fundamentals of mindfulness (7th step): these are the objects of concentration. The four great efforts (6th step): these are the requisites for concentration.

The practicing, developing and cultivating of these things: this is the development *(bhāvanā)* of concentration. Right concentration *(sammā-samādhi)* has two degrees of development: (1) neighbourhood concentration' *(upacāra-samādhi)*, which approaches the first absorption without, however, attaining it; (2) attainment concentration *(appanā-samādhi)*, which is the concentration present in the four absorptions *(jhāna)*. These absorptions are mental states beyond the reach of the five-fold sense-activity, attainable only in solitude and by unremitting perseverance in the practice of concentration. In these states all activity of the five senses is suspended. No visual or audible impressions arise at such a time, no bodily feeling is felt. But, although all outer sense-impressions have ceased, yet the mind remains active, perfectly alert, fully awake.

The attainment of these absorptions, however, is not a requisite for the realization of the four supermundane paths of holiness; and neither neighbourhood-concentration nor attainment-concentration, as such, possess the power of conferring entry to the four supermundane paths; hence, they really have no power to free one permanently from evil things. The realization of the four supermundane path is possible only at the moment of deep insight *(vipassanā)* into the impermanency *(aniccatā)*. Miserable nature *(dukkhatā)* and impersonality *(anattatā)* of this whole phenomenal process of existence. This insight, again, is attainable only during neighbourhood-concentration, not during attainment-concentration.

He who has realized one or other of the four supermundane paths without ever having attained the absorptions, is called *sukka-vipassaka*, or *suddha-vipassanāyānika*, i.e., one who has taken merely insight *(vipassanā)* as his vehicle. He, however, who after cultivating the absorptions, has reached one of the supermundane paths, is called *Samatha-yānika*, or one who has taken tranquility *(samatha)* as his vehicle *(yāna)*.

Mental tranquility is brought about by *bhāvanā*-meditation. *Samatha bhāvanā*, the development of mental tranquility with concentration, is accompanied by three benefits; it gives happiness in the present life, a favourable rebirth, and the freedom from mental defilements which is a prerequisite for attainment of insight. In *samatha* the mind becomes like a still, clear pool completely free from disturbance and agitation, and ready to mirror on its surface the nature of things as they really are, the aspect of them which is hidden from ordinary knowledge by the restlessness of craving. It is the peace and fulfillment which is depicted on the features of the Buddha, investing His images with a significance that impresses even those who have no knowledge of what it means. Such an image of the Buddha can itself be a very suitable object of meditation, and is, in fact, the one that most Buddhists instinctively use. The very sight of the tranquil Buddha image can calm and pacify a mind distraught with worldly hopes and fears. It is the certain and visible assurance of Nibbāna.

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Lust the fiercest fire; hate the tightest grip, delusion the worst trap, craving the worst flood.

251. *Natthi rāgasamō aggi*
natthi dōsasamō gahō
natthi mōhasamaṁ jālaṁ
natthi taṇhāsamā nadī. (18:17)

There is no fire like lust,
nought seizes like aversion,
unequalled is delusion's net,
no river's like to craving.

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CRAVING IS THE WORST FLOOD

18 (9) The Story of Five Lay-Disciples (Verse 251)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to five lay-disciples.

The story goes that these five men went to the monastery desiring to hear the Dhamma, and having saluted the Buddha, sat down respectfully on one side. Now in the case of the Buddhas, no such thought ever enters their mind as the following, "This man is a Khattiya, this man is a Brahman, this is a rich man, this is a poor man; I will preach the Dhamma to this man in such wise as to exalt him; I will not do so, however, in the case of this other man." It matters not with reference to what subject the Buddhas preach the Dhamma. They place reverence for the Dhamma before all else, and preach the Dhamma as though they were bringing down the Celestial River from the sky.

But though the Buddha preached the Dhamma in this wise to the five men who sat about him, one of them was asleep while sitting, the second one was drawing lines with his fingers on the ground, the third was trying to shake a tree, the fourth was looking up at the sky. The fifth was the only one who was respectfully and attentively listening to the Buddha. Venerable Ānanda, who was near the Buddha fanning him saw the different behaviour of the five disciples and said to the Buddha, "Venerable Sir! While you were expounding the Dhamma like big drops of rain falling from the sky, only one out of those five people was listening attentively." Then Venerable Ānanda described the different behaviour of the other four to the Buddha and asked why they were behaving thus.

The Buddha then explained to Venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, these people could not get rid of their old habits. In their past existences, the first one was a snake; as a snake usually coils itself up and goes to sleep, so also, this man goes to sleep while listening to the Dhamma. The one who was scratching the earth with his hand was an earthworm, the one who was shaking the tree was a monkey, the one who was gazing up at the sky was an astronomer and the one who was listening attentively to the Dhamma was a learned astrologer. In this connection, Ānanda, you must remember that one must be attentive to be able to understand the Dhamma and that there are many people who cannot follow what was being said."

Venerable Ānanda then asked the Buddha, "Venerable Sir! What are the things that prevent people from being able to take in the Dhamma? And the Buddha replied. "Ānanda, they are unable to do so by reason of lust, by reason of hatred, by reason of delusion. For there is no fire like the fire of lust, consuming living beings as it does, without leaving so much as ashes behind. To be sure, the world-conflagration which closes an epoch burns up the world without leaving anything behind, but this is a fire which breaks out only on the appearance of the seven suns, and this fire burns only at times and at seasons. But as for the fire of lust, there is no time when the fire of lust does not burn. Therefore, I say that there is no fire like the fire of lust, no grip like hatred, no snare like delusion, and no river like Craving." At the end of the discourse, the one who was listening attentively attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 251)

rāgasamō aggi natthi, dōsasamō gahō natthi,
mōhasamaṁ jālaṁ natthi, taṇhāsamā nadī natthi

rāgasamō: comparable to lust; *aggi:* a fire; *natthi:* there is not; *dōsasamō:* comparable to hatred; *gahō:* a grip; *natthi:* there is not; *mōhasamaṁ:* comparable to ignorance; *jālaṁ:* a net; *natthi:* there is not; *taṇhāsaṁā:* comparable to desire; *nadī:* a river; *natthi:* there is not

There is no fire like passion. There is no grip like hatred. There is no net like ignorance. There is no torrent like craving.

Commentary

rāgasamō, dōsasamō, mōhasamaṁ, tanhāsamā: All the main blemishes of the human mind are compared to various disasters that affect man. Lust *(rāgō)* is compared to fire. Hatred *(dōsa)* is thought of as a grip. Ignorance *(mōha)* is compared to a net. Craving *(taṇhā)* is compared to a furious flood: this enables people to understand mental blemishes in physical terms.

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Easy to detect are others' faults. One's own one hides like a crafty gambler his losing die.

252. *Sudassaṁ vajjaṁ aññēsaṁ*
attanō pana duddasaṁ
parēsaṁ hi sō vajjāni
ōpuṇāti yathābhusaṁ
attanō pana chādēti
kaliṁ'va kitavā saṭhō. (18:18)

Others' faults are easy to see
yet hard it is to see one's own,
and so one winnows just like chaff
the faults of other people, while
hiding away those of one's own
as crafty cheat the losing throw.

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EASY TO SEE ARE THE FAULTS OF OTHERS

18 (10) The Story of Meṇḍaka the Rich Man (Verse 252)

While residing near the town of Bhaddiya, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the renowned rich man Meṇḍaka and his family.

Once, during his tour of Anga and Uttara regions, the Buddha saw in his vision that time was ripe for Meṇḍaka, his wife, his son, his daughter-in-law, his granddaughter and his servant, to attain sōtāpatti fruition. Seeing the prospect of these six people attaining sōtāpatti fruition, the Buddha went to the town of Bhaddiya.

Meṇḍaka was an extremely rich man. It was said that he found a large number of life-size golden statues of goats in his backyard. For this reason, he was known as Meṇḍaka (a goat) the rich man. Again, it was also said that during the time of Vipassi Buddha he had donated a monastery for Vipassi Buddha and a congregation hall complete with a platform for the preacher. On completion of these buildings he made offerings of alms-food to Vipassi Buddha and the monks for four months. Then, in yet another of his past existences, when he was a rich man in Bārānasī, there was a famine throughout the region. One day, they had cooked a meal just enough for the members of the family when a paccēkabuddha stood at the door for alms-food. then and there he offered all the food. But due to his great faith and generosity, the rice pot was later found to be miraculously filled up again; so also were his granaries.

Meṇḍaka and his family, hearing that the Buddha was coming to Bhaddiya, went to pay homage to him. On the way he met a number of heretics who said to him, "Householder, how is it that you, who believe in the Activity of Souls, go to the hermit Gōtama, who does not?" Thus did the heretics seek to dissuade him from his purpose. But instead of paying any attention to them, he went and saluted the Buddha and seated himself respectfully on one side. Thereupon the Buddha preached the Dhamma to him in orderly sequence. After hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, Meṇḍaka, his wife Candapadumā, his son Dhananjaya, his daughter-in-law Sumanādēvi, his granddaughter Visākhā and the servant Puṇṇa attained sōtāpatti fruition. Meṇḍaka then told the Buddha how, on his way, some ascetics had spoken ill of the Buddha and had tried to dissuade him from coming to see him. The Buddha then said, "My disciple, it is natural for people not to see one's own faults, and to exaggerate other people's faults and failings."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 252)

aññēsaṁ vajjaṁ sudassaṁ attanō pana duddasaṁ hi sō parēsaṁ vajjāni bhusaṁ yathā ōpuṇāti kaliṁ kitavā saṭhō iva attanō pana chādēti

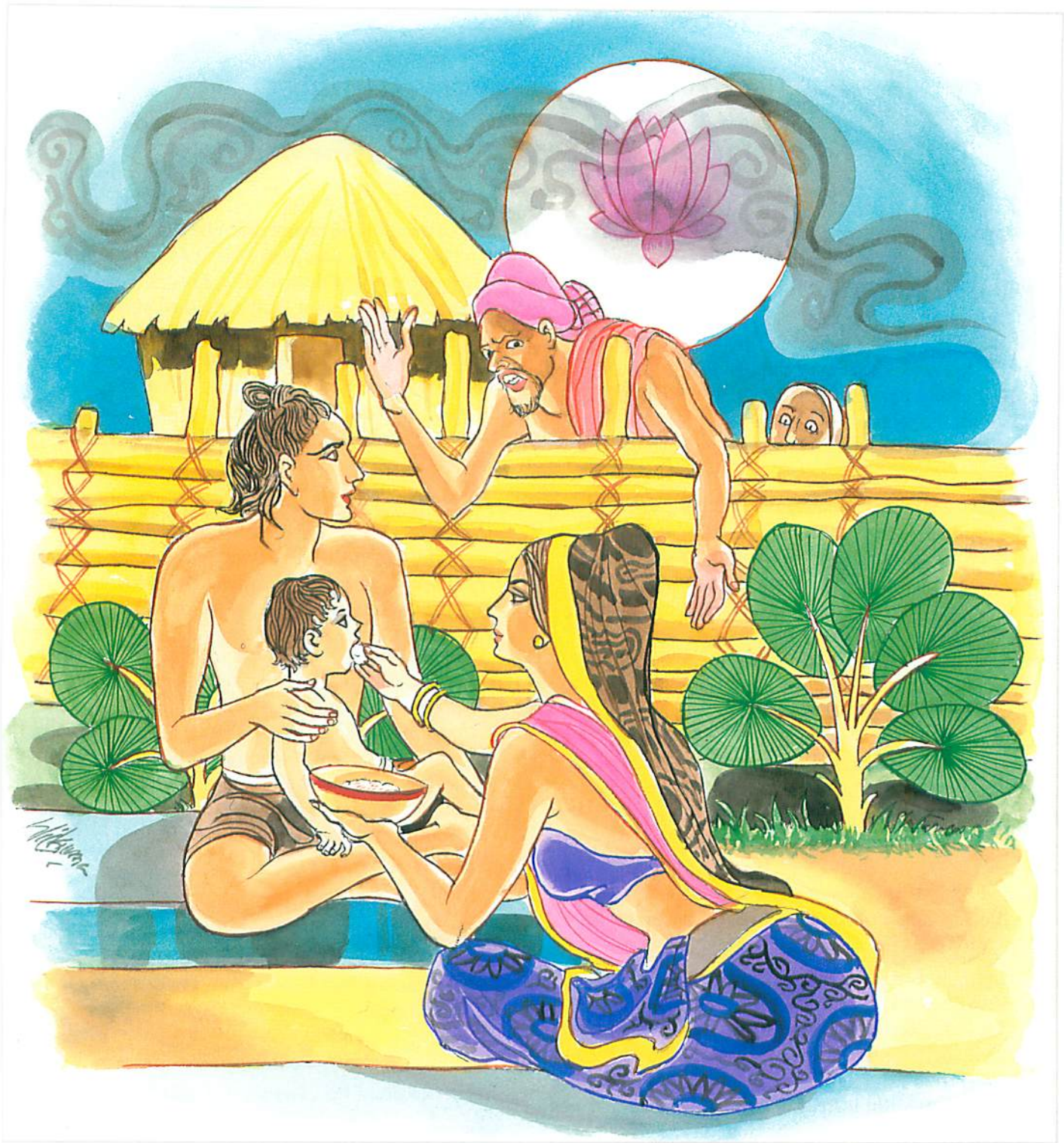
aññēsaṁ: others'; *vajjaṁ:* fault; *sudassaṁ:* easy to see; *attanō pana:* but one's own (fault); *duddasaṁ:* is difficult to see; *hi:* so it is; *sō:* he; *parēsaṁ:* others'; *vajjāni:* faults; *bhusaṁ yathā:* like chaff; *ōpuṇāti:* winnows into prominence; *kaliṁ:* one's own body; *kitavā:* with leafs and branches camouflaging; *saṭhō iva:* like the bird hunter; *attanō pana:* one's own faults; *chādēti:* conceals

The faults of others are clearly observed. But one's own faults are difficult to see. A person winnows the faults of others into prominence, like chaff. He hides his own like the bird-hunter who conceals himself with leaves and twigs.

Commentary

kitavā: camouflage. Here, the image of a bird-hunter *(sathō)* covering himself with twigs and branches to conceal his presence from birds, is used. In the same way the evil person, too, camouflages his intentions to deceive others.

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Detecting and protesting over others' faults, one never rids one's own. Far from release is he.

253. *Paravajjānupassissa*
niccaṁ ujjhānasaññinō
āsavā tassa vaḍḍhanti
ārā sō āsavakkhayā. (18:19)

Who's always seeing other's faults,
taking offence, censorious,
pollutions spread for such a one
who's far from their exhaustion.

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SEEING OTHERS' FAULTS

18 (11) The Story of Venerable Ujjhānasaññī (Verse 253)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Ujjhānasaññī.

Venerable Ujjhānasaññī was always finding fault with and speaking ill of others. Other monks reported about him to the Buddha. The Buddha replied to them, "Monks, if someone finds fault with another so as to teach him in good ways it is not an act of evil and is therefore not to be blamed. But, if someone is always finding fault with others and speaking ill of them just out of spite and malice, he will not attain concentration and mental absorption (jhāna). He will not be able to understand the Dhamma, and moral intoxicants (āsavas) will increase in him.

Then the Buddha pronounced this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 253)

paravajjānupassissa niccaṁ ujjhānasaññinō tassa āsavā vaḍḍhanti sō āsavakkhayā ārā

paravajjānupassissa: those who are given to the habit of observing faults of others; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *ujjhānasaññinō:* deride other; *tassa:* his; *āsavā:* taints; *vaḍḍhanti:* grow; *sō:* he; *āsavakkhayā:* from the sate of taintlessness; *ārā:* is far away.

There are those who are given to the habit of observing the faults of others. They deride others constantly. Their taints keep on thriving, and are far away from the state of taintlessness.

Commentary

ujjhānasaññinō: tending to divide others. The name of the Venerable in the story derives from his personal weakness in finding fault with others, merely to destroy others.

paravajjānupassissa: those who are given to the habit of observing the faults of others. This is a shortcoming of most men. It is almost a by-product of worldly life. In day to day life, much unhappiness is caused by this habit. This habit arises partly due to the inclination of some to be talkative. When they talk without inhibition, fault-finding too happens.

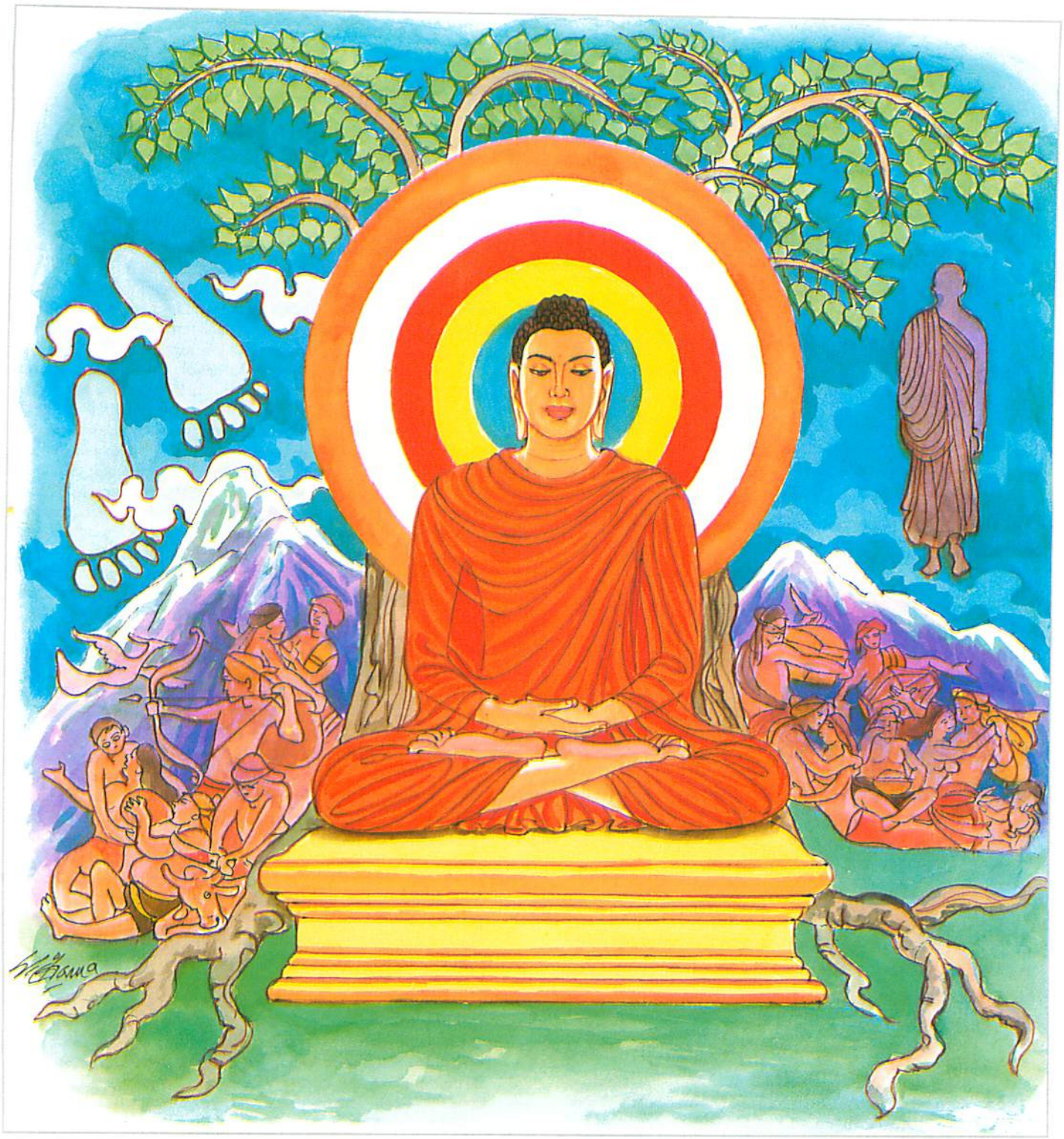
> "Much talking is a source of danger,
> Through silence misfortune is avoided,
> The talkative parrot in a cage is shut,
> While birds that cannot talk fly freely."
> (Tibetan Yōga)

How often do we speak deliberately? How often do we know what we are going to say before words have come tumbling out of our mouths? And sometimes we can even surprise ourselves by what we have said as much as we may have surprised and shocked the person to whom we were talking. And quite often we wish we had not said something after we have said it. But then it is too late, for words that have once come out can never be withdrawn in again, even though we may apologize for them and retract them. For they have been expressed and there they abide forever. The sound vibrations made by our vocal cords have become something in the world, part of the world. Some people believe that the same is true of thought; that a thought once made, whether good or bad, never disappears out of existence again. This is a very serious idea when we remember how lightly we utter words in anger, dislike, contempt or unkindness, and these words are conditioned reflexes. An even occurs that annoys us and before we are aware of it certain angry words have tumbled out. And the next stage, of course, after noticing what we are saying is to notice what we are thinking, for we must think before we speak, although generally the thought is so rapid as to merge itself with the words. The injunction we often hear from grown ups to "Think before you speak!" (although they seldom do so themselves) means to slow up the rate of our replies so that we know our thought before we express it aloud; then we know what we are saying. If you can form the habit of noticing what you are saying and if you think about it you will soon be able to see what sort of remarks come out the most rapidly and the most violently, the ones that hurt other people the most. When you reason something out you have to think and therefore speak slowly, but when your emotions are aroused, when you feel anger or dislike or pity or sorrow or resentment, then your emotions (whose centre is the middle of the brain) send their direction to the tongue and rapid, violent words pour forth before you can stop them. Thoughts controlled mean words controlled and words controlled mean actions controlled, for angry words are often followed by blows, and control of words and actions means that you cannot be provoked into a fight and perhaps into drawing a knife and doing someone serious injury. Indeed, it is quite good fun trying to see the effect you produce on someone by refusing to allow yourself to be provoked. They tend to get more and more infuriated because they are trying to anger you and just cannot do it. Then you can watch and see how silly people look when they are losing their tempers, and you will know how silly you would look when you lose yours. So remember the tongue is really your servant and you are its master, and it should therefore say what you want it to say and not run off on its own as it does so often. For, unfortunately, with most of us, its our tongue that is master of us and we are its slaves, and we have to listen to what it speaks in our name, and we seem unable to stop it wagging.

> "One does not become a wise man just by talking a lot,
> neither is he versed in the doctrine because he speaks much."
> (Buddha)

Sometimes it is very difficult to find out the truth through arguments. one who possesses oratorical power, could twist and hide the facts for his own sake and could easily run down on other's point of view. Especially heated arguments never bring any good results. one who wants to know the real facts, must think quietly and discuss with others calmly and gently. The truth will never come out through heated arguments, or by hurting the feelings of others; because everybody tries to defend his own prestige even though he knows he is in the wrong.

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The skies are free of foot-prints. While worldlings tarry, the liberated brook no delay.

254. *Ākāsē padaṁ natthi*
samaṇō natthi bāhirē
papañcābhiratā pajā
nippapañcā Tathāgatā. (18:20)

In skies above there is no path,
no peaceful one's without,
in manifoldness do folk delight,
Tathagatas are manifold-free.

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NOTHING IS ETERNAL OTHER THAN NIBBĀNA

18 (12) The Story of Subhadda the Wandering Ascetic (Verses 254 & 255)

While residing at the Sal Forest of the Mallās at Upavattana in the city of Kusinārā, the Buddha spoke these Verses just before Parinibbāna (The Great Demise) in reply to the question raised by Subhadda the wandering ascetic.

The story goes that in times long past, when Subhadda's younger brother gave alms nine times of the first-fruits of a certain crop, Subhadda himself had no desire to give alms and refused, but in the end did give alms. As a result of this, he failed to see the Buddha both in the First Period of Enlightenment and in the Second. In the Last Period of Enlightenment, however, when the Buddha was come to the time of the Great Decease, he thought to himself, "I have entertained doubts on three points and have asked the old monks to resolve my doubts for me. But because I have looked upon the monk Gōtama as a novice, I have never asked him. Now, however, the time of his Great Decease is come, and if I do not ask him now, I may be sorry hereafter." Accordingly, he approached the Buddha.

Venerable Ānanda sought to prevent him. But the Buddha gave him leave to approach, saying to the Venerable, "Ānanda, do not keep Subhadda away; let him ask me his question." Therefore, Subhadda entered within the curtain, seated himself at the foot of the bed, and asked the Buddha the following questions, "Sir monk, is there such a thing as a path through the air? Can one be called a monk who is an outsider? Are the Aggregates eternal?" Thereupon the Buddha informed him that these things have no real existence, expounding the Dhamma in these stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 254)

ākāsē padaṁ natthi, bāhirē samaṇō natthi, pajā papañcābhiratā, Tathāgatā nippapañcā

ākāsē: in the sky; *padaṁ natthi:* footsteps are not seen; *bāhirē:* outside; *samaṇō:* monks; *natthi:* are not found; *pajā:* the masses; *papañcābhiratā:* are engulfed in worldly attractions; *Tathāgatā:* the Buddhas; *nippapañcā:* are totally bereft of worldly pre-occupations

In the skies, there are no footsteps that can be discerned. In the same way, outside the Buddhist system, there are no persons that could be discerned as Samaṇās — monks. The ordinary masses are assailed by worldly hindrances. But the Buddhas are not affected by those hindrances.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 255)

ākāsē padaṁ natthi bāhirē samaṇō natthi, sassatā saṅkhārā natthi Buddhānaṁ iñjitaṁ natthi

ākāsē: in the sky; *padaṁ natthi:* footsteps are not seen; *bāhirē:* outside; *samaṇō:* monks; *natthi:* are not found; *sassatā:* eternity; *saṅkhārā:* of the component thing; *natthi:* there is not; *Buddhānaṁ:* for the Buddha; *iñjitaṁ:* agitation or anxiety; *natthi:* there is not

In the skies, there are no footsteps that can be discerned. In the same way, outside the Buddhist system there are no persons who could be described as Samaṇas-bhikkhus. No component thing is eternal. The Buddha has no agitation or anxiety.

Commentary

Ascetic Subhadda. The last personal convert of the Buddha was Ascetic Subhadda. He has a significant place in the history of Buddhism on account of that fact. At the time of the Buddha's Parinibbāna a wandering Ascetic, named Subhadda, was living at Kusinārā. He heard the news that the Ascetic Gōtama would attain Parinibbāna in the last watch of the night. And he thought, "I have heard grown-up and elderly teachers, and their teachers, the wandering ascetics, say that seldom and very seldom, indeed, do Exalted, Fully Enlightened arahats arise in this world. Tonight in the last watch the Ascetic Gōtama will attain Parinibbāna. A doubt has arisen in me, and I have confidence in the ascetic Gōtama. Capable, indeed, is the ascetic Gōtama to teach the doctrine so that I may dispel my doubt."

samaṇō natthi bāhirē: Outside the Dispensation *(sāsana)* of the Buddha.

Here *samaṇa* refers to Saints who have realized the four Paths and four Fruits. They are the Ariya Saints who have attained Nibbāna.

There is no single impediment such as craving, pride and so on, by means of which the Buddhas regard the conditioned things as eternal.

(cont'd on page 545)

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Skies are free of foot-prints. Conditioned things never eternal. Buddhas know no agitation.

255. *Ākāsē padaṁ natthi*
samaṇō natthi bāhirē
saṅkhārā sassatā natthi
natthi Buddhānamiñjitaṁ. (18:21)

In skies above there is no path,
no peaceful one's without,
nothing conditioned ever lasts,
no Buddha's ever shaken.

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THE BUDDHA HAS NO ANXIETY

18 (12) The Story of Subhadda the Wandering Ascetic (Verses 254 & 255) (cont'd)

Thereupon Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, went to Upavattana Sāla grove of the Mallās where the Venerable Ānanda was, and approaching him spoke as follows: "I have heard grown-up and elderly teachers and their teachers, the wandering ascetics, say that seldom, and very seldom, indeed, do exalted, fully enlightened arahats arise in this world. Tonight in the last watch of the Ascetic Gōtama will attain Parinibbāna. A doubt has arisen in me, and I have confidence in the Ascetic Gōtama. Capable, indeed, is the Ascetic Gōtama to teach the doctrine so that I may dispel my doubts. Shall I, O Ānanda, obtain a glimpse of the Ascetic Gōtama?"

"Enough, friend Subhadda, do not worry the Buddha. The Buddha is wearied," said the Venerable Ānanda.

For the second and third time Subhadda repeated his request, and for the second and third time Venerable Ānanda replied in the same manner.

The Buddha heard the conversation between the Venerable Ānanda and Subhadda, and addressing Ānanda, said: "Nay, Ānanda, do not prevent Subhadda. Let Subhadda, O Ānanda, behold the Accomplished One. Whatsoever Subhadda will ask of me, all that will be with the desire for knowledge, and not to annoy me. And whatever I shall say in answer he will readily understand."

Thereupon the Venerable Ānanda introduced Subhadda to the Buddha. Subhadda exchanged friendly greetings with the Buddha and sitting aside said, "There are these ascetics and priests, O Gōtama, who are leaders of companies and congregations, who are heads of sects and are well-known, renowned religious teachers, esteemed as good men by the multitude, as, for instance, Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhalī Gōsāla, Ajita Kēsakambali, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta, Niganṭha Nāthaputta — have they all, as they themselves claim, thoroughly understood the Truth or not, or have some of them understood, and some not?"

"Let it be, O Subhadda! Trouble not yourself as to whether all or some have realized it or not. I shall teach the doctrine to you. Listen and bear it well in mind. I shall speak." "So be it, Lord!" replied Subhadda.

The Buddha spoke as follows: "In whatever Dispensation there exists not the Noble Eight-fold Path, neither is the First Samana, nor the Second, nor the Third, nor the Fourth to be found therein. In whatever Dispensation, O Subhadda, there exists the Noble Eight-fold Path, there also are to be found the First Samaṇa, the Second Samaṇa, the Third Samaṇa, the Fourth Samaṇa. In this Dispensation, O Subhadda, there exists the Noble Eight-fold Path.

"Here, indeed, are found the First Samaṇa, the Second Samaṇa, the Third Samaṇa, and the Fourth Samaṇa. The other foreign schools are empty of Samaṇas. If, O Subhadda, the disciples live rightly, the world would not be void of arahats. My age was twenty-nine when I went forth as a seeker after what is good. Now one and fifty years are gone since I was ordained. Outside this fold there is not a single ascetic who acts even partly in accordance with this realizable doctrine."

Thereupon Subhadda spoke to the Buddha as follows: "Excellent, Lord, excellent! It is as if, O Lord, a man were to set upright that which was overturned, or were to reveal that which was hidden, or were to point the way to one who has gone astray, or were to hold a lamp amidst the darkness, so that whoever has eyes may see, even so has the doctrine been expounded in various ways by the Buddha. And I, Lord, seek refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Sangha. May I receive the Lesser and the Higher Ordination in the presence of the Buddha!"

"Whoever, Subhadda," said the Buddha, "being already committed to the other doctrines desires the Lesser and the Higher Ordination, remains on probation for four months. At the end of four months, the disciples approving, he is ordained and raised to the status of a monk. Nevertheless, on understanding, I make the individual exception."

Then said Subhadda, "If, Lord, those already committed to other doctrines, who desire the Lesser and the Higher Ordination in this Dispensation, remain on probation for four months, I too will remain on probation; and after the lapse of that period, the disciples approving, let me be received into the Sangha and raised to the status of a monk."

Thereupon the Buddha addressed Ānanda and said, "Then, Ānanda, you may ordain Subhadda." "So be it, Lord!" replied Ānanda.

And Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, spoke to the Venerable Ānanda as follows, "It is a gain to you, O Venerable Ānanda! It is indeed a great gain to you, for you have been anointed by the anointment of discipleship in the presence of the Buddha by Himself." Subhadda received in the presence of the Buddha the Lesser and the Higher Ordination.

And in no long time after his Higher Ordination, the Venerable Subhadda, living alone, remote from men, strenuous, energetic, and resolute, realized, in this life itself, by his own intuitive knowledge, the consummation of that incomparable Life of Holiness, and lived abiding in that state for the sake of which sons of noble families rightly leave the householder's life for the homeless life. He perceived that rebirth was ended, completed was the Holy Life, that after this life there was none other.

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Salvation without God

For the first time in the history of the world, Buddha proclaimed a salvation, which each man could gain for himself and by himself in this world during this life, without the least help from a personal God or Gods. He strongly inculcated the doctrine of self-reliance, of purity, of courtesy, of enlightenment, of peace and of universal love. He strongly urged the necessity of knowledge, for without wisdom psychic insight could not be got in this life.

Prof. Eliot, "Buddhism and Hinduism"

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Chapter 19

DHAMMAṬṬHA VAGGA

Established in Dhamma

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An upholder of justice judges not in haste. The wise judge with care the right from wrong.

256. *Na tēna hōti dhammaṭṭhō*
yēn'atthaṁ sahasā nayē
yō ca atthaṁ anatthaṁ ca
ubhō niccheyya paṇḍitō. (19:1)

Whoever judges hastily
does Dhamma not uphold,
a wise one should investigate
truth and untruth both.

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DHAMMAṬṬHA VAGGA (Established in Dhamma)
THE JUST AND THE IMPARTIAL ARE THE BEST JUDGES

19 (1) The Story of the Judge (Verses 256 & 257)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some judges who were corrupt.

On a certain day the monks made their alms-round in a settlement at the north gate of Sāvatthi, and returning from their pilgrimage to the monastery, passed through the center of the city. At that moment, a cloud came up, and the rain began to fall. Entering a hall of justice opposite, they saw lords of justice taking bribes and depriving lawful owners of their property. Seeing this, they thought, "Ah, these men are unrighteous! Until now we supposed they rendered righteous judgments." When the rain was over, they went to the monastery, saluted the Buddha, and sitting respectfully on one side, informed him of the incident. Said the Buddha, "Monks, they that yield to evil desires and decide a cause by violence, are not properly called justices; they only that penetrate within a wrong and without violence render judgement according to the wrong committed, are properly called justices."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 256)

yēna atthaṁ sahasā nayē tēna dhammaṭṭhō na hōti paṇḍitō yō ca atthaṁ ca anatthaṁ ca ubhō niccheyya

yēna: if for some reason; *atthaṁ:* the meaning; *sahasā nayē:* falsely adjudged; *tēna:* by that; *dhammaṭṭhō:* based on justice; *na hōti:* he is not; *paṇḍitō:* the wise person; *yō ca:* in his way; *atthaṁ ca:* justice; *anatthañca:* and the injustice; *ubhō:* these two; *niccheyya:* decides

If for some reason someone were to judge what is right and wrong, arbitrarily, that judgement is not established on righteousness. But, the wise person judges what is right and what is wrong discriminately, without prejudice.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 257)

asāhasēna dhammēna samēna parē nayatī dhammassa guttō mēdhāvī dhammaṭṭhitō ti pavuccati

Glossary (Verse 257)

asāhasēna: without being arbitrary; *dhammēna:* righteously; *samēna:* impartially; *parē:* others; *nayatī:* judges; *dhammassa:* by the law of righteousness; *guttō:* protected; *mēdhāvī:* that wise person; *dhammaṭṭhitō ti:* one established in the righteous; *pavuccati:* is called

That wise person, who dispenses justice and judges others, impartially, without bias, non-arbitrarily, is guarded by and is in accordance with the Law of Righteousness. Such a person is described as well established in the Dhamma.

Commentary

dhammaṭṭhitō: one who is established in righteousness. The Buddha has always made it clear that an intellectual appreciation of the intricacies of the Dhamma is not all fruitful unless one is firmly established in the Dhamma — to say one should organize his style of life in accordance with the Dhamma. At this stage, it is essential to know what is the word of the Buddhas.

If one wishes to know what were the words of the Buddha Himself, then the books about Buddhism will not suffice and one should turn to the records of His Teachings collected in the Pāli canon. This canonical collection of the Buddha word cannot be compressed into one handy volume although there are many brief formulations of the Dhamma from different points of view. As the Buddha taught for forty-five years, so the records of His Dhamma and the Vinaya are compendious.

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(cont'd on page 551)

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Cautious and just, with fairness he leads. Guarded by Dhamma, Dhamma-dweller he's called.

257. *Asāhasēna dhammēna*
samēna nayatī parē
dhammassa guttō mēdhāvī
dhammaṭṭhō'ti pavuccati. (19:2)

Who others guides impartially
with carefulness, with Dhamma,
that wise one Dhamma guards,
a 'Dhamma-holder's' called.

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FIRMLY ROOTED IN THE LAW

19 (1) The Story of the Judge (Verses 256 & 257) (cont'd)

Commentary

The Pāli canon was codified in the first council after the Buddha's passing *(parinibbāna)*. A few items have been added at later dates. This canon was then transmitted by memorizers — monks who learnt portions of the discourses by heart from their Teachers, and in turn transmitted the memorized text to their monk-pupils. This verbal transmission lasted for about four hundred years. Many brahmins trained in the art of committing texts to memory became monks and faithfully transmitted the canon in Pāli language until the time of the fourth council in Sri Lanka.

Due to the disturbed conditions of those times, the senior monks decided to commit the whole canon to writing. They assembled for this purpose and wrote the Buddha's word using the metal stylus to inscribe ola palm leaves. Since that time the canon has been copied using the same materials until printed editions began to appear at the end of the nineteenth century. The first complete printed edition was published by order of King Rāma the Fifth (Chulalongkorn) using the Thai script.

In the West, the Pāli Text Society was founded by T. W. Rhys Davids in 1881, for the publication of the entire canon in Latin-script. This is now complete and most of it has also been translated into English and published by that society.

The canon is composed of the following sections and subsections. The renderings in English of the Pāli names for them are the titles of the published translations of the Pāli Text Society (PTS) unless otherwise stated.

I. *Vinaya-Pitaka:* "The Book of the Discipline" (lit.: Volume of Discipline) six books in complete translation.
(1) *Bhikkhu-vibhanga* — the matrix of discipline for monks.
(2) *Bhikkhunī-vibhanga* — the matrix of discipline for nuns.
(3) *Mahāvagga* — the great collection of miscellaneous disciplines.
(4) *Cullavagga* — the lesser collection of miscellaneous disciplines.
(5) *Parivāra* — a summary composed in Sri Lanka.
Bhikkhu-pātimokkha — the two hundred and twenty-seven fundamental training rules for a monk (published by Mahamakut Press, Bangkok).

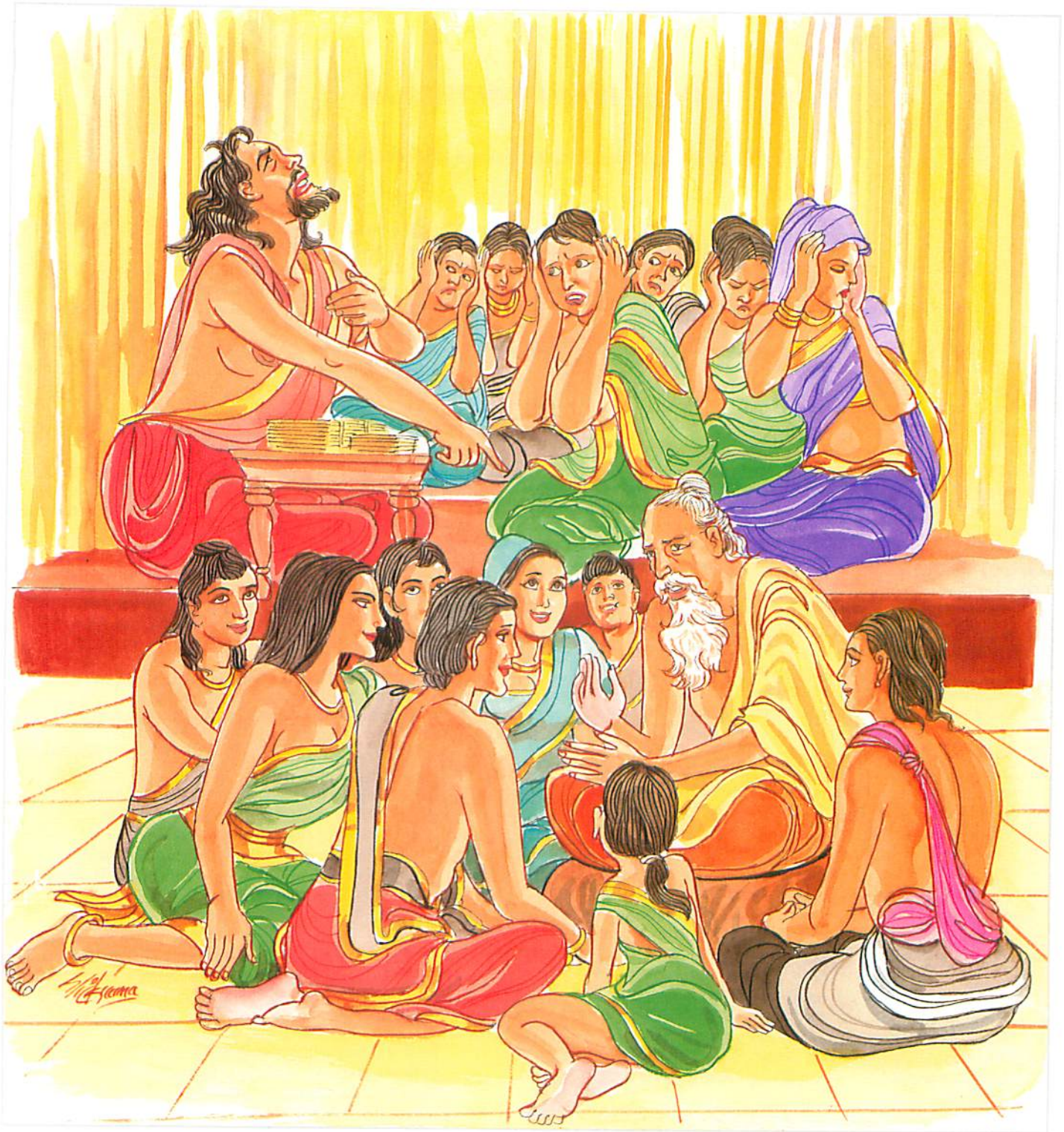
II. *Sutta-Pitaka:* (lit.: The Volume of Discourses)
(1) *Dīgha-nikāya* — "Dialogues of the Buddha" (lit.: The Extended Collection) 3 books containing 34 long discourses.
(2) *Majjhima-nikāya* — "Middle Length Sayings" (lit.: The Middle-length Collection) 3 books containing 152 discourses of medium length.
(3) *Saṁyutta-nikāya* — "Kindred Sayings" (lit.: The Related Collection) 5 books containing 7762 discourses arranged by subjects.
(4) *Anguttara-nikāya* — "Gradual Sayings" (lit.: The One-further Collection) 5 books 9557 discourses arranged in numerical groups from one to eleven.
(5) *Khuddaka-nikāya* — "Minor Anthologies" (lit.: Minor Collection) composed of fifteen separate works:
(i) *Khuddakapātha* — "Minor Readings" (and Illustrator — its commentary). A brief handbook of essentials.
(ii) *Dhammapada* — (many illustrations) 26 Chapters containing 423 inspiring Verses.
(iii) *Udāna* — "Verses of Uplift" — inspired utterances.
(iv) *Itivuttaka* — "As it was said" — a collection of short discourses.
(v) *Sutta-nipāta* — "Woven Cadences" — mostly discourses in verse.
(vi) *Vimānavatthu* — "Stories of the Mansions" — accounts of the heavens.
(vii) *Pētavatthu* — "Stories of the Departed" — accounts of the ghosts.
(viii) *Thēragāthā* "Psalms of the Brethren" — "The Venerables' Verses" — inspired verse spoke by enlightened monks.
(ix) *Therīgāthā* — "Psalms of the Sisters" — the same for nuns.
(x) *Jātaka* — "Jataka Stories" — 550 past lives of the Buddha in three books (only verses are canonical, stories are commentary).
(xi) *Niddēsa* — ancient commentary on (v) above.
(xii) *Patisambhidāmagga* — analytical work.
(xiii) *Apadāna* — no English translation of these past lives of disciples.
(xiv) *Buddhavaṁsa* — 2 translations "The Lineage of the Buddhas", "The Chronicle of the Buddhas".
(xv) *Cariyā-piṭaka* — 'The Collection of Ways of Conduct'

III. *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka:* (lit.: The Volume of Further Teachings) 5 books in translation so far.
(1) *Dhammasanganī* — 'Buddhist Psychological Ethics'.
(2) *Vibhanga* — 'The Book of Analysis'.
(3) *Dhātukathā* — 'The Discourse on Elements'.
(4) *Puggalapaññatti* — 'A Designation of Human Types'.
(5) *Kathāwatthu*: 'Points of Controversy' added at the Third Council
(6) *Yamaka* — Pairs.
(7) *Paṭṭhāna* — 'Conditional Relations'

But for the practice and penetration of the Dhamma it is not necessary to read all the Buddha's words and the extensive commentaries, though in some cases it may remain useful. The Buddha has said:

> Better the single Dhamma Word
> by hearing which one dwells at peace,
> Than floods of verse as thousand-fold
> profitless and meaningless.
> (Dhammapada Verse, 102)

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Profuse in words, one's not thereby wise. Secure, loving and dauntless, wise he truly is.

258. *Na tēna paṇḍitō hōti*
yāvatā bahu bhāsati
khēmī avērī abhayō
paṇḍitō'ti pavuccati. (19:3)

Just because articulate
one's not thereby wise,
hateless, fearless and secure,
a 'wise one' thus is called.

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WHO SPEAKS A LOT IS NOT NECESSARILY WISE

19 (2) The Story of a Group of Six Monks (Verse 258)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of six monks.

Once, there was a group of six monks who made trouble at the place of eating either in the monastery or in the village. One day, while some sāmanēras were, having their alms-food, the group of six monks came in and said boastfully to the sāmanēras, "Look! We only are the wise." Then they started throwing things about, leaving the place of eating in disorder. When the Buddha was told about this, he said, "Monks! I do not say that one who talks much, abuses and bullies others is a wise man. Only he who is free from hatred, and harms no one is a wise man."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 258)

yāvatā bahu bhāsati tēna paṇḍitō na hōti khēmī
avērī abhayō paṇḍitō iti pavuccati

yāvatā: just because; *bahu bhāsati:* (one) speaks a lot; *tēna:* by that; *paṇḍitō na hōti:* he does not become a wise person; *khēmī:* liberated; *avērī:* not hating; *abhayō:* fearless (person); *paṇḍitō iti:* a wise person; *pavuccati:* is called

A person cannot be described as learned simply because he speaks quite a lot. He who is liberated and secure, non-hating and fearless is described as a learned person.

Commentary

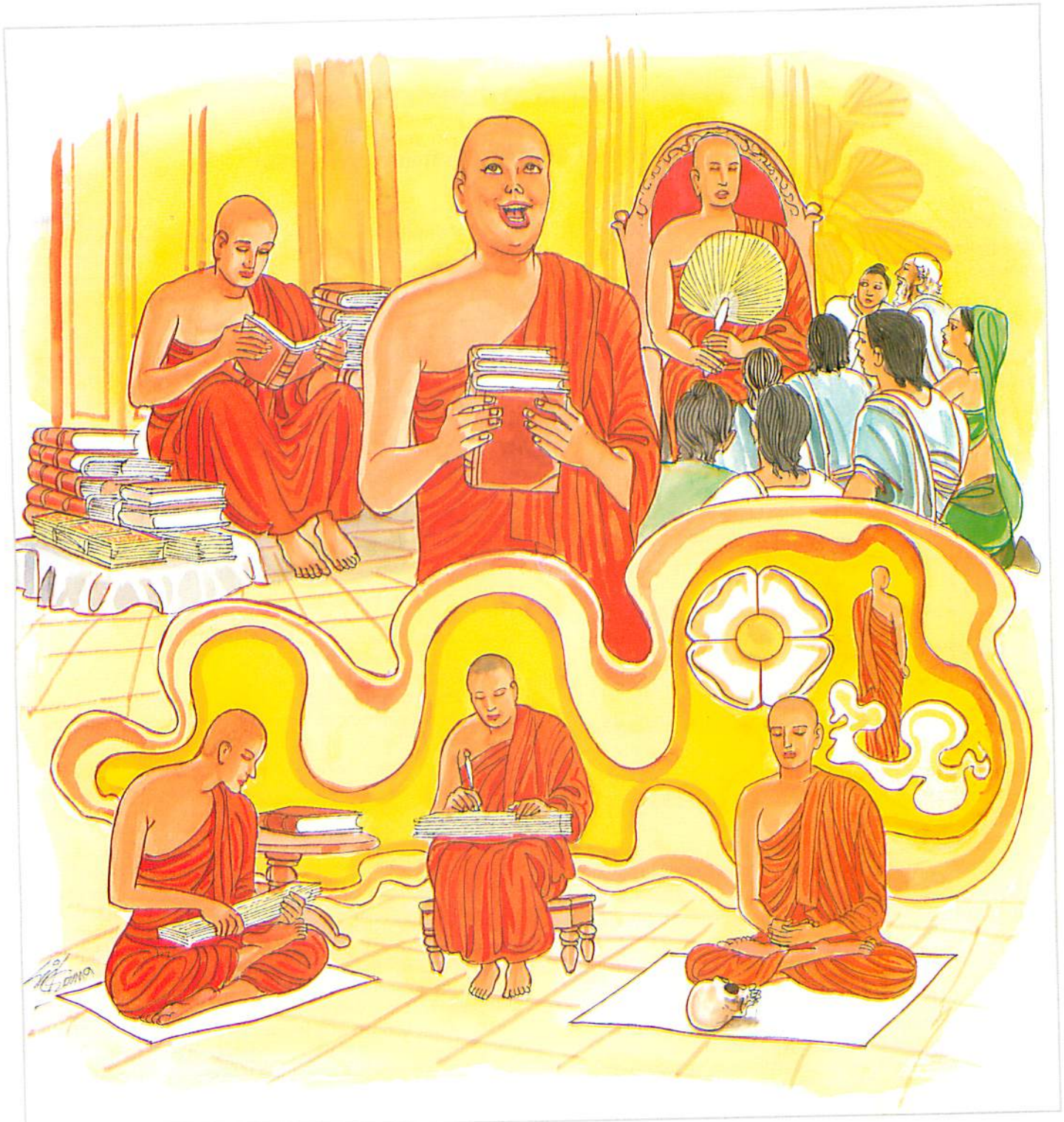
khēmī, avērī, abhayō: liberated, hate-less, fearless. these are the three qualities extolled in this verse. The assiduous cultivation of these virtues will make a man a wise person, but not talkativeness. To discipline the mind in these qualities and to become a true wise man *(panditō)*, one must practice mind training *(bhāvanā)*. The most effective system in this regard is the meditation on *mettā*. The word *'maitrī'* or *mettā* means loving-kindness. Accordingly, the form of meditation which helps one to acquire the ability to consider all beings in this world including animals as one's friends is *mettā bhāvanā*.
May all beings be happy, May all beings be healthy, May all beings be well — Extension of such thoughts towards all beings whether they be relatives or non-relative, friends or enemies, humans or animals is *mettā bhāvanā*. Wishing happiness towards humans alone does not mean *maitrī* in the true sense of the word. True *maitrī* constitutes the wishing of happiness to the entire world including even the smallest of living things. The Buddha is the supreme example of *maitrī* in this world. He has shown *maitrī* equally to all beings of the world, irrespective of their being friends or enemies, humans or non-humans. *Maitrī* is a merit of highest order. It is one of the four sublime states *(brahma vihāra)*. It is one of the perfections *(pāramitā)* for the attainment of supreme enlightenment *(sammā sambōdhi)*. According to the discourse of *khanda sutta* no harm could be caused by serpents or wild animals if loving-kindness is extended towards them.
The benefits of *mettā bhāvanā* are dealt with, in the discourse of the *mettānisamsa*. Therein are given eleven benefits of practicing *mettā bhāvanā*.

(1) Comfortable sleep.
(2) Waking up comfortably.
(3) Not having bad dreams.
(4) Being loved by all humans.
(5) Being loved by deities.
(6) Protection by deities.
(7) Not being subject to danger from fire, poisons and weapons.
(8) Mental Poise.
(9) Brightness of facial complexion.
(10) Ability to face death without fear.
(11) The birth in the brahma world after death for one who has developed concentration and who was not able to attain arahatship in this life.

It is very significant that out of these eleven benefits ten could be obtained in this very life. This meditation is of immense use in order to lead a happy life. The greatest wealth a man could possess is mental peace. The absence of mental peace is mainly due to the presence of enmity in the mind. If this meditation is continued without interruption one can achieve the four transcendental states. As human beings, we are by nature envious of others' happiness and progress. Therefore, to attain real loving kindness is rather difficult. human beings are inclined to be happy about the good fortune of their wives and children. This is not real *mettā* but desire posing as *mettā*. This is a doctrine opposed to *mettā* and this tendency should be discouraged.
The real *mettā* is to wish others happiness without ever expecting even the smallest benefit in return. One should not confuse *Mettā* with the desire to develop the interests of one's own family. In addition, without actually having a feeling of good-will towards all living beings it is meaningless to wish others' health, wealth and happiness. *Mettā bhāvanā* bestows benefits on the person who cultivates *mettā* as well as on the persons towards whom such feeling are directed. Both parties are benefitted only from genuine *mettā*. *Mettā* should be cultivated thus:

Mātā yathā niyaṁ puttaṁ
Āyusā ēkaputtamanurakkhē
Ēvampi sabbabhūtēsu
Mānasambhāvayē aparimānaṁ

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By extent of speech, one's no true Dhamma-liver. Alert in its practice, he's the true liver.

259. *Na tāvatā dhammadharō*
yāvatā bahu bhāsati
yō ca appam'pi sutvāna
dhammaṁ kāyēna passati
sa vē dhammadharō hōti
yō dhammaṁ nappamajjati. (19:4)

Just because articulate
one's not skilled in Dhamma;
but one who's heard even little
and Dhamma in the body sees,
that one is skilled indeed,
not heedless of the Dhamma.

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DHAMMAṬṬHA VAGGA (Established in Dhamma)
THE JUST AND THE IMPARTIAL ARE THE BEST JUDGES

19 (1) The Story of the Judge (Verses 256 & 257)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some judges who were corrupt.

On a certain day the monks made their almsround in a settlement at the north gate of Sāvatthi, and returning from their pilgrimage to the monastery, passed through the center of the city. At that moment, a cloud came up, and the rain began to fall. Entering a hall of justice opposite, they saw lords of justice taking bribes and depriving lawful owners of their property. Seeing this, they thought, "Ah, these men are unrighteous! Until now we supposed they rendered righteous judgments." When the rain was over, they went to the monastery, saluted the Buddha, and sitting respectfully on one side, informed him of the incident. Said the Buddha, "Monks, they that yield to evil desires and decide a cause by violence, are not properly called justices; they only that penetrate within a wrong and without violence render judgement according to the wrong committed, are properly called justices."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 256)

yēna atthaṁ sahasā nayē tēna dhammaṭṭhō na hōti paṇḍitō yō ca atthaṁ ca anatthaṁ ca ubhō niccheyya

yēna: if for some reason; *atthaṁ:* the meaning; *sahasā nayē:* falsely adjudged; *tēna:* by that; *dhammaṭṭhō:* based on justice; *na hōti:* he is not; *paṇḍitō:* the wise person; *yō ca:* in his way; *atthaṁ ca:* justice; *anatthañca:* and the injustice; *ubhō:* these two; *niccheyya:* decides

If for some reason someone were to judge what is right and wrong, arbitrarily, that judgement is not established on righteousness. But, the wise person judges what is right and what is wrong discriminately, without prejudice.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 257)

asāhasēna dhammēna samēna parē nayatī dhammassa guttō mēdhāvī dhammaṭṭhitō ti pavuccati

Glossary (Verse 257)

asāhasēna: without being arbitrary; *dhammēna:* righteously; *samēna:* impartially; *parē:* others; *nayatī:* judges; *dhammassa:* by the law of righteousness; *guttō:* protected; *mēdhāvī:* that wise person; *dhammaṭṭhitō ti:* one established in the righteous; *pavuccati:* is called

That wise person, who dispenses justice and judges others, impartially, without bias, non-arbitrarily, is guarded by and is in accordance with the Law of Righteousness. Such a person is described as well established in the Dhamma.

Commentary

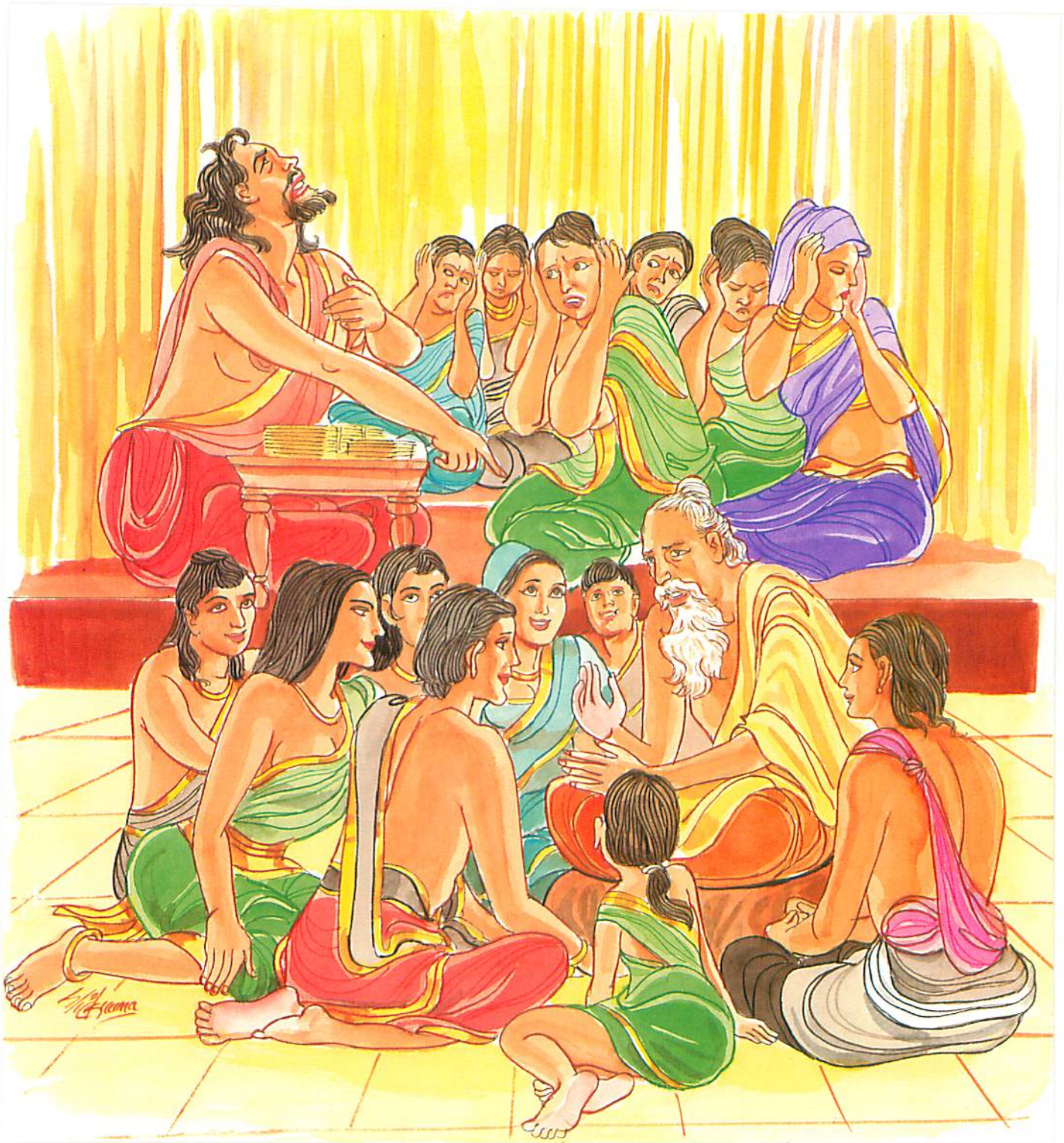
dhammaṭṭhitō: one who is established in righteousness. The Buddha has always made it clear that an intellectual appreciation of the intricacies of the Dhamma is not all fruitful unless one is firmly established in the Dhamma — to say one should organize his style of life in accordance with the Dhamma. At this stage, it is essential to know what is the word of the Buddhas.

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yāvatā bahu bhāsati
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Explanatory Translation (Verse 258)

yāvatā bahu bhāsati tēna paṇḍitō na hōti khēmī avērī abhayō paṇḍitō iti pavuccati

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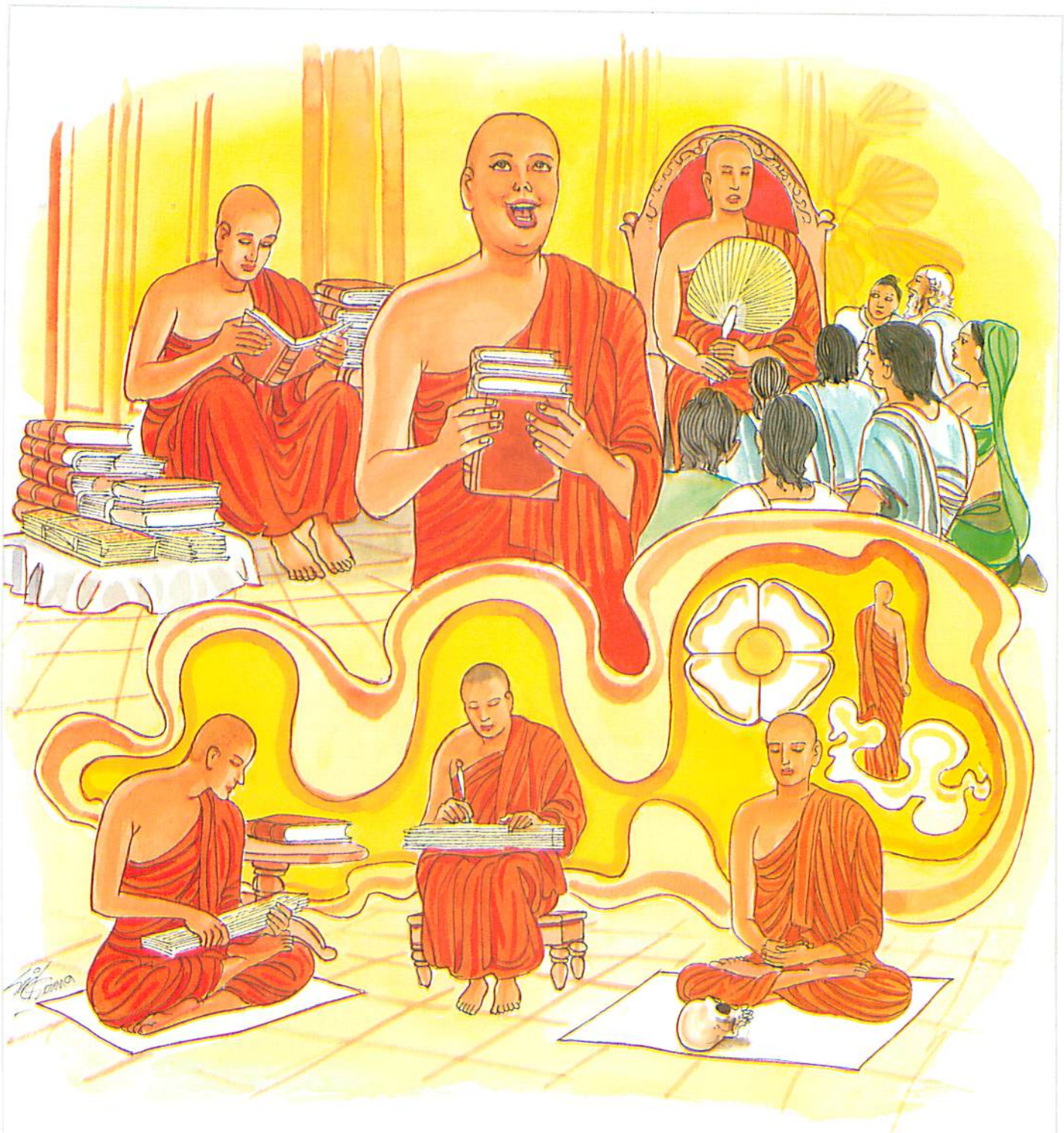
(1) Comfortable sleep.
(2) Waking up comfortably.
(3) Not having bad dreams.
(4) Being loved by all humans.
(5) Being loved by deities.
(6) Protection by deities.
(7) Not being subject to danger from fire, poisons and weapons.
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It is very significant that out of these eleven benefits ten could be obtained in this very life. This meditation is of immense use in order to lead a happy life. The greatest wealth a man could possess is mental peace. The absence of mental peace is mainly due to the presence of enmity in the mind. If this meditation is continued without interruption one can achieve the four transcendental states. As human beings, we are by nature envious of others' happiness and progress. Therefore, to attain real loving kindness is rather difficult. human beings are inclined to be happy about the good fortune of their wives and children. This is not real *mettā* but desire posing as *mettā*. This is a doctrine opposed to *mettā* and this tendency should be discouraged.

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yāvatā bahu bhāsati
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dhammaṁ kāyēna passati
sa vē dhammadharō hōti
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Just because articulate
one's not skilled in Dhamma;
but one who's heard even little
and Dhamma in the body sees,
that one is skilled indeed,
not heedless of the Dhamma.

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THOSE WHO KNOW SPEAK LITTLE

19 (3) The Story of Ēkūdāna the Arahat (Verse 259)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who was an arahat.

This monk lived in a grove near Sāvatthi. He was known as Ēkūdāna, because he knew only one stanza of exultation *(udāna)* by heart:

To the monk of lofty thoughts, heedful, training himself in the ways of silence,
To such a monk, tranquil and ever mindful, sorrows come not.

But the monk fully understood the meaning of the Dhamma as conveyed by the stanza. On each sabbath day, he would exhort others to listen to the Dhamma, and he himself would recite the one stanza he knew. Every time he had finished his recitation, the guardian spirits (dēvās) of the forests praised him and applauded him resoundingly. On one fast-day, two learned elder monks, who were well-versed in the Tipitaka, accompanied by five hundred monks came to his place. Ēkūdāna asked the two elder monks to preach the Dhamma. They enquired if there were many who wished to listen to the Dhamma in this out of the way place. Ēkūdāna answered in the affirmative and also told them that even the guardian spirits of the forests usually came, and that they usually praised and applauded at the end of discourses. So, the two learned elders took turns to preach the Dhamma, but when their discourses ended, there was no applause from the guardian spirits of the forests. The two learned thēras were puzzled; they even doubted the words of Ēkūdāna. But Ēkūdāna insisted that the guardian spirits used to come and always applauded at the end of each discourse. The two elders then pressed Ēkūdāna to do the preaching himself. Ēkūdāna held the fan in front of him and recited the usual stanza. At the end of the recitation, the guardian spirits applauded as usual. The monks who had accompanied the two learned elders complained that the dēvas inhabiting the forests were very partial.

They reported the matter to the Buddha on arrival at the Jētavana Monastery. To them the Buddha said, "Monks! I do not say that a monk who has learnt much and talks much of the Dhamma is "one who is versed in the Dhamma, (Dhammadhara)." One who has learnt very little and knows only one stanza of the Dhamma, but fully comprehends the Four Noble Truths, and is ever mindful is the one who is truly versed in the Dhamma."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 259)

yāvatā bahu bhāsati, tāvatā dhammadharō na yō ca apparh api sutvāna kāyēna dhammarh passati, sō vē dhammadharō hōti sō dhammarh nappamajjati.

yāvatā: just because; *bahu bhāsati:* one speaks a lot; *tāvatā:* by that; *dhammadharō na:* one does not become an upholder of the dhamma; *yō ca:* if someone; *apparh api:* even a little of the dhamma; *sutvāna:* having heard; *kāyēna:* by his body; *dhammarh passati:* practices the dhamma; *sō:* he; *vē:* without any doubt; *dhammadharō hōti:* becomes an upholder of dhamma; *yō:* if someone; *dhammarh:* in dhamma; *nappamajjati:* is diligent (he too is an upholder of dhamma)

One does not become an upholder of the Law of Righteousness merely because one talks quite a lot. Even if one, though he has heard only a little, experiences the Dhamma by his body and is diligent, he is truly an upholder of the Dhamma.

Commentary

bahu bhāsati: speaks uninhibitedly. The tendency to speak effusively can be counteracted by the silence of the mind. The means to achieve this is meditation. Watching the mind in meditation, and allowing the mind to be silent can be effected through the contemplation of the mind *(citta vipassanā)*.

But how does one dwell in contemplation of the mind? Herein disciple knows the greedy mind as greedy, and the mind which is not as not greedy; knows the angry mind as angry, and the not angry mind as not angry; knows the deluded mind as deluded, and the undeluded mind as undeluded. He knows the cramped mind as cramped, and the scattered mind as scattered; knows the developed mind as developed, and the undeveloped mind as undeveloped; knows the surpassable mind as surpassable, and the unsurpassable mind as unsurpassable; knows the concentrated mind as concentrated, and the unconcentrated mind as unconcentrated; knows the freed mind as freed, and the unfreed mind as unfreed.

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the mind, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how the mind arises; beholds how it passes away; beholds the arising and passing away of the mind. 'Mind is there': this clear awareness is present in him, to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness; and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the mind.

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Grey hairs alone make no senior. Merely ripe in years, empty-in-age he is called.

260. *Na tēna thērō hōti*
yēn'assa palitaṁ sirō
paripakkō vayō tassa
mōghajiṇṇō'ti vuccati. (19:5)

A man is not an Elder
though his head be grey,
he's just fully ripe in years,
'aged-in-vain' he's called.

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GREY HAIR ALONE DOES NOT MAKE AN ELDER

19 (4) The Story of Venerable Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya (Verses 260 & 261)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Bhaddiya. He was also known as Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya because he was very short in stature.

For on a certain day this Venerable went to wait upon the Buddha. As he departed, Thirty forest monks saw him. The monks went to the Buddha, saluted him, and sat down respectfully on one side. The Buddha, perceiving that they were ripe for arahatship, asked them this question, "Did you see a certain Venerable leave this place?" "No, Venerable, we did not." "You did not?" "We saw a certain novice, Venerable." "Monks, he was no novice; he was a Venerable." "He was exceedingly young, Venerable." "Monks, I do not call a man a Venerable merely because he is old, because he sits in the seat of a Venerable; but he who comprehends the Truths and is ever kind to others, he is a Venerable indeed."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 260)

yēna assa sirō palitaṁ tēna thērō na hōti tassa
vayō paripakkō mōghajiṇṇō iti vuccati

Glossary (Verse 260)

yēna: for some reason; *assa:* one's; *sirō palitaṁ:* hair becomes gray; *tēna:* just because of that; *thērō na hōti:* one does not become an elder; *tassa vayō:* his age; *paripakkō:* becomes mature; *mōghajiṇṇō iti:* ripe in year but not in virtue; *vuccati:* is called

One does not become an elder merely because one's hair has turned grey. One, who is only old in years, has grown ripe uselessly.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 261)

yamhi saccaṁ ca dhammō ca ahiṁsā saññamō
damō vantamalō sa dhīrō vē thērō iti pavuccati

yamhi: if in an individual; *saccaṁ ca:* the fourfold truths; *dhammō ca:* the Buddha's teaching; *ahiṁsā:* harmlessness; *saññamō:* restraint; *damō:* discipline (are present); *vantamalō:* if he has got rid of the stains of defilements; *sa:* that person; *dhīrō:* a person full of effort; *vē:* certainly; *thērō:* true elder; *iti pavuccati:* (he) is called

All things that men do arise out of the mind. The words and deeds of men spring from their minds. Sometimes, their minds are blemished — evil. If they speak or act with an evil mind, the inevitable result is suffering. Wherever they go, this suffering will keep on following them. They cannot shake off this suffering. This is very much like the wheel of the cart that follows the steps of a draught bull yoked to the cart. The cart-wheel keeps on following the bull. The bull is perpetually bound to it.

Commentary

Thēra: This term is applied to monks who have counted at least ten years in the Sangha from the date of their higher ordination. *Thēra*, literally, means well established - one who is firm and stable. In English, this term is generally rendered as Elder. A Monk who has completed twenty years in the Sangha is referred to as *Mahā Thēra* (Great Venerable). In Sanskrit, the term for *Thēra* is *Sthavira*.

saccaṁ: truth. Here, the Four Noble Truths are meant.

(cont'd on page 559)

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Stainless, endowed with truth, virtue, love and restraint, such a steadfast one true Elder is.

261. *Yamhi saccaṁ ca dhammō ca*
ahiṁsā saññamō damō
sa vē vantamalō dhīrō
thērō iti pavuccati. (19:6)

In whom is truth and Dhamma too,
harmlessness, restraint, control,
he's steadfast, rid of blemishes,
an 'Elder' he is called.

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THE PERSON FULL OF EFFORT IS THE TRUE ELDER

19 (4) The Story of Venerable Lakuṇṭaka Bhaddiya (Verses 260 & 261) (cont'd)

Dhammō: The nine supramundane states are described as nine lōkuttara Dhamma. They are four paths and the four fruits and the ninth is Nibbāna. The four paths and four fruits are:-

(1) *sōtāpanna* path

(2) *sōtāpanna* fruit

(3) *sakadāgāmi* path

(4) *sakadāgāmi* fruit

(5) *anāgāmi* path

(6) *anāgāmi* fruit

(7) arahat path

(8) arahat fruit

(9) Nibbāna

As the traveller by night sees the landscape around him by a flash of lightning and the picture so obtained swims long thereafter before his dazzled eyes, so the individual seeker, by the flashing light of insight, glimpses Nibbāna with such clarity that the after-picture never more fades from his mind.

When the spiritual pilgrim realizes Nibbāna for the first time, he is called a *sōtāpanna*, one who has entered the stream that leads to Nibbāna for the first time. The stream represents the noble eightfold path.

A stream-winner is no more a worldling *(puthujjana)*, but an *ariya* (noble).

On attaining this first stage of sainthood, he eradicates the following three fetters *(saṁyōjana)* that bind him to existence known as:

(1) *Sakkāya - diṭṭhi = sati + kāyē - diṭṭhi* - literally, view when a group or compound exists. Here, *kāya* refers to the five Aggregates of matter, feeling, perception, mental states, and consciousness. The view that there exists an unchanging entity, a permanent soul, when there is a complex compound of psychophysical aggregates, is termed *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*. Dhammasangani enumerates twenty kinds of such soul-theories. *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi* is usually rendered as self-illusion, theory of individuality, or illusion of individualism.

(2) *Vicikicchā* - doubts. They are doubts about (i) the Buddha, (ii) the Dhamma, (iii) the Sangha, (iv) the disciplinary rules *(sikkhā)*, (v) the past, (vi) the future, (vii) both the past and the future, and (viii) dependent origination *(Paṭicca-Samuppāda)*.

(3) *Sīlabbataparāmāsa* - adherence to (wrongful) rites and ceremonies.

Dhammasangani explains it thus: "It is the theory held by ascetics and brahmins outside this doctrine that purification is obtained by rules of moral conduct, or by rites, or by both rules of moral conduct and rites."

For the eradication of the remaining seven fetters, a *sōtāpanna* is reborn seven times at the most. He gains implicit confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. He would not, for any reason, violate any of the five precepts. He is not subject to rebirth in states of woe as he is destined to enlightenment.

With fresh courage as a result of this distant glimpse of Nibbāna, the noble pilgrim makes a rapid progress and, perfecting his insight, becomes a *sakadāgāmi* (once-returner), the second stage of sainthood, by attenuating two other fetters - namely, sense-desires *(kāmarāga)* and ill-will *(paṭigha)*.

Now, he is called a once-returner because he is born in the human realm only once should he not attain arahatship in that birth itself. It is interesting to note that the ariya saint, who has attained the second stage of sainthood, can only weaken these two powerful fetters with which he is bound from a beginningless past. At times, though to a slight extent, he may harbour thoughts of lust and anger.

It is by attaining the third stage of sainthood, that of the *anāgāmi* (never-returner), that he completely eradicates those two Fetters. Thereafter, he neither returns to this world nor is he born in the celestial realms, since he has rooted out the desire for sensual gratification. After death, he is reborn in the pure abodes *(suddhāvāsa)*, an environment reserved for *anāgāmis*. There, he attains arahatship and lives till the end of his life.

When a layman becomes an *anāgāmi* he leads a celibate life.

The *anāgāmi* saint now makes his final advance and, destroying the remaining five fetters — namely, attachment to Realms of Form *(rūparāga)*, attachment to formless realms *(arūparāga)*, pride *(māna)*, restlessness *(uddhacca)*, and ignorance *(avijjā)* - attains arahatship, the final stage of sainthood.

Stream-winners, once-returners, never-returners are called *sēkhas* because they have yet to undergo a training. Arahats are called *asēkhas* (adepts) because they no more undergo any training.

An arahat, literally a worthy one, is not subject to rebirth because he does not accumulate fresh kammic activities. The seeds of his reproduction have all been destroyed.

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Jealous, selfish, deceitful, he is no virtuous man tho' fluent in speech and handsome in form.

262. *Na vākkaranamattēna*
vaṇṇapokkharatāya vā
sādhurūpō narō hōti
issukī maccharī saṭhō. (19:7)

Not by eloquence alone
or by lovely countenance
is a person beautiful
if jealous, boastful, mean.

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WHO GIVES UP JEALOUSY IS GOOD-NATURED

19 (5) The Story of Some Monks (Verses 262 & 263)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some monks.

For once upon a time certain Venerables saw some young monks and novices dyeing robes and performing the other duties for their preceptors. Thereupon they said to themselves, "We ourselves are clever at putting words together, but for all that, receive no such attentions. Suppose now we were to approach the Buddha and say to him, 'Venerable, when it comes to the letter of the sacred word, we too are expert; give orders to the young monks and novices as follows — Even though you have learned the Law from others, do not rehearse it until you have improved your acquaintance with it under these Venerables.' Thus will our gain and honour increase."

Accordingly, they approached the Buddha and said to him what they had agreed upon. The Buddha listened to what they had to say and became aware of the following, "In this Religion, according to tradition, it is entirely proper to say just this. However, these Venerables seek only their own gain." So he said to them, "I do not consider you accomplished merely because of your ability to talk. But that man in whom envy and other evil qualities have been uprooted by the Path of arahatship, he alone is truly accomplished."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 262)

vākkaraṇamattēna vaṇṇapokkharatāya vā issukī maccharī saṭho narō sādhurūpō na hōti

vākkaraṇamattēna: merely because of the ornate speech; *vaṇṇapokkharatāya vā:* or by the comeliness of appearance; *issukī:* envious; *maccharī:* greedy; *saṭhō:* devious; *narō:* man; *sādhurūpō:* an acceptable person; *na hōti:* does not become.

Merely because of one's verbal flourishes, impressive style of speaking, or the charming presence, a person who is greedy, envious and deceitful, does not become an acceptable individual.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 263)

yassa ētaṁ samucchinnaṁ ca mūlaghaccaṁ samūhataṁ vantadōsō mēdhāvi sō sādhurūpō iti vuccati

yassa: if by one; *ētaṁ:* all these evils; *samucchinnaṁ:* are being uprooted; *ca:* and; *mūlaghaccaṁ:* eradicated; *samūhataṁ:* fully destroyed; *vantadōsō:* he who has given up all these evils; *mēdhāvi:* wise; *sō:* that wise person; *sādhurūpo iti:* a virtuous one; *vuccati:* is called

If an individual has uprooted and eradicated all these evils and has got rid of blemishes, such a person is truly an acceptable individual.

(cont'd on page 563)

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With evil routed out in toto, possessed of wisdom and void of stains, wholesome is he called.

263. *Yassa c'ētaṁ samucchinnaṁ*
mūlaghaccaṁ samūhataṁ
sa vantadōsō mēdhāvi
sādhurūpō'ti vuccati. (19:8)

But 'beautiful' is called that one
in whom these are completely shed,
uprooted, utterly destroyed,
a wise one purged of hate.

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WHO UPROOTS EVIL IS THE VIRTUOUS ONE

19 (5) The Story of Some Monks (Verses 262 & 263) (cont'd)

Commentary

Buddha as teacher. In these verses, the Buddha admonishes elder monks who believe that they are the right persons to teach the young monks just because they can use words deftly. The Buddha says it takes more than the clever use of words to be an expert spiritual teacher. Throughout his life, Buddha taught and guided people in spiritual matters — and even in worldly matters at times. He did not only preach, but also lived according to what he preached.

The Buddha was the embodiment of the virtues that he preached. During his successful and eventful ministry of forty-five years, he translated all his words into action. At no time did he ever express any human frailty or any base passion. Yet, the Buddha's moral code is the most perfect which the world has ever known.

For more than twenty-five centuries, millions of people have found inspiration and solace in his Teaching. His Teaching still beckons the weary pilgrim to the security and peace of Nibbāna.

To Buddha, religion was not a bargain but a way to enlightenment. He did not want followers with blind faith; he wanted followers who could think freely and wisely.

There was never an occasion when the Buddha expressed any unfriendliness towards a single person. Not even to his opponents and worst enemies did the Buddha express any unfriendliness. There were a few prejudiced minds who turned against the Buddha and tried to kill him; yet, the Buddha never treated them as enemies. The Buddha once said, "As an elephant in the battle field endures the arrows that are shot into him, so will I endure the abuse and unfriendly expression of other people."

In the annals of history, no man is recorded as having so consecrated himself to the welfare of all living beings as had the Buddha. From the hour of his enlightenment to the end of His life, He strove tirelessly to elevate mankind. He slept only two hours a day. Though twenty-five centuries have gone since the passing away of the great Teacher, His message of love and wisdom still exists in its pristine purity. This message is still decisively influencing the destinies of humanity. He was the most compassionate one who illuminated this world with loving-kindness.

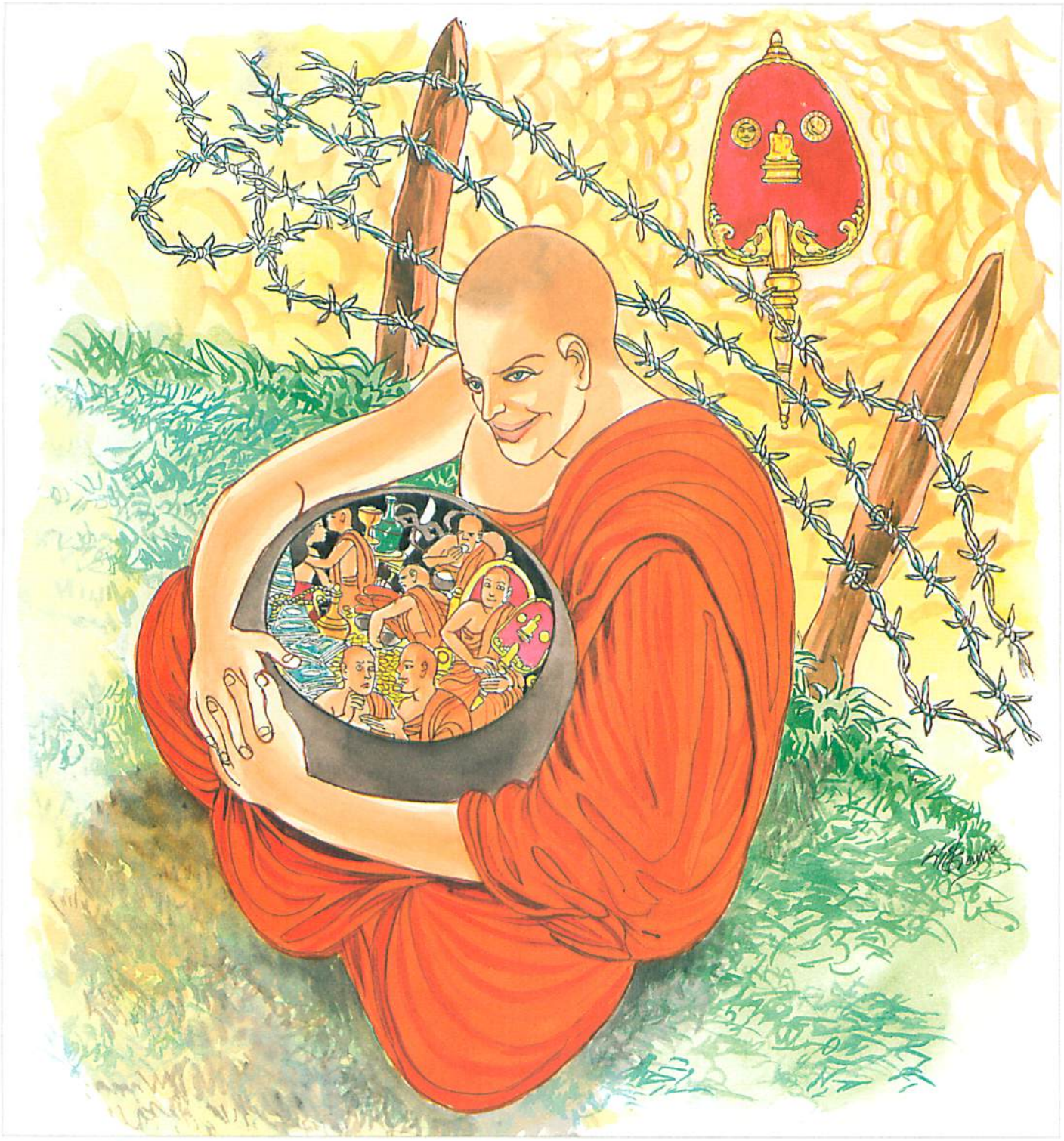
After attaining Nibbāna, the Buddha left a deathless message that is still living with us in the world today. Today, we are confronted by the tenable threat to world peace. At no time in the history of the world is His message more needed than it is now.

The Buddha was born to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to show the world how to get rid of suffering and disease, decay, and death and the worries and miseries of living beings.

No amount of talk and discussion not directed towards right understanding will lead to deliverance. This was the principle that guided the Buddha's Ministry.

The Buddha was not concerned with some meta-physical problems which only confuse man and upset his mental equilibrium. their solution surely will not free mankind from misery and ill. That was why the Buddha hesitated to answer such questions, and at times refrained from explaining those which were often wrongly formulated. The Buddha was a practical Teacher. His sole aim was to explain in all its detail the problem of *dukkha*, suffering, the universal fact of life, to make people feel its full force, and to convince them of it. He has definitely told us what He explains and what He does not explain.

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Full of lies, greed and desire, he can truly be no monk, parading only his shaven head.

264. *Na muṇḍakēna samaṇō*
abbatō alikaṁ bhaṇaṁ
icchālōbhasamāpannō
samaṇō kiṁ bhavissati? (19:9)

By shaven head no samaṇa
if with deceit, no discipline.
Engrossed in greed and selfishness
how shall he be a samaṇa?

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SHAVEN HEAD ALONE DOES NOT MAKE A MONK

19 (6) The Story of Venerable Hatthaka (Verses 264 & 265)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a monk named Hatthaka.

The story goes that whenever Hatthaka was defeated in an argument, he would say, "Pray come to such and such a place at such and such a time, and we will resume the discussion." He would then precede his opponent to the appointed place and say, "See! The heretics are so afraid of me that they dare not meet me; this is a confession of defeat on their part." This and much else of the same sort he would say. These were the tactics he invariably employed with one opponent after another, whenever he met defeat. The Buddha, hearing that Hatthaka was doing thus and so, sent for him and asked him, "Hatthaka, is the report true that you are doing thus and so?" "It is true," replied Hatthaka. Then said the Buddha, "Why do you do so? A man who utters such falsehoods has no right to the name of monk merely because he goes about with his head tonsured. But he that conquers sins both small and great, is a monk indeed."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 264)

muṇḍakēna samaṇō na abbatō alikaṁ bhaṇaṁ icchā-lōbhasamāpannō kiṁ samaṇō bhavissati

muṇḍakēna: by the shaven head; *samaṇō na:* one does not become a monk; *abbatō:* unprincipled; *alikaṁ bhaṇaṁ:* given to lying; *icchā-lōbhasamāpannō:* he filled with desire and greed; *kiṁ samaṇō bhavissati:* how can a monk be

Can an individual who does not practice religion, speaks untruth, and is filled with desire and greed, become an ascetic, merely because he is shaven-headed?

Explanatory Translation (Verse 265)

yō ca anuṁ thūlāni pāpāni sabbasō samēti pāpānaṁ samitattā hi samaṇō iti pavuccati

yō ca: if someone; *anum:* minute; *thūlāni:* massive; *pāpāni:* evil actions; *sabbasō:* totally; *samēti:* quells; *pāpānaṁ:* evil actions; *samitattā hi:* (as) has eradicated fully; *samaṇō:* (he) monk; *iti pavuccati:* is called

If an individual were to quell all sins, big and small, he is described as an ascētic because he has quelled sins.

Commentary

Jētavana Monastery: A good portion of the stanzas in the Dhammapada originated at Jētavana Monastery. In consequence, this monastery possesses a special significance as the spiritual residence of the Dhammapada.

Jētavana Monastery was built by Anāthapiṇḍika, a stalwart among all-time supporters of Buddhism. Anāthapiṇḍika praised the Buddha for the manner of preaching the doctrine, and took refuge in the Triple Gem as a lay disciple of the Buddha. He further invited the Buddha and the fraternity of monks to receive alms from him the next day at the residence of his brother-in-law, and took leave of the Buddha in reverence.

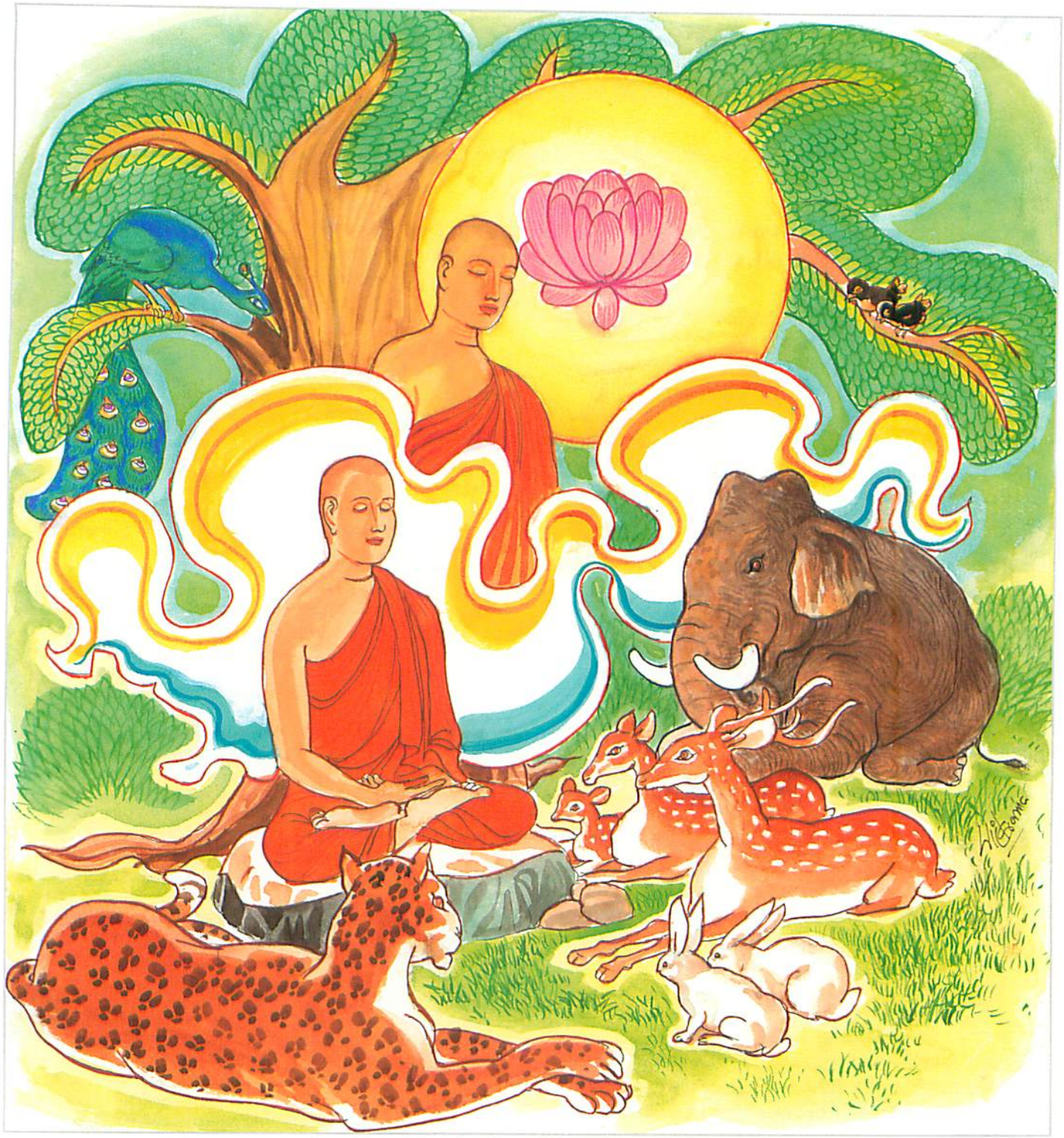
When the millionaire at Rājagaha heard of the invitation to the Buddha by his brother-in-law, he said, "You yourself are a guest here; so I will provide you with all the expenses in regard to the alms-giving." "Thank you, O millionaire, I have all the expenses for the purpose," said Anāthapiṇḍika. Similar offers were made by the chief of the suburbs of Rājagaha, and by King Bimbisāra himself. But Anāthapiṇḍika did not accept any such offers. At the end of the alms-giving, Anāthapiṇḍika invited the Buddha to Sāvatthi with the fraternity of monks for residence.

"Well Gone Ones take delight in lonely spots," said the Buddha. "I know that, Venerable," asserted Anāthapiṇḍika. The Buddha delivered an admonition to Anāthapiṇḍika, and left the place. After finishing his work at Rājagaha Anāthapiṇḍika left for Sāvatthi. He was a person with many friends and associates, and he used to give good counsel to others. on the way, he told the people, "Friends, lay out parks, build monasteries, and offer alms. The Buddha is born in the world. I have invited Him to Sāvatthi; and He will be coming along this road."

Thus induced by Anāthapiṇḍika the people began to lay out gardens, build monasteries, and make arrangements for alms. No sooner had Anāthapiṇḍika arrived at Sāvatthi than he looked for a suitable spot for the residence of the Buddha, and saw the garden of prince Jēta. So he went to see the prince, and said, "Sir, will you give me your garden to build a monastery?" "No, I will not give my garden even if you were to spread there one billion of gold coins," said the prince. "I have then bought your garden, prince," said the millionaire. "No," said the other.

(cont'd on page 567)

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Battling all evils, both great and small, through his conquest of evil is he a samaṇa called.

265. *Yō ca samēti pāpāni*
anuṁ thūlāni sabbasō
samitattā hi pāpānaṁ
samaṇō'ti pavuccati. (19:10)

All evils altogether he
subdues both fine and gross.
Having subdued all evil he
indeed is called a 'Samaṇa'.

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WHO GIVES UP EVIL IS TRUE MONK

19 (6) The Story of Monk Hatthaka (Verses 264 & 265) (cont'd)

Commentary

The dispute as to whether the garden had been bought by Anāthapiṇḍika or not was taken before judicial officers who decided in favour of Anāthapiṇḍika, as the land was bought when the price was fixed.

Anāthapiṇḍika brought billion of gold coins in cart loads, and covered the ground. But a small spot was left uncovered, and he ordered his men to go and bring more gold coins to cover the remainder. Then prince Jēta thought that the cause for which the millionaire is sacrificing his gold cannot be a light one, and he said, "No, millionaire, you need not cover the balance area with gold. Let me make a donation of the area."

The millionaire granted his request, as the prince was a well known and highly recognized person, and his patronage meant much. The prince put up an edifice over that area. Anāthapiṇḍika constructed on the Jēta grove monasteries, studies, stores, alms-halls, fire places, lavatories, bathrooms, walks, ambulatories, wells, ponds, heated rooms and pavilions.

The Buddha, after spending sufficient time at Rājagaha, proceeded towards Vēsāli, and arrived at Vēsāli in due course. Thence the Buddha arrived at Sāvatthi, and came to the Jētavana Monastery. Anāthapiṇḍika offered alms to the Buddha and the fraternity of monks, and on the advice of the Buddha, donated the Jētavana Monastery to the fraternity of monks of the four directions, whether present there or not.

samaṇa: This is a term used to denote religious priests. The members of the Buddhist Sangha are also referred to as *samaṇa*. In this verse, Buddha describes the person who deserves to be called *samaṇa*.

Among the four groups of the disciples of the Buddha, *bhikkhu* (monks), *bhikkhuni* (nuns), *upāsaka* (male lay disciples), and *upāsikā* (female lay disciples) — the Sangha or Order of monks are most closely associated with the Buddha. The duty of the Buddhist monk is to learn the Teachings of the Buddha and to give guidance and advice in accordance with these Teachings. He is also required to perform the religious duties and ceremonies. His duty is not limited to preserving the Buddha's Word; his duty is also to introduce the Teachings of the Buddha throughout the world. It is not easy to introduce the Buddha's Teaching in any part of the world without obtaining the proper guidance and assistance from monks.

Buddhist monks are not regarded as priests since they do not act as mediator between deity and man. They can only show the way for those who like to find their own salvation. To approach the Buddha, no mediator is required. There is no need for the special intervention of a priest or any selected person.

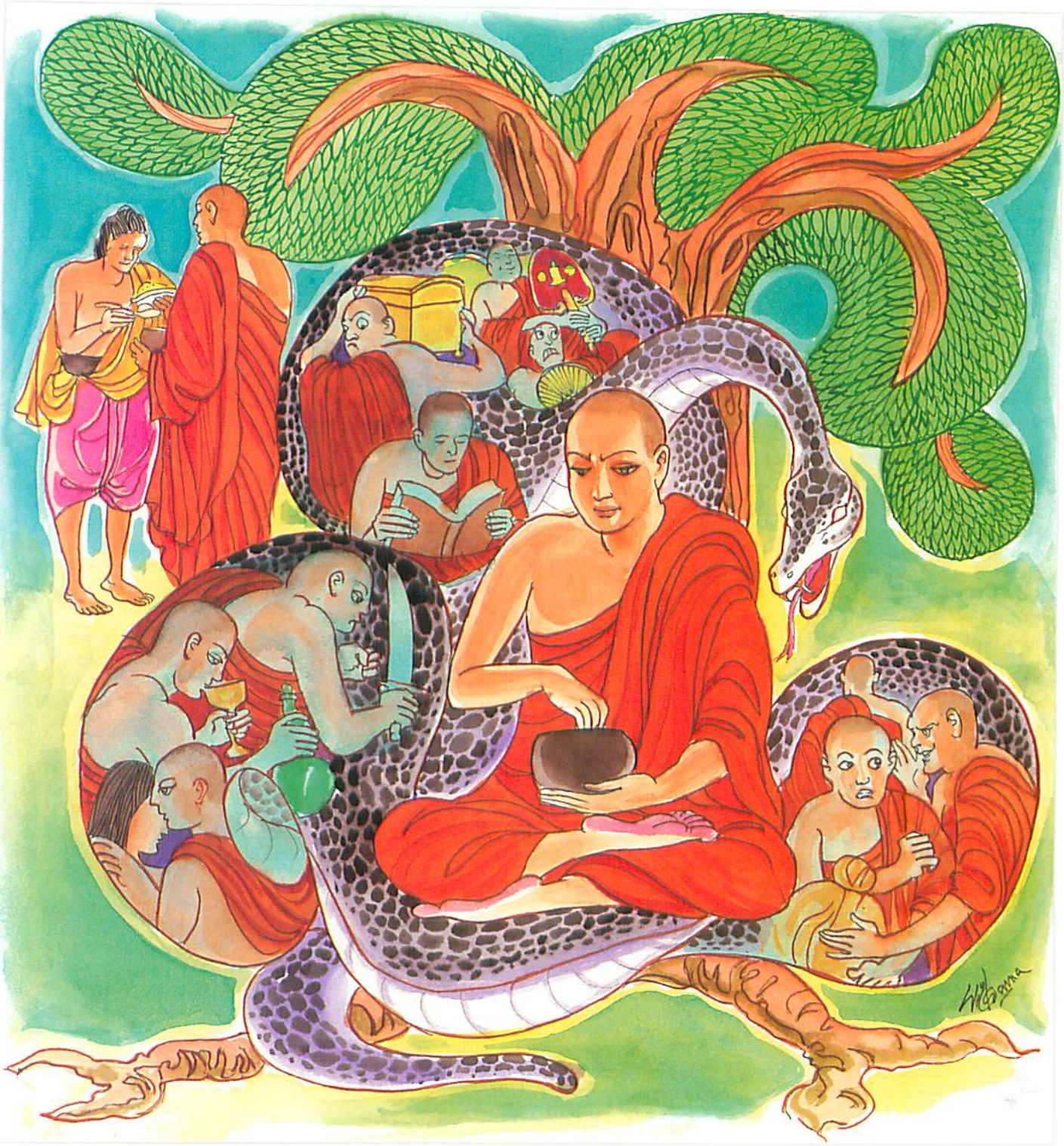
From the very beginning of the establishment of the Sangha, two different groups of monks were formed: *grantha dhura* and *vidarshanā dhura*. *Grantha dhura* are the monks who associate with the public. They offer their religious services to society. Educated, young men who become monks usually join this group. *Vidarshana dhura* are the monks who keep away from the busy society and devote their time to meditation. Most elderly men who become monks usually join this group. The monks who associate with the public should not neglect their meditation. They should try to devote at least a few minutes a day for meditation. Those who devote their time only to meditation should give others necessary instruction how to meditate. Both groups of monks are equally important. In certain Buddhist countries, some monks set aside certain periods of time for meditation; then they return to serve the society.

Buddhist monks live a very simple life. Their attitude towards life is filled with tolerance and contentment. In the monasteries where monks live, there is an atmosphere of peace, tranquillity and serenity. There is a look of peace and calm on the smiling faces of many of the monks. Their faces often reflect a dignity, a gentleness, an air of detachment and freedom from the commitments of the householder. Kindness, truthfulness, and devotion towards religion are their duties.

In many Buddhist countries, monks render service not only in the religious field but also in social, educational, cultural and health activities. In fact, monasteries in Buddhist countries are traditionally centres of social service.

If the Buddha had not introduced the Sangha, the Teaching of the Buddha would have disappeared long ago from this world. The tradition of Buddhist councils, which have ensured the perpetuation of the Word of the Buddha, was initiated by monks. Several Councils were held to draw up the canonical texts and the creed of Buddhism in their pure form. Arahant Mahākassapa presided over the first council held in Rājagaha immediately after the passing away of the Buddha.

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By mere begging of food, one is no bhikkhu. Nor by adopting any commoners' way.

266. *Na tēna bhikkhu hōti*
yāvatā bhikkhatē parē
vissaṁ dhammaṁ samādāya
bhikkhu hōti na tāvatā. (19:11)

Though one begs from others
by this alone's no bhikkhu.
Not just by this a bhikkhu
but from all Dhamma doing.

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ONE IS NOT A MONK MERELY BY BEGGING ALMS FOOD

19 (7) The Story of a Brahmin (Verses 266 & 267)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to a brahmin.

The story goes that this brahmin retired from the world and became a monk of an heretical order. As he went about on his alms-round, he thought to himself, "The Buddha addresses as monks his own disciples who go about on alms-round; he ought to address me also as a monk." Accordingly, he approached the Buddha and said to him, "Venerable, I also support my life by going about on alms-round; address me as a monk." But the Buddha said to him, "Brahmin, I do not call a man a monk merely because he receives alms. For a man who adopts and practices all the forms is not therefore a monk. But he that weighs well all the aggregates of being and acts accordingly, he is a monk indeed."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 266)

yāvatā parē bhikkhatē tēna bhikkhu na hōti;
vissaṁ dhammaṁ samādāya tāvatā bhikkhu na hōti

yāvatā: because (someone); *parē:* from others; *bhikkhatē:* begs; *tēna:* by that; *bhikkhu na hōti:* (he) does not become a monk; *vissaṁ dhammaṁ:* repulsive belief; *samādāya:* embracing; *tāvatā:* to that extent; *bhikkhu na hōti:* does not become a monk

No one becomes a monk merely because he begs others. An individual, though begging, does not become a monk if he embraces vicious and repulsive beliefs.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 267)

idha yō puññaṁ ca pāpaṁ ca bāhetvā brahmacariyavā lōkē saṅkhāya carati sa vē bhikkhū iti vuccati

idha: in this (dispensation); *yō:* if someone; *puññaṁ ca:* merit; *pāpaṁ ca:* and evil actions; *bāhetvā:* giving up (rising above); *brahmacariyavā:* living higher discipline; *lōkē:* in this world; *saṅkhāya:* reflecting wisely; *carati:* if one lives; *ca:* that person; *vē:* certainly; *bhikkhū iti:* a monk; *vuccati:* is called

Who rises above both good and bad and treads the path of higher discipline, reflecting wisely, that person, indeed, deserves to be described as a monk.

Commentary

The Buddha's encounters with brāhmins: In the course of his earthly mission the Buddha encountered mostly aggressive brāhmins, who confronted him. One of these is the nameless brāhmin who occasioned the present verses. Although he was not significant enough to have his name known, some other brāhmins He had to deal with were remarkably well-known. Some of them were:

Sōṇadaṇḍa. The Buddha, accompanied by a group of many monks, arrived in the city of Campā, in the Kingdom of Anga, and was staying on the bank of the pond Gaggarā. At that time, the brāhmin Sōṇadaṇḍa was living in Campā, enjoying the area donated to him by King Bimbisāra.

The people of the city who heard of the qualities and the attainments of the Buddha went in large numbers towards the pond Gaggarā where the Buddha was staying. Sōṇadaṇḍa who saw the people going in large numbers in the direction of the pond, heard from his attendant that they were going to see the Buddha. Sōṇadaṇḍa told his attendant to inform the people that he himself wished to join them and see the Buddha.
About five hundred brāhmins who had come to Campā heard of the wish of Sōṇadaṇḍa to see the Buddha, and went and told him that it was beneath his dignity to go and see the Buddha, and that the proper thing is for the Buddha to come and see Sōṇadaṇḍa.
When these brāhmins reminded Sōṇadaṇḍa of his birth, qualities and attainments, he spared no pains in describing to them the high birth, the supreme virtues, and the attainments of the Buddha in detail. Finally, Sōṇadaṇḍa succeeded in convincing them of the greatness of the Buddha, and went in their company to see the Buddha.
Sōṇadaṇḍa entered into conversation with the Buddha, and was able to listen to a long exposition of the doctrine. Being fully satisfied with the teaching of the Buddha, he took refuge in the Triple Gem, and offered himself as a life-long devotee of the Buddha. After inviting the Buddha and the monks to meals, he offered them alms the next day at his residence.

Kūṭadanta. When the Buddha was travelling in Magadha in the company of about five hundred monks. He came to the brāhmin village of Khānumātā and was staying at its mango grove. At this time, the brāhmin Kūṭadanta was living in this village donated to him by King Bimbisāra. He also had made preparations for an animal sacrifice on a large scale, and cattle, calves, goats and lambs, numbering seven hundred in each group, were tethered for sacrifice.

(cont'd on page 571)

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Beyond good and evil, noble in conduct, loving and discerning he lives, the true monk.

267. *Yō'dha puññañca pāpañca*
bāhetvā brahmacariyavā
sankhāya lōkē carati
sa vē bhikkhū'ti vuccati. (19:12)

Who both good and evil deeds
has gone beyond with holy life,
having discerned the world he fares
and 'Bhikkhu' he is called.

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HOLY LIFE MAKES A MONK

19 (7) The Story of a Brāhmin (Verses 266 & 267) (cont'd)

Commentary

The people of the village were going in large numbers to the mango grove to see the Buddha, and were seen by Kūṭadanta. When he heard of the purpose of their visit, he also intimated to them his wish to join them. However, the hundreds of brāhmins who had come to take part in the sacrifice tried to dissuade him from going to see the Buddha, and referred to his status and attainments in lofty terms. After listening to them, Kūṭadanta spoke to them of the greatness of the Buddha in all respects, and after convincing them of the greatness of the Buddha, he went in their company to the mango grove to see Him.

The Buddha preached to him a long discourse, dwelling mainly on morality and the observance of the precepts, and unfolded the Four Noble Truths. Kūṭadanta, while listening to the doctrine, realized the fruit of Sōtāpatti. He abandoned the animal sacrifice, and offered alms to the Buddha and the monks the next day at the sacrificial hall.

Pokkharasāti. When the Buddha was travelling in the kingdom of Kōsala, in the company of about five hundred monks, He came to the brāhmin village of Icchānaṅgala, and began to spend the time in Icchānaṅgala Grove. At this time, the brāhmin Pokkharasāti was living in the city of Ukkaṭṭhā, and was enjoying its proceeds. This city had been donated to him by Pasēnadi, the King of Kōsala.

Pokkharasāti had a learned pupil called Ambaṭṭha under him, and he asked his pupil to go and see the Buddha at the grove and ascertain whether the Buddha had the greatness attributed to Him by the people. The pupil asked the teacher how he could ascertain whether the Buddha had the greatness attributed to him. He advised his pupil to look for the thirty-two marks of a great person in the Buddha, for, such a person, according to their teaching, is destined to be a Universal Monarch, if he remains a layman, and a fully enlightened sanctified one if he renounces the world.

Ambaṭṭha took leave of his teacher, and went in the company of a large number of young men by chariot to the grove in which the Buddha dwelt. When he knocked at the door of the chamber of the Buddha, as was told by the monks who were outside, the Buddha opened the door. Ambaṭṭha entered the chamber with his followers, and his followers sat down. He kept standing and walking while talking to the Buddha.

The Buddha asked him whether that was the way he used to talk to his teachers and elders. He said that it was different with them, but with shaven-headed dark monks, he was used to talk in that manner. The Buddha remarked that he was ill-educated and undisciplined. Ambattha then found fault with the Sākyans, and referred to them in disparaging terms. The Buddha pointed out to him that he descends from a servant girl of the Sākyans, and he admitted the fact.

After listening to a long discourse of the Buddha and satisfying himself that He had the thirty-two great marks, Ambaṭṭha took leave of the Buddha, and went to his teacher Pokkharasati. He told Pokkharasāti that the Buddha was endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man and that he had a long conversation with Him. When Pokkharasāti heard how his pupil had spoken to the Buddha, he lost his temper, and kicked him in anger.

Pokkharasāti forthwith went to the Buddha, and apologized to Him for the shortcomings of his pupil and listened to the doctrine of the Buddha. He realized the doctrine and took refuge in the Triple Gem, and offered himself as a life-long devotee of the Buddha.

Jānussōni. Jānussōni was a learned brāhmin who lived in the brāhmin village of Manasākata in the kingdom of Kōsala. When the Buddha was residing at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, Jānussōni was travelling at noon through the city of Sāvatthi in a chariot drawn by all-white mares. on the way, he met the wandering ascetic Pilōtika, and asked him where he was coming from. He said that he was coming after meeting the Venerable Gōtama.

"What do you think of the Venerable Gōtama? Is He highly learned? Is He very erudite?" asked Jānussōni. "Who am I to fathom the wisdom and estimate the erudition of the Venerable Gōtama? It is only another person like the monk Gōtama who is capable of measuring and estimating his wisdom and erudition."

"You are speaking very highly of the monk Gōtama," remarked Jānussōni. "Who am I to speak highly of the monk Gōtama? He is praised by the praiseworthy. He is the greatest among all deities and men," said Pilōtika. Janussōni asked, "How did you come to be so pleased with the monk Gōtama?" Pilōtika explained the greatness of the Buddha, making use of the simile of the feet of the elephant. After listening to Pilōtika, Jānussōni hastened to see the Buddha, and met Him. He also told the Buddha everything that Pilōtika said about the Buddha using the simile of the feet of the elephant. The Buddha completed the discourse of the simile, and preached the Cūlahatthipadōpama Sutta in full. At the end of the discourse, Janussōni praised the Buddha, and became a life-long disciple of the Buddha.

On another occasion, the Buddha preached to him the Bhayabhērava Sutta, where He explained the theory of cause and effect, and said that His doctrine is a middle way teaching which avoids both materialism and nihilism.

Sēla and Kēniya. When the Buddha was travelling with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks in the region of Anguttarāpa, He came to the suburb of Āpana. The matted-haired ascetic Kēniya who had heard much about the greatness of the Buddha went to see the Buddha. After he listened to the admonition of the Buddha, he was highly pleased with Him, and invited Him to alms with the fraternity of monks.

The Buddha, however, did not accept the invitation as the fraternity of monks was large and Kēniya was a follower of the brāhmins. When Kēniya pleaded for the third time and made his request, the Buddha accepted his invitation in silence. Kēniya went to his hermitage and with the help of his friends and relations made all preparations for the great feast in honour of the Buddha. The building of the pavilion was undertaken by Kēniya himself.

When these preparations were in progress a highly educated brāhmin called Sēla, who was a teacher of three hundred pupils, and was a follower of Kēniya, came to this spot and inquired what all those preparations were for, and heard that they were for the Buddha who was dwelling in their suburb, Āpana. When Sēla saw the personality of the Buddha endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great being, he was highly satisfied, and praised the personality of the Buddha in a number of verses. After the Buddha replied to him, he begged for ordination, and with his following entered the order, and received higher ordination. In due course, they became sanctified ones.

The next day, Kēniya entertained the Buddha and the fraternity of monks to a great feast at his hermitage, at the end of which the Buddha made over the merits to him in two verses.

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Not by mere silence, unwise, a sage. It's one with wisdom, weighing with scales for good.

268. *Na mōnēna munī hōti*
mūḷharūpō aviddasu
yō ca tulaṁ'va paggayha
varamādāya paṇḍitō. (19:13)

By silence one is not a sage
if confused and foolish,
but one who's wise, as if with scales
weighs, adopts what's good.

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SILENCE ALONE DOES NOT MAKE A SAGE

19 (8) The Story of the Followers of Non-Buddhist Doctrines (Verses 268 & 269)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to some non-Buddhist ascetics.

The story goes that whenever the heretics took a meal in a given place, they would say to their hosts, "May tranquillity be your portion, may happiness be your portion, may your years increase. In such and such a place there is mud, in such and such a place there are thorns; to such a place you should not go." After this manner would they express their thanks and good wishes, and only after having so done, would they depart. But in the first period of enlightenment, before the saying of thanksgivings had been enjoined, the monks would depart from the refectory with never a word of thanksgiving to their hosts. At this the people were offended and said, "We hear words of thanksgiving and good wishes from the heretics, but the reverend monks depart in utter silence." The monks reported this matter to the Buddha.

Said the Buddha, "Monks, henceforth in refectories and other such places render thanks according to your good pleasure and speak pleasantly to your hosts as you sit beside them." Thus did the Buddha enjoin upon them the saying of thanksgivings, and they did according to his command. When the people heard the words of thanksgiving, they put forth the greater efforts, invited the monks to take meals in their houses, and went about bestowing abundant offerings upon them. Then were the heretics offended and said, "We are sages and keep silence, but the disciples of the Buddha deliver lengthy discourses in refectories and other such places." When the Buddha heard their remarks, he said, "Monks, I do not call a man a sage merely because he keeps silence. For there are some men who say nothing because of ignorance, others because of lack of confidence, while still others are so niggardly that they seek to prevent others from learning anything of importance which they themselves know. Therefore, I say that a man is not called a sage merely because he keeps silence; rather is he called a sage because of suppression of evil."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 268)

mūḷharūpō aviddasu mōnēna munī na hōti
paṇḍitō yō ca tulaṁ paggayha iva varaṁ ādāya

mūḷharūpo: possessing foolish ways; *aviddasu:* the ignorant one; *mōnēna:* through the ritual of keeping silent only; *munī na hōti:* does not become a sage; *paṇḍitō:* blessed with wisdom; *yō ca:* someone; *tulaṁ paggayha iva:* like a person holding scales; *varaṁ ādāya:* deciding what is noble

The ignorant person, possessing foolish ways and seemingly bewildered, may practice silence — the austerity of the *munis*. But this does not make him a sage. But the wise person, like someone holding scales, weighs good and bad and selects what is noble.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 269)

pāpāni parivajjēti, sa munī. sō tēna munī. yō
ubhō lōkē munāti, tēna munī pavuccati.

pāpāni parivajjēti: (He) gets rid of evil; *sa:* in consequence; *munī sō:* is described as *muni* (the sage): *tēna:* therefore; *munī:* that sage; *yō:* he who; *ubhō lōkē:* both worlds (internal and external); *munāti:* through his wisdom comprehends; *tēna:* because of this; *munī pavuccati:* is described as muni (the sage)

Weighing what is right and wrong, he shuns evil. For this he is a sage *(muni)*. He is capable of weighing both worlds through his sagely wisdom.

(cont'd on page 575)

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The sage totally rejects all evil. He weighs up both worlds. So he is called a sage.

269. *Pāpāni parivajjēti*
sa munī tēna sō munī
yō munāti ubhō lōkē
munī tēna pavuccati. (19:14)

Shunning evils utterly
one is a sage, by that a sage.
Whoever both worlds knows
for that one's called a 'Sage'.

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ONLY TRUE WISDOM MAKES A SAGE

19 (8) The Story of the Followers of Non-Buddhist Doctrines (Verses 268 & 269) (cont'd)

Commentary

Heretics: On many occasions, the hermits spread adverse rumours about the Buddha and His Teachings. These stanzas, too, were occasioned by such an attempt by the heretics to mar the reputation of the Buddha. Some attempts by heretics to sully the character of the Buddha took a gruesome guise. Here are some such attempts.

When, at one time, the Buddha was dwelling at the Jētavana Monastery, the heretics were greatly worried about their own future. For, the Buddha and the fraternity of monks were highly respected, honoured, looked after and obeyed by the people, and they were provided with meals, robes, seats, medicines and other requisites. On the other hand, the heretics were not so respected, honoured, looked after and listened to, and they did not receive meals, robes, seats, medicines and other requisites.

As the heretics were unable to face this situation, they went to a female wandering ascetic, who was known as *Sundarī* (beauty) due to her bodily beauty. She was young in age, and bad in character. It was the plan of the heretics that they would attack the character and reputation of the Buddha and the monks through this female ascetic.

They asked her, "Sister, can you do some favour for your relations?" "What do you want me to do? There is nothing I will not do for you. I am prepared even to sacrifice my life for the sake of my relations," assured the female ascetic.

The heretics asked her to go at once to the Jētavana, and keep on going there regularly. Accordingly, she decked herself well and began to go to the Jētavana at the time when people were returning from the Monastery after listening to the discourses of the Buddha. When she was asked by the people where she was going to, she said that she was going to spend the night in the Fragrant Chamber with the Buddha. She would actually spend the night in a hermitage of the heretics, and early in the morning would come to the city passing the Jētavana Monastery. When people asked her where she was coming from, she said that she was returning home after spending the night in the Fragrant Chamber of the Buddha.

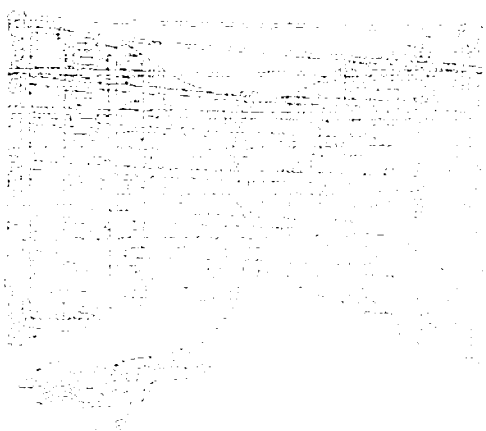
The heretics, one day, got this female ascetic killed and buried in a hole in the ditch of the Jētavana Monastery by some hirelings, and went and complained to King Pasēnadi that Sundarī was missing.

"Where do you suspect her to be?" asked the King. "In the Jētavana Monastery," they replied promptly.

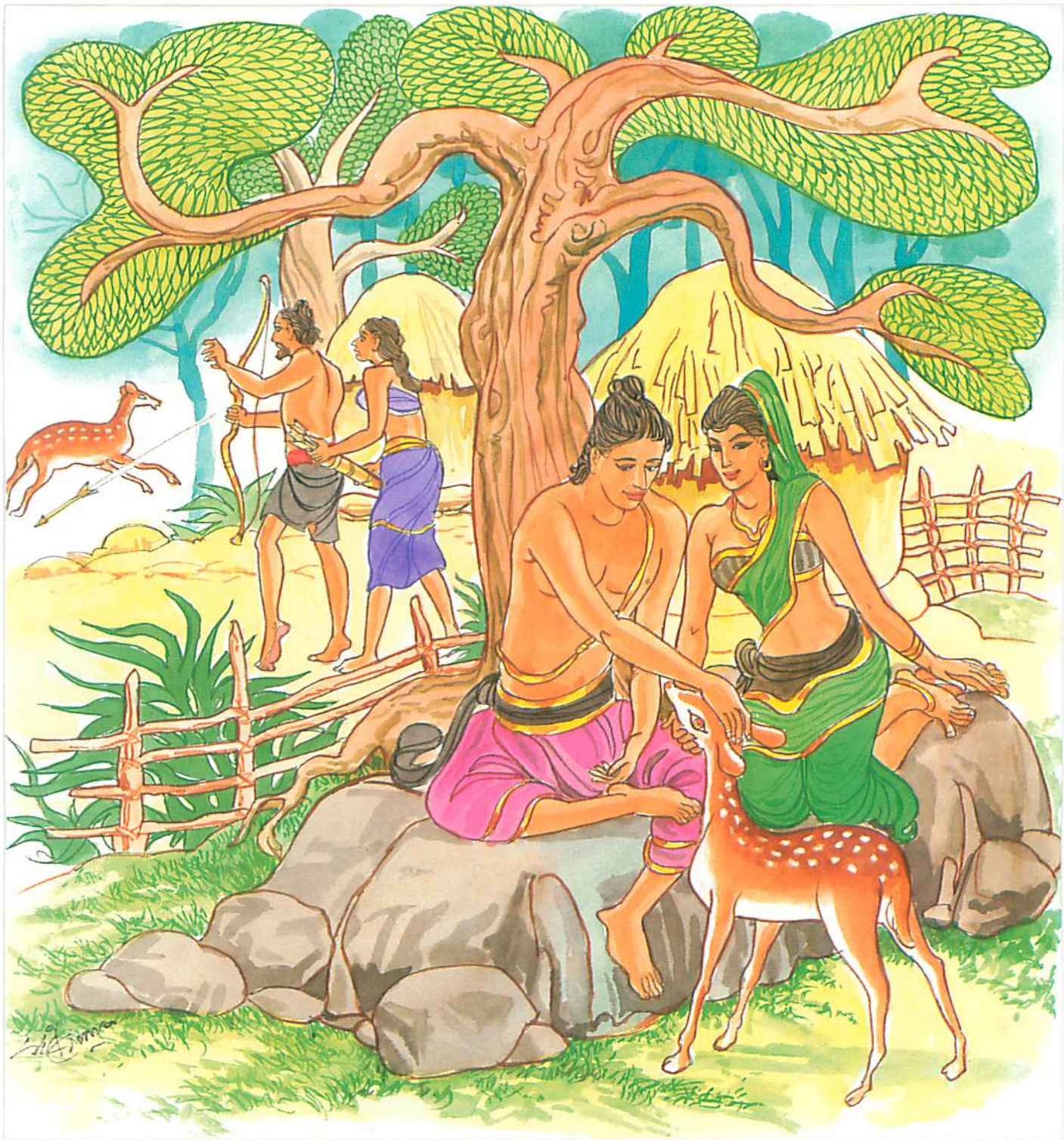
The king gave them permission to search where they wished. Finding the body near the Jētavana Monastery, they carried it to the palace. Then they said to the king, "O' king, the followers of the Buddha have killed this Paribbājikā and have thrown away her body in the rubbish heap near the Jētavana Monastery to cover up the misdeed of their Teacher." To them, the king replied, "In that case, you may go round the town and proclaim the fact." So they went round the town carrying the dead body of Sundari, shouting, "Look at what the followers of the Buddha have done; see how they have tried to cover up the misdeed of Gōtama!" The procession then returned to the palace.

The king next ordered his men to further investigate the murder of Sundari. On investigation, they found out that Sundari had died at the hands of some drunkards. So they were brought to the king. When questioned, the drunkards disclosed that they were hired by the ascetics to kill Sundari and put her body near the Jētavana Monastery. The king then sent for the non-Buddhist ascetics, and they finally confessed their role in the murder of Sundari. The king then ordered them to go round the town and confess their guilt to the people.

So they went round the town saying, "We are the ones who killed Sundari. We have falsely accused the disciples of Gōtama just to bring disgrace on Gōtama. The disciples of Gōtama are innocent, only we are guilty of the crime." As a result of this episode, the power and, the respects to the Buddha were very much enhanced his glory.



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Killing makes man ignoble. Non-violence towards all beings confers nobility on man.

270. *Na tēna ariyō hōti*
yēna pāṇāni hiṁsati
ahiṁsā sabbapāṇānaṁ
ariyō'ti pavuccati. (19:15)

By harming living beings
one is not a 'Noble' man,
by lack of harm to all that live
one is called a 'Noble One'.

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TRUE ARIYAS ARE HARMLESS

19 (9) The Story of a Fisherman Named Ariya (Verse 270)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a fisherman named Ariya.

Once, there was a fisherman who lived near the north gate of Sāvatthi. One day through his supernormal power, the Buddha found that time was ripe for the fisherman to attain sōtāpatti fruition. So on his return from the alms-round, the Buddha, followed by the monks, stopped near the place where Ariya was fishing. When the fisherman saw the Buddha, he threw away his fishing gear and came and stood near the Buddha. The Buddha then proceeded to ask the names of his monks in the presence of the fisherman, and finally, he asked the name of the fisherman. When the fisherman replied that his name was Ariya, the Buddha said that the noble ones *(ariyas)* do not harm any living being, but since the fisherman was taking the lives of fish he was not worthy of his name. At the end of the discourse, the fisherman attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 270)

yēna pāṇāni hiṁsati tēna ariyō na hōti sabbapāṇānaṁ ahiṁsā ariyō iti pavuccati

yēna: if someone; *pāṇāni:* living beings; *hiṁsati:* hurts; *tēna:* due to that; *ariyō:* a noble person; *na hōti:* (he) does not become; *sabbapāṇānaṁ:* all living beings; *ahiṁsā:* does not hurt; *ariyō iti pavuccati:* (because of that) he is called a noble one

A person who hurts living beings is not a noble human being. The wise person, who does not hurt any living being is called ariyo, a noble individual.

Commentary

ahiṁsā: non-violence. The all-pervading spirit of Buddhist ethics *ahiṁsā*. This concept was interpreted in an immortal manner by Emperor Asōka, whose missionaries took the Word of the Buddha to most centres of the then-known world. For four years Asōka, though in fact the ruler of his domains, had to wage a relentless struggle to subjugate them and further enlarge his territories, bringing Kālinga too under his sway. This was Asōka's digvijaya or war of military conquest. It was only after the completion of this digvijaya of Asōka that, stricken by remorse at the terrible magnitude of the human slaughter involved, he embarked on a policy of Dharmavijaya or conquest by righteousness, imbued with the high ideals of love and compassion taught by the Buddha's Dhamma. Thereafter he was known as Dharmāsōka.

Having turned to the path of righteousness, after embracing Buddhism, Asōka set about spreading the faith both in his empire and in far-flung lands abroad. he had his two children ordained, his son Mahinda and his daughter Sanghamittā, sending the former to propagate the faith in Sri Lanka, while Sanghamittā came later with the sapling of the Mahā Bō Tree at Buddhagayā and established the Order of Buddhist Nuns.

The policy of Asōka was one which enjoined:

(1) *ahiṁsā* to all beings,

(2) refraining from harsh and rude speech,

(3) respecting parents, teachers and elders,

(4) having regard for brāhmins, priests and servants,

(5) leading a life of righteousness, which entails compassion, generosity, truthfulness, purity, gentleness, gratitude and spending according to one's means,

(6) engaging in dharmayāthrā or pilgrimages,

(7) constructing of wells and ponds and the planting of fruits and medical herbs, and

(8) having filial regard and affection for one's subjects.

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Not by rites or rituals, nor by profound learning, not by meditative calm nor by life in solitude.

271. *Na sīlabbatamattēna*
bāhusaccēna vā puna
athavā samādhilābhēna
vivicca sayanēna vā. (19:16)

Not by vows and rituals
or again by learning much
or by meditative calm
or by life in solitude.

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A MONK SHOULD DESTROY ALL PASSIONS

19 (10) The Story of Some Monks (Verses 271 & 272)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some virtuous monks.

The story goes that some of these monks considered thus within themselves. "We have acquired virtue; we have taken upon ourselves the pure practices; we are exceedingly learned; we dwell in places of abode that are solitary and remote; we have developed the supernatural powers by ecstatic meditation. For us it would be no hard matter to attain arahatship; indeed, we can attain arahatship any day we wish." Likewise those of the monks who had attained the fruit of the third path, considered thus within themselves, "For us it would be no hard matter now to attain arahatship." One day all of them approached the Buddha, saluted him, and seated themselves respectfully on one side.

The Buddha asked them, "But, monks, have you brought your religious duties to consummation?" The monks replied, "Venerable, we have attained such and such degrees of sanctity. Therefore, whenever we wish, we are able to attain arahatship. With this thought in our minds, we keep residence." When the Buddha heard their reply, he said, "Monks, it is never proper for a monk, merely because he has kept the precepts whole and undefiled, or because he has attained the bliss of the third path, to think, 'But little suffering is involved in our present existence.' On the contrary, not until he has attained destruction of the depravities, should he allow himself to think, 'I have attained true bliss.'"

Explanatory Translation (Verse 271)

sīlabbatamattēna puna bāhusaccēna vā athavā
samādhi lābhēna vivicca sayanēna vā

Glossary (Verse 271)

sīlabbatamattēna: only through precepts and rights; *puna:* and also; *bāhusaccēna vā:* through much learning; *athavā:* not only; *samādhi lābhēna:* through the attainment of tranquility; *vivicca sayanēna vā:* or through secluded lodging

These two stanzas are an admonition to the monks making an effort to reach the state of blemishlessness — Nibbāna. They are asked not to slacken their effort to win liberation by being content with some of the achievements which only pave the way to the final goal.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 272)

aputhujjanasēvitaṁ nekkhammasukhaṁ phusāmi
bhikkhu āsavakkhayaṁ appattō vissāsaṁ na āpādi

aputhujjanasēvitaṁ: patronized by those who have risen above the worldly; *nekkhammasukhaṁ:* the joy of renunciation; *phusāmi:* I touch with my mind; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *āsavakkhayaṁ appattō:* without reaching the release from the blemishes; *vissāsaṁ:* to confidence; *na āpādi:* do not reach

Monks, do not rest content by precepts and rites. Do not even be content with extensive learning. Nor should you feel satisfied by achieving states of mental trance. Do not rest content with seclusion, assuring yourself "I have experienced the joy of renunciation not possible for the ordinary." Do not slacken your effort until you attain Nibbāna.

Commentary

nekkhammasukhaṁ: the joy of renunciation. To attain higher reaches of the joy of spiritual life, *nekkhamma* (renunciation) is essential.

On one occasion, the Buddha was residing at the Deer Park, in Isipatana, near Vārānasi. Thereupon, the Buddha addressed the group of five monks as follows:

There are these two extremes *(antā)*, O' monks, which should be avoided by one who has renounced *(pabbajitēna)*:

(1) Indulgence in sensual pleasures — this is base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble and profitless and,

(2) Addiction to self-mortification — this is painful, ignoble and profitless.

(cont'd on page 581)

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...has a monk the bliss of his recluse life, with Nibbānic goal still unreached.

272. *Phusāmi nekkhammasukhaṁ*
aputhujjanasēvitaṁ
bhikkhu vissāsamāpādi
appattō āsavakkhayaṁ. (19:17)

Should you, O bhikkhu, be content,
"I've touched the bliss of letting go
not enjoyed by common folk",
though you've not gained pollution's end.

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BLEMISHES SHOULD BE GIVEN UP TO REACH RELEASE

19 (10) The Story of Some Monks (Verses 271 & 272) (cont'd)

Commentary

Abandoning both these extremes the Buddha has comprehended the middle path *(majjhimā paṭipadā)* which promotes sight *(cakkhu)* and knowledge *(ñāna)*, and which tends to peace *(vūpasamāya)*, higher wisdom *(abhiññāya)*, enlightenment *(sambōdhāya)*, and Nibbāna.

What, O' monks, is that middle path the Buddha has comprehended which promotes sight and knowledge, and which tends to peace, higher wisdom, enlightenment, and Nibbāna?

The very noble eight-fold path — namely, right understanding *(sammādiṭṭhi)*, right thoughts *(sammā saṁkappa)*, right speech *(sammā vācā)*, right action *(sammā-kammanta)*, right livelihood *(sammā ājīva)*, right effort *(sammā vāyāma)*, right mindfulness *(sammāsati)*, and right concentration *(sammā samādhi)*, — This, O' monks, is the Middle path which the Tathāgata has comprehended.

Now, this O' monks, is the noble truth of suffering *(dukkha-ariyasacca)*! Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

Now, this, O' monks, is the noble truth of the cause of suffering *(dukkha-samudaya-ariyasacca)*:

It is this craving which produces rebirth *(pōnōbhavikā)*, accompanied by passionate clinging, welcoming this and that (life). It is the craving for sensual pleasures *(kāmataṅhā)*, craving for existence *(bhavataṅhā)* and craving for non-existence *(vibhavataṅhā)*.

Now, this, O' monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering *(dukkha-nirōdha-ariyasacca)*:

It is the complete separation from, and destruction of, this very craving, its forsaking, renunciation, the liberation therefrom, and non-attachment thereto.

Now, this, O' monks, is the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering *(dukkha-nirōdha-gāminī-paṭipadā-ariyasacca)*.

It is this noble eight-fold path — namely, right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

(1) i. "This is the noble truth of suffering." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

ii. "This noble truth of suffering should be perceived *(pariññeyya)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge,the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

iii. "This noble truth of suffering has been perceived *(pariññāta)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

2) i. "This is the noble truth of the cause of suffering." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

ii. "This noble truth of the cause of suffering should be eradicated *(pahātabbha)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

iii. "This noble truth of the cause of suffering has been eradicated *(pahīnaṁ)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

3) i. "This is the noble truth of cessation of suffering." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

ii. "This noble truth of the cessation of suffering should be realized *(sacchikātabba)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

iii. "This noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been realized *(sacchikataṁ)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

4) i. "This is the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

ii. "This noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering should be developed *(bhāvētabbaṁ)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

iii. "This noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering has been developed *(bhāvitaṁ)*." Thus, O' monks, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

As long, O' monks, as the absolute true intuitive knowledge regarding these four noble truths under their three aspects and twelve modes was not perfectly clear to me, so long I did not acknowledge in this world inclusive of deities, Māras and brāhmas and amongst the hosts of ascetics and priests, deities and men, that I had gained the incomparable supreme enlightenment *(anuttaraṁ sammāsambōdhiṁ)*.

When, O' monks, the absolute true intuitive knowledge regarding these four noble truths under their three aspects and twelve modes, became perfectly clear to me, then only did I acknowledge in this world inclusive of deities, Mārās, brāhmas, amongst the hosts of ascetics and priests, deities and men, that I had gained the incomparable supreme enlightenment.

And there arose in me the knowledge and insight *(ñāṇadassana)* — "Unshakable is the deliverance of my mind. This is my last birth, and now there is no existence again."

Thus the Buddha discoursed, and the delighted monks applauded the words of the Buddha.

When this doctrine was being expounded there arose in the Venerable Koṇḍañña the dustless, stainless, truth-seeing eye *(Dhammacakkhu)* and he saw that "whatever is subject to origination all that is subject to cessation."

When the Buddha expounded the discourse of the Dhammacakka, the earth-bound deities exclaimed, "This excellent Dhammacakka which could not be expounded by any ascetic, priest, deity, Māra or brāhma in this world has been expounded by the Buddha at the Deer Park, in Isipatana, near Vārānasi.

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Ultimate fact of reality

Here it is necessary to draw attention to another unique feature of the religion of the Buddha, namely, that it is the only religion of any religious teacher, which is the outcome of a consistent philosophy, which claims to tell us about the ultimate facts of existence and reality. The religion of the Buddha is a way of life resulting from the acceptance of a view of life, which is said to be factual. His philosophy is not without an account of the nature of knowledge.

Dr. K.N. Jayatilleke, "Buddhism and Peace"

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Chapter 20

MAGGA VAGGA

The Path



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Best among ways the Noble Path, Ariyan Truths among truths. The Seer among beings.

273. *Maggān'aṭṭhaṅgikō seṭṭhō*
saccānaṁ caturō padā
virāgō seṭṭhō dhammānaṁ
dipadānañca cakkhumā. (20:1)

Of paths the Eight-fold is the best,
of truths the statements four,
the passionless of teachings best,
of humankind the Seer.

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MAGGA VAGGA (The Path)
EIGHT-FOLD PATH IS THE BEST

20 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 273 – 276)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to five hundred monks.

The story goes that once upon a time the Buddha, after journeying through the country, returned to Sāvatthi and seated himself in the hall of Dhamma. When he had taken his seat, these five hundred monks began to talk about the paths over which they had travelled, saying, "The path to such and such a village is smooth; to such and such a village, rough; to such and such a village, covered with pebbles; to such and such a village, without a pebble.: After this manner did they discuss the paths over which they had travelled. The Buddha, perceiving that they were ripe for arahatship, went to the hall of Dhamma, and seating himself in the seat already prepared for him, asked, "Monks, what is the present subject of discussion as you sit here together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, this is a path foreign to our interests; one who is a monk should address himself to the noble path, for only by so doing can he obtain release from all sufferings."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 273)

maggānaṁ aṭṭhangikō seṭṭhō saccānaṁ caturō padā dhammānaṁ virāgō seṭṭhō dipadānaṁ ca cakkhumā

maggānaṁ: of the paths; *aṭṭhangikō maggō:* the eightfold (path is); *seṭṭhō:* is greatest; *saccānaṁ:* of truths; *caturō padā:* four noble truths (are the greatest); *dhammānam:* of the states of being; *virāgō:* detachment-Nibbāna; *dipadānaṁ:* of the two-footed; *cakkhumā:* one who possesses eyes (the Buddha) is the greatest

Of all paths, the eight-fold path is the greatest. Of the truths, the greatest are the four noble truths. Detachment (Nibbāna) is the greatest among all states. And, of all those who are two-footed ones, one who possesses eyes, The Buddha is the greatest.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 274)

visuddhiyā dassanassa ēsō ēva maggō natthi aññō tumhē ētamhi paṭipajjatha etaṁ mārassa pamōhanaṁ

visuddhiyā dassanassa: for the clarity of insight; *ēsō ēva maggō:* this is the only path; *natthi aññō:* no other (path); *tumhē:* (therefore) you; *ētamhi:* this path; *paṭipajjatha:* follow; *etaṁ:* this path; *mārassa:* death; *pamōhanaṁ:* will bewilder

This is the path. There is no other for the achievement of clarity of insight. You must follow this path to the total bewilderment of Māra.

(cont'd on page 587)

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This way and none other for purified vision. Enter thereupon and defy all evil.

274. *Esō'va maggō natth'aññō*
dassanassa visuddhiyā
ētamhi tumhē paṭipajjatha
mārass'ētaṁ pamōhaṇaṁ. (20:2)

This is the path, no other's there
for purity of insight,
enter then upon this path
bemusing Māra utterly.

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ONLY PATH TO PURITY

20 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 273 – 276)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 275)

ētamhi patipannā tumhē dukkhassa antam karissatha mayā sallasanthanaṁ maggō aññāya vē akkhētō

ētamhi: this path; *patipannā:* following; *tumhē:* by you; *dukkhassa:* of suffering; *antaṁ karissatha:* (you) must make an end of; *mayā:* by me; *sallasanthanaṁ:* for the extraction of the arrow (from the body); *maggō:* the path; *aññāya:* having known; *vē:* certainly; *akkhētō:* proclaimed

If you follow this path, you will reach the termination of suffering. This path has been revealed by me, after realizing the extraction of arrows.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 276)

tumhēhi ātappaṁ kiccaṁ Tathāgatā akkhātārō paṭipannā jhāyinō Mārabandhanā pamokkhanti

tumhēhi: by yourself; *ātappaṁ:* the effort (to get rid of blemishes); *kiccaṁ:* should be made; *Tathāgatā:* the way-farers (the Buddhas); *akkhātārō:* proclaimers (of Nibbāna); *paṭipannā:* the followers of the path; *jhāyinō:* meditators; *mārabandhanā:* from the shackles of death; *pamokkhanti:* get fully released

Paraphrase (Verse 276)

The effort must be made by yourself. The Buddhas (the Teachers) only show the way and direct you. Those contemplative meditators, who follow the path, fully and totally escape the snares of death.

Commentary

Esō va maggaṁ natthi aññō dassanassa visuddhiyā: There is no other path for purity of vision than just this one. Those who travel along the path, indicated by the Buddha to reach purity of vision, have to practice the technique of meditation by which purity of vision is achievable.

A truth-seeker attains this stage through seven stages. In consequence, this process is characterized as *sapta visuddhi* (seven stages of purity). The seven stages of purity are:

(1) *Sīla visuddhi* (purity of morals)

(2) *Citta visuddhi* (purity of mind)

(3) *Diṭṭhi visuddhi* (purity of views)

(4) *Kankhāvitarana visuddhi* (purity of the conquest of doubts)

(5) *Maggāmagga ñaṇadassana visuddhi* (purity of knowledge and insight into the right and wrong path)

(6) *Patipadā ñaṇadassana visuddhi* (purity of knowledge and insight into progress)

(7) *Ñaṇadassana visuddhi* (purity of knowledge and insight into the noble path).

(cont'd on page 589)

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Treading this path you shall terminate all suffering. Realising the way, I've made it known.

275. *Ētamhi tumhē paṭipannā*
dukkhass'antaṁ karissatha
akkhētō vē mayā maggō
aññāya sallasanthanaṁ. (20:3)

Entered then upon this path
you'll make an end of dukkha.
Freed in knowledge from suffering's stings
the Path's proclaimed by me.

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PATH TO END SUFFERING

20 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 273 – 276)

Commentary

(1) *Sīlavisuddhi* — purity of morals — The person with an impure character has always a fear that others would find fault with him or bring shame on him or take revenge on him. Similarly, his own conscience troubles him saying that he has done something wrong. The mind of the non-virtuous person is debilitated by such thoughts. The person whose mind is thus debilitated will not gain any results if he turns to meditation. Like a tree which is planted on infertile soil, his mind will not be able to attain wisdom by concentration. Therefore, a yogāvacara, if he wishes to concentrate and reach an exalted state or attain the correct path by meditation, must, first of all, prepare the way for meditation just as a farmer prepares the land for cultivation. If he is a layman he must act according to the ways of a layman. If he is a monk he must act according to the ways of a monk. The layman if he wishes to be virtuous must at the minimum observe the five precepts. Virtue will arise when all defilements are eradicated. Therefore, he must try his best to purify himself by leading a virtuous life instead of feeling that he is unable to lead a virtuous life and give up meditation.

(2) *Cittavisuddhi* — purity of mind — It is very difficult to realize the nature of *nāma rūpa* (mind and matter) as they are covered by illusions of the existence of individuals, males, females, persons and other concepts. The knowledge of *nāma rūpa* which we gather from books is insufficient for us to eradicate our defilements and attain the path leading to salvation and enlightenment. Knowledge from books is knowledge at second-hand which has not been experienced as it has not been realized by the individual himself. It is not self-realization.

To attain the correct path we require more than a knowledge from books; we require a clear philosophy which we can comprehend for ourselves. This philosophy can be realized only by meditation and meditation alone. Just as a person sharpens his knife before he begins to cut anything hard, in order to understand the nature of *nāma rūpa* the *yōgāvacara* must first of all prepare his mind. When his mind is free from hindrances, he attains *citta visuddhi*.

To purify our minds we must increase our powers of concentration. The nature of the mind is not to concentrate for a long time on one object but to wander from object to object. The person who is travelling at a very fast speed is unable to comprehend any one thing he sees on the side of the road as his mind which has not attained concentration and wanders from object to object cannot comprehend the true nature of things. When, by insight meditation, we are concentrating on the real nature of mind and matter, if the mind does not abide for a long time on this, it will begin to wander from object to object very fast. Such a mind will not be able to grasp the ultimate reality. If he is unable to do so, the wisdom of insight meditation would not arise in him quickly. Therefore, if he wishes to develop insight wisdom quickly, he must concentrate and prepare his mind for such a venture.

After diligent practice a person will attain the ability to keep his mind concentrated on one object for a long time. This ability in the mind concentration is attained by mental discipline *(samādhi)*. Without allowing in the intervening period for anything else to enter his mind, if he is able to keep his mind concentrated on one object for a long time he is in a state of trance. There are also yōgāvacaras who, at the very beginning, develop a high state of insight wisdom without developing concentration. Therefore, there is no harm if those who do not like to develop concentration can develop pure insight wisdom. Of those who develop insight wisdom after concentration there are some who attain this insight wisdom while they are in a trance. Still others develop concentration up to a certain point and when they have reached the first stage of concentration they are able to attain to insight wisdom. Others develop concentration and insight wisdom at the same time and meditate making use of both these factors at the same time. Of these systems, to achieve insight wisdom after attaining a state of trance does not suit the present day. If he does so it may happen that for a long time he may not be able to achieve insight wisdom.

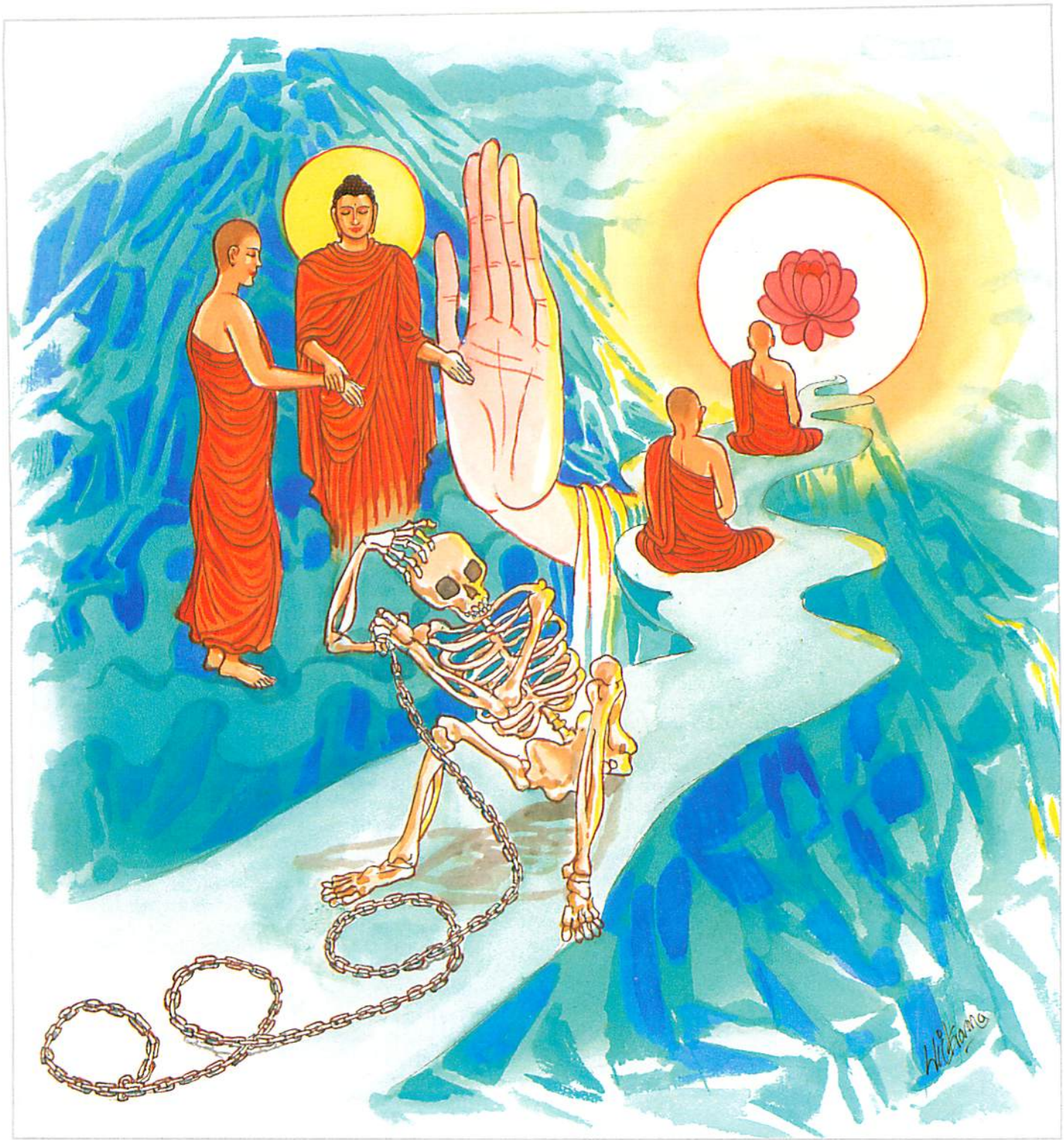
It is our opinion that at first a person must develop his concentration first and thereafter adopt the method of developing both concentration and insight wisdom. This seems to be the best system which can be followed.

(3) *Diṭṭhivisuddhi* — Purity of views — To purify one's mind by meditating on the Buddha or by undertaking any other system of meditation one must commence with *diṭṭhi visuddhi bhāvanā*. What is *Ātma diṭṭhi drūsti? Ātma diṭṭhi drūsti* means not considering mind and matter as mind and matter, myself as myself, mother as mother, father as father, brother as brother, sister as sister, an enemy as an enemy, a friend as a friend, and considering other varied individuals as beings in the same character and treating them and accepting them as such. This is *Ātma drūsti. Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* is another name for it. (*sakkāya — diṭṭhi*, means belief in a soul or self). Insight wisdom means considering the nature of mind and matter as mind and matter itself and not as oneself or as father, mother or any other being. This insight wisdom which is free from *ātma drūsti* is called *diṭṭhi visuddhi*. The brief explanation of *diṭṭhi visuddhi* is purity of wisdom.

The beginning of insight meditation is *diṭṭhi visuddhi bhāvanā*. The yogāvacara will have to spend a very long time to acquire this *diṭṭhivisuddhi* — pure wisdom. He must master correctly the *diṭṭhivisuddhi*. If the yōgāvacara tries to go forward without correctly mastering the *diṭṭhivisuddhi* his meditation practice will be confused. This should be mastered in the manner in which the doctrine of mind and matter can be seen as myself, mother or father or any other individual just as we peel the bark of a banana tree and thus make our wisdom into separate sections. This meditation has to be developed till we get rid of the ideas which we formerly entertained in our minds as mine, my father, my brother, my son, my wife — i.e., the conception of considering them as beings and individuals and until we can see and analyse them as I am not I, and my father is not my father and consider them as just constituents of matter and mind.

(cont'd on page 591)

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Do ye strive yourselves. Buddhas only teach the way. Tread the path and be ye released.

276. *Tumhēhi kiccaṁ ātappaṁ*
akkhātārō Tathāgatā
paṭipannā pamokkhanti
jhāyinō Mārabandhanā. (20:4)

Buddhas just proclaim the Path
but you're the ones to strive.
Contemplatives who tread the Path
are freed from Māra's bonds.

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BUDDHA ONLY SHOWS THE WAY

20 (1) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 273 – 276)

Commentary

According to Buddhist philosophy there is no permanent, unchanging spirit or entity which we can consider as self or soul or ego in contra-distinction to matter, and consciousness or *viññāna* should not be considered as spirit as opposed to matter. It should be particularly emphasised because a wrong conception that consciousness is a sort of self which continues as a permanent substance throughout life has persisted throughout the ages.

The Buddha has explained it further by an example. The nature of a fire is described by the material on account of which it burns. If it burns on account of straw it is called a straw fire. So consciousness is described according to the condition through which it arises.

The Buddha has described in unequivocal terms that consciousness is dependent on matter, sensation, perception and mental conceptions and that it cannot subsist independently of them. Consciousness exists with matter as its means *(rūpāyaṁ)*, matter as its object *(rūpārammaṇa)*, matter as its support — *(rūpapatiṭṭhitaṁ)* and seeking happiness it may grow, increase and develop. Consciousness may exist having sensation as its means or mental conception as its support, and seeking happiness it may grow, increase and develop.

If a man says "I shall show the coming, the going, the disappearance, the arising, the growth, the increase or the development or of consciousness apart from matter, sensation, perception and mental conception," he would be speaking of something that does not exist. In brief, the five aggregates *(Pañcakkhandha)* can be described thus. What we can describe as a being or an individual or I is only a convenient name or a label given to the combination of these five groups. They are all impermanent and subject to constant change. Whatever is impermanent is sorrow. The true meaning of the Buddha's words is, briefly, this: The five aggregates of attachment are equal to sorrow. For two consecutive moments they are not the same. Therefore, A is not equal to A. They are a flux or stream of momentary arising or disappearing.

"O' Brahmaṇa, it is just like a mountain river flowing far and swift taking everything along with it. There is no moment, no instant or second when it ceases to flow, but it continues to flow. Similarly, is human life like a mountain river." In these words the Buddha explained to Raṭṭhapāla that the world is in continuous flux and is impermanent.

As one thing disappears it conditions the appearance of the next in a series of cause and effect. There is no unchanging substance within them. There is nothing behind them that can be described as a permanent self, or soul. It will be agreed by every one that neither matter nor sensation nor perception, nor any of these mental activities nor consciousness can be really called I. But these independent five physical and mental aggregates are working together in combination as a physio-psychological machine to give the idea of "I". But this is an erroneous idea, a mental conception which is nothing but one of those fifty-two mental conceptions of the fourth aggregate which is the idea of self.

These five aggregates taken together are popularly called suffering itself. there is no other being or myself standing behind these five aggregates who experiences *dukkha*.

Kammassa Kārakā natthi — vipākassaca vēdakō
Suddhadhammā pavattanti — ēvētaṁ sammadassanaṁ

(4) *Kaṇkhāvitāraṇa visuddhi* — purity of the conquest of doubts — To obtain the supramundane state, doubt is a great hindrance. To eradicate the origin of anything we must discover its causes. The cycle of rebirth can be destroyed by finding out its causes.

(5) *Maggâmagga ñāṇadassana visuddhi* - purity of knowledge and insight into right and wrong path. Here, *magga* means the correct system of meditation. To attain this state of wisdom one should observe the *tilakkhaṇa* meditation. When the *nāma* and *rūpa* are taken together they are referred to as *saṁkhāra*. The conditioned things *(saṁkhāras)* referred to in the *paticca samuppāda* refer to cause and effect of the karmic actions. Although we hear the words *anicca, dukkha anatta* very often, we do not realise that they have such a deep meaning. We know that all living beings are subject to death but this is insufficient for *vipassanā bhāvanā*. It is not enough to know only the attributes of sorrow. This is difficult for us to understand because our mind is overwhelmed by delusion.

(6) *Paṭipadāñaṇadassana visuddhi* - purity of knowledge and insight into progress. The disciple who is free from the harmful influences of the defilements and has gained the purity and knowledge of the right and wrong paths in the previous stage, develops his insight to its culmination in this final stage through the systematic and steadfast progress of deeper understanding. This is termed *paṭipadā* - gradual progress - which consists of the nine-fold insight wisdom leading to the realisation of transcendental states.

(7) *Ñāṇadassana visuddhi* - purity of knowledge and insight into the noble path. The four wisdom of knowing the path to four stages of higher attainment make up this.

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All conditioned things are transient. Disillusionment through this knowledge leads to release.

277. *Sabbē saṅkhārā aniccā'ti*
yadā paññāya passati
atha nibbindati dukkhē
ēsa maggō visuddhiyā. (20:5)

When with wisdom one discerns
transience of conditioned things
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the path to purity.

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CONDITIONED THINGS ARE TRANSIENT

20 (2) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 277 — 279)

While residing at Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to five hundred monks.

The story that these five hundred monks, who had received a meditation topic from the Buddha and who had striven and struggled with might and main in the forest without attaining arahatship, returned to the Buddha for the purpose of obtaining a meditation topic better suited to their needs.

The Buddha inquired within himself, "What will be the most profitable meditation topic for these monks?" Then he considered within himself, "In the dispensation of the Buddha Kassapa these monks devoted themselves for twenty thousand years to meditation on the characteristic of impermanence; therefore, the characteristic of impermanence shall be the subject of the single stanza which I shall give."

And he said to them, "Monks, in the sphere of sensual existence and in the other spheres of existence all the aggregates of existence are by reason of unreality impermanent."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 277)

sabbē saṅkhārā aniccā iti yadā paññāya passati
atha dukkhē nibbindati ēsa visuddhiyā maggō

sabbē: all; *saṅkhārā:* component things; *aniccā:* are transient; *iti yadā:* when this; *paññāya passati:* (you) realize with insight; *atha:* then; *dukkhē:* from suffering; *nibbindati:* (you) get detached; *ēsa:* this is; *visuddhiyā:* to total freedom of blemishes (Nibbāna); *maggō:* the path

All component things, all things that have been put together, all created things are transient, impermanent, non-constant. When this is realized through insight, one achieves detachment from suffering. This is the path to total freedom from blemishes.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 278)

sabbē saṅkhārā dukkhā iti yadā paññāya passati
atha dukkhē nibbindati ēsa visuddhiyā maggō

sabbē: all; *saṅkhārā:* component things; *dukkhā'ti:* are suffering; *iti yadā:* when this; *paññāya passati:* (you) realize with insight; *atha:* then; *dukkhē:* from suffering; *nibbindati:* (you) get detached; *ēsa:* this is; *visuddhiyā:* to total freedom of blemishes (Nibbāna); *maggō:* the path

All component things — all things that have been put together — all created things are sorrow-fraught. When this is realized through Insight, one achieves detachment from suffering. This is the path to total freedom from suffering.

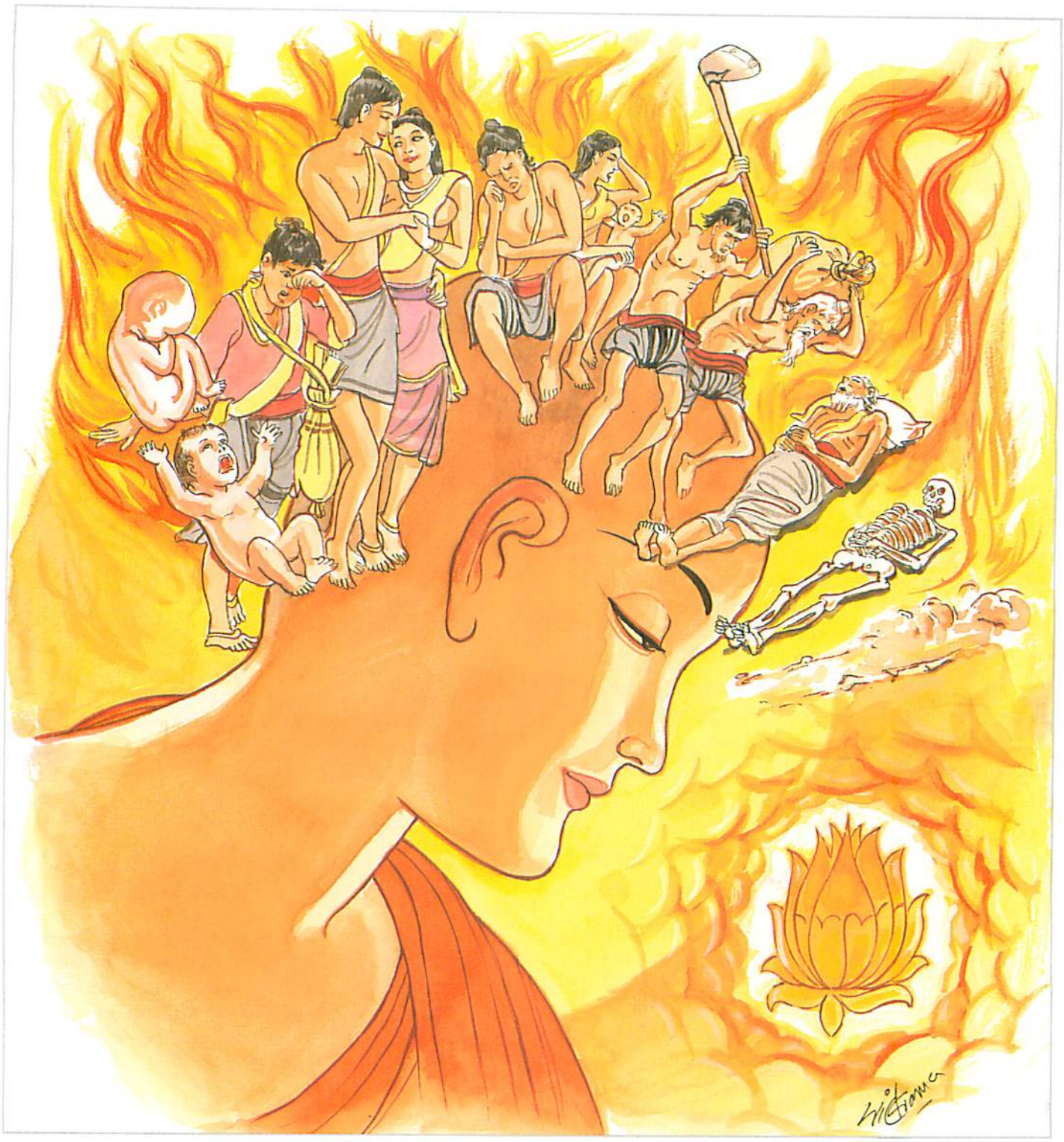
Explanatory Translation (Verse 279)

sabbē dhammā anattā iti yadā paññāya passati
atha dukkhē nibbindati ēsa visuddhiyā maggō

sabbē: all; *dhammā:* states of being; *anattā:* (are) without a self; *iti yadā:* when this; *paññāya passati:* (you) realize with insight; *atha:* then; *dukkhē:* from suffering; *nibbindati:* (you) get detached; *ēsa:* this is; *visuddhiyā:* to total freedom of blemishes (Nibbāna); *maggō:* the path

(cont'd on page 595)

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All conditioned things are sorrow-fraught. This knowledge clears your path...

278. *Sabbē saṅkhārā dukkhā'ti*
yadā paññāya passati
atha nibbindati dukkhē
ēsa maggō visuddhiyā. (20:6)

When with wisdom one discerns
the dukkha of conditioned things
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the path to purity.

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ALL COMPONENT THINGS ARE SORROW

20 (2) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 277 — 279) (cont'd)

Commentary

All states of being are without a self. When this is realized through insight, one achieves detachment from suffering. This is the path to total freedom from suffering.

Commentary

aniccā: impermanent. In the Buddhist system, there are three characteristics of existence — *anicca, dukkha* and *anatta*. Impermanence implies that all forms of existences end up in decay and death. With the exception of Nibbāna, this applies to all phenomena.

Whoever constantly keeps in mind the fact that he would someday be subjected to death and that death is inevitable, would be eager to fulfil his duties to his fellowmen before death, and this would certainly make him heedful in respect of this world and the next. It has been said, therefore, that a "monk who is engaged in the thought of death is ever heedful *(Maraṇasati-manuyuttō bhikkhu satatam appamattō hōti)*.

There are, however, extremists who say that reflection on death is an unnecessary thought that tends to retard the progress of a person. This is not so. For, thus has Visnusarman said in the *Pancatantra*:

> *Samcintya tamugradandam*
> *mrtyum manusyasya vicaksanasya*
> *Varsambusikta iva carmabandhah*
> *Sarvaprayatnah Sithili bhavanti.*

(All the endeavours of a wise man who constantly thinks of death that causes severe punishment, are bound to become easy and flexible like leather bags moistened with rain water.)

It must be noted, however, that Buddhism never advocated dejection and neglect of one's duties by pondering over the death. On the contrary, what is taught in Buddhism is the fulfillment of one's duties and obligations in the best possible manner even on the eve of death. The Buddha had expressed His categorical disapproval of the postponement of one's duties: thus says the Buddha:

> *Ajjēva kiccam ātappaṁ Kō jaññā Māraṇaṁ suvē....*
>
> (Today itself, one should strive for the accomplishment of one's tasks; for, who knows whether death would strike tomorrow...)

The *Uraga Jātaka* recounts how a father, when his only son lay dead, bitten by a serpent, sent news of the incident to the inmates of the house and without awaiting their arrival, continued to plough his field; he was a person who regularly practiced meditation on death. By thus reflecting on the inevitability of death, one becomes increasingly active in the performance of one's duties; one also develops a sense of fearlessness towards death. Furthermore, such a person takes care not to commit the slightest sin that is likely to cause suffering the next world; he also becomes a free person who has forsaken all bonds and attachments to his beloved ones and other objects.

Both monks and laymen, unmindful of death and considering themselves as immortals, are often heedless in cultivating virtues. They engage themselves in strife and arguments and are often dejected, with their hopes and aspirations shattered. At times, they postpone their work with the hope of doing it on a grand scale in the future, and end up without being able to do anything. Therefore, it is only proper that one should daily reflect on death. Out of the four-fold topics of meditation prescribed for Buddhists as suitable to be practiced everywhere *(sabbattha kammaṭṭhāna)*, reflection on death comes as the fourth *(Buddhānussati mettā ca — asubhaṁ Maraṇassati)*.

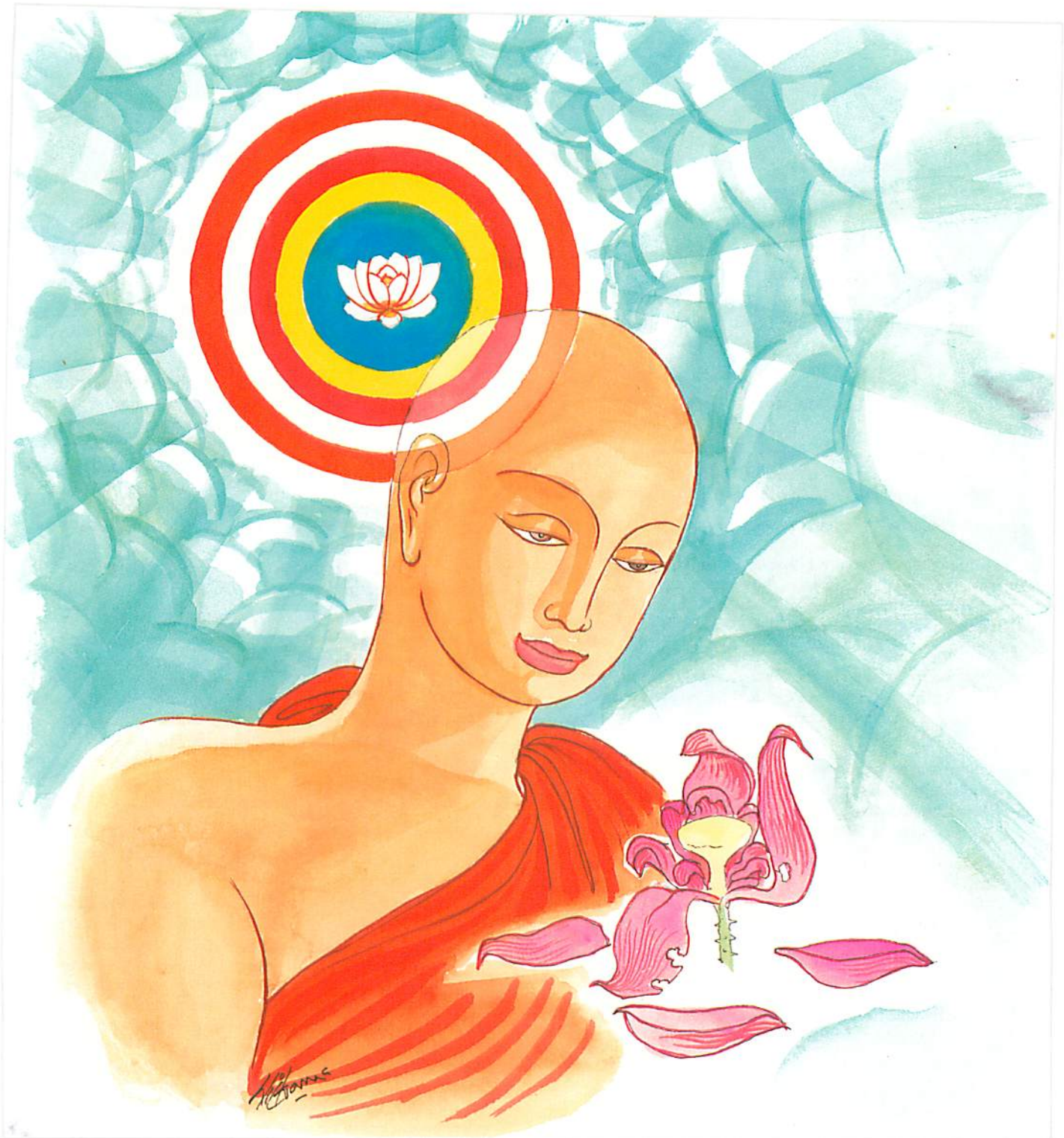
"Ēkadhammō bhikkavē bhāvitō bahulīkatō ēkanta nibbidāya virāgāya nirōdhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambōdhāya nibbāṇāya saṁvattati; katamō ēkadhammō maraṇassati." There is, O' monks, one Dhamma which when meditated on and practiced constantly, leads to detachment from the world of becoming, freedom from all defilements, emancipation from worldly sorrows, acquisition of higher knowledge, realization of the four noble truths, and attainment of Nibbāna. What is this one Dhamma? It is the constant reflection on death. The loftiness and significance of reflection on death, is clearly conveyed by this doctrinal passage.

dukkha: suffering. This is the second of the three characteristics of existence. The four noble truths, too, pivot round suffering *(dukkha)*.

The Buddha's Teaching regarding the four noble truths deals with the knowledge of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation, and the way to the cessation of suffering. The truth regarding suffering tells us that all beings are subject to birth, decay, disease and death. In brief, the five aggregates *(skandhās)*: physical phenomena *(rūpa)*; feeling of sensation *(vēdanā)*; perception *(saññā)*; volitional activities *(samkhāra)*; consciousness *(viññāna)*; all constitute suffering. This is the truth regarding suffering, and the right understanding of it is *sammādiṭṭhi*. This *Sammādiṭṭhi* is basically essential for the understanding of the real nature of the world. Of the four noble truths, the understanding of suffering is of cardinal importance. Thus this is considered first.

(cont'd on page 597)

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All things are without self. This disillusionment leads to the path...

279. *Sabbē dhammā anattā'ti*
yadā paññāya passati
atha nibbindati dukkhē
ēsa maggō visuddhiyā. (20:7)

When with wisdom one discerns
all knowables are not a self
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the path to purity.

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EVERYTHING IS SOUL-LESS

20 (2) The Story of Five Hundred Monks (Verses 277 — 279) (cont'd)

Commentary

The second noble truth deals with the cause of suffering, and this is craving or attachment *(taṇhā)*. It is because of this craving that all beings continue to be born and reborn in *saṁsāra*. What a being enjoys as happiness is really suffering, which springs from this craving or attachment. Man pursues many pleasures, seeking happiness like the deer deluded by a mirage because of this craving or attachment. To be emancipated from Saṁsara or the cycle of birth and rebirth one must understand the truth regarding craving. This craving assumes three forms:

(1) *Kāma taṇhā* (attachment to sensual pleasures);

(2) *Bhava taṇhā* (attachment to existence);

(3) *Vibhava taṇhā* (attachment to non-existence).

Kāma taṇhā arises out of *sakkāyadiṭṭhi* or the idea that there exists an unchanging entity or a permanent soul — that there is such an entity as I. A person who is under such a delusion always strives to pander to his five senses. It is because of *kāma taṇhā* that happiness is regarded as enjoyment through the five senses. This is a delusion. As *kāma taṇhā* increases, suffering arises. Thus *kāma taṇhā* is a cause of suffering.

Bhava taṇhā is the craving that arises in a being for termination of life. This craving arises in a being who believes in the existence of a soul *(sassatadiṭṭhi)*.

Vibhava taṇhā is the craving that arises in a being for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures as an end in itself. This craving arises because of the non-belief in an after-life *(ucchēdaditthi)*. The Lōkāyata theory of *Cārvāka* and *Ajita Kēsakambala* belongs to this category. In the Brahmajāla Sutta of the Buddhist canon seven types of *ucchēdavāda* are expounded.

The person who develops right understanding, the first constituent of the noble eight-fold path, realizes that this craving is the cause of suffering. The second of the four noble truths deals with the cause of this craving or suffering. Right understanding gives the knowledge of how to end suffering. The Third noble Truth deals with the cessation of suffering. This cessation of suffering is brought about by eradicating the three kinds of craving *(taṇhakkhaya)* which give rise to suffering. This is Nibbāna.

Right understanding gives us the knowledge of the path to the cessation of suffering. The fourth noble truth deals with the cessation of suffering *(dukkhanirōdhagāmini patipadāgnāna)*. The path to the cessation of suffering is the noble eight-fold path. This is the middle path. It is, therefore, impossible to eradicate the three forms of craving which give rise to suffering without following the middle path.

Anatta: no-soul concept. This is the third of the three characteristics of existence as the Buddha expounded. The idea of a lack of a soul, or a permanent and abiding self, or an *ātman* that is eternal is extremely difficult for most individuals to understand.

The sum total of the doctrine of change taught in Buddhism is that all component things that have conditioned existence are a process and not a group of abiding entities, but the changes occur in such rapid succession that people regard mind and body as static entities. They do not see their arising and their breaking up, but regard them unitarily, see them as a lump *(ghāna saññā)* or whole.

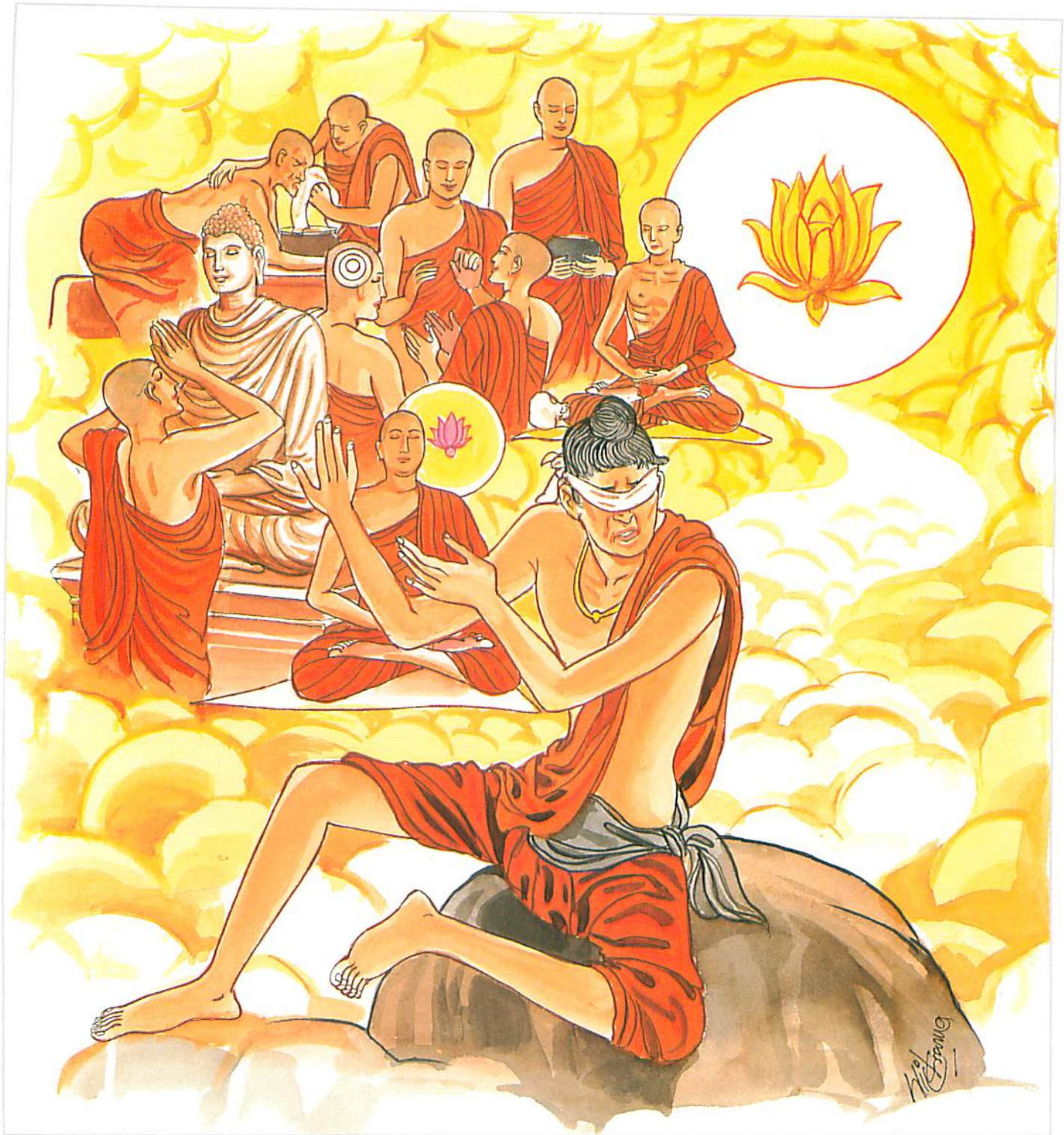
Those ascetics and brahmins who conceive a self in diverse ways conceive it as either the five aggregates of clinging, or as any one of them.

"Herein the untaught worldling...considers body as the Self, Self as possessed of body as included in the self, self as included in the body...similarly as to feeling, perception, volitional formations, and consciousness... Thus this is the wrong view. The I am notion is not abandoned...

It is very hard, indeed, for people who are accustomed continually to think of their own mind and body and the external world with mental projections as wholes, as inseparable units, to get rid of the false appearance of 'wholeness'. So long as man fails to see things as processes, as movements, he will never understand the *anatta* (no-Soul) doctrine of the Buddha. That is why people impertinently and impatiently put the question: "If there is no persisting entity, no unchanging principle, like self or soul *(ātman)*, what is it that experiences the results of deeds here and hereafter?"

Another view of the three characteristics of existence are the characteristics of impermanence *(anicca)*, suffering *(dukkha)* and not-self *(anatta)*. These three characteristics are always present in or are connected with existence, and they reflect the real nature of existence. They help us to deal with existence. What we learn to develop as a result of understanding the three characteristics is renunciation. Once we understand that existence is universally characterised by impermanence, suffering and not-self, we eliminate our attachment to existence. Once we eliminate our attachment to existence, we gain the threshold of Nibbāna. This is the purpose served by the understanding of the three characteristics. It removes attachment by removing delusions, the misunderstanding that existence is permanent, is pleasant and has something to do with the self. This is why understanding the three characteristics is central to wisdom.

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Unenterprising, youthful but lazy, irresolute and weak, fail in their way to wisdom.

280. *Uṭṭhānakālamhi anuṭṭhahānō*
yuvā balī ālasiyaṁ upētō
saṁsanna saṅkappamanō kusītō
paññāya maggaṁ alasō na vindati. (20:8)

Though time to strive, not striving,
while young and strong yet indolent,
weak-minded and irresolute:
one finds not wisdom's way.

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THE SLOTHFUL MISS THE PATH

20 (5) The Story of Venerable Tissa the Idle One (Verse 280)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Tissa, a lazy monk.

Once, many young men were admitted into the Sangha by the Buddha in Sāvatthi. After receiving a meditation topic from the Buddha, all the new monks except one went to the forest to practice meditation. They practiced zealously and vigilantly so that in due course all of them attained arahatship. When they returned to the monastery to pay homage to him, the Buddha was very pleased and satisfied with their achievement. Monk Tissa who stayed behind did not try hard and therefore achieved nothing.

When Tissa found that the relationship between the Buddha and those monks was very cordial and intimate, he felt rather neglected, and regretted that he had wasted all that time. So he resolved to practice meditation throughout the night. As he was walking in meditation on that night, he slipped and broke a thigh bone. Other monks hearing his cry went to help him. On hearing about the above incident the Buddha said, "Monks, one who does not strive when he should be striving but idle away his time will not attain mental absorption *(jhāna)* and *magga* insight."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 280)

uṭṭhānakālamhi anuṭṭahānō yuvā balī ālasiyaṁ upētō, saṁsanna saṅkappamanō kusītō alasō paññāya maggaṁ na vindati

uṭṭhānakālamhi: when an effort is due; *anuṭṭhahānō:* does not make the effort; *yuvā:* (though) young; *balī:* (though) strong; *ālasiyaṁ upētō:* (if) lethargic; *saṁsanna saṅkappamanō:* if good thoughts are suppressed; *kusītō:* lazy; *alasō:* indolent; *paññāya maggaṁ:* the path of wisdom; *na vindati:* does not find

If an individual does not make an effort even at a time when exertion is due, if a person is lethargic even when he is young and strong, if a person suppresses the wholesome thoughts that arise in his mind, if he is lazy, he will not find the path to wisdom.

Commentary

paññāya maggaṁ: the path that has to be discerned through wisdom.

paññā: understanding, knowledge, wisdom, insight, comprises a very wide field. The specific Buddhist knowledge or wisdom, however, as part of the noble eight-fold path to deliverance, is insight, i.e., that intuitive knowledge which brings about the four stages of holiness and the realization of Nibbāna and which consists in the penetration of the impermanency, misery and impersonality of all forms of existence.

With regard to the condition of its arising one distinguishes three kinds of knowledge: knowledge based on thinking *(cintā-maya-paññā)*, knowledge based on learning *(suta-maya-paññā)*, and knowledge based on mental development *(bhāvanā-maya-paññā)*.

Based on thinking is that knowledge which one has acquired through one's own thinking, without having learnt it from others. Based on earning is that knowledge which one has heard from others and thus acquired through learning. Based on mental development is that knowledge which one has acquired through mental development in this or that way, and which has reached the stage of full concentration.

Wisdom is one of the five mental faculties, one of the three kinds of training, and one of the perfections.

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Enter the Path revealed to you by the sages. Restrain yourselves in body, mind and speech.

281. *Vācānurakkhī manasā susaṁvutō*
kāyēna ca akusalaṁna kayirā
ētē tayō kammapathē visōdhayē
ārādhayē maggaṁ isippavēditaṁ. (20:9)

In speech ever watchful with mind well-restrained
never with the body do unwholesomeness.
So should one purify these three kamma-paths
winning to the Way made known by the Seers.

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PURIFY YOUR THOUGHTS, WORDS AND DEEDS

20 (6) The Story of a Pig Spirit (Verse 281)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a pig spirit.

Once Venerable Mahā Moggallāna was coming down the Gijjhakūṭa hill with Venerable Lakkhana when he saw a miserable, ever-hungry spirit *(pēta)*, with the head of a pig and the body of a human being. On seeing the *pēta*, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna smiled but did not say anything. Back at the monastery, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, in the presence of the Buddha, talked about this *pēta* with its mouth swarming with maggots. The Buddha also said that he himself had seen that very pēta soon after his attainment of Buddhahood, but that he did not say anything about it because people might not believe him and thus they would be doing wrong to him. Then the Buddha proceeded to relate the story about this *pēta*.

During the time of Kassapa Buddha, this particular pēta was a monk who often expounded the Dhamma. On one occasion, he came to a monastery where two monks were staying together. After staying with those two for some time, he found that he was doing quite well because people liked his expositions. Then it occurred to him that it would be even better if he could make the other two monks leave the place and have the monastery all to himself. Thus, he tried to set one against the other. The two monks quarrelled and left the monastery in different directions. On account of this evil deed, that monk was reborn in Avīci Niraya and he was serving out the remaining part of his term of suffering as a swine-pēta with its mouth swarming with maggots. Then the Buddha exhorted, "A monk should be calm and well-restrained in thought, word and deed."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 281)

vācānurakkhī manasā susaṁvutō, kāyēna ca akusalaṁ na kayirā ētē tayō kammapathē visōdhayē isippavēditaṁ maggaṁ ārādhayē

vācānurakkhī: well guarded in speech; *manasā:* in mind; *susaṁvutō:* well restrained; *kāyēna ca:* even by body; *akusalaṁ:* evil actions; *na kayirā:* are not done; *ētē tayō kammapathē:* (keeps) these three doors of action; *visōdhayē:* cleansed; *isippavēditaṁ:* realized by the sages; *maggaṁ:* the noble eight-fold path; *ārādhayē:* (he) will attain

If one is well-guarded in speech, well-restrained in mind and if one refrains from committing sins physically, he will certainly attain the noble eight-fold path realized by the sages.

Commentary

Tayō kammapathē: the three doors of kamma (action) — the speech, mind and body. Views regarding kamma tend to be controversial. Though we are neither absolutely the servants nor the masters of our kamma, it is evident from counteractive and supportive factors that the fruition of kamma is influenced to some extent by external circumstances, surroundings, personality, individual striving, and the like. It is this doctrine of kamma that gives consolation, hope, reliance, and moral courage to a Buddhist. When the unexpected happens, difficulties, failures, and misfortunes confront him, the Buddhist realizes that he is reaping what he has sown, and is wiping off a past debt. Instead of resigning himself, leaving everything to kamma, he makes a strenuous effort to pull out the weeds and sow useful seeds in their place, for the future is in his hands. He who believes in kamma, does not condemn even the most corrupt, for they have their chance to reform themselves at any moment. Though bound to suffer in woeful states, they have the hope of attaining eternal peace. By their deeds they create their own hells, and by their own deeds they can also create their own heavens. A Buddhist who is fully convinced of the law of kamma does not pray to another to be saved but confidently relies on himself for his emancipation. Instead of making any self-surrender, or propitiating any supernatural agency, he would rely on his own will-power and work incessantly for the weal and happiness of all. The belief in kamma, "validates his effort and kindles his enthusiasm" because it teaches individual responsibility. To an ordinary Buddhist kamma serves as a deterrent, while to an intellectual it serves as an incentive to do good. This law of kamma explains the problem of suffering, the mystery of the so-called fate and predestination of some religions, and above all the inequality of mankind.

We are the architects of our own fate. We are our own creators. We are our own destroyers. We build our own heavens. We build our own hells. What we think, speak and do, become our own. It is these thoughts, words, and deeds that assume the name of kamma and pass from life to life exalting and degrading us in the course of our wanderings in *saṁsāra*.

The Buddha said:

> Man's merits and the sins he here hath wrought:
> That is the thing he owns, that takes he hence.
> That dogs his steps, like shadows in pursuit.
> Hence let him make good store for life elsewhere.
> Sure platform in some other future world,
> Rewards of virtue on good beings wait.

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From energetic application springs wisdom. Enter upon the way for its increase.

282. *Yogā vē jāyatī bhūri*
ayōgā bhūrisaṅkhayō
ētāṁ dvēdhā pathaṁ ñatvā
bhavāya vibhavāya ca
tathattānaṁ nivēseyya
yathā bhūri pavaḍḍhati. (20:10)

From endeavour wisdom springs,
lacking effort wisdom wanes:
having known this two-fold path
either to progress or decline
so should one exhort oneself
that wisdom may increase.

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WAY TO INCREASE WISDOM

20 (7) The Story of Venerable Pōṭhila (Verse 282)

While residing at the Jētavana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Pōṭhila.

Pōṭhila was a senior monk who knew the Pitaka well and was actually teaching the Dhamma to many monks. Because he knew the Pitaka, he was also very conceited. The Buddha knew his weakness and wanted him to mend his ways and put him on the right path. So, whenever Pōṭhila came to pay obeisance, the Buddha would address him as 'Useless Pōṭhila'. When Pōṭhila heard these remarks, he pondered over those words of the Buddha and came to realize that the Buddha had made those unkind remarks because he, Pōṭhila, had not made any serious effort to practice meditation and had not achieved any of the *maggās* or even any level of mental absorption *(jhāna)*.

Thus, without telling anyone Venerable Pōṭhila left for a monastery at a place twenty yōjanas (leagues) away from the Jētavana monastery. At that monastery there were thirty monks. First, he went to the most senior monk and humbly requested him to be his mentor; but the elder, wishing to humble him, asked him to go to the next senior monk, who in his turn sent him on to the next. In this way, he was sent from one to the other until he came to a seven year old arahat sāmanēra. The young sāmanēra accepted him as a pupil only after ascertaining that Pōṭhila would obediently follow his instructions. As instructed by the sāmanēra, Venerable Pōṭhila kept his mind firmly fixed on the true nature of the body; he was very ardent and vigilant in his meditation.

The Buddha saw Pōṭhila in his vision and through supernormal power made Pōṭhila feel his presence and encouraged him to be steadfast and ardent. At the end of the discourse, Pōṭhila attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 282)

yōgā vē bhūri jāyati ayōgā bhūrisankhayō
bhavāya vibhavāya ca ētāṁ dvedhā pathaṁ ñatvā
yathā bhūri pavaḍḍhati tathā attānaṁ nivēseyya

yōgā: (from) meditation; *vē:* certainly; *bhūri:* refined wisdom; *jāyati:* arises; *ayōgā:* through non-meditation; *bhūrisaṅkhayō:* the erosion of wisdom happens; *bhavāya:* progress; *vibhavāya ca:* also decline; *ētāṁ dvēdhā pathaṁ:* these two paths; *ñatvā:* having known; *yathā:* in what manner; *bhūri pavaḍḍhati:* wisdom increases; *tathā:* in that manner; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *niveseyya:* establish

From reflection and concentrated meditation refined wisdom arises. Through the non-practice of concentration wisdom erodes. Once these two paths — one leading to progress and other to decline — are recognized, one must conduct one's self to increase wisdom.

Commentary

yōgā vē bhūri jāyati: Meditation certainly refines wisdom. Meditation *(bhāvanā)* is a process of refining wholesome faculties, mental mostly. Mental Development (lit. calling into existence, producing) is what in English generally but rather vaguely, is called meditation. One has to distinguish two kinds - development of tranquillity *(samatha-bhāvanā)*, i.e., concentration *(samādhi)*, and development of insight *(vipassanā-bhāvanā)*, i.e., wisdom *(paññā)*.

These two important terms, tranquility and insight *(samatha-vipassanā)*, are very often met with and explained in the Sutta, as well as in the Abhidhamma.

Tranquility *(samatha)* is the concentrated, unshaken, peaceful and, therefore, undefiled state of mind, whilst insight *(vipassanā)* is the intuitive insight into the impermanency, misery and impersonality *(anicca, dukkha, anatta)* of all bodily and mental phenomena of existence, included in the five groups of existence, namely corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness.

Tranquility, or concentration of mind, according to *Sankhēpavaṇṇanā* (comment to *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*), bestows a three-fold blessing: favourable rebirth, a present happy life, and purity of mind which is the condition of Insight. Concentration *(samādhi)* is the indispensable foundation and precondition of Insight by purifying the mind from the five mental defilements or hindrances *(nīvaraṇa)* whilst insight *(vipassanā)* produces the four supermundane stages of holiness and deliverance of mind. The Buddha, therefore, says: "May you develop mental concentration, O' monks; for whoso is mentally concentrated sees things according to reality". And it is said, "Just as when a lighted lamp is brought into a dark chamber, the lamp-light will destroy the darkness and produce and spread the light, just so will insight, once arisen, destroy the darkness of ignorance and produce the light of knowledge."

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Cut down the forest, no single tree. 'Tis the forest that begets fear. Be ye freed of that.

283. *Vanaṁ chindatha mā rukkhaṁ*
vanatō jāyati bhayaṁ
chetvā vanañca vanathaṁ ca
nibbanā hōtha bhikkhavō. (20:11)

The wood cut down but not a tree
since it's from wood that fear is born.
Having cut wood and woodedness
O bhikkhūs be without a wood.

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SHUN PASSION

20 (8) The Story of Five Old Monks (Verses 283 & 284)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to five old monks.

The story goes that in the days when they were living in the world they were rich and wealthy householders of Sāvatthi. Intimate friends, one of another, they banded themselves together for the performance of good works. Hearing the Buddha preach the Dhamma, they said to themselves, "We are old men; why should we remain laymen any longer?" Accordingly, they asked the Buddha to admit them to the Sangha, and retiring from the world, adopted the monastic life. Now, by reason of their advanced years, they were unable to learn the Dhamma by heart, and, therefore, built a hermitage of leaves and grass on the outskirts of the monastery, and lived there together. On their alms-round they generally went to the houses of their sons and wives and there took their meals.

Now one of the old monks had a former wife named Madhurapacika, and she was a good friend to them all. Therefore, they all used to take the food they received to her house, and sit down there and eat it, and Madhurapācikā would give them of her store of sauces and curries. In the course of time she was attacked by some disease or other and died. Thereupon, those aged Venerables assembled in one of their huts, and falling on each other's necks, wept and lamented, saying, "Madhurapācikā the lay disciple is dead." Thereupon, the monks came running up from all quarters and asked, "Brethren, what is the matter?" The old monks replied, "Venerables, the former wife of our comrade is dead. She was a most generous benefactress of ours. Where shall we ever find another like her now? That is why we are weeping."

The monks fell to discussing the incident in the hall of truth. In came the Buddha and asked, "Monks, what are you discussing now, as you sit here all gathered together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, this is not the first time they have so conducted themselves; the same thing happened in a previous state of existence also. In a previous state of existence they were all reborn as crows. As she was walking along the shore of the sea, a wave of the sea picked her up and flung her into the sea, and there she perished, whereupon they all wept and lamented. 'We will pull her out again,' said they, and forthwith set to work with their beaks to bale out the great ocean; finally were wearied of their task."

After the Buddha had related this *Kāka Jātaka* in detail, he addressed the monks as follows, "Monks, in as much as you have incurred this suffering because of the forest of lust, hatred, and delusion, it behoves you to cut down this forest; by so doing you will obtain release from suffering."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 283)

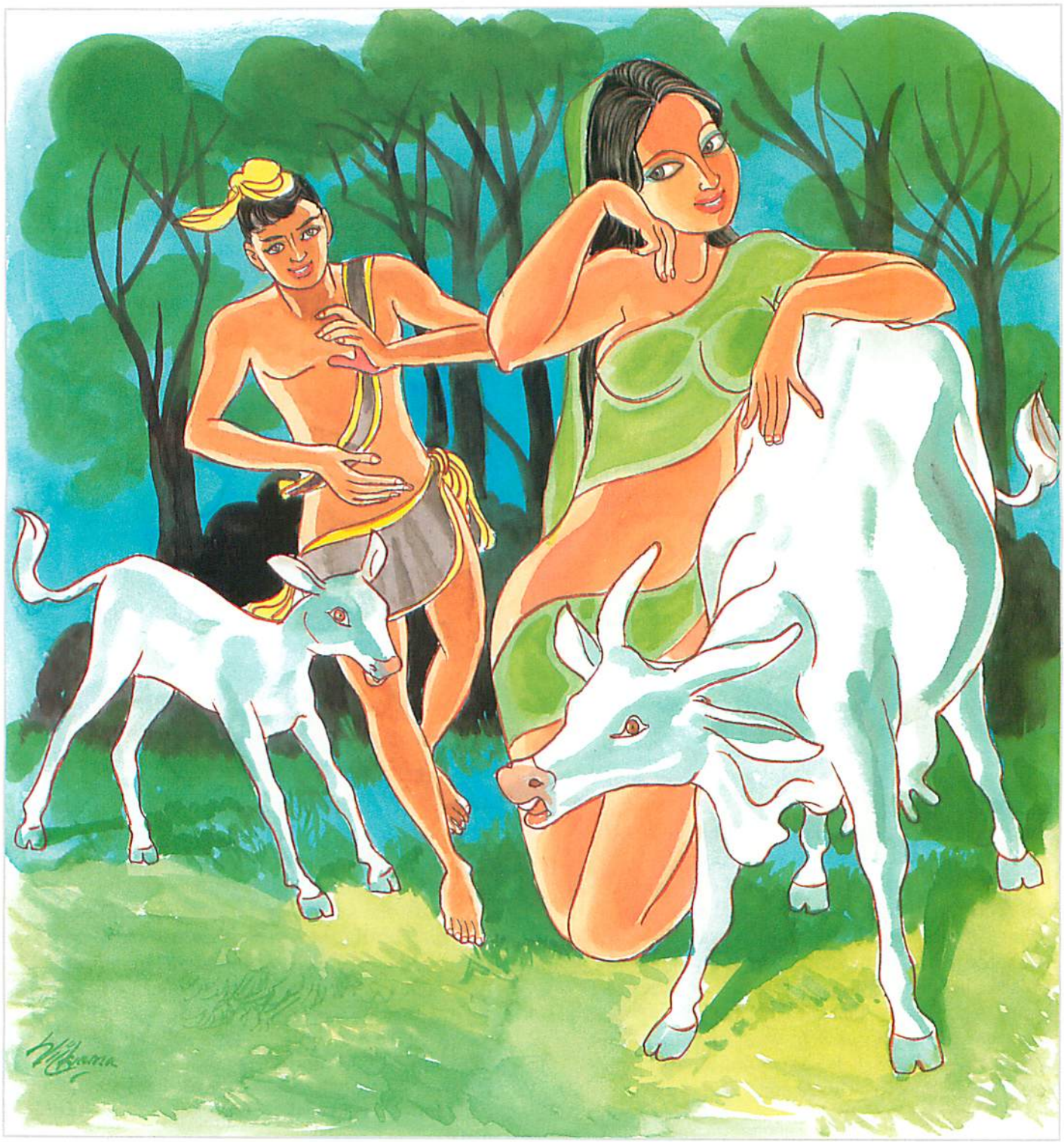
bhikkhavō vanaṁ chindatha mā rukkhaṁ vanatō bhayaṁ jāyati vanañca vanathañca chetvā nibbanā hōtha

bhikkhavō: O' monks; *vanaṁ:* the forest (of blemishes); *chindatha:* cut down; *mā rukkhaṁ:* (do) not (cut down) the tree; *vanatō:* from the forest (of defilements); *bhayaṁ:* fear; *jāyati:* arises; *vanañca:* the forest; *vanathañca:* and the undergrowth too; *chetvā:* having cut down; *nibbanā hōtha:* achieve Deathlessness (forestlessness)

O' Monks, cut down the forests of defilements. But, do not cut down the trees. Fear comes from the forests of defilements. Clear both the forests and the undergrowth. Having done this achieve the state of Nibbāna.

(cont'd on page 607)

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As long as man's passion for woman remains uncut, the mind's held in bondage.

284. *Yāvaṁ hi vanathō na chijjati*
aṇumattō'pi narassa nārisu
paṭibaddhamanō'va tāva sō
vacchō khīrapakō'va mātari. (20:12)

As long indeed as woodedness
of man to woman is not cut
so long in bondage is one's mind
as milch-calf to the mother cow.

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ATTACHMENT TO WOMEN

20 (8) The Story of Five Old Monks (Verses 283 & 284) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 284)

narassa nārisu aṇumattō api vanathō yāvaṁ hi
na chijjati, tāva sō mātari khīrapakō vaccho iva
paṭibaddhamanō ēva

narassa: of man's; *nārisu:* towards women; *aṇumattō api:* even slightly; *vanathō:* an undergrowth of defilements (exists); *yāvaṁ hi:* as long as; *na chijjati:* (this is) not destroyed; *tāva:* till then; *sō:* that man; *mātari:* towards the mother (attached); *khīrapakō:* suckling; *vacchō iva:* like a calf; *paṭibaddhamanō ēva:* certainly will be of attached mind (to women)

As long as a man's mind is attached to women , even minutely, like a little undergrowth that has not been cut down, so long will his mind be attached like a suckling calf to its mother cow.

Commentary

narassa nārisu: of a man towards women. The Buddha refers to the strong and unrestrainable attachment a man entertains towards a woman. The Buddha's attitude to sex is evident in certain areas of the Buddha's Discourses. The opening Discourses of Anguttara Nikāya states: Monks, I know not of any other single form by which a man's heart is attracted as it is by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's form fills a man's mind.

Monks, I know not of any other single sound...I know not of any other single smell...I know not of any other single flavour...I know not of any other single touch...by which a man's heart is attracted as it is by that of a woman. A woman's sound, smell, flavour, and touch fill a man's mind.

Monks, I know not of any other single form, sound, smell, flavour and touch by which a woman's heart is attracted as it is by the form, sound, smell, flavour and touch of a man. Monks, a woman's mind is filled with these things."

Here is a sermon on sex explained in unmistakable language, the truth of which no sane man dare deny. Sex is described by the Buddha as the strongest impulse in man. If one becomes a slave to this impulse even the most powerful man turns into a weakling; even the sage may fall from the higher to a lower level. The sexual urge, especially in youth, is a fire that needs careful handling. If one is not thoughtful and restrained, it can cause untold harm. There is no fire like lust. Passions do not die out: they burn out.

Since the Buddha was a practical philosopher he did not expect his lay followers to lead ascetic lives. Indeed, he called them enjoyers of sense pleasures *(gihī kāmabhōgī)*. Being well aware of man's instincts and impulses, his appetites and urges, the Master did not prohibit sexual relations for the laity as he had done for monks. But he warned man against wrong ways of gratifying the sexual appetite. He went a step further and recommended the observation of the eight precepts with special emphasis on the third one for the laity during fast-days of retreat *(upōsatha)* or as the occasion demanded.

If a person makes up his mind to live an unmarried life he should make a real effort to be chaste in body, speech and thought. if he is not strong enough to remain single, he may marry, but he should refrain from such sexual relations as are wrong and harmful. As the Buddha explains in the Discourse on downfall:

If a person is addicted to women (given to a life of debauchery), is a drunkard, a gambler, and squanders all his earnings — this is a cause of his downfall.

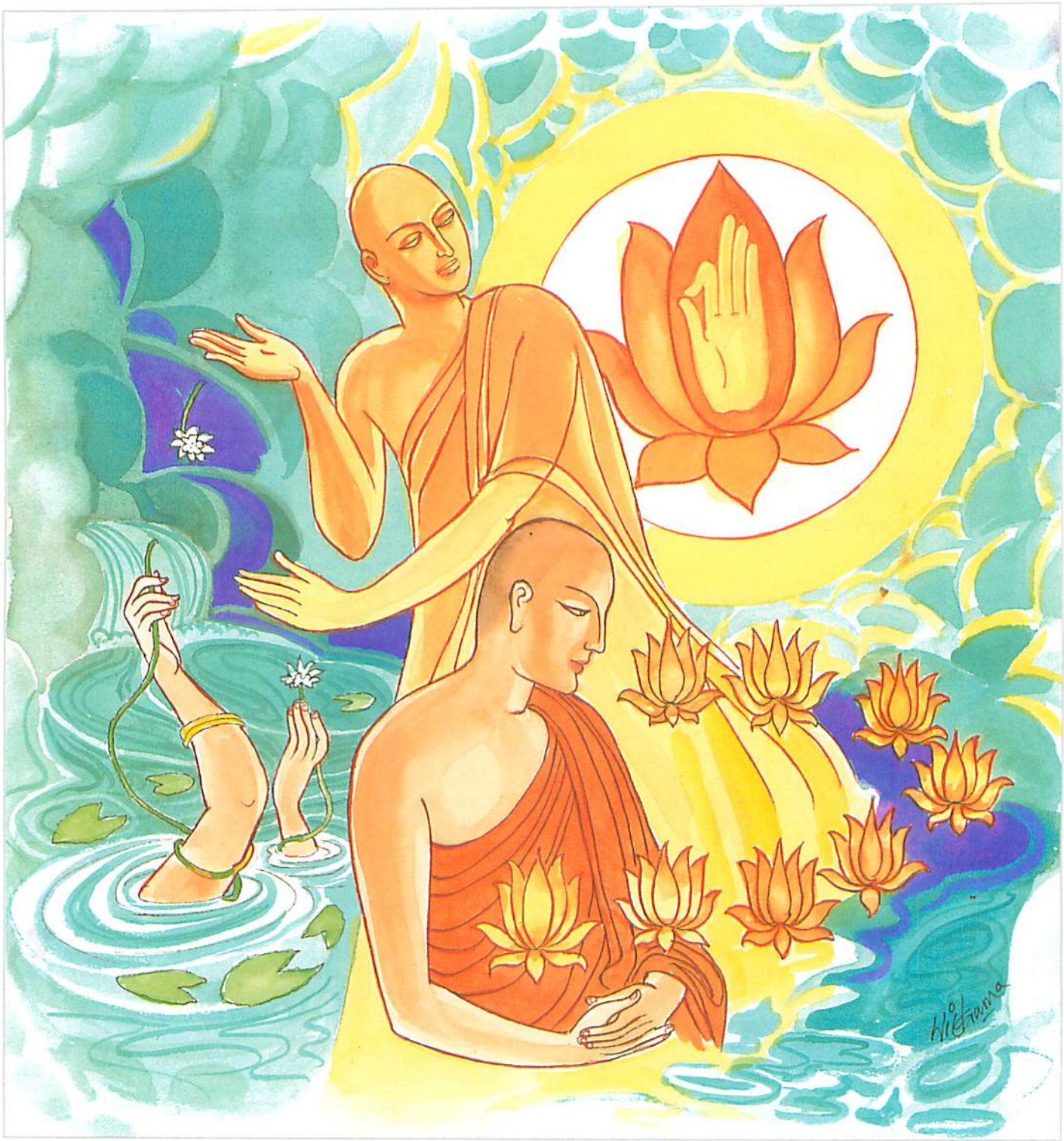
Not satisfied with one's own wives, if one has been with whores and the wives of others — this is a cause of one's downfall.

Being past one's youth, to take as wife a girl in her teens, and to be unable to sleep for jealousy — this is a cause of one's downfall.

The Buddha has analysed the evil results of adultery in these words:

Four misfortunes befall a man who is unmindful of right conduct and commits sexual misconduct with another man's wife: acquisition of demerit, disturbed sleep, reproach, and suffering in *niraya*. Thus, there is the acquisition of demerit, and there is rebirth in the evil apāya realms. The enjoyment of a scared man with a scared woman is short-lived, and the king also metes out severe punishment. Therefore, a man should not commit wrong action with another man's wife.

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Cut off passions, like breaking a lily with one's hand. Pursue the path of peace to Nibbāna.

285. *Ucchinda sinēhamattanō*
kumudaṁ sāradikaṁ'va pāṇinā
santimaggamēva brūhaya
nibbāṇaṁ sugatēna dēsitaṁ. (20:13)

Cut off affection for oneself
as hand a lily in the Fall.
Cultivate this peaceful path,
Nibbāna by the Buddha taught.

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PATH TO PEACE

20 (9) The Story of an Venerable who had been a Goldsmith (Verse 285)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk, a pupil of Venerable Sāriputta.

Once, a young, handsome son of a goldsmith was admitted into the Sangha by Venerable Sāriputta. The young monk was given loathsomeness of the dead body as the meditation topic by Venerable Sāriputta. After taking the meditation topic he left for the forest and practiced meditation there; but he made very little progress. So he returned twice to Venerable Sāriputta for further instructions. Still, he made no progress. So Venerable Sāriputta took the young monk to the Buddha, and related everything about the young monk.

The Buddha knew that the young monk was the son of a goldsmith, and also that he had been born in the family of goldsmiths during his past five hundred existences. Therefore the Buddha changed the subject of meditation for the young monk; instead of loathsomeness, he was instructed to meditate on pleasantness. With his supernormal power, the Buddha created a beautiful lotus flower as big as a cart-wheel and told the young monk to stick it on the mound of sand just outside the monastery. The young monk, concentrating on the big, beautiful, fragrant lotus flower, was able to get rid of the hindrances. He was filled with delightful satisfaction *(pīti)*, and step by step he progressed until he reached as far as the fourth level of mental absorption *(jhāna)*.

The Buddha saw him from his perfumed chamber and with his supernormal power made the flower wither instantly. Seeing the flower wither and change its colour, the monk perceived the impermanent nature of the flower and of all other things and beings. That led to the realization of the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and the insubstantiality of all conditioned things. At that instant, the Buddha sent forth his radiance and appeared as if in person to the young monk and instructed him to get rid of craving *(taṇhā)*. At the end of the discourse, the young monk attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 285)

sāradikaṁ kumudaṁ pāṇinā iva attanō sinēham
ucchinda santimaggam ēva brūhaya nibbānaṁ
sugatēna dēsitaṁ

sāradikaṁ: in the autumn; *kumudaṁ:* a lily; *pāṇinā iva:* like (plucking) with one's own hand; *attanō sinēham:* attachment to self; *ucchinda:* pluck out; *santimaggam ēva:* the path only to Nibbāna; *brūhaya:* cultivate; *sugatēna:* by the Buddha; *dēsitaṁ:* has been preached

Just like a person plucking out a lily with one's own hand, pluck out your self-attachment. Cultivate the path to Nibbāna, as advocated by the Buddha.

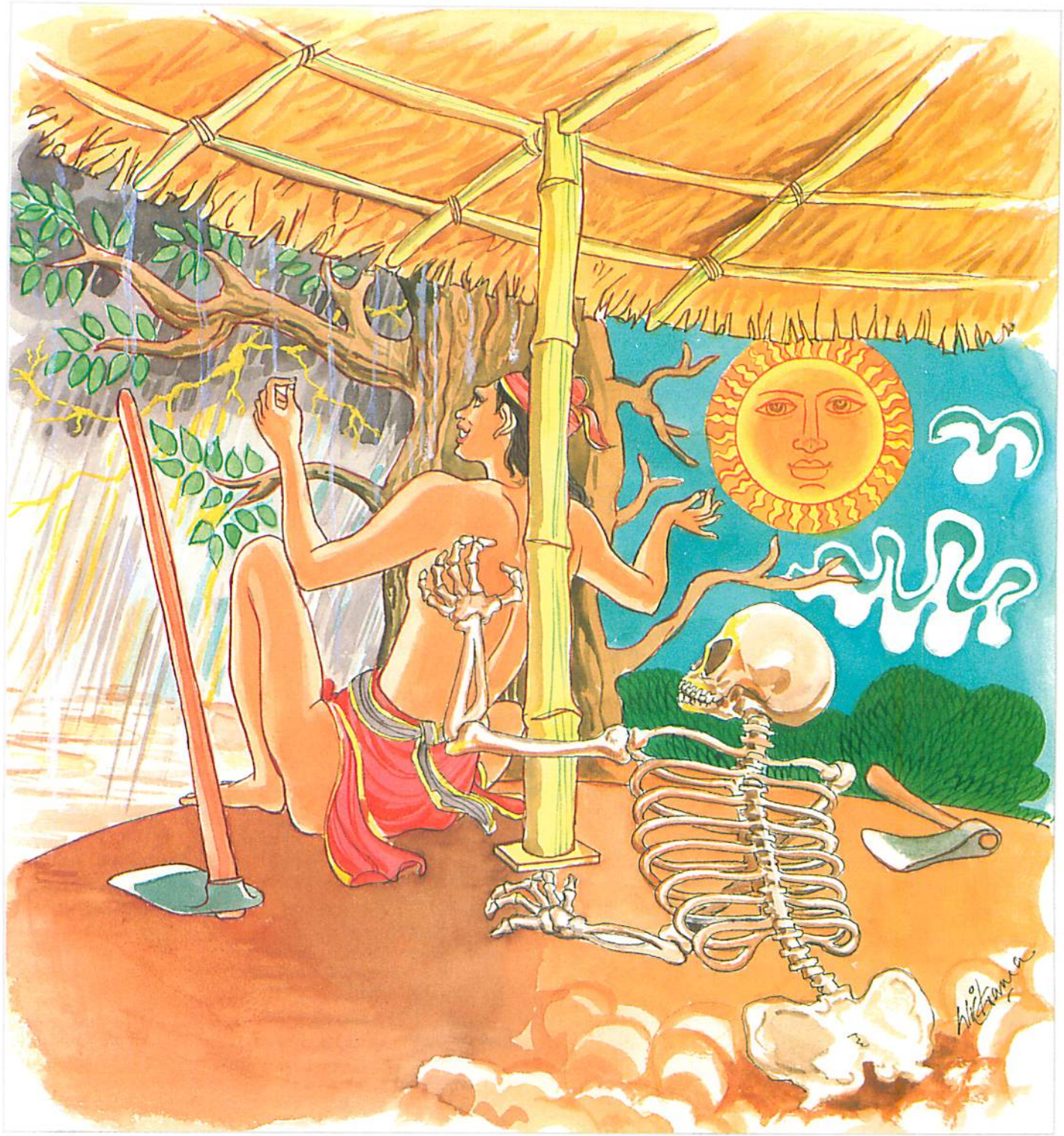
Commentary

kumudaṁ: lily flower. In this image the plucking of the lily flower by hand is used to emphasize the ease with which the young monk attained arahatship. Here, the object of contemplation was a lotus. This was the object given to him for meditation. In meditation the use of such an object *(kasiṇa)* was a wide-spread practice in the Buddhist system of mind training.

attanō: According to the stanza here, it means the five aggregates. The five aggregates, namely, are: matter *(rūpakkhandha)*; sensations *(vēdanākkhandha)*; perceptions *(Saññākkhandha)*; mental formations *(samkhārakkhandha)* and consciousness *(viññānakkhandha)*.

These, namely, are the five aggregates. What we call a being, or an individual, or I, is only a convenient name or a label given to the combination of these five groups. They are all impermanent, all constantly changing. Whatever is impermanent is *dukkha (yad aniccaṁ tam dukkhaṁ)*. This is the true meaning of the Buddha's words: In brief the five aggregates of attachment are *dukkha*. They are not the same for two consecutive moments.

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The unwise plans for the future from season to season, oblivious to dangers which inhere.

286. *Idha vassaṁ vasissāmi*
idha hēmantagimhisu
iti bālō vicintēti
antarāyaṁ na bujjhati. (20:14)

Here shall I spend the Rains,
here the Winter, here the Summer.
Thus speculates the fool,
the danger he knows not.

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THE FEAR OF DEATH

20 (10) The Story of Mahādhana, a Merchant (Verse 286)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Mahādhana, a merchant from Vārāṇasī.

Once, a merchant from Vārāṇasī came to a festival in Sāvatthi with many carts fully loaded with textiles and other merchandise. When he reached a river bank near Sāvatthi the river was in spate; so he could not cross the river. He was held up for seven days as it was raining hard and the water did not subside. By that time, he was already late for the festival, and there was no need for him to cross the river.

Since he had come from a long distance he did not want to return home with his full load of merchandise; So he decided to spend the rainy season, the cold season and the hot season in that place and said so to his assistants. The Buddha while going on an alms-round knew the decision of the merchant and he smiled. Ānanda asked the Buddha why he smiled and the Buddha replied, "Ānanda, do you see that merchant? He is thinking that he would stay here and sell his goods the whole year. He is not aware that he would die here in seven days' time. What should be done should be done today. Who would know that one would die tomorrow? We have no date fixed with the king of death. For one who is mindful by day or by night, who is not disturbed by moral defilements and is energetic, to live for just one night is a well-spent life.

Then the Buddha sent Ānanda to Mahādhana, the merchant. Ānanda explained to Mahādhana that time was running out for him, and that he should practice mindfulness instead of being negligent. On learning about his impending death, Mahādhana was alarmed and frightened. So, for seven days, he invited the Buddha and other monks for alms-food. On the seventh day, the Buddha expounded a discourse in appreciation *(anumōdanā)*. At the end of the discourse, Mahādhana the merchant attained sōtāpatti fruition. He followed the Buddha for some distance and returned. On his return, he had a severe headache and passed away soon after. Mahādhana was reborn in the Tusita dēva world.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 286)

vassaṁ idha vasissāmi hēmantagimhisu idha iti
bālō vicintēti antarāyam na bujjhati

vassaṁ: during (the four months of) rain; *idha:* in this place; *vasissāmi:* I will reside; *hēmantagimhisu:* in winter and summer; *idha:* here (I reside); *iti:* this way; *bālō:* the ignorant person; *vicintēti:* thinks; *antarāyaṁ* the danger to his own self; *na bujjhati:* (he) is not aware of

In the four months during retreat, winter or summer, in a chosen place, the ignorant plans unaware of the threat of death.

Commentary

antarāyaṁ na bujjhati: does not see the danger to his own life. The merchant in this story was not mindful of the fact of death. There are in this world people in various walks of life who resent the very word death, let alone reflect on it. Infatuated by long life, good health, youth and prosperity, they completely forget the fact that they are subjected to death. Immersed in the evanescent pleasures of the five-fold senses, they seek only after material progress in this world, completely disregarding a future life, and indulging in vice through the mind, body and speech. They regard this impermanent and evanescent life as permanent and everlasting. It is to arouse a sense of dissatisfaction in such blind and ignorant people, to allay the pangs of sorrow caused by the separation of animate objects, like parents and children, and inanimate objects, like wealth and property, to inculcate the doctrine of impermanence in all beings, and thereby convince them of the unsatisfactoriness of life, and direct them towards the attainment of everlasting peace, that the Buddha preached these words.

A person who has not comprehended the doctrine of the Buddha is infatuated by long life and considers himself as immortal, even though he may see many deaths around him; he is infatuated by good health and considers himself free from disease even though he may see countless diseased persons around him; he is infatuated by youth even though he may see many aged persons and considers himself as one who is not subjected to old age; he is infatuated by wealth and prosperity even though he may see countless persons rendered destitute through loss of wealth; and he never thinks for a moment, that he too, might be subjected to such a state.

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Man dotes on children and wealth. But death sweeps him like a flood a sleeping village.

287. *Taṁ puttapasusammattaṁ*
byāsattamanasaṁ naraṁ
suttaṁ gāmaṁ mahōghō'va
maccu ādāya gacchati. (20:15)

For one who has a clinging mind
and finds delight in babes and herds
Death does seize and carry away
as great flood a sleeping village.

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DEATH TAKES AWAY THE ATTACHED

20 (11) The Story of Kisāgōtamī (Verse 287)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Kisāgōtamī, the daughter of a rich man from Sāvatthi.

Kisāgōtamī came to the Buddha as she was stricken with grief due to the death of her only son. To her the Buddha said, "Vainly you imagine that you alone had lost a child. But this is an eternal law for all beings. For death, like to a raging torrent, drags along and flings into the sea of ruin all living beings; still are their longings unfulfilled." At the end of the discourse, Kisāgōtamī attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 287)

puttapasusammattaṁ byāsattamanasaṁ taṁ naraṁ suttaṁ gāmaṁ mahōghō iva maccu ādāya gacchati

puttapasusammattaṁ: intoxicated with the possessions of children, cattle, etc. *byāsattamanasaṁ:* with a mind overwhelmed; *taṁ naraṁ:* that person; *suttaṁ gāmaṁ:* sleeping village; *mahōghō iva:* like a great flood; *maccu:* the Death; *ādāya gacchati:* takes him along (in the flood)

Men are proud that they possess children, cattle and other forms of wealth. They tend to be proud that way because their minds are overwhelmed by blemishes. Floods sweep away a sleeping village, taking along all its people and their possessions. In the same way, death comes unawares and sweeps along the people however proud they are of their possessions.

Commentary

Kisāgōtamī was foremost among the female Mahā arahats of the noble Sangha, for the ability to wear rough robes. We first come across her during the dispensation of Padumuttara Buddha. She saw her like and immediately resolved to follow her in her footsteps. She gave alms, and practiced meditation. She was born in dēva realms. She was born in this dispensation in a rich family. She duly married. But people took no notice of her. She was lean and hence she was called Kisā. Hence, her own name Gōtamī was linked with Kisā and was known as Kisāgōtamī. When a son was born to her she became popular. As soon as child came to an endurable age he died.

The prop on which she was leaning was suddenly removed. Attachment made her blind. She could not believe he was dead. So, with the dead child in her arms she roamed for a medicine for his recovery. She was laughed and scorned at. She was agitated beyond measure. She was nearly going mad.

One day, a good samaritan pointed the way to Jētavanārāma, where the Buddha was residing. When she went, the Buddha was discoursing to the monks and she stood at the end of the hall and entreated the Lord for the medicine that she had hitherto sought in vain. The Buddha saw her future. The Buddha saw that she was a stranger to death. So the Buddha asked her to bring some mustard seed. She felt that her child would recover soon and was about to set forth for the mustard. "But tarry a little," the Buddha added, "that mustard seed must be brought from a house, meaning clan, that has not tasted death."

However, she thought it was simple enough. But she was on a voyage of discovery. Once again, the spectacle of the distraught mother with the corpse of the child in her arms was parading in the streets of Srāvasti. The much sought after mustard was readily available in every home perhaps but alas! Not the particular seeds the Buddha wanted. There was no visitor so frequent as death. The truth gradually dawned on her about the universality of death. The force of death overwhelmed her. She saw that the Buddha wanted to teach her the great lesson. She hurriedly took the corpse to the cemetery and kept it there remarking that he was not the only child to die. Her practice of meditation in the past came to her rescue. It was not difficult for her to realize that nothing endureth forever. It was so in all planes of life, including the brahma world. Only an arahat passes away completely never to be born again or to die again. She glimpsed that bliss. She returned a sadder and wiser woman. She no longer sought the medicine. She yearned for the higher prescription that would cure her once and for all.

She begged of the great physician to minister to her mind's disease. The Buddha's diagnosis was incomparable. The Buddha preached. There were four powerful currents *(ōgā)* that would hurl mortals to and from in the ocean of *samsāra*.

The four currents are:

(1) carnal pleasures *(kāma)*;

(2) clinging to existence *(bhava)*;

(3) attachment to various wrong beliefs *(diṭṭhi)*;

(4) ignorance *(avijjā)*.

Kisāgōtamī grasped the truth which ordinary mortals fail to understand. The Buddha, further, acknowledged that a person who lives realizing the supreme bliss even for one day was nobler by far than one who lives a century blinded by ignorance.

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When death comes, neither parents, nor children nor kinsmen can protect one.

288. *Na santi puttā tāṇāya*
na pitā na'pi bandhavā
antakēnā'dhipannassa
natthi ñātīsu tāṇatā. (20:16)

No sons are there for shelter
nor father nor related folk,
one by the Death-king seized upon
in kin no shelter finds.

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NO PROTECTION WHEN NEEDED

20 (12) The Story of Paṭācārā (Verses 288 & 289)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Paṭācārā, the daughter of a rich man from Sāvatthi.

Now at that time the Buddha, perceiving that the sorrow of Paṭācārā was assuaged, said to her, "Paṭācārā, to one that goethe to the world beyond, nor sons nor father nor kinsfolk can ever be a refuge or a shelter or a retreat. Therefore, even though they live, they exist not. But he that is wise should clarify his virtue; so should he make clear the path that leads to Nibbāna." At the conclusion of the lesson Paṭācārā was established in the fruit of conversion; many others likewise obtained the fruit of conversion and the fruits of the second and third paths.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 288)

antakēna adhipannassa tāṇāya puttā na santi,
pitā na, pi bandhavā na, ñātīsu tāṇatā natthi

antakēna: by the end maker (death); *adhipannassa:* person gripped by; *tānāya:* for the protection; *puttā:* children; *na santi:* not there; *pitā:* father; *na:* (is) not (there); *pi:* also; *bandhavā:* relations; *na:* (there are) not; *ñātīsu:* (this way) from relations; *tāṇatā natthi:* (he) has no protection

When an individual is being gripped by the end-maker (death) the sons cannot protect one. Not even one's father can shield a person from the grip of death. Nor can one's relations come to his rescue.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 289)

paṇḍitō ētāṁ atthavasaṁ ñatvā sīlasaṁvutō nibbānagamanaṁ maggaṁ khippaṁ ēva visōdhayē

paṇḍitō: the wise; *ētāṁ atthavasaṁ:* this matter; *ñatvā:* being aware of; *sīlasaṁvutō:* restrained and disciplined; *nibbānagamanaṁ maggaṁ:* the path to Deathlessness; *khippam:* quickly; *ēva visōdhayē:* certainly should clear

Being aware that no one can rescue you from death, the wise person, who is restrained and disciplined, should clear the path to Nibbāṇa, without any loss of time.

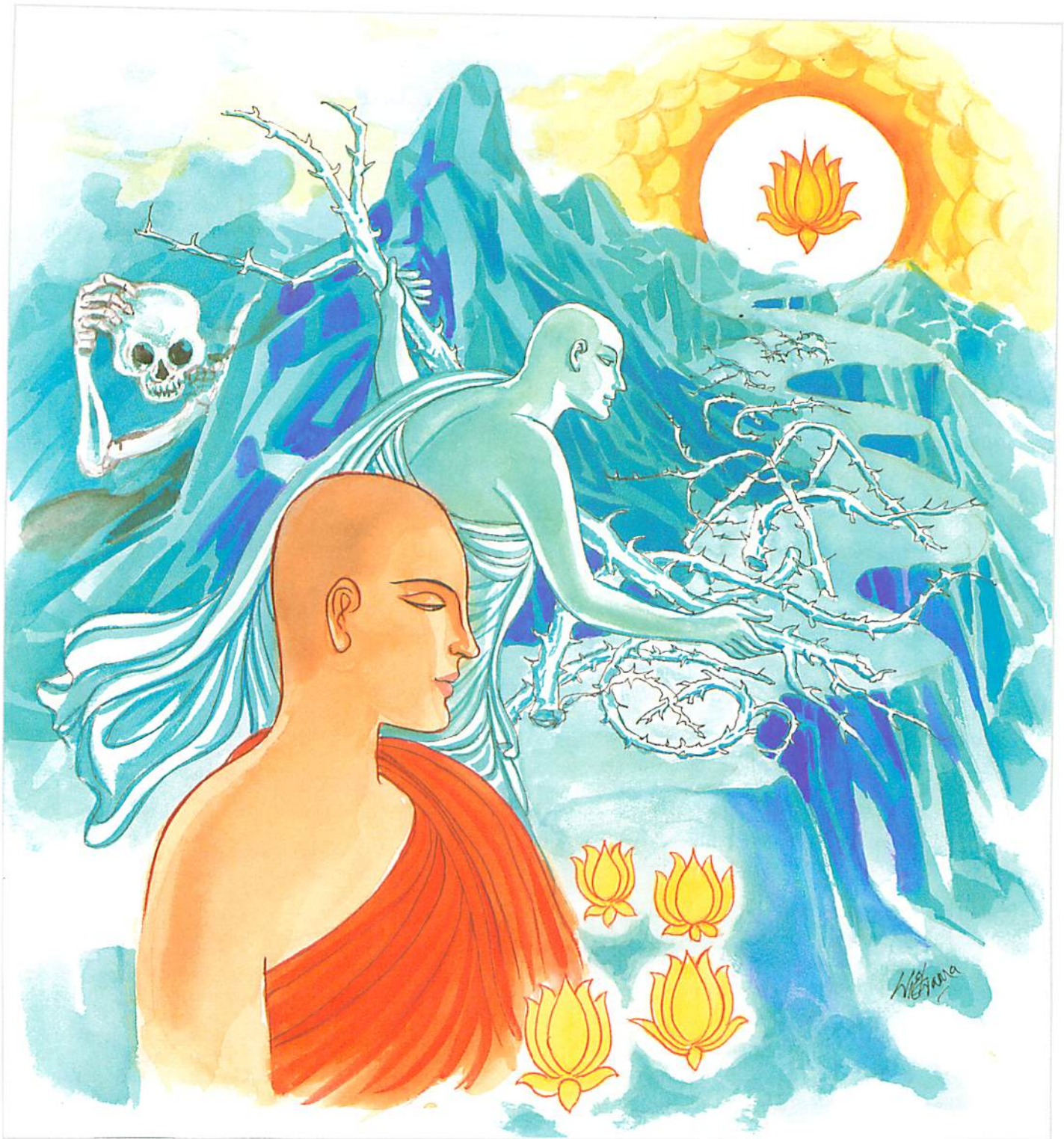
Commentary

Antakēnādhipannassa natthi ñātisu tānatā: when a person is gripped by death, no one, not even his relatives, can protect him from it.
It has been further emphasized in the Salla Sutta (the shaft of grief) as follows:

(1) There is no device by which one who is born, can escape death.
(2) Having attained old age, death is inevitable.
(3) Just as ripe fruits must fall, even so mortals who are born must always have the fear of death.
(4) Just as earthenware made by a potter is destined to break, even so is the life of mortals, destined to break.
(5) Grown-ups and the young, the wise and the foolish — all these come under the sway of death.
(6) No father can save his son, no relative can save his relatives, when they depart in death.
(7) While relatives stand watching and lamenting, see how beings are led to death, like cattle to a slaughter house.
(8) Since beings are thus assailed by death and old age, the wise knowing the nature of this world, do not grieve.
(9) It is in vain that you lament over the dead, since you do not know whence they came nor whither they go.
(10) If wailing will heal the mourner's pangs of sorrow, only then let the wise wail.
(11) Peace of mind is not attained by wailing. It only brings grief and hurts the body.
(12) Mourning only makes the mourner emaciated and pale. It does not help the departed. Therefore, mourning is useless.
(13) By not forsaking sorrow, he proceeds to greater pain. He only goes deeper into the realm of sorrow.
(14) Observe how others born in this world according to their kamma,must also tremble under the sway of death.
(15) In whichever manner people think of things, things turn out to be otherwise. Such is the opposite nature of things. Observe thus the nature of the world.
(16) Even if a man were to live a hundred years or more, he must still yield his life, at last bereft of friends and relatives.
(17) Therefore, listening to the arahats and seeing a person departed, control your weeping, reflecting that he cannot be with you again.
(18) Just as one would extinguish with water, the flames of a house on fire, even so let a steadfast and wise man remove grief, quickly as the wind (a handful of) cotton.
(19) Let a person, desirous of his own welfare, pluck out the shafts of wails and grief, planted by himself.
Having these shafts plucked out and having attained mental peace, he becomes blessed and free from grief, overcoming all sorrows.

(cont'd on page 617)

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Knowing the truth of this, the virtuous and wise should soon clear the path to Nibbāna.

289. *Ētamatthavasaṁ ñatvā*
paṇḍitō sīlasaṁvutō
nibbānagamanaṁ maggaṁ
khippamēva visōdhayē. (20:17)

Having understood this fact
the wise by virtue well-restrained
swiftly then should clear the path
leading to Nibbāna.

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THE PATH TO THE DEATHLESS

20 (12) The Story of Paṭācārā (Verses 288 & 289) (cont'd)

Even in death or in the loss of children or wealth, one has to reflect thus:

(1) Grains, wealth, silver, gold and whatever property there is: slaves,
(2) craftsmen, hired menials and all the dependant ones.
(3) All these have to be abandoned when leaving. But whatever one
(4) does through the deed, word or thought.
That alone belongs to him; that alone he takes with him and that alone follows him like the inseparable shadow.
All beings die. Life ends in death. Beings fare according to their deeds, experiencing the results by their meritorious and sinful deeds. Those who do sinful deeds go to the woeful states and those who do meritorious deeds attain blissful states. Therefore, let one always do good deeds, which serve as a store for life elsewhere. Meritorious deeds are a great support to beings in the future world.

In the Uraga Jātaka (man quits his mortal frame), the story concerns a landowner whose son had died. Here, the Buddha went to the man's house, and after He was seated, the Buddha asked,, "Pray, Sir, why are you grieving?" And on his replying, "Yes, Venerable, ever since my son's death I grieve," He said, "Sir, verily that which is subjected to dissolution is dissolved, and that which is subjected to destruction is destroyed, and this happens not to one man only, nor in one village merely, but in countless spheres, and in the three modes of existence. There is no creature that is not subjected to death, nor is there any existing thing that is capable of abiding in the same condition. All beings are subjected to death, and all compounds are subjected to dissolution. But sages of old, when they lost a son, said, 'That which is subjected to destruction is destroyed...and grieved not.'" And hereupon, at the man's request He related a story of the past.

Once upon a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Vārāṇasī, the Bōdhisatta was born in a brahmin household, in a village outside the gates of Vārāṇasī, and rearing a family. He supported them by field labour. He had two children, a son and a daughter. When the son was grown up, the father brought a wife home for him, from a family of equal rank with his own. Thus, with a female slave they composed a household of six; the Bōdhisatta and his wife, the son and daughter, the daughter-in-law and female slave. They lived happily and affectionately together. The Bōdhisatta thus admonished the other five; "According as ye have received, give alms, observe holy days, keep the moral law, dwell on the thought of death, be mindful of your mortal state. For in the case of beings like ourselves, death is certain, life is uncertain: all existing things are transitory and subjected to decay. Therefore, take heed to your ways, day and night." They readily accepted His Teaching and dwelt earnestly on the thought of death.

Now one day, the Bōdhisatta went with his son to plough his field when the youth was bitten by a snake and fell down dead. The Bōdhisatta, on seeing him fall, left his oxen and came to him, and finding that he was dead, he took him up and laid him at the foot of a certain tree, and covering him up with a cloak, he neither wept nor lamented. He said, "That which is subjected to dissolution is dissolved, and that which is subjected to death is dead. All compound existences are transitory and liable to death." And recognizing the transitory nature of things, he went on with his ploughing. Seeing a neighbour pass close by the field, he asked, "Friend, are you going home?" And on his answering, "Yes," he said, "Please then go to our house and say to the mistress, 'You are not today as formerly to bring food for two, but to bring it for one only. And hitherto, the female slave alone has brought the food, but today all four of you are to put on clean garments, and to come with perfumes and flowers in your hands.'" "All right," he said, and went and spoke these very words to the brahmin's wife. She asked, "By whom, Sir, was this message given?" "By the brahmin, lady," he replied. She understood that her son was dead. But she did not so much as tremble. Thus showing perfect self-control, and wearing white garments and with perfumes and flowers in her hand, she bade them bring food, and accompanied the other members of the family to the field. But not one of them either shed a tear or made lamentation. The Bōdhisatta still sitting in the shade where the youth lay, ate his food. And when his meal was finished, they all took up fire-wood and lifting the body on to the funeral pile, they made offerings of perfumes and flowers, and then set fire to it. But not a single tear was shed by any one. All were dwelling on the thought of death. Such was the efficacy of their virtue that the throne of Sakka manifested signs of heat. Sakka said, "Who, I wonder, is anxious to bring me down from my throne?" And on reflection, he discovered that the heat was due to the force of virtue existing in these people, and being highly pleased he said, "I must go to them and utter a loud cry of exultation like the roaring of a lion, and immediately afterwards fill their dwelling place with the seven treasures." And going there in haste he stood by the side of the funeral pyre and said, "What are you doing?" "We are burning the body of a man, my Lord." "It is no man that you are burning," he said, "I think you are roasting the flesh of some beast that you have slain." "Not so, my Lord," they said. "It is merely the body of a man that we are burning." Then he said, "It must have been some enemy." The Bōdhisatta said, "It is our own true son, and no enemy." "Then he could not have been dear as a son to you."

"He was very dear, my Lord.' "Then why do you not weep?" Then the Bōdhisatta, to explain the reason why he did not weep, spoke the first stanza:

> Man quits his mortal frame, when joy in life is past,
> E'en as a snake is wont, its worn out slough to cast;
> No friend's lament can touch the ashes of the dead:
> Why should I grieve: He fares the way he had to tread.

Sakka, on hearing the words of the Bōdhisatta, asked the brāhmin's wife, "How, lady, did the dead man stand to you?" "I sheltered him ten months in my womb, and suckled him at my breast, and directed the movements of his hands and feet, and he was my grown up son, my Lord." "Granted, lady, that a father from the nature of a man may not weep, a mother's heart surely is tender. Why then do you not weep?" And to explain why she did not weep, she spoke a couple of stanzas:

> Uncalled he hither came, unbidden soon to go;
> Even as he came, he went. What cause is here for woe?
> No friend's lament can touch the ashes of the dead:
> Why should I grieve? He fares the way he had to tread.

On hearing the words of the brāhmin's wife, Sakka asked the sister, "Lady, what was the dead man to you?" "He was my brother, my Lord." "Lady, sisters surely are loving towards their brothers. Why do you not weep?" But she to explain the reason why she did not weep, repeated a couple of stanzas:

> Though I should fast and weep, how would it profit me?
> My kith and kin alas! would more unhappy be
> No friend's lament can touch the ashes of the dead:
> Why should I grieve? He fares the way he had to tread.

Sakka, on hearing the words of the sister, asked his wife, "Lady, what was he to you?" "He was my husband, my Lord." "Women surely, when a husband dies, as widows are helpless. Why do you not weep?" But she, too, explained the reason why she did not weep.

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No assumption in Buddhism

It is a glory of Buddhism that it makes intellectual enlightenment an essential condition of salvation. In Buddhism morality and intellectual enlightenment are inseparable from one another. While morality forms the basis of the higher life, knowledge and wisdom complete it. Without a perfect understanding of the law of causality and transformation (Pratityasamutpāda), no one can even be said to be truly moral if he does not possess the necessary insight and knowledge. In this respect Buddhism differs from all other religions. All monotheistic religions start with certain assumptions, and when these assumptions are contradicted by the growth of knowledge it increases sorrow. But Buddhism starts with no assumptions. It stands on the firm rock of facts, and can therefore never shun the dry light of knowledge.

Prof. Lakshimi Narasu, "The Essence of Buddhism"

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Chapter 21

PAKIṆṆAKA VAGGA

Miscellaneous

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Viewing the possibility of greater happiness, the wise should give up the lesser ones.

290. *Mattā sukhapariccāgā*
passē cē vipulaṁ sukhaṁ
cajē mattāsukhaṁ dhīrō
sampassaṁ vipulaṁ sukhaṁ. (21:1)

If one should see great happiness
in giving up small happiness
one wise the lesser would renounce
the greater full-discerning.

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PAKIṆṆAKA VAGGA (MISCELLANEOUS)
GIVE UP A LITTLE ACHIEVE MUCH

21 (1) The Story of the Buddha's Former Deeds (Verse 290)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse with reference to the power and glory of the Buddha as witnessed by many people on his visit to Vēsāli.

Once, a famine broke out in Vēsāli. It began with a serious drought. Because of drought, there was almost a total failure of crops and many people died of starvation. This was followed by an epidemic of diseases and as people could hardly cope with the disposal of the corpses there was a lot of stench in the air. This stench attracted the ogres. The people of Vēsāli were facing the dangers of destruction by famine, disease and also by the ogres. In their grief and sorrow they tried to look for a refuge. They thought of going for help from various sources but finally, they decided to invite the Buddha. So a mission headed by Māhāli, the Licchavi prince, and the son of the chief brahmin were sent to King Bimbisāra to request the Buddha to pay a visit to Vēsāli and help them in their distress. The Buddha knew that this visit would be of much benefit to many people, so he consented to go to Vēsāli. Accordingly, King Bimbisāra repaired the road between Rājagaha and the bank of the river Gangā. He also made other preparations and set up special resting-places at an interval of every yōjana. When everything was ready, the Buddha set out for Vēsāli with five hundred monks. King Bimbisāra also accompanied the Buddha. On the fifth day they came to the bank of the river Gangā and King Bimbisāra sent word to the Licchavi princes. On the other side of the river, the Licchavi princes had repaired the road between the river and Vēsāli and had set up resting-places as had been done by King Bimbisāra on his side of the river. The Buddha went to Vēsāli with Licchavi princes but King Bimbisāra stayed behind. As soon as the Buddha reached the other bank of the river heavy rain fell in torrents, thus cleansing up Vēsāli. The Buddha was put up in the rest-house which was specially prepared for him in the central part of the city. Sakka, king of the dēvas, came with his followers to pay obeisance to the Buddha, and the ogres fled. That same evening the Buddha delivered the Ratana Sutta and asked the Venerable Ānanda to go round between the threefold walls of the city with the Licchavi princes and recite it. The Venerable Ānanda did as he was told. As the protective verses (parittas) were being recited, many of those who were sick recovered and followed the Venerable Ānanda to the presence of the Buddha. The Buddha delivered the same Sutta and repeated it for seven days. At the end of the seven days, everything was back to normal in Vēsāli. The Licchavi princes and the people of Vēsāli were very much relieved and were overjoyed. They were also very grateful to the Buddha. They paid obeisance to the Buddha and made offerings to him on a grand and lavish scale. They also accompanied the Buddha on his return journey until they came to the bank of the Gangā at the end of three days.

On arrival at the river bank, King Bimbisāra was waiting for the Buddha; so also were the dēvas and the brahmas and the king of the Nāgās with their respective entourage. All of them paid obeisance and made offerings to the Buddha. The dēvas and the brahmas paid homage with umbrellas, flowers, etc., and sang in praise of the Buddha. The Nāgās had come with barges made of gold, silver and rubies to invite the Buddha to the realm of the Nāgās; they had also strewn the surface of the water with five hundred kinds of lotuses. This was one of the three occasions in the life of the Buddha when human beings, dēvas and brahmas came together to pay homage to the Buddha. The first occasion was when the Buddha manifested his power and glory by the miracle of the pairs, emitting rays of light and sprays of water; and the second was on his return from the Tāvatimsa dēva world after expounding the Abhidhamma.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 290)

mattāsukha pariccāgā cē vipulam sukhaṁm passē vipulaṁ sukhaṁ sampassaṁ dhīrō mattā sukhaṁ cajē

mattāsukha pariccāgā: by giving up little comfort; *cē:* if; *sukham:* a greater happiness; *passē:* is seen; *vipulam sukham:* (that) great happiness; *sampassaṁ:* seeing well; *dhīrō:* the wise person; *mattā sukhaṁ:* that slight comfort; *cajē:* gives up

By giving up a modicum of pleasure, which the worldly pursuits bring, if one can be assured of tremendous pleasure - which is Nibbāna - the wise person should certainly give up the little pleasure.

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Who so causes pain to others and expects happiness, will not be freed from tangles of enmity.

291. *Paradukkhūpadānēna*
attanō sukham icchati
vērasaṁsaggasaṁsaṭṭhō
vērā sō na parimuccati. (21:2)

Who so for self wants happiness
by causing others pain,
entangled in anger's tangles
one's from anger never free.

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WHEN ANGER DOES NOT ABATE

21 (2) The Story of the Woman Who ate up the Eggs of a Hen (Verse 291)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a feud between a woman and a hen.

Once, there lived a woman in a village near Sāvatthi. She had a hen in her house; every time the hen laid an egg she would eat the egg. The hen was very hurt and angry and made a vow to have vengeance on the woman and made a wish to be reborn as some being that would be in a position to kill the offspring of that woman. The hen's wish was fulfilled as it was reborn as a cat and the woman was reborn as a hen in the same house. The cat ate up the eggs of the hen. In their next existence the hen became a leopard and the cat became a deer. The leopard ate up the deer as well as its offspring. Thus, the feud continued for five hundred existences of the two beings. At the time of the Buddha one of them was born as a woman and the other a female spirit.

On one occasion, the woman was returning from the house of her parents to her own house near Sāvatthi. Her husband and her young son were also with her. While they were resting near a pond at the roadside, her husband went to have a bath in the pond. At that moment the woman saw the female spirit and recognized her as her old enemy. Taking her child she fled from the female spirit straight to the Jētavana Monastery where the Buddha was expounding the Dhamma and put her child at the feet of the Buddha. The female spirit who was in hot pursuit of the woman also came to the door of the monastery, but the guardian spirit of the gate did not permit her to enter. The Buddha, seeing her, sent the Venerable Ānanda to bring the female spirit to his presence. When the female spirit arrived, the Buddha reprimanded both the woman and the female spirit for the long chain of feud between them. He also added, "If you two had not come to me today, your feud would have continued endlessly. Enmity cannot be appeased by enmity; it can only be appeased by loving-kindness."

He who seeks his own happiness by inflicting pain on others, being entangled by bonds of enmity, cannot be free from enmity.

At the end of the discourse, the female spirit took refuge in the three gems, viz., the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Samgha, and the woman attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 291)

paradukkhūpadānēna attanō sukhaṁ icchati,
vērasaṁsaggasaṁsaṭṭhō sō vērā na parimuccati

paradukkhūpadānēna: if by inflicting pain on others; *attanō:* someone; *sukhaṁ:* happiness; *icchati:* desires; *vērasamsaggasamsaṭṭhō:* who is contaminated by the touch of anger; *sō:* he; *verā:* from anger; *na parimuccati:* will not achieve release

The individual who achieves happiness by inflicting pain on others is not freed from anger because he is entangled in the web of anger due to the contact of the anger of other people.

Commentary

sō vērā na parimuccaṭi: A desirable object leads to attachment whilst an undesirable one leads to aversion. *Vērā* is the great fire that burns the whole world. Aided by ignorance, these two produce all the suffering in the world.

khanti: patience or tolerance. *Khanti* is the antidote to anger. *Khanti* (forbearance) is one of the perfections practiced by the aspirant Buddha.

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Defilements increase in them who do what is not to be done and neglect what should be done.

292. *Yaṁ hi kiccaṁ tadapaviddhaṁ*
akiccaṁ pana kayirati
unnaḷānaṁ pamattānaṁ
tēsa'ṁ vaḍḍhanti āsavā. (21:3)

What should be done is left undone
and done is what should not be done,
ever the pollutions grow
of those ones proud and heedless.

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HOW BLEMISHES INCREASE

21 (3) The Story of the Venerables of Bhaddiya (Verses 292 & 293)

While residing near the town of Bhaddiya, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some monks.

Once, some monks, who were staying in Bhaddiya, made some ornate slippers out of some kind of reeds and grasses. When the Buddha was told about this, he said, "Venerables, you have entered the Sangha for the sake of attaining *arahatta phala*. Yet, you are now striving hard only in making slippers and decorating them."

At the end of the discourse, those monks attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 292)

yaṁ hi kiccaṁ taṁ apaviddhaṁ akiccaṁ pana kayirati unnaḷānaṁ pamattānaṁ tēsaṁ āsavā vaḍḍhanti

yaṁ hi: if something; *kiccaṁ:* should be done; *taṁ:* that; *apaviddhaṁ:* if neglected; *akiccaṁ:* which should not be done; *pana kayirati;* is really done; *unnaḷānaṁ:* of those proud; *pamattānaṁ:* slothful one's; *tēsaṁ:* their; *āsavā:* blemishes; *vaḍḍhanti:* increase

If people do what should not be done, and neglect what should be done, the blemishes of those proud, slothful ones begin to increase.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 293)

yēsañ ca kāyagatā sati niccaṁ susamāraddhā kiccē sātaccakārinō tē akiccaṁ na sēvanti satānaṁ-sampajānnaṁ āsavā atthaṁ gacchanti

yēsañ ca: if some one; *kāyagatā sati:* the meditation with regard to physical reality; *niccaṁ:* always; *susamāraddhā:* were to practice well; *kiccē:* in what has to be done; *sātaccakārinō:* maintain constant practice; *tē:* he; *akiccaṁ:* which should not be done; *na sēvanti:* does not do; *satānaṁ:* those mindful; *sampajānnaṁ:* of those alert in mind; *āsavā: atthaṁ:* to decline; *gacchanti:* go

If one were to practice constantly on the mindfulness of physical reality, maintaining steady attention on what has to be done, they will shun what should not be done. The blemishes of those mindful, alert will get eroded.

Commentary

kāyagatāsati bhāvanā: This is called *paṭikkūlamanasikāra bhāvanā*. This meditation means the comprehension of the constitution of the body and its real nature. According to the Teachings of the Buddha, the body of a being is made up of thirty-two impurities. These thirty-two impurities are classified into four groups of five, and two groups of six:-

(1) *Kēsā, lōmā, nakhā, daṅtā, tacō.*
(Head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin.)

(2) *Maṁsaṁ, ṇahāru, aṭṭhi, aṭṭhimiñjā, vakkaṁ.*
(Flesh, sinews, bones, bone marrow, kidney.)

(3) *Hadayaṁ, yakinaṁ, kilōmakaṁ, pihakaṁ, papphāsaṁ.*
(Heart, liver, midriff, spleen, lungs.)

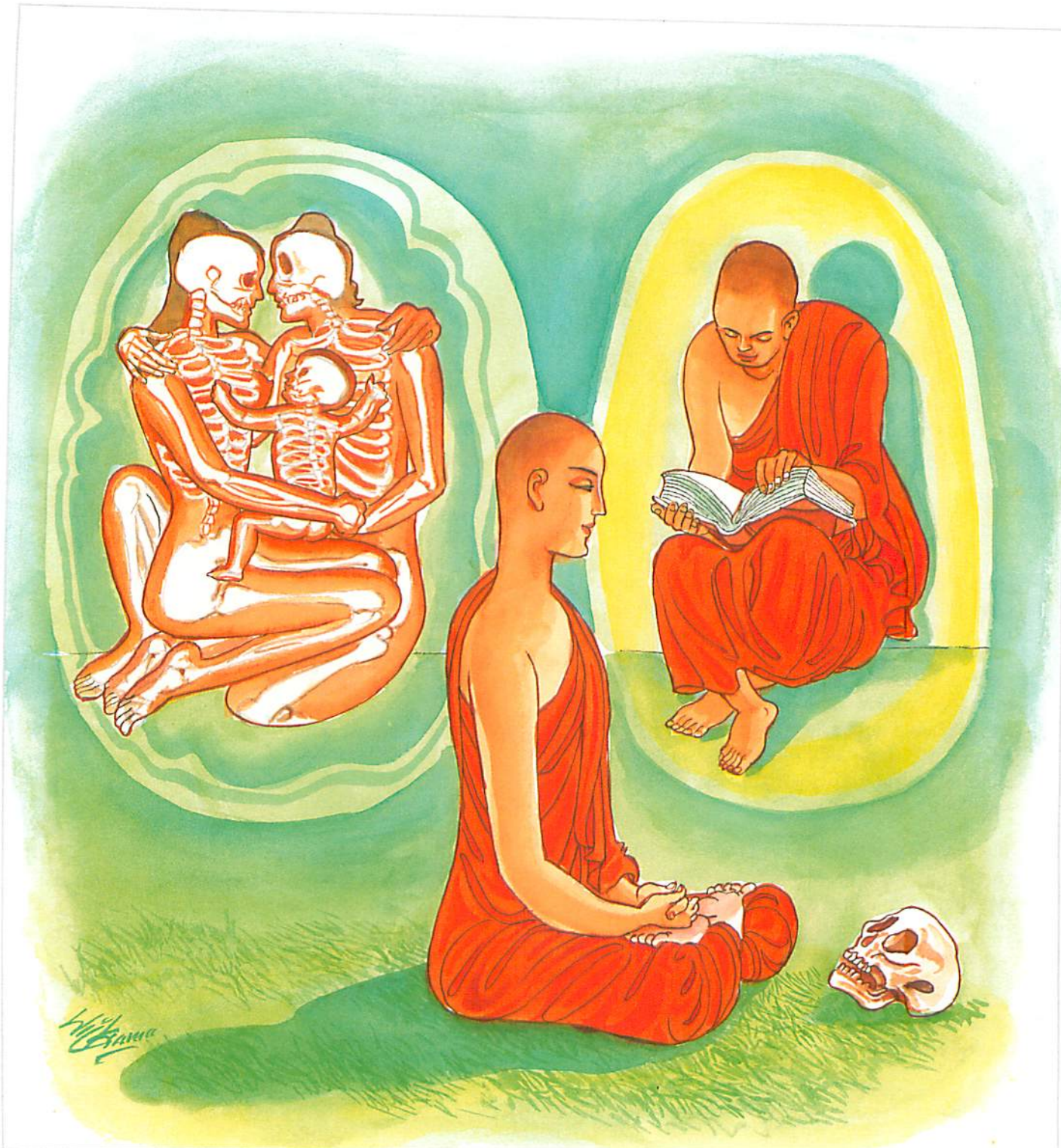
(4) *Antaṁ, antagunaṁ, udariyaṁ, karīsaṁ, mattalungaṁ.*
(Bowels, entrails, gorge, dung, brain.)

(5) *Pittaṁ, semhaṁ, pubbō, lōhitaṁ, sēdō, mēdō.*
(Bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat.)

(6) *Assu, vasā, khēlō, simghānikā, lasikā, muttaṁ.*
(Tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil of the joints, urine.)

(cont'd on page 627)

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Constantly contemplative on the body, mindful and alert, they wear off their defilements.

293. *Yēsañ ca susamāraddhā*
niccaṁ kāyagatā sati
akiccaṁ tē na sēvanti
kiccē sātaccakārinō
satānaṁ sampajānānaṁ
atthaṁ gacchanti āsavā. (21:4)

But those who always practise well
bodily mindfulness,
do never what should not be done
and ever do what should be done,
for mindful ones, the full-aware,
pollutions fade away.

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MINDFULNESS OF PHYSICAL REALITY

21 (3) The Story of the Venerables of Bhaddiya (Verses 292 & 293) (cont'd)

Commentary

The first group of five impurities, thus classified, should be reflected on from beginning to end and from end to beginning. After that you should reflect on the second group of five impurities from beginning to end and from end to beginning. Thereafter, you should reflect on the impurities of the first and the second group together from the beginning to the end and from the end to the beginning. After having practiced meditation on the third group, also in a similar manner, you should reflect on all the other groups also by reflecting on them in a similar manner. This meditation should be practiced by the following seven methods:

(1) vacasā

(2) manasā

(3) *vaṇṇatō*

(4) *saṇṭhānatō*

(5) *disāto*

(6) *okāsatō*

(7) *paricchēdatō*.

Vacasā means meditation by reflecting on the abovementioned thirty-two impurities while repeating them verbally.

Manasā means meditation while repeating them mentally.

Vaṇṇatō means meditation by reflecting on such impurities as hair, etc., while determining their colours.

Saṇṭhānatō means meditation by reflecting on such impurities as hair, etc., while determining their shape.

Disātō means meditation by reflecting on the impurities of the body while determining the situation of the parts as above or below the navel, on the upper or lower side of the body directionally.

Okāsatō means meditation by reflecting on such impurities while determining the place in the body acquired by these parts.

Paricchedatō means meditation by reflecting on such impurities, each of them taken separately.

kāya-gatā-sati: mindfulness with regard to the body. Sometimes this refers only to the contemplation on the thirty-two parts of the body, and sometimes to all the various meditations comprised under the contemplation of the body *(kāyānupassanā)*, the first of the four foundations of mindfulness *(satipaṭṭhāna)*, consisting partly in concentration *(samādhi)* exercises, partly in insight *(vipassanā)* — exercises. On the other hand, the cemetery meditations *(sīvathikā)* mentioned in the first *satipaṭṭhāna* are nearly the same as the ten contemplations of loathsomeness *(asubha-bhāvanā)* whereas elsewhere the contemplation on the thirty-two parts of the body is called the reflection on impurity *(paṭikkūla-saññā)*.

The Buddha said, "One thing, O' monks, developed and repeatedly practiced, leads to the attainment of wisdom. It is the contemplation on the body," the reference is to all exercises mentioned in the first *satipaṭṭhāna*.

Visuddhimagga gives a detailed description and explanation of the method of developing the contemplation on the thirty-two parts of the body. This exercise can produce the first absorption only *(jhāna)*. The text given in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and elsewhere — but leaving out the brain — runs as follows:

"And further, O monks, the monk contemplates this body from the sole of the foot upwards, and from the top of the hairs downward, with skin stretched over it, and filled with manifold impurities: "This body has hairs of the body, hairs of the head, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidney, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, bowels, stomach, excrement, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin, grease, spittle, nasal mucus, oil of the joints, urine and so on."

Visuddhimagga states: By repeating the words of this exercise one will become well acquainted with the wording, the mind will not rush here and there, the different parts will become distinct and appear like a row of fingers, or a row of hedge-poles. Now, just as one repeats the exercise in words, one should do it also in mind. The repeating in mind forms the condition for the penetration of the characteristic marks. He who thus has examined the parts of the body as to colour, shape, region, locality and limits, and considers them one by one, and not too hurriedly, as something loathsome, to such a one, while contemplating the body, all these things at the same time are appearing distinctly clear. But also when keeping one's attention fixed outwardly such as to the bodies of other beings, and when all the parts appear distinctly, then all men and animals moving about lose the appearance of living beings and appear like heaps of many different things. And it looks as if those foods and drinks, being taken by them, were being inserted into this heap. Now, while again one is conceiving the idea 'disgusting!' — omitting in due course several parts — gradually the attainment-concentration *(appanā-samādhi*, i.e., the concentration of the *jhāna)* will be reached. In this connection, the appearing of forms is called the acquired image *(uggaha-nimitta)*, the arising of loathsomeness, however, the counter-image *(paṭibhāga-nimitta)*.

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All failings destroyed, vision put right, and senses truly controlled, he's the wholly perfect man.

294. *Mātaraṁ pitaraṁ hantvā*
rājāno dvē ca khattiyē
raṭṭhaṁ sānucaraṁ hantvā
anīghō yāti brāhmaṇō. (21:5)

One's mother and father having slain
and then two warrior kings,
a realm as well its treasurer,
one goes immune, a Brahmin True.

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THE DESTROYER WHO REACHES NIBBĀNA

21 (4) The Story of Venerable Bhaddiya (Verses 294 & 295)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Venerable Bhaddiya who was also known as Lakuṇtaka Bhaddiya because of his short stature.

On one occasion, some monks came to visit and pay homage to the Buddha at the Jētavana Monastery. While they were with the Buddha, Lakuṇtaka Bhaddiya happened to pass by not far from them. The Buddha called their attention to the short monk and said to them, "Venerables, look at that monk. He has killed both his father and his mother, and, having killed his parents, he goes about without any *dukkha*" The monks could not understand the statement made by the Buddha. So, they entreated the Buddha to make it clear to them and the Buddha explained the meaning to them.

In the above statement, the Buddha was referring to an arahat, who had eradicated craving, conceit, wrong beliefs, and attachment to sense bases and sense objects. The Buddha had made the statement by means of metaphors. Thus, the terms mother and father are used to indicate craving and conceit respectively. The eternity-belief *(sassatadiṭṭhi)* and annihilation-belief *(ucchēdadiṭṭhi)* are likened to two kings, attachment is liked to a revenue officer and the sense bases and sense objects (the *ajjhatta* and *bahiddha āyatanas*) are likened to a kingdom.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 294)

mātaraṁ pitaraṁ dvē ca khattiyē rājānō hantvā sānucaraṁ raṭṭhaṁ hantvā brāhmanō anīghō yāti

mātaraṁ: the mother (craving); *pitaraṁ:* father (egotism); *dvē ca khattiyē rājānō:* the two warrior kings also; *hantvā* :having assassinated; *sānucaraṁ:* along with their subordinate; *raṭṭhaṁ:* the kingdom; *hantvā:* having destroyed; *brāhmanō.:* the saint (who has got rid of blemishes); *anīghō yāti:* goes without any trepidation

The brahmin kills the mother - craving; kills the father - egotism, self-esteem; kills the two warrior kings. They represent the two views eternalism and Nihilism opposed to Buddhist thoughts. The subordinates are the clinging to life - *nandi rāga*. And he destroys that kingdom. It is a kingdom made up of the twelve *āyatanas*. He destroys the subordinates which, are the *nandi rāgas*. They are defilements which cling to life. Having destroyed all these, the brahmin (arahat) goes without punishment.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 295)

mātaraṁ pitaraṁ dvē ca sotthiyē rājānō hantvā veyyagghapañcamaṁ hantvā brāhmanō anīghō yāti

mātaraṁ: the mother (craving); *pitaraṁ:* father (egotism); *dvē ca sotthiyē rājānō:* the two brahamin kings (eternalism and nihilism) also; *haṇṭvā*: having assassinated; *veyyagghapañcamaṁ:* the five fierce tigers (five hindrances); *haṇṭvā:* having destroyed; *brāhmanō.:* the saint (who has got rid of blemishes); *anīghō yāti:* goes without any trepidation

The brahmin (arahat) kills the mother - craving; kills the father - egotism, self-esteem; kills the two learned kings. They represent the two false views eternalism and nihilism. He kills the five tigers *(nīvaranas)* that obstruct the path. And, having done all these killings, the arahat goes about unaffected.

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Ridding mind-hindrances with scepticism as the fifth...he's the thoroughly perfect man.

295. *Mātaraṁ pitaraṁ hantvā*
rājānō dvē ca sotthiyē
veyyagghapañcamaṁ hantvā
anīghō yāti brāhmaṇō. (21:6)

One's mother and father having slain
and then two learned kings,
as well the fifth, a tiger fierce,
one goes immune, a Brahmin True.

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THE 'KILLER' WHO GOES FREE

21 (4) The Story of Venerable Baddhiya (Verses 294 & 295) (cont'd)

Commentary

These two verses indicate the variety of wrong views that have to be destroyed by a seeker who is bent on achieving the highest fruits of spiritual life.

These views come within the category of *diṭṭhi*. The word means view, belief, speculative opinion, insight.

If not qualified by *sammā* (right), it mostly refers to wrong and evil view or opinion, and only in a few instances to right view, understanding or insight (e.g. *diṭṭhi-ppatta, diṭṭhi visuddhi*, purification of insight; *diṭṭhi-sampanna*, possessed of insight).

Wrong or evil views (*diṭṭhi* or *micchā-diṭṭhi*) are declared as utterly rejectable for being a source of wrong and evil aspirations and conduct, and liable at times to lead man to the deepest abysses of depravity.

So stated the Buddha said: No other thing than evil views do I know, O' monks whereby to such an extent the unwholesome things not yet arisen arise, and the unwholesome things already arisen are brought to growth and fullness. No other thing than evil views do I know, whereby to such an extent the wholesome things not yet arisen are hindered in their arising, and the wholesome things already arisen disappear. No other thing than evil views do I know, whereby to such an extent human being at the dissolution of the boody, at death are passing to a way of suffering, into a world of woe, into hell. Whatever a man filled with evil views performs or undertakes, or whatever he possesses of will, aspiration, longing and tendencies, all these things lead him to an undesirable, unpleasant and disagreeable state, to woe and suffering.

From the Abhidhamma it may be inferred that evil views, whenever they arise, are associated with greed.

Numerous speculative opinions and theories, which at all times have influenced and still are influencing mankind, are quoted in the Sutta-texts. Amongst them, however, the wrong view which every where, and at all times, has most misled and deluded mankind is the personality-belief, the ego-illusion. This personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), or ego-illusion (*atta-diṭṭhi*), is of two kinds: eternity-belief and annihilation-belief.

Eternity-belief (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) is the belief in the existence of a persisting ego-entity, soul or personality as being, more or less, identical with those physical and mental processes, and which therefore, at the dissolution at death, will come to be annihilated.

Now, the Buddha neither teaches a personality which will continue after death, nor does he teach a personality which will be annihilated at death, but he shows us that personality, ego, individual, and so on are nothing but mere conventional designations (*vōhāra-vacana*) and that in the ultimate sense *pamattha-sacca*) there is only this self-consuming process of physical and mental phenomena which continually arise and again disappear immediately.

The Buddha is free from any theory (*diṭṭhigata*), for the Buddha has seen what corporeality is, and how it arises and passes away. He has seen what feeling...perception...mental formations...consciousness are, and how they arise and pass away. Therefore I say that the Buddha has won complete deliverance through the extinction, fading away, disappearance, rejection and casting out of all imaginings and conjectures, of all inclination to the vain-glory based on ego.

The rejection of speculative views and theories is a prominent feature in a chapter of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga*.

The so-called evil views with fixed destiny (*niyata-micchādiṭṭhi*) constituting the last of the ten unwholesome courses of action (*kammapatha,*) are the following three:

(1) the fatalistic view of the uncausedness of existence (*ahētuka-diṭṭhi*). This was taught by Makkhali-Gosāla, a contemporary of the Buddha who denied every cause for the corruptness and purity of beings, and asserted that everything is minutely predestined by fate.

(2) the view of the inefficacy of action (*akiriya-diṭṭhi*). This was taught by Pūraṇa-Kassapa, another contemporary of the Buddha, who denied every kammical effect of good and bad actions. To him who kills, steals, robs and so on, nothing bad will happen. As for generosity, self-restraint and truthfulness and so on, no reward is to be expected.

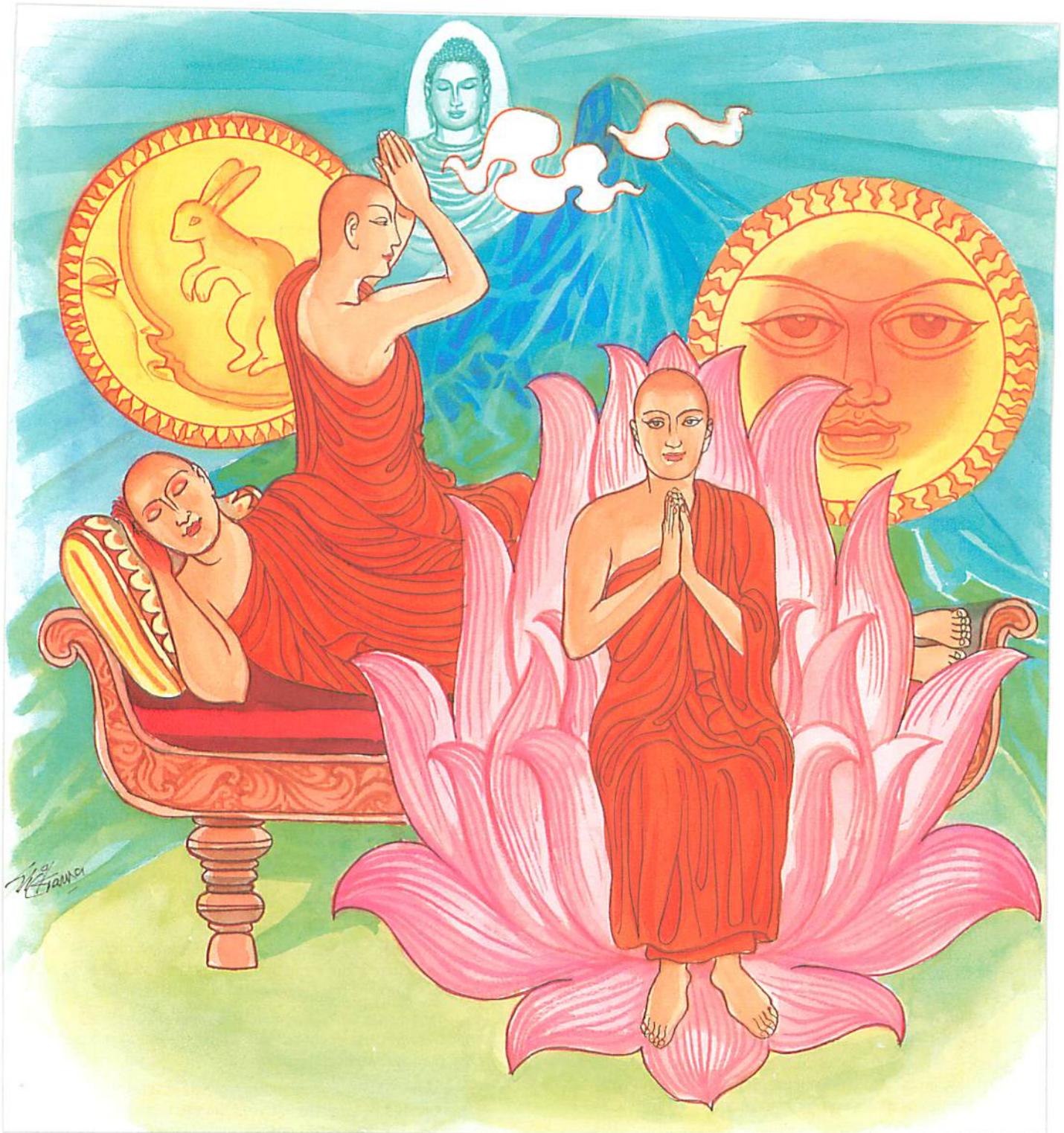
(3) Nihilism (*natthika-diṭṭhi*). This was taught by Ajita-Kēsakaṁbali, a third contemporary of the Buddha, who asserted that any belief in good action and its reward, is a mere delusion, that after death no further life would follow, that man at death would become dissolved into the elements.

Frequently mentioned are also the ten antinomies (*antagāhikā micchā-diṭṭhi*): finite is the world or infinite is the world...body and soul are identical or body and soul are different.

In the Brahmajāla Sutta sixty-two false views are classified and described, comprising all conceivable wrong views and speculations about man and world.

Wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) are one of the proclivities (*anusaya*), cankers (*āsava*), clingings (*upādāna*), one of the three modes of perversions (*vipallāsa*). Unwholesome consciousness (*akusala citta*) rooted in greed, may be either with or without wrong views (*diṭṭhigata-sampayutta* or *vippayutta*).

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Mindful of the Buddha, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

296. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
niccaṁ Buddhagatā sati. (21:7)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
are mindful of the Buddha.

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MEDITATION ON THE VIRTUES OF THE BUDDHA

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the son of a wood cutter.

Once in Rājagaha, a wood cutter went into the woods with his son to cut some firewood. On their return home in the evening, they stopped near a cemetery to have their meal. They also took off the yoke from the two oxen to enable them to graze nearby; but the two oxen went away without being noticed by them. As soon as they discovered that the oxen were missing, the wood cutter went to look for them, leaving his son with the cart of firewood. The father entered the town, looking for his oxen. When he returned to his son it was getting late and the city gate was closed. Therefore, the young boy had to spend the night alone underneath his cart.

The wood cutter's son, though young, was always mindful and was in the habit of contemplating the unique qualities of the Buddha. That night, two evil spirits came to frighten and to harm him. When one of the evil spirits pulled at the leg of the boy, he cried out, "I pay homage to the Buddha" *(Namō Buddhassa)*. Hearing those words, the evil spirits got frightened and felt that they must look after the boy. So one of them remained near the boy, guarding him from all dangers; the other went to the king's palace and brought the food tray of King Bimbisāra. The two evil spirits then fed the boy as if he were their own son. At the palace, the evil spirit left a written message concerning the royal food tray; and this message was visible only to the king.

In the morning, the king's men discovered that the royal food tray was missing and they were very upset and very much frightened. The king found the message left by the evil spirit and directed his men where to look for it. The king's men found the royal food tray among the firewood in the cart. They also found the boy who was still sleeping underneath the cart. When questioned, the boy answered that his parents came to feed him in the night and that he went to sleep contentedly and without fear after taking his food. The boy knew only that much and nothing more. The king sent for the parents of the boy, and took the boy and his parents to the Buddha. The king, by that time, had heard that the boy was always mindful of the unique qualities of the Buddha and also that he had cried out *"Namō Buddhassa"* when the evil spirit pulled at his leg in the night.

The king asked the Buddha, "Is mindfulness of the unique qualities of the Buddha the only dhamma that gives one protection against evil and danger, or is mindfulness of the unique qualities of the Dhamma equally potent and powerful?" To him, the Buddha replied, "O king, my disciple! There are six things, mindfulness of which is a good protection against evil and danger."

Then the Buddha gave a discourse.

At the end of the discourse, the boy and his parents attained sōtāpatti fruition. Later, they joined the Sangha and eventually they became arahats.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 296)

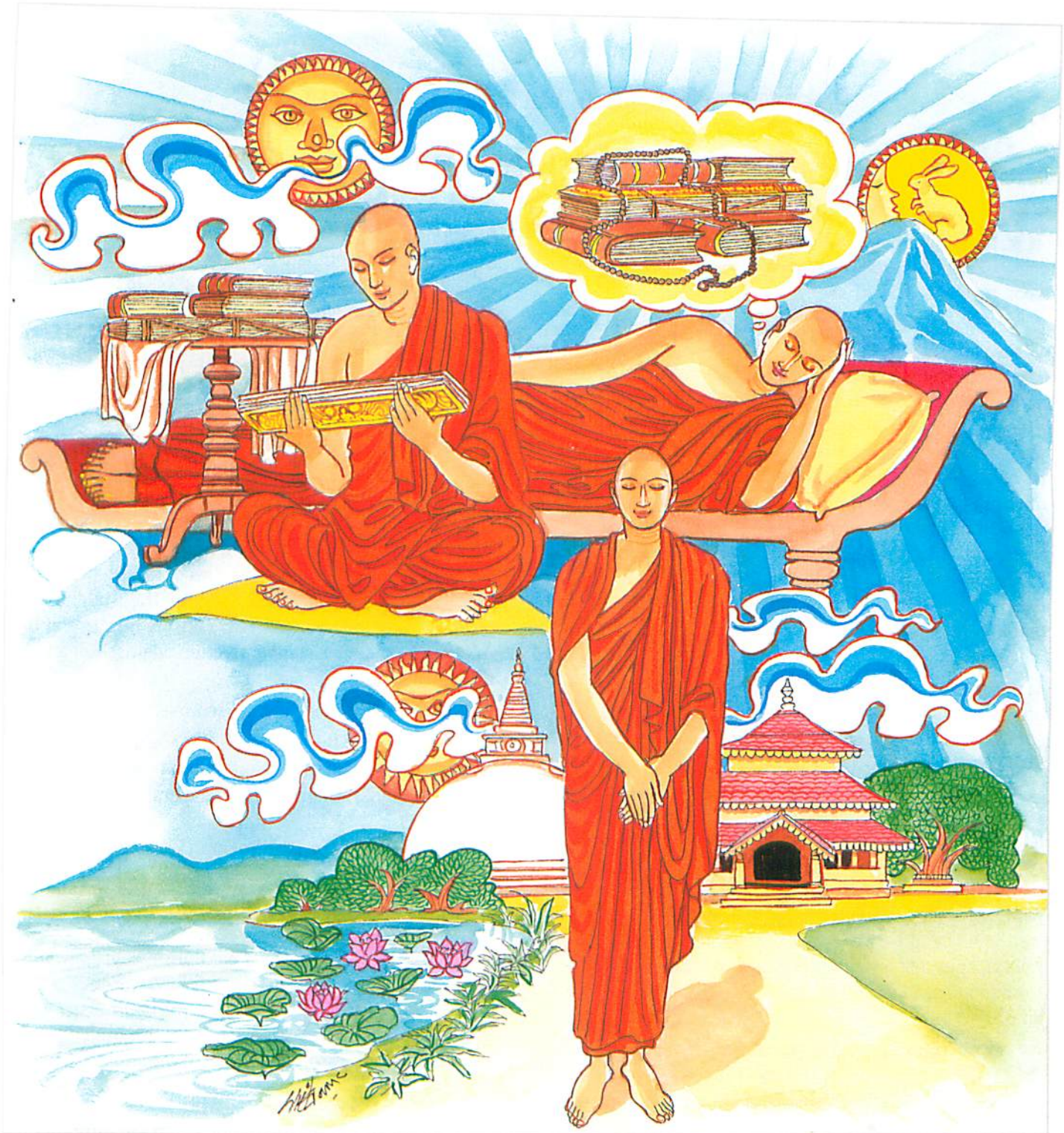
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca niccaṁ Buddhagatāsati
Gōtamasāvakā sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ: if someone; *divā ca:* during day; *ca rattō:* and at night; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *Buddhagatāsati.:* practice the Buddha-mindfulness; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti:* arise, well awake

Those disciples of the Buddha who are mindful of the virtues of their Teacher day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

(cont'd on page 635)

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Mindful of the Dhamma, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

297. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
niccaṁ Dhammagatā sati. (21:8)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
are mindful of the Dhamma.

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MEDITATION ON THE VIRTUES OF THE DHAMMA

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 297)

yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca niccaṁ dhammagatā sati
Gōtamasāvakā sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ: if someone; *divā ca:* during day; *ca rattō:* and at night; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *Dhammagatā sati.:* practises the dhamma-mindfulness; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti:* arise, well-awake

Those disciples of the Buddha who are mindful of the virtues of the Dhamma day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 298)

yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca niccaṁ Saṅghagatā sati
sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ: if someone; *divā ca:* during day; *ca rattō:* and at night; *niccaṁ:* constantly; *Saṅghagatā sati:* practises the Sangha-mindfulness; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti:* arise, well-awake

The disciples of the Buddha who are mindful of the virtues of the Saṅgha - the brotherhood - day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

Explanatory Translation (299)

yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca niccaṁ kāyagatā sati
Gōtamasāvakā sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ: if someone; *divā ca:* during day; *ca rattō:* and at night; *niccaṁm:* constantly; *kāyagatā sati.:* practises the meditation with regard to physical reality; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti:* arise, well-awake

The disciples of the Buddha who are mindful of the real nature of the body day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 300)

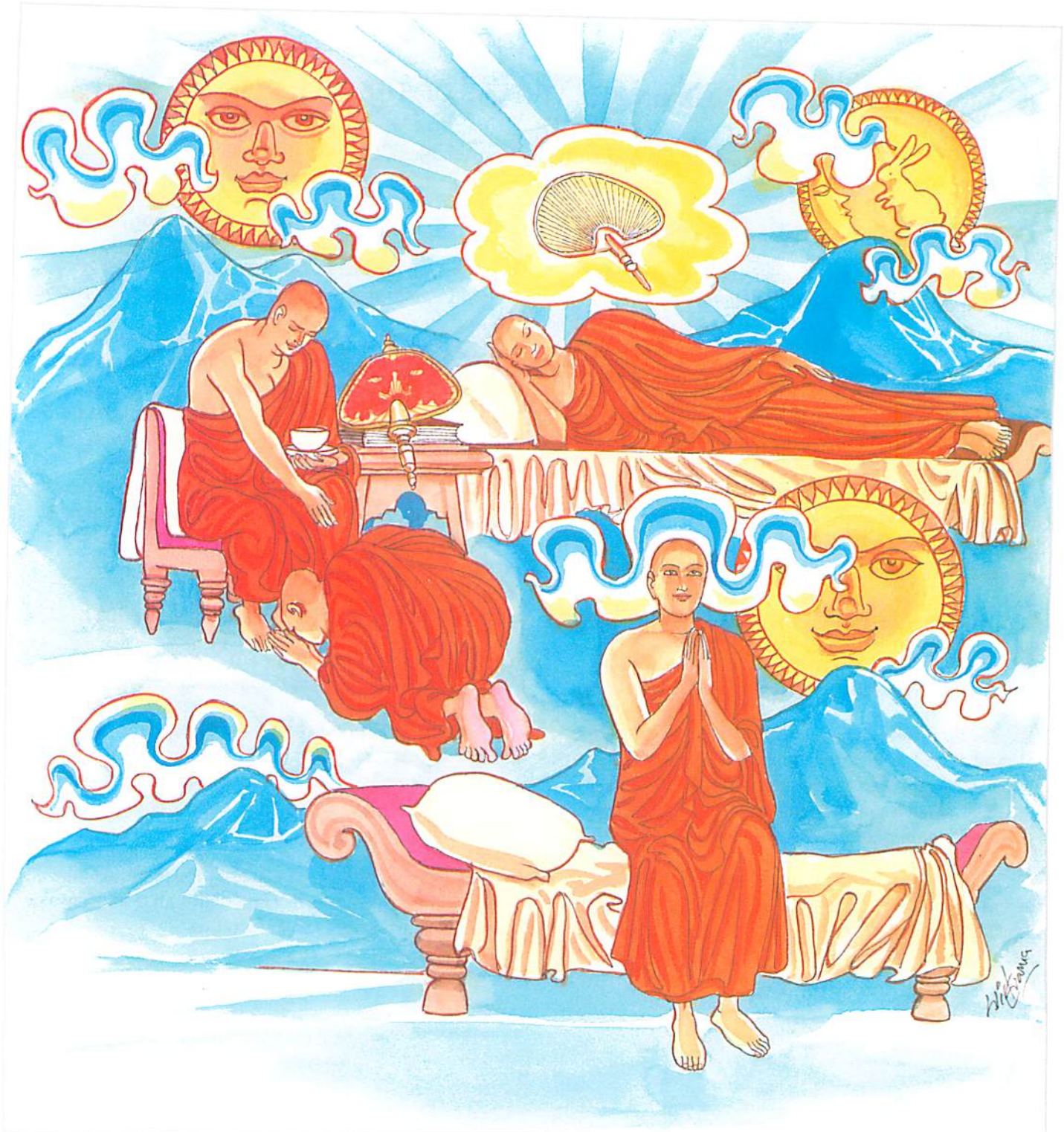
yēsaṁ manō divā ca rattō ca ahimsāya ratō
Gōtamasāvakā sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ manō: if someone's mind; *divā ca:* during day; *ca rattō:* and at night; *ahimsāya:* in harmlessness; *ratō:* delights; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti:* arise, well-awake

The disciples of the Buddha whose minds take delight in harmlessness day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

(cont'd on page 637)

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Mindful of the Sangha, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

298. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
niccaṁ Saṅghagatā sati. (21:9)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
are mindful of the Sangha.

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MEDITATION ON THE VIRTUES OF SAṄGHA

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 301)

yēsaṁ manō divā ca rattō ca bhāvanāya ratō
Gōtamasāvakā sadā suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti

yēsaṁ: if some one's; *manō:* mind; *divā ca rattō ca:* day and night; *bhāvanāya:* in meditation; *ratō:* delights; *Gōtamasāvakā:* those disciples of the Buddha; *sadā:* always; *suppabuddhaṁ:* wide awake; *pabujjhanti:* arise

The disciples of the Buddha whose minds take delight in meditation day and night, arise wide awake and in full control of their faculties.

Commentary

buddhānussati bhāvanā: This form of meditation is suitable to be practiced by everyone both young and old. The word *anussati* means reflection. Therefore *buddhānussati bhāvanā* means the meditation practiced while reflecting on the virtues of the Buddha.

The Buddha has infinite virtues. But these are incorporated in nine main virtues. They are called the ninefold virtues of the Buddha enumerated as *Itipisō bhagavā.... Buddhānussati bhāvanā* has to be practiced while reflecting on these virtues.

It is difficult to meditate while reflecting on all the virtues of the Buddha at the same time. Therefore, it is much easier to reflect on one out of such virtues. Later one could practice meditation, reflecting on all the virtues. One could start with the first virtue namely *arahat* and proceed in the following manner:

Firstly, one should clean oneself and worship the Triple Gem with offerings of flowers and then seek the three-fold refuge and observe the five precepts. Thereafter, seated in a convenient posture before a statue of the Buddha one should strive to create the image of the Buddha in one's own mind by looking at it with love and adoration. Then closing the eyes and placing the right hand on the left one should think thus while being cognizant of the fact that the Buddha is present in one's mind.

(1) The Lord Buddha does not commit any sin whatsoever even in secret. Therefore he is called *Arahat.*

(2) One should continue to think in this manner for sometime. Thereafter one should meditate thus: The Buddha does not commit any sin whatsoever even in secret. He has destroyed all defilements. He is worthy of all offerings. Therefore the Buddha is called *Arahat.*"

In this manner one should continue to meditate on the other virtues of the Buddha as well. When we meditate in this manner our minds remain focused directly on the Buddha without straying towards other objects. Thereby our minds become pure and we get solace. We begin to acquire the virtues of the Buddha even though in a small scale. Therefore we should endeavour to practice this meditation.

dhammānupassanā bhāvanā: *Dhammānupassanā* means reflection on such things as thoughts *(cētasika dhamma)*, aggregates like *rūpa, vēdanā* etc., *(khanda)*, sense - bases like eye and ear, *(āyatanadhamma)*, factors of enlightenment like *sati, dhamma vicaya (bojjhangadhamma)*, and the four noble truths *(chaturārya sacca)*. The meditation could be considered as the most difficult in the *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation series. There are five main parts of *dhammānupassanā bhāvanā*, such as:

(1) *Vivarana pariggaha*, (2) *khandha pariggaha*, (3) *āyatana pariggaha*, (4) *bojjanga pariggaha*, and (5) *sacca pariggaha.*

Nivārana pariggaha: There are five hindrances that obstruct the path to Nibbāna. They are called *Nivārana*. They are: (1) *kāmacchanda*, (2) *vyāpāda*, (3) *thīnamiddha*, (4) *uddhacca kukkucca*, and (5) *vicikicchā.*

kāmacchanda: means sense desire. This arises as a result of considering objects as satisfactory. One should reflect on kāmacchanda in the following five ways:

(1) when a sense-desire *(kāmacchanda)*, arises in one's mind to be aware of its presence;

(2) when there is no sense-desire in one's mind to be aware of its absence;

(3) to be aware of the way in which a sense-desire not hitherto arisen in one's mind would come into being;

(4) to be aware of the way in which a sense-desire arisen in one's mind would cease to be;

(5) to be aware of the way in which a sense-desire which ceased to exist in one's mind would not come into existence again.

vyāpāda This means ill-will. It distorts the mind and blocks the path to Nibbāna. One should reflect on *vyāpāda* in the following five ways:

(1) when there arises ill-will *(Vyāpāda)* in one's mind, to be aware of its presence;

(2) when there is no ill-will in one's mind, to be aware of its absence;

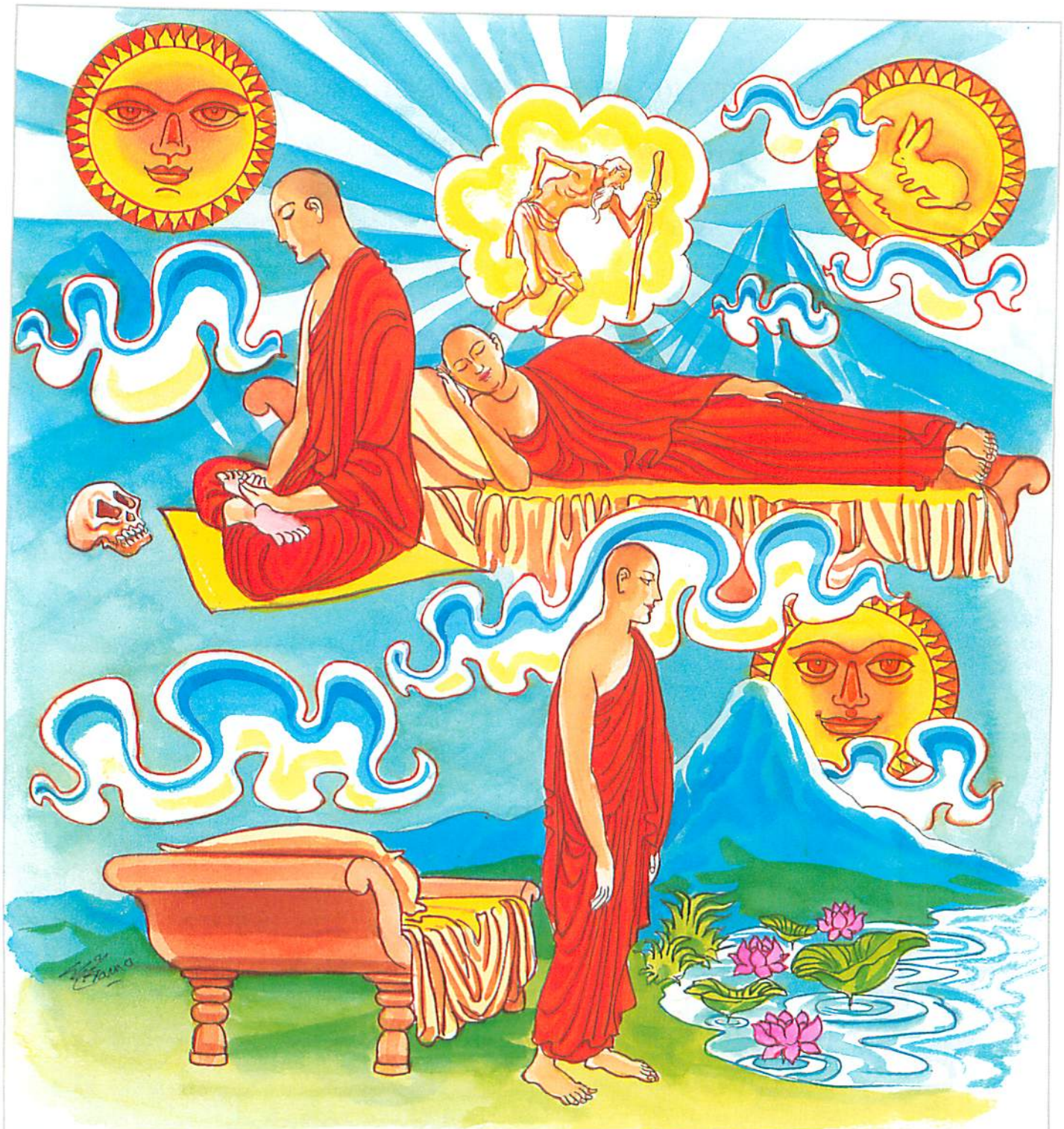
(3) to be aware of the way in which ill-will not hitherto arisen in one's mind would come into being;

(4) to be aware of the way in which ill-will arises in one's mind would case to be;

(5) to be aware of the way in which ill-will which ceased to exist in one's mind would not come into existence again.

(cont'd on page 639)

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Mindful of the body, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

299. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
niccaṁ kāyagatā sati. (21:10)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
are mindful of the body.

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MEDITATION ON THE REAL NATURE OF THE BODY

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301) (cont'd)

Commentary

thīnamiddha: This means sloth in mind and body. This should also be reflected on, in the five ways described earlier as in the case of kāmacchanda and *vyāpāda*.

uddhacca kukkucca: This means restlessness and worry that arises in the mind. This mental agitation prevents calmness and is a hindrance to the path to Nibbāna. This also should be reflected on, in the five ways already referred to.

vicikicchā:: This means skeptical doubt that arises over the following 8 factors regarding the doctrine, namely:

(1) doubt regarding the Buddha;

(2) doubt regarding the Dhamma;

(3) doubt regarding the Sangha;

(4) doubt regarding the precepts *(sikkhā)*;

(5) doubt regarding one's previous birth;

(6) doubt regarding one's next birth;

(7) doubt regarding one's previous birth and the next birth;

(8) doubt regarding the doctrine of dependent origination *(paticca samuppāda)*.

This also should be reflected on, in the five ways referred to earlier. The reflection on the fivefold hindrances *(nīvarana)* taken separately is called *nīvarana pariggaha*.

khandha pariggaha: A being is composed of five aggregates of clinging. This is the group that grasps life which are based in:

(1) the aggregate of matter *(rūpa upādānakkhandha)*;

(2) the aggregate of sensation or feelings *(vēdanā upādānakkhandha)*;

(3) the aggregate of perceptions *(saññā upādānakkhandha)*;

(4) the aggregate of mental formations *(samkhāra upādānakkhandha)*;

(5) the aggregate of consciousness *(viññāna upādānakkhandha)*.

One should reflect on matter *(rūpa)* in the following way:

Matter is of worldly nature. Matter has come into existence in this manner. Matter will cease to be in this manner. The same procedure should be adopted in reflecting on the other aggregates of clinging as well. The aim of this meditation is to get rid of any attachment towards these aggregates and to realize their impermanent nature.

āyatana pariggaha: *Āyatana* means sense-bases. They are twelve in number and are divided into two parts — external and internal. The six internal sense-bases *(adhyātma āyatana)* are:

(1) eye — *chakkāyatana*, (2) ear — *sōtāyatana*, (3) nose — *ghānāyatana*, (4) tongue — *jivhāyatana*, (5) body — *kāyāyatana*, and (6) mind — *manāyatana*.

The six external sense-bases *(bāhirāyatana)* are:

(1) form — *rūpāyatana*, (2) sound — *saddāyatana*, (3) smell — *gandhāyatana*, (4) taste — *rasāyatana*, (5) contact — *poṭṭhabbāyatana*, and (6) mental objects — *dhammāyatana*.

Taking each of these sense-base one should reflect on them in the following five ways:

(1) knowing what it is, (2) knowing how it has come into being, (3) knowing how a sense-base not arises hitherto comes into being, (4) knowing how a sense-base that has come into being cease to be, and (5) knowing how a sense-base which has ceased to be does not come into being again.

Once this meditation is practiced with regard to oneself, it could be extended to others as well.

bojjhanga pariggaha: *Bojjhanga*, or factors of enlightenment, means the conditions that a person striving for enlightenment should follow.

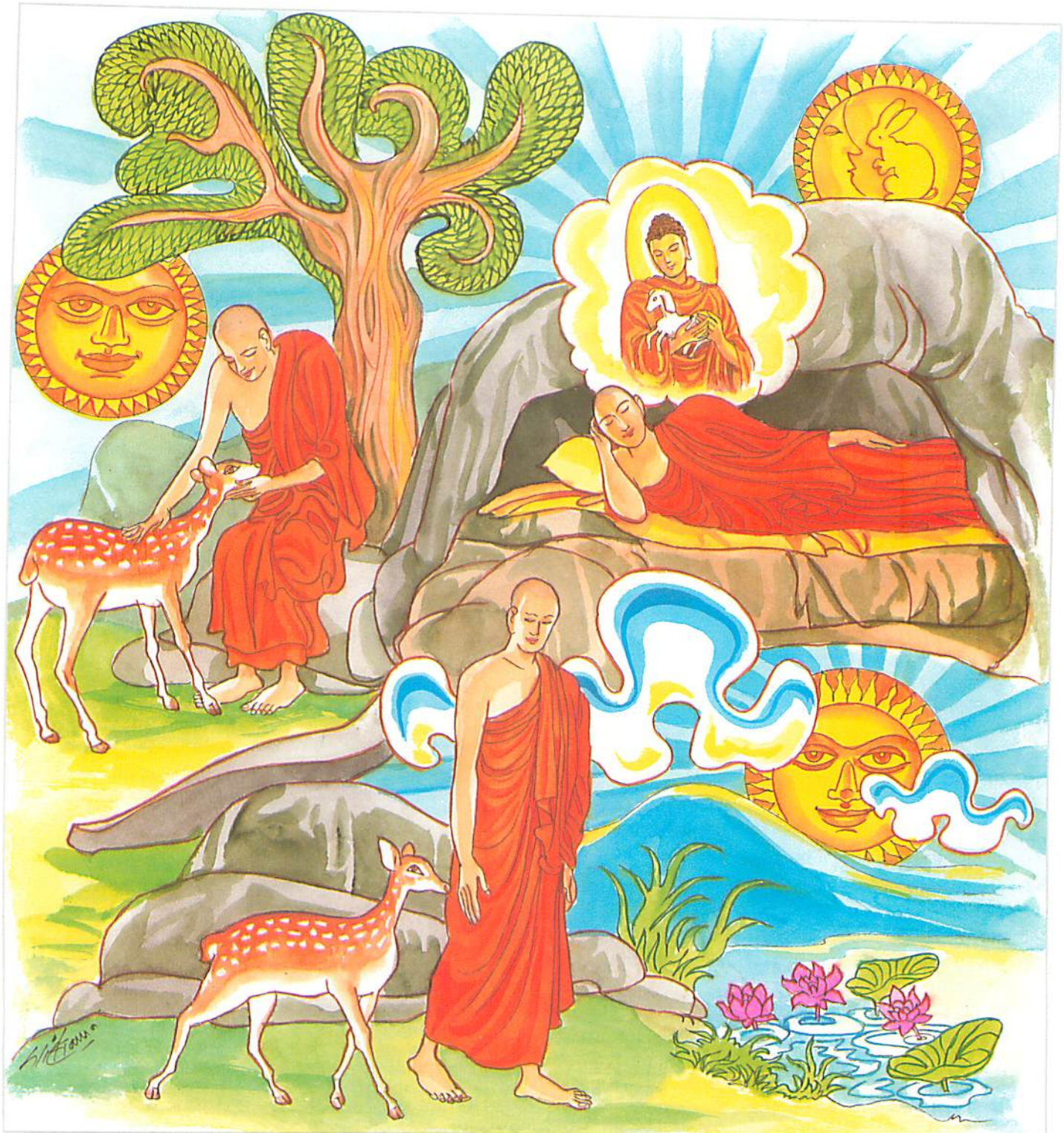
They are seven in number: (1) *sati sambojjhanga*, (2) *dhamma vicaya sambojjhanga*, (3) *viriya sambojjhanga*, (4) *pīti sambojjhanga*, (5) *passaddhi sambojjhanga*, (6) *samādhi sambojjhanga*, (7) *upekkhā sambojjhanga*.

These seven conditions beginning with *sati* are stages that gradually arise in a person striving for enlightenment and are related to one anōther. Therefore, it is difficult to describe them separately.

The person who strives for enlightenment acts being mindful of all his thoughts and activities of the body. Such mindfulness is called *sati* here. With such mindfulness he distinguishes between right and wrong and examine them with wisdom. Such critical examination is called *dhammavicaya*. This factor of enlightenment connected with wisdom develops in a person striving for enlightenment. The effort of such a person in order to cultivate right *(dhamma)* having got rid of wrong *(adhamma)* is here called *viriya*. The *viriya sambojjhanga* develops in a person, who strives thus. The happiness that arises in one's mind by the establishment and the development of right *(dhamma)* is called *pīti sambojjhanga*. The calmness that arises in the mind and the body by the development of happiness devoid of sense-desires is called *passaddhi*. The *passaddhi sambojjhanga* develops in a person who follows this procedure. Concentrating the mind on a good *(kusala)* object based on this calmness constitutes the *samādhi sambojjhanga*. With the development of concentration one realizes the futility of sensations and develops a sense of equanimity *(upekkhā)* being unaffected by happiness and sorrow. This is called *upekkhā sambojjhanga*.

(cont'd on page 641)

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Delighting in harmlessness, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

300. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
ahimsāya ratō manō. (21:11)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
in harmlessness delight.

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MEDITATION ON HARMLESSNESS

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301) (cont'd)

Commentary

In practicing this meditation one should reflect on each of these factors in the following four ways:

(1) knowing the presence of a factor of enlightenment (bojjhanga) in oneself when it is present;

(2) knowing the absence of a factor of enlightenment (bojjhanga) when it is absent;

(3) knowing how a factor of enlightenment could be developed when it is not present in oneself;

(4) knowing how a factor of enlightenment arisen in oneself could be further developed.

By reflecting in this manner it would be possible to develop the sevenfold factors which assist one to attain Nibbāna.

sacca pariggaha: This means the realization of facts regarding the four noble truths, namely: (1) *dukkha*, (2) *samudaya*, (3) *nirōdha*, and (4) *magga*.

dukkha: The truth of suffering: according to the Buddha's Teaching the entire world which is in a state of flux is full of suffering. The Buddha has showed the path to end that suffering. There are twelve ways in which this suffering could be explained.

(1) birth is suffering *(jāti)*;

(2) Old age is suffering *(jarā)*;

(3) Death is suffering *(maraṇa)*;

(4) Sorrow is suffering *(sōka)*;

(5) Lamentation is suffering *(paridēva)*;

(6) Physical pain is suffering *(dukkha)*;

(7) Mental pain is suffering *(dōmanassa)*;

(8) Laborious exertion is suffering *(upāyāsa)*;

(9) Association with unpleasant persons and conditions is suffering *(appiyēhisampayōga)*;

(10) Separation from beloved ones and pleasant conditions is suffering *(piyēhivippayōga)*;

(11) Not getting what one desires is suffering *(yampiccam nalabhati tampi dukkaṁ)*;

(12) In short, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering *(samkhittēna pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā)*.

The conception of suffering may also be viewed from seven aspects, as: (1) suffering arising from physical pain *(dukkha)*, (2) suffering arising from change *(viparināmadukkha)*, (3) suffering arising from the coming into being and cessation of conditional states *(samkhatadukkha)*, (4) suffering arising from physical and mental ailments but whose cause of arising are concealed *(paṭicchannadukkha)*, (5) suffering arising from various trials and tribulations and whose cause of arising are evident *(appaṭicchanna dukkha)*, (6) suffering arising from all the types other than *dukkha-dukkha (pariyāyadukkha)*, and (7) physical and mental suffering called *dukkha-dukkha (nippariyāya dukkha)*.

Thus one should reflect on suffering in various ways, considering the fact that it is a state conditioned by cause and effect. In this way one should strive to realize the true nature of suffering.

Samudaya: The truth of arising of suffering: by this is meant craving which is the root cause of all suffering. It is primarily threefold: (1) *kāma* (attachment for worldly objects), (2) *bhava* (attachment for continuity and becoming), and (3) *vibhava* (attachment with the idea that there is no continuity and becoming). This craving is further classified in relation to the various sense-objects:

(1) *rūpa taṇhā* (craving for form), (2) *sadda taṇhā* (craving for sound), (3) *gandha taṇhā* (craving for smell), (4) *rasa taṇhā* (craving for taste), (5) *poṭṭhabba taṇhā* (craving for contact), and (6) *dhamma taṇhā* (craving for mental objects).

Nirōdha: Truth of the cessation of suffering: this means the supreme state of Nibbāna resulting from the elimination of all defilements. It is two-fold, namely: (1) attaining Nibbāna and continuing to live *(sōpadisēsa nirvāna)*, and (2) attaining Nibbāna at death *(nirupādisēsa Nirvāna)*.

Magga: The noble eight-fold path which is the only way to attain Nirvāna is meant by *magga* which comprises:

(1) right understanding *(sammādiṭṭi)*;

(2) right thought *(sammāsankappa)*;

(3) right speech *(sammāvācā)*;

(4) right action *(sammākammanta)*;

(5) right livelihood *(sammā ājīva)*;

(6) right effort *(sammāvāyāmā)*;

(7) right mindfulness *(sammāsati)*;

(8) right concentration *(sammā samādhi)*.

(cont'd on page 643)

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With a mind delighting in self-culture, day and night, his disciples rise with a full awakening.

301. *Suppabuddhaṁ pabujjhanti*
sadā Gōtamasāvakā
yēsaṁ divā ca rattō ca
bhāvanāya ratō manō. (21:12)

Well awakened, they're awake
ever the Buddha's pupils
who constantly by day, by night
in meditation take delight.

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THE MIND THAT TAKES DELIGHT IN MEDITATION

21 (5) The Story of a Wood Cutter's Son (Verses 296 – 301) (cont'd)

Commentary

Each of these factors should be taken separately and reflected on and one should strive to practice them thoughtfully in every day life.

One should be mindful of one's thoughts and strive to get rid of evil thoughts and foster right thoughts *(sammā saṇkappa)* by practicing right understanding *(Sammādiṭṭi)*. Consequently one should be able to restrain one's body, speech and mind and through right concentration *(sammā samādhi)* be able to focus the mind towards the attainment of Nibbāna.

The most significant feature of this four-fold *satipaṭṭhāna"* meditation described so far, is the importance attached therein to the concentration of thoughts without a break from beginning to end. The practice of this meditation diligently will enable one to tread the path to Nibbāna.

According to the *visuddhimagga* and other important Buddhist texts it is imperative for one who practises this meditation to associate with a learned and noble teacher. This is extremely important because in the absence of such a teacher a person desirous of practicing this meditation could be misled.

By practicing the various sections of the *satipaṭṭāna* meditation as part of the daily routine, one would also be able to control and adjust one's life in a successful manner and thereby lead a household life of peace and contentment.

ahimsâya ratô: Takes delight in non-violence positively takes delight in cultivating loving-kindness. A very special characteristic of the Teaching of the Buddha, is the central position given in it to the need to be kind to all beings. Loving-kindness *mettā*, the practice of which ensures non-violence, has been extensively dwelt upon by the Buddhist.

In his exhortation to Rāhula, the Buddha said: Cultivate, Rāhula, the meditation on lovingkindness; for by cultivating lovingkindness ill-will is banished. Cultivate, Rāhula, the meditation on compassion; for by cultivating compassion harm and cruelty are banished.

From this it is clear that *mettā* and *karunā* are diametrically opposed to ill-will and cruely respectively. Ill-will or hate, like sense desire (lust), is also caused by the sense faculties meeting sense objects. When a man's eye comes in contact with a visible object, which to his way of thinking is unpleasant and undesirable, then repugnance arises if he does not-exercise systematic wise attention. It is the same with ear and sound, nose and smell, tongue and taste, body and contact, mind and mental objects. Even agreeable things, both animate and inanimate, which fill man with great pleasure can cause aversion and ill-will. A person, for instance, may woo another whom he loves and entertain thoughts of sensual affection, but if the loved one fails to show the same affection or behaves quite contrary to expectation conflicts and resentment arise. If he then fails to exercise systematic attention, if he is not prudent, he may behave foolishly, and his behaviour may lead to disaster, even to murder or suicide. Such is the danger of these passions will have to be named by *mettā*.

mettā: is a popular term among Buddhists, yet no English word conveys its exact meaning. Friendliness, benevolence, good-will, universal love, lovingkindness are the favourite renderings. *Mettā* is the wish for the welfare and happiness of all beings, making no restrictions whatsoever. It has the characteristic of a benevolent friend. Its direct enemy is ill-will (hatred) while the indirect or masked enemy is carnal love or selfish affectionate desire (*pēma*, Skt. *pēma*) which is quite different from *mettā*. Carnal love when disguished as *mettā* can do much harm to oneself and others. One has to be on one's guard against this masked enemy. Very often people entertain thoughts of sensual affection, and mistaking it for real *mettā* think that they are cultivating *mettā*, and do not know that they are on the wrong track. If one were dispassionately to scrutinize such thoughts one would realize that they are tinged with sensuous attachment. If the feeling of love is the direct result of attachment and clinging, then it really is not *mettā*.

Carnal love or *pêma* is a kind of longing capable of producing much distress, sorrow and lamentation. This fact is clearly explained by the Buddha in the discourses, and five verses of chapter sixteen on affection in the *Dhammapada* emphasize it thus:

> From what is beloved grief arises,
> From what is beloved arises fear.
> For him who is free from what he loves
> There is no grief and so no fear.
>
> From affection, grief arises...
> From attachment, grief arises...
> From lust grief arises...
> From craving grief arises...

As is well known, to love someone means to develop an attachment to the loved one, and when the later is equally fond of you a bond is created, but when you are separated or when the dear one's affection towards you wanes, you become miserable and may even behave foolishly. In his formulation of the noble truth of suffering, the Buddha says: Association with the unloved is suffering, separation from the loved is suffering, not to get what one wants in suffering... *Mettā*, however, is a very pure sublime state of the human, like quicksilver it cannot attach itself to anything. It is a calm, non-assertive super-solvent among virtues.

It is difficult to love a person dispassionately, without any kind of clinging, without any idea of self, me and mine; for in man the notion of 'I' is dominant, and to love without making any distinction between this and that, without setting barriers between persons, to regard all as sisters and brothers with a boundless heart, may appear to be almost impossible, but those who try even a little will be rewarded; it is worth while. Through continuous effort and determination one reaches the destination by stages.

A practiser of *mettā* should be on his guard against callous folk who are ocentric. It often happens that when a person is gentle and sincere others try to exploit his good qualities for their own ends. This should not be encouraged. If one allows the self-centred to make unfair use of one's *mettā*, kindliness and tolerance, that tends to intensify rather than allay the evils and sufferings of society.

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To renounce and delight therein are difficult. Home is painful too. Let not pain hunt you.

302. *Duppabbajjaṁ durabhiramaṁ*
durāvāsā gharā dukhā
dukkhō'samānasaṁvāsō
dukkhānupatitaddhagū
tasmā na c'addhagū siyā
na ca dukkhānupatitō siyā. (21:13)

Hard's the going-forth, hard to delight in it,
hard's the household life and dukkha is it too.
Dukkha's to dwell with those dissimilar
and dukkha befalls the wanderer.
Be therefore not a wanderer,
not one whom dukkha befalls.

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SAṀSĀRA — JOURNEY

21 (6) The Story of the Monk from the Country of the Vajjis (Verse 302)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk from Vēsāli, a city in the country of the Vajjis.

On the night of the full moon day of Kattika, the people of Vēsāli celebrated the festival of the constellations *(nakkhatta)* on a grand scale. The whole city was lit up, and there was much merry-making with singing, dancing, etc. As he looked towards the city, standing alone in the monastery, the monk felt lonely and dissatisfied with his lot. Softly, he murmured to himself, "There can be no one whose lot is worse than mine." At that instant, the spirit guarding the woods appeared to him, and said, "Those beings in *niraya* envy the lot of the beings in the dēva world; so also, people envy the lot of those who live alone in the woods." Hearing those words, the monk realized the truth of those words and he regretted that he had thought so little of the lot of a monk.

Early in the morning the next day, the monk went to the Buddha and reported the matter to him. In reply, the Buddha told him about the hardships in the life of all beings.

Then the Buddha pronounced this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 302)

duppabbajjaṁ durabhiramaṁ gharā durāvāsā
dukkhā asamānasamvāsō dukkhō addhagū
dukkhānupatitō tasmā addhagū na ca siyā
dukkhānupatitō na ca siyā

duppabbajjaṁ: being a monk is difficult; *durabhiramaṁ:* difficult it is to take delight in that life; *gharā:* households; *durāvāsā:* are difficult to live in; *dukkhā:* painful; *asamānasamvāsō:* living with those who have desperate views; *dukkhō:* is painful; *addhagū:* a person who has stepped into the path of *saṁsāra*; *dukkhānupatitō:* are pursued by suffering; *tasmā:* therefore; *addhagu:* a saṁsāra traveller; *na ca siyā:* one should not become; *dukkhānupatitō:* one pursued by suffering; *na ca siya:* one should not become

It is hard to become a monk; it is hard to be happy in the practice of a monk. The hard life of a householder is painful; to live with those of a different temperament is painful. A traveller in *saṁsāra* is continually subject to *dukkha*; therefore, do not be a traveller in *saṁsāra*; do not be the one to be repeatedly subject to *dukkha*.

Commentary

saṁsāra: round of rebirth, lit. perpetual wandering. *Saṁsāra* is a name by which is designated the sea of live ever restlessly heaving up and down, the symbol of this continuous process of ever again and again being born, growing old, suffering and dying. More precisely put, *saṁsāra* is the unbroken chain of the five-fold *khanda*-combinations, which, constantly changing from moment to moment, follow continuously one upon the other through inconceivable periods of time. Of this *saṁsāra*, a single lifetime constitutes only a tiny and fleeting fraction; hence to be able to comprehend the first noble truth of universal suffering, one must let one's gaze rest upon the *saṁsāra*, upon this frightful chain of rebirths, and not merely upon one single lifetime, which of course, may sometimes be less painful.

The Buddha said: O' monks, this cycle of continuity *(saṁsāra)* is without a visible end, and the first beginning of beings wandering and running round, enveloped in ignorance *(avijjā)* and bound down by the fetters of thirst (desire, *taṇhā*) is not to be perceived....

And further, referring to ignorance which is the main cause of the continuity of life the Buddha said: The first beginning of ignorance. *(avijjā)* is not to be perceived in such a way as to postulate that there was no ignorance beyond a certain point.

Thus, it is not possible to say that there was no life beyond a certain definite point.

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The confident and virtuous, with wealth and fame, they are praised wherever they go.

303. *Saddhō sīlēna sampanno*
yasōbhōgasamappitō
yaṁ yaṁ padēsaṁ bhajati
tattha tatth'ēva pūjitō. (21:14)

Who's full of faith and virtue,
of substance, high repute,
is honoured everywhere,
wherever that one goes.

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HE IS HONOURED EVERYWHERE

21 (7) The Story of Citta the Householder (Verse 303)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Citta, a householder of the town of Macchikāsanda.

Citta, after hearing the Dhamma expounded by the Venerable Sāriputta, attained *anāgāmi magga* and *phala*. One day, Citta loaded five hundred carts with food and other offerings for the Buddha and his disciples, and left for Sāvatthi, accompanied by three thousand followers. They travelled at the rate of one yōjana (league) a day and reached Sāvatthi at the end of a month. Then Citta went ahead with five hundred of his companions to the Jētavana Monastery. While he was paying obeisance to the Buddha, masses of flowers dropped miraculously from above like showers of rain. Citta stayed at the monastery for one whole month, offering alms-food to the Buddha and the monks and also feeding his own party of three thousand. All this time, the dēvas were replenishing his stock of food and other offerings.

On the eve of his return journey, Citta put all the things he had brought with him in the rooms of the monastery as offerings to the Buddha. The dēva then filled up the empty carts with various items of priceless things. The Venerable Ānanda, seeing how Citta's riches were being replenished, asked the Buddha, "Venerable Sir! Is it only when Citta approached you that he is blessed with all these riches? Is he similarly blessed when he goes somewhere else?" To him the Buddha replied, "Ānanda, this disciple is fully endowed with faith and generosity; he is also virtuous and his reputation spreads far and wide. Such a one is sure to be revered and showered with riches wherever he goes."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 303)

saddhō sīlēna sampannō yasōbhōga samappitō
yaṁ yaṁ padēsaṁ bhajati tattha tattha ēva pūjitō

saddhō: one who is devoted; *sīlēna:* with discipline; *sampannō:* adorned; *yasōbhōga samappitō:* endowed with glory and riches; *yaṁ yaṁ padēsaṁ:* whatever place; *bhajati:* he frequents; *tattha tattha ēva:* in all those places; *pūjitō:* he is adored

He who is full of faith and virtue, who also possesses fame and fortune, is held in reverence wherever he goes.

Commentary

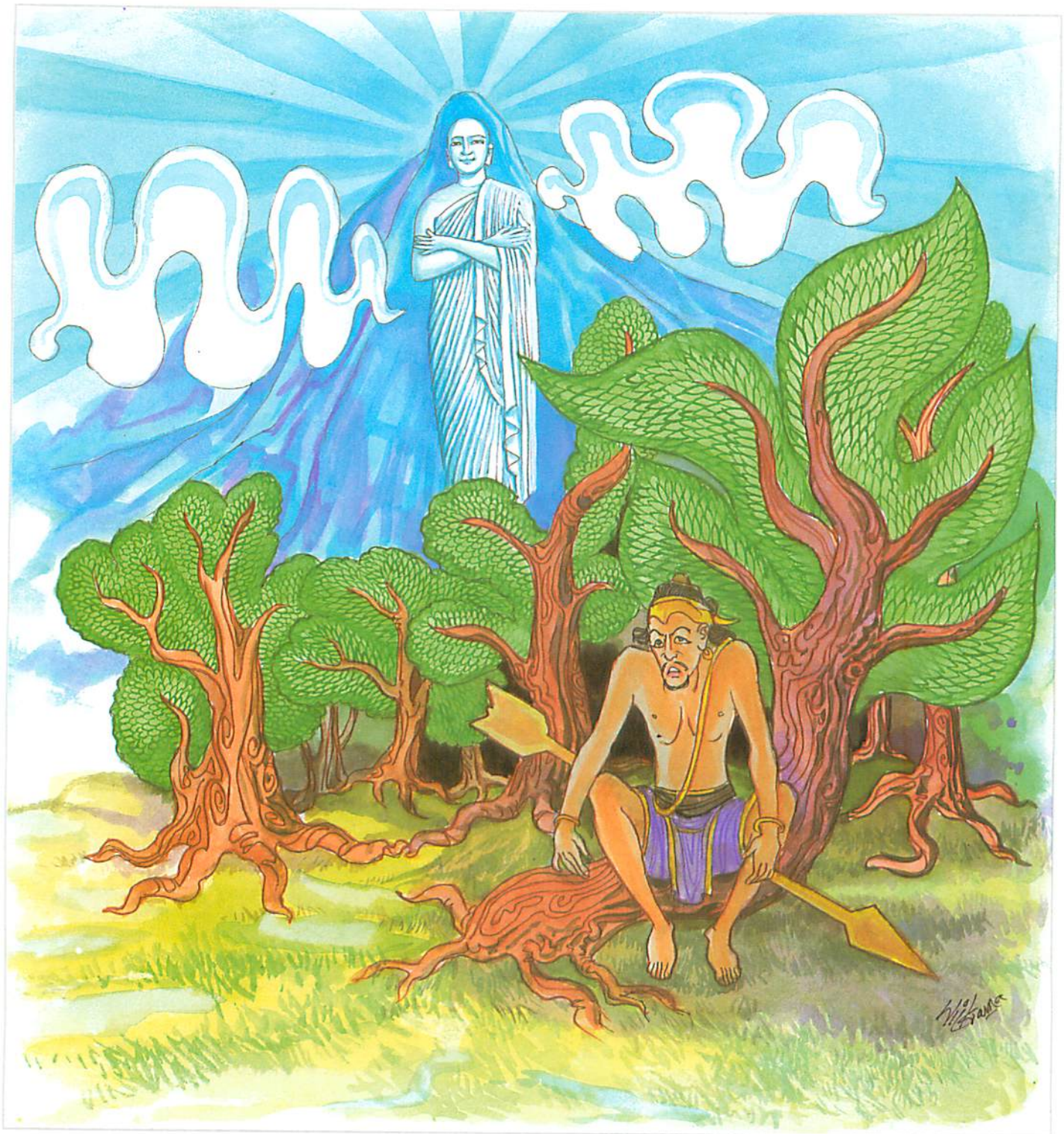
saddhā: faith, confidence. A Buddhist is said to have faith if he believes n the Buddha's Enlightenment or in the three jewels *(ti-ratana)*, by taking his refuge in them *(ti-sarana)*. His faith, however, should be reasoned and rooted in understanding *(ākāravati saddhā dassanamūlikā)*; and he is asked to investigate and test the object of his faith. A Buddhist's faith is not in conflict with the spirit of inquiry, and doubt about doubtable things is admitted and inquiry into them is encouraged. The faculty of faith *(saddhindriya)* should be balanced with that of wisdom *(paññindriya; indriya-samatta)*. It is said: A monk who has understanding, establishes his faith in accordance with that understanding. Through wisdom and understanding, faith becomes an inner certainty and firm conviction based on one's own experience.

Faith is called the seed of all wholesome states because, according to commentarial explanations, it inspires the mind with confidence *(ōkappana, pasāda)* and determination *(adhimokkha)*, for launching out *(pakkhandhana)*; to cross the flood of saṁsāra.

Unshakable faith is attained on reaching the first stage of holiness, stream-entry *(sōtāpatti, ariyapuggala)*, when the fetter of skeptical doubt *(vicikicchā)* in the three jewels is one of the characteristic qualities of the stream-winner *(sōtāpannassa aṅgāni)*.

Faith is a mental concomitant, present in all karmically wholesome, and its corresponding neutral consciousness. It is one of the four streams of merit *(puññadhārō)*, one of the five spiritual faculties *(indriya)*. Spiritual powers *(bala)*. elements of exertion *(padhāniyanga)* and one of the seven treasures *(dhana)*.

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The virtuous are visible from afar. The unworthy, like arrows at night, aren't seen tho' near.

304. *Dūrē santō pakāsenti*
Himavantō'va pabbatō
asant'ettha na dissanti
rattikhittā yathā sarā. (21:15)

Afar the true are manifest
like Himālayan range,
yet even here the false aren't seen,
they're arrows shot by night.

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THE VIRTUOUS ARE SEEN

21 (8) The Story of Cūlasubhadda (Verse 304)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Cūlasubhaddā the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika.

Anāthapiṇḍika and Ugga, the rich man from Ugga, studied under the same teacher when they were both young. Ugga had a son while Anāthapiṇḍika had a daughter. When their children came of age, Ugga asked for the consent of Anāthapiṇḍika to the marriage of their two children. So the marriage took place, and Cūlasubhaddā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika, had to stay in the house of her parents-in-law. Ugga and his family were followers of non-Buddhist ascetics. Sometimes, they would invite those non-Buddhist ascetics to their house. On such occasions, her parents-in-law would ask Cūlasubhaddā to pay respect to those naked ascetics, but she always refused to comply. Instead, she told her mother-in-law about the Buddha and his unique qualities.

The mother-in-law of Cūlasubhaddā was very anxious to see the Buddha when she was told about him by her daughter-in-law. She even agreed to let Cūlasubhaddā invite the Buddha for alms-food to their house. So, Cūlasubhaddā prepared food and collected other offerings for the Buddha and his disciples. She then went up to the upper part of the house and looking towards the Jētavana Monastery, she made offerings of flowers and incense and contemplated the unique qualities and virtues of the Buddha. She then spoke out her wish, "Venerable! May it please you to come, with your disciples, to our house tomorrow. I, your devoted lay-disciple, most respectfully invite you. May this invitation of mine be made known to you by this symbol and gesture." Then she took eight fistfuls of jasmin and threw them up into the sky. The flowers floated through the air all the way to the Jētavana Monastery and lay hanging from the ceiling of the congregation hall where the Buddha was expounding the Dhamma.

At the end of the discourse, Anāthapiṇḍika, the father of Cūlasubhaddā, approached the Buddha to invite him to have alms-food in his house the following day. But the Buddha replied that he had already accepted Cūlasubhaddā's invitation for the next day. Anāthapiṇḍika was puzzled at the reply of the Buddha and said, "But Venerable! Cūlasubhaddā does not live here in Sāvatthi; she lives in Ugga at a distance of one hundred and twenty yōjanas from here." To him, the Buddha said, "True, householder, but the good are clearly visible as if they are in one's very presence even though they may be living at a distance."

The next day, the Buddha came to the house of Ugga, the father-in-law of Cūlasubhaddā. The Buddha was accompanied by a multitude of monks on this trip; they all came through the air in decorated floats created by the order of Sakka, king of the dēvas. Seeing the Buddha in his splendour and glory, the parents-in-law of Cūlasubhaddā were very much impressed and they paid homage to the Buddha. Then, for the next seven days, Ugga and his family gave alms-food and made other offerings to the Buddha and his disciples.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 304)

santo dūrē himavantō pabbatō va pakāsenti ettha
asantō ratti khittā sarā yathā na dissanti

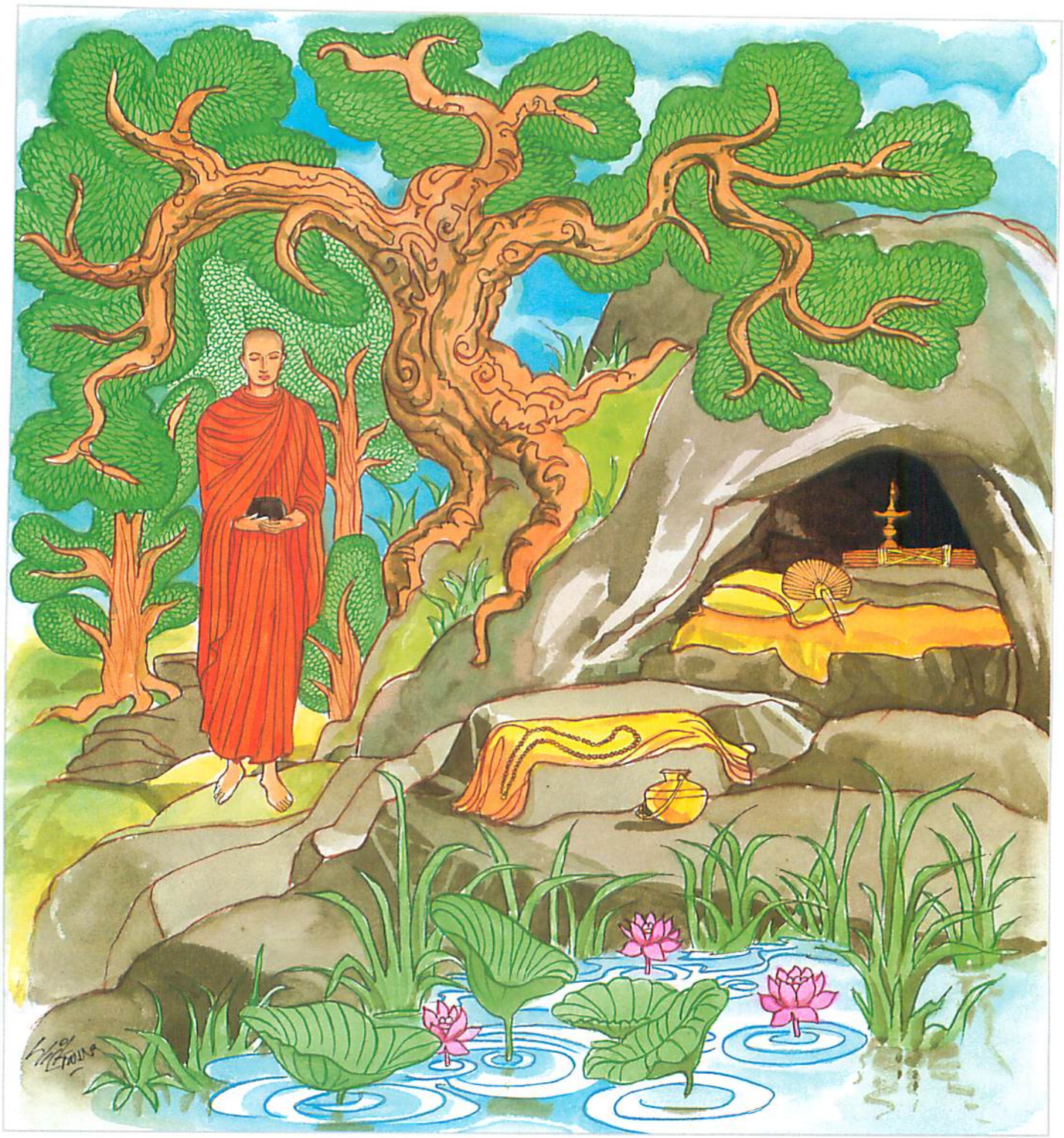
santō: the subdued ones; *dūrē:* even if at a distance; *himavantō pabbatō iva:* like a snowy mountain peak; *pakāsenti:* become vividly visible; *ettha:* in this world; *asantō:* the undisciplined persons; *ratti khittā:* shot in the dark; *sarā yathā:* like arrows; *na dissanti:* cannot be seen

Like the Himālayas, the good are visible even from afar; like arrows shot in the night, the wicked are not even seen though they may be near.

Commentary

santō; asantō: the tranquil one and the undisciplined one. According to this, good saintly people are visible from afar like the Himālayas. The wicked are unseen — like arrows shot in the dark.

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Taming oneself, alone everywhere, one should ever delight in the woods.

305. *Ēkāsanaṁ ēkaseyyaṁ*
ēkō caram atanditō
ēkō damayaṁ attānaṁ
vanantē ramitō siyā. (21:16)

Alone one sits, alone one lies,
alone one walks unweariedly,
in solitude one tames oneself
so in the woods will one delight.

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DISCIPLINE YOURSELF IN SOLITUDE

21 (9) The Story of the Monk Who Stayed Alone (Verse 305)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who stayed by himself. Because he usually stayed alone, he was known as Venerable Ēkavihāri.

Venerable Ēkavihāri did not associate much with other monks, but usually stayed by himself. All alone, he would sleep or lie down, or stand, or walk. Other monks thought ill of Ēkavihāri and told the Buddha about him. But the Buddha did not blame him. Instead, he said, "Yes, indeed, my 'son' has done well; for, a monk should stay in solitude and seclusion."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 305)

ēkō attānaṁ damayam ēkāsanaṁ ēkaseyyaṁ
atanditō ēkō caram vanantē ramitō siyā

ēkō: he, all alone; *attānaṁ damayaṁ:* disciplines himself; *ēkāsanaṁ:* sits all alone; *ēkaseyyaṁ:* sleeps alone; *atanditō:* without feeling lethargic; *ēkō:* all alone; *caram:* goes about; *vanantē:* the deep forest; *ramitō:* takes delight in

He who sits alone, lies down alone, walks alone, in diligent practice, and alone tames himself alone should find delight in living in the forest.

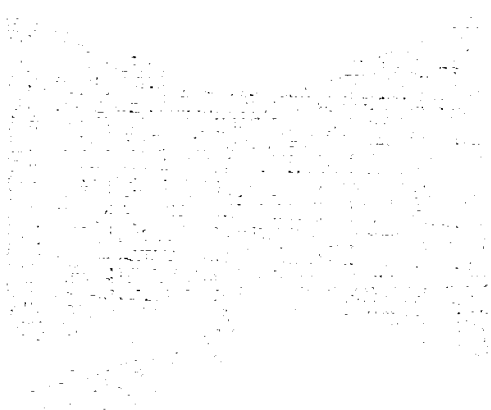
Commentary

vanantē ramitō: takes delight in the forest. This stanza was spoken by the Buddha to extol the virtues of a monk who took delight in forest-dwelling. The special qualities of the forest for a monk in meditation are given this way.

According to the explanation given in the *vinaya*, a forest embraces all that which lies outside a village and its precincts. The *Abhidhamma* states that the forest commences when one passes the village-outpost. But, in regard to ascetic practices, as we learn from the *Suttanta* explanation, a forest-dwelling is said to be at least five hundred bow-lengths distant from the village boundary.

The following are the advantages of living in the forest: a monk who lives in a forest can easily acquire concentration not yet acquired, or develop that which has already been attained. Moreover, his teacher is pleased with him, just as the Buddha said: I am pleased with the forest-life of the monk, Nāgita. The mind of him who lives in a forest-dwelling is not distracted by undesirable objects. As he is sustained by the necessary qualification of moral purity he is not overcome, when living in the forest, by the terrors which are experienced by those who are impure in word, deed and thought; this is stated in the *Bhayabhērava Sutta*: Putting away all craving for life, he enjoys the blissful happiness of calm and solitude. In the words of the *visuddhi-magga*:

> Secluded, detached, delighting in solitude,
> The monk by his forest-life endears himself unto the Buddha.
> Living alone in the forest he obtains that bliss,
> Which even the gods with Indra do not taste.
> Wearing but *paṁsukūla* as his armour to the forest battlefield armed with other ascetic vows,
> He, before long, shall conquer Māra and his army.
> So the wise should delight in the forest-life.



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Buddhist Idea of Sin

Its idea of sin differs somewhat from the Christian idea. Sin to the Buddhist is mere ignorance or stupidity. The wicked man is an ignorant man. He doesn't need punishment and condemnation so much as he needs instruction. He is not regarded as 'violating God's commands' or as one who must beg for divine mercy and forgiveness. Rather it is necessary for the sinner's friends to make him reason in the human way. The Buddhist does not believe the sinner can escape the consequences in prayerful attempts to bargain with God.

John Walters, "Mind unshaken"

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Chapter 22

NIRAYA VAGGA

Hell

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He who asserts what's not true and he who denies what's true, both suffer equally in hell.

306. *Abhūtavādī nirayaṁ upēti*
yō vāpi katvā na karōm iti cā'ha
ubhō'pi tē pecca samā bhavanti
nihīnakammā manujā parattha. (22:1)

With one denying truth there goes to hell
that one who having done says 'I did not'.
Both of them in making kammas base
are equal after death.

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NIRAYA VAGGA (Hell)
LIARS SUFFER TORTURES OF HELL

22 (1) The Story of Sundarī the Wandering Female Ascetic (Verse 306)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Sundarī, a wandering female ascetic.

As the number of people who revered the Buddha increased, the non-Buddhist ascetics found that the number of their followers was dwindling. Therefore, they became very jealous of the Buddha; they were also afraid that things would get worse if they did not do something to damage the reputation of the Buddha. So, they sent for Sundarī and said to her, "Sundarī, you are a very beautiful and clever young lady. We want you to put Samana Gōtama to shame, by making it appear to others that you are having sexual dealings with him. By so doing, his image will be impaired, his following will decrease and many would come to us. Make the best use of your looks and be crafty.

Sundarī understood what was expected of her. Thus, late in the evening, she went in the direction of the Jētavana Monastery. When she was asked where she was going, she answered, "I am going to visit Samana Gōtama; I live with him in the perfumed chamber of the Jētavana Monastery." After saying this, she proceeded to the place of the non-Buddhist ascetics. Early in the morning the next day, she returned home. If anyone asked her from where she had come she would reply, "I have come from the perfumed chamber after staying the night with Samana Gōtama." She carried on like this for two more days. At the end of three days, those ascetics hired some drunkards to kill Sundarī and put her body in a rubbish heap near the Jētavana Monastery.

The next day, the ascetics spread the news about the disappearance of Paribbajikā Sundarī. They went to the king to report the matter and their suspicion. The king gave them permission to search where they wished. Finding the body near the Jētavana Monastery, they carried it to the palace. Then they said to the king, "O king, the followers of Gōtama have killed this Paribbājikā and have thrown away her body in the rubbish heap near the Jētavana Monastery to cover up the misdeed of their teacher." To them the king replied, "In that case, you may go round the town and proclaim the fact." So they went round the town carrying the dead body of Sundarī, shouting, "Look! What the followers of Gōtama have done; see how they have tried to cover up the misdeed of Gōtama!" The procession then returned to the palace. The monks living in the Jētavana Monastery told the Buddha what those ascetics were doing to damage his reputation and impair his image. But the Buddha only said, "My sons, you just tell them this," and then spoke in verse as follows:

Explanatory Translation (Verse 306)

abhūtavādī nirayaṁ upēti pi ca yō katvā na karōmi iti ca āha nihīnakammā tē ubhō manujā api pecca parattha samā bhavanti

abhūtavādī: he who utters lies; *api yō katvā:* and he having committed sins; *na karōmīti:* will say I did not commit; *āha:* if he says this; *nirayaṁ upēti:* (he) will go to hell; *nihīnakammā:* of depraved acts; *te ubhō āpi manujā:* both these types of person; *pecca:* having departed this world; *parattha:* in the next world; *samā bhavanti:* become similar

One who tells lies about others goes to hell *(niraya)*; one who has done evil and says "I did not do it", also goes to hell. Both of them being evil-doers, suffer alike (in hell) in their next existence.

The king next ordered his men to further investigate the murder of Sundarī. On investigation, they found out that Sundarī had died at the hands of some drunkards. So they were brought to the king. When questioned, the drunkards disclosed that they were hired by the ascetics to kill Sundarī and put her body near the Jētavana Monastery. The king then sent for the non-Buddhist ascetics, and they finally confessed their role in the murder of Sundarī. The king then ordered them to go round the town and confess their guilt to the people. So they went round the town saying, "We are the ones who killed Sundarī. We have falsely accused the disciples of Gōtama just to bring disgrace on Gōtama. The disciples of Gōtama are innocent, only we are guilty of the crime." As a result of this episode, the power, the glory and the fortune of the Buddha were very much enhanced.

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Many who don the dyed robe, undisciplined and of sinful ways, thereby get reborn in hell.

307. *Kāsāvakaṇṭhā bahavō*
pāpadhammā asaññatā
pāpā pāpēhi kammēhi
nirayaṁ tē upapajjarē. (22:2)

Many who wear the yellow robe
are unrestrained in evil things,
these evil ones by evil deeds
in hell do they arise.

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BAD MEN GET BORN IN BAD STATES

22 (2) The Story of Those Who Suffered for Their Evil Deeds (Verse 307)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to some *pētas* (ghosts).

Once, the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna was coming down the Gijjhakūṭa hill with Venerable Lakkhana when he saw some ghosts. When they were back at the Monastery, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna told Venerable Lakkhana, in the presence of the Buddha, that he had seen a ghost who was just a skeleton. Then he added that he had also seen five monks with their bodies burning in flames. On hearing the statement about those monks, the Buddha said, "During the time of Kassapa Buddha, those monks had done much evil. For those evil deeds they had suffered in hell and now they are serving out the remaining term of suffering as ghosts."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 307)

kāsāvakaṇṭhā pāpadhammā asaññatā bahavō tē
pāpā pāpēhi kammēhi nirayaṁ upapajjarē

kāsāvakaṇṭhā: with a saffron robe round their necks; *pāpa dhammā:* sinful men; *asaññatā:* unrestrained people; *bahavō:* are many; *tē pāpā:* these sinners; *pāpēhi kammēhi:* due to their sinful acts; *nirayaṁ:* in hell; *upapajjarē:* are born

Many men wearing the yellow robe up to their necks who have an evil disposition and are unrestrained in thought, word and deed are reborn in hell on account of their evil deeds.

Commentary

In this story, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna is referred to as having a companion by the name of Venerable Lakkhana. This friend and companion of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna cultivated merit during the dispensation of Padumuttara Buddha. Since that time he had heaped much merit and finally he was born a brahmin by the name of Lakkhana. His circle was Uruwēla Kāsyapa and his two brothers Gayā and Nadī. With their conversion, he, too, later became an arahat. He was a friend and companion to Mahā Moggalāna. In the course of their travels, they came across a non-human spirit on the top of Vulture's Peak (Gijjakūta) who is in one of the four states of woe, viz., *prētha* (ghost realm).

The others are hell, animal and demon states. He had the shape of a crow and was emitting flames. On being questioned about the reason for his suffering he said that once upon a time he was born as a bird in the family of the robin. During the dispensation of Kassapa Buddha, while people were offering alms to monks, this bird suddenly flew in that direction and snatched three mouthfuls of rice and flew away. It was the result of that action.

On another occasion, on the same spot, while the same pair was going, Mahā Mogallāna only saw a serpent with its immense length enveloped in flames, with a human face and a mouth like that of a pig. Venerable Mahā Mogallāna smiled but put off giving the reason of the smile till they met the Buddha. Venerable Lakkhana waited for the opportunity and then asked. The Venerable Mogallāna explained that while sympathising with suffering of that being, yet it was with a sigh of relief that he smiled, because no long for him such states of suffering is possible. The Buddha concurred, and said that He, too, after Enlightenment at Gayā, saw the same serpent but did not wish to say anything as there would be skeptics. What a Buddha discloses it would by a lapse for anyone not to believe. Besides, a Buddha's utterance is well-timed. This applies to scientific developments about which the Buddha was silent. It does not, therefore, necessarily follow that the Buddha did not know them. Besides, they form no part of His mission. Here is testimony corroborated by the Buddha Himself. Lakkhana was one of the eight great arahats of the Sangha.

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Better for an undisciplined sinful monk to swallow hot iron balls than thrive on public alms.

308. *Seyyō ayōguḷō bhuttō*
tatthō aggisikhū'pamō
yañcē bhuñjeyya dussīlō
raṭṭhapiṇḍaṁ asaññatō. (22:3)

Better to eat a ball of iron
glowing as flame of fire
than one should eat the country's alms
immoral and unrestrained.

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FOOD FIT FOR SINNERS

22 (3) The Monks Who Lived on the Bank of the Vaggumudā River (Verse 308)

While residing at the Mahāvana forest near Vesāli, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the monks who spent the raining season on the bank of the Vaggumudā River.

At that time, there was a famine in the country of the Vajjis. So, to enable them to have enough food, those monks made it appear to the people that they had attained *magga* and *phala* although they had not done so. The people from the village, believing them and respecting them, offered much food to them leaving very little for themselves.

At the end of the raining season *(vassa)*, as was customary, monks from all parts of the country came to pay homage to the Buddha. The monks from the bank of the Vaggumudā River also came. They looked hale and hearty while the other monks looked pale and worn out. The Buddha talked to all the monks and enquired how they fared during the vasssa. To the monks from Vaggumudā River the Buddha specifically asked whether they had any difficulty in getting alms-food on account of the famine. They answered that they had no difficulty at all in getting alms-food.

The Buddha knew how those monks had managed to get enough alms-food. But he wanted to teach them on this point, so he asked, "How did you manage so well in getting alms-food throughout the raining season?" Then the monks told him how they discussed among themselves and decided that they should address one another in such a way that the villagers would think that they had really attained *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*. Then the Buddha asked them whether they had really attained *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala*. When they answered in the negative, the Buddha reprimanded them and recited this stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 308)

asaññatō dussīlō cē yañ raṭṭhapiṇḍaṁ bhuñjeyya,
tatthō aggisikhūpamō, ayōguḷō bhuttō seyyō

asaññatō: undisciplined; *dussīlō:* lacking in virtue; *cē:* if; *yañ:* for some reason; *raṭṭhapiṇḍaṁ:* food given by the people; *bhuñjeyya:* were to eat; *tatthō:* heated; *aggisikhūpamō:* flame like; *ayōguḷō:* iron ball; *bhuttō:* eating; *seyyō:* is better

It is better for one to eat a red-hot lump of iron burning like a flame than to eat alms-food offered by the people, if one is without morality (sīla) and unrestrained in thought, word and deed.

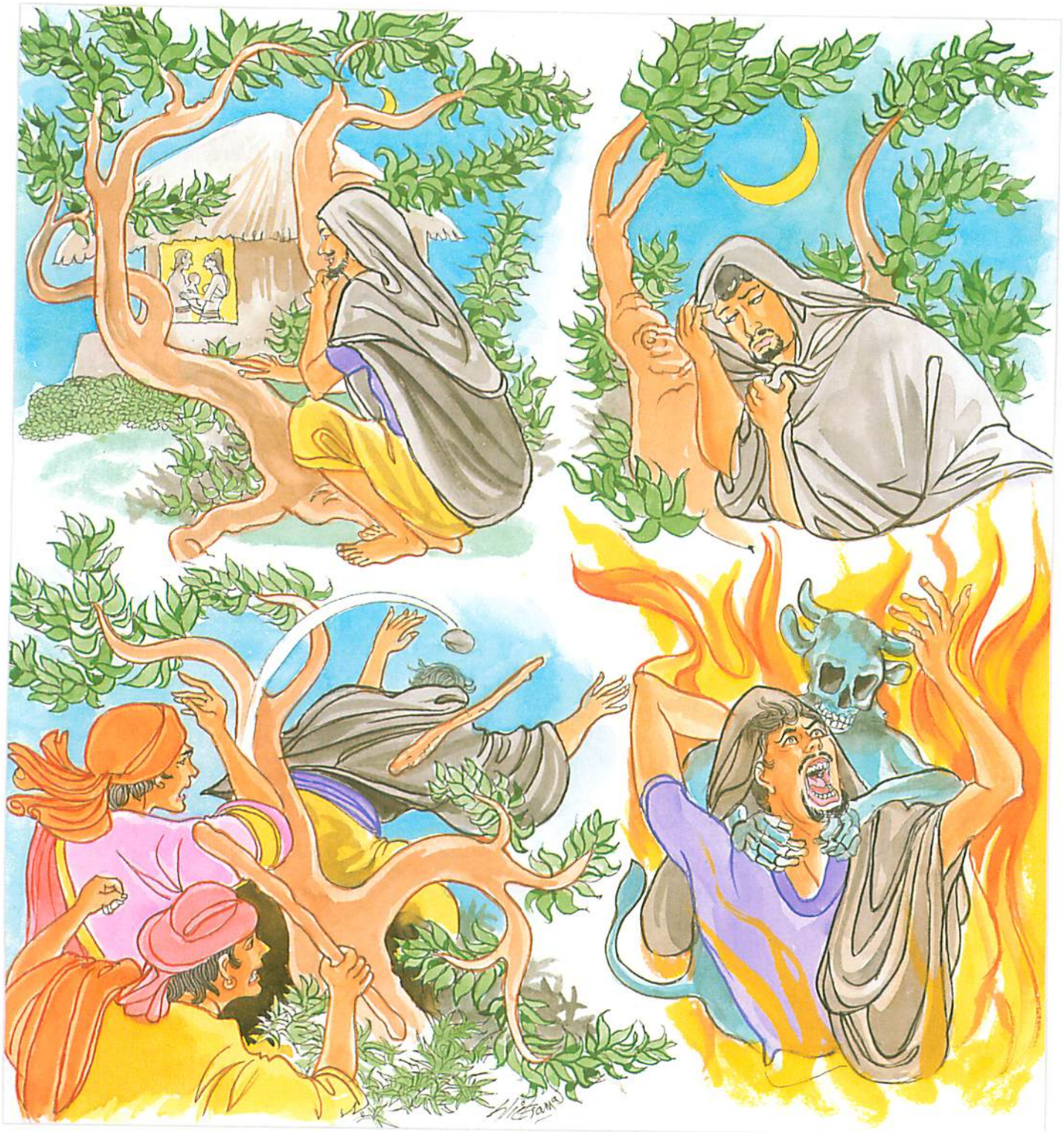
Commentary

vassa: This verse was spoken by the Buddha with reference to a group of monks who spent the vassa (the raining season) on the bank of the Vaggumudā River.

In ancient times, as today, three regular seasons prevailed in India, namely, *vassāna* (rainy) *hēmanta* (winter) and *gimhāna* (hot). The *vassāna* or rainy season starts in *Āsātha* and extends up to *Assayuga*, that is approximately from the middle of July to the middle of November.

During the *vassāna* period, due to torrential rains, rivers and streams usually get flooded, roads get inundated, communications get interrupted and people as a rule are confined to their homes and villages and live on what provisions they have collected during the previous seasons. During this time the ascetics find it difficult to engage in their preaching tours, wandering from place to place. An infinite variety of vegetable and animal life also appears to such an extent that people could not move about without unconsciously destroying them. Accordingly all ascetics including the disciples of the Buddha, used to, suspend their itinerant activities and live in retirement in solitary places. As a rule the Buddha and His disciples were invited to spend their rainy seasons either in a monastery or in a secluded park. Sometimes, however, they used to retire to forests. During these rainy seasons people flocked to the Buddha to hear the Dhamma and thus availed themselves of His presence in their vicinity to their best advantage.

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Adulterer gathers demerit and lies uneasy. Suffering censure here he faces pain in hell.

309. *Cattāri ṭhānāni narō pamattō*
āpajjati paradārūpasēvī
apuññalābhaṁ na nikāmaseyyaṁ
nindaṁ tatīyaṁ nirayaṁ catutthaṁ. (22:4)

Four things befall that heedless one
sleeping with one who's wed:
demerit gained but not good sleep,
third is blame while fourth is hell.

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THE MAN WHO COVETS ANOTHER'S WIFE

22 (4) The Story of Khēma the Guild Leader (Verse 309 & 310)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Khēma, the son of a rich man. Khēma was also the nephew of the renowned Anāthapiṇḍika.

Khēma, in addition to being rich, was also very good looking and women were very much attracted to him. They could hardly resist him and naturally fell prey to him. Khēma committed adultery without compunction. The king's men caught him three times for sexual misconduct and brought him to the presence of the king. But King Pasēnadi of Kōsala did not take action because Khēma was the nephew of Anāthapiṇḍika. So Anāthapiṇḍika himself took his nephew to the Buddha. The Buddha talked to Khēma about the depravity of sexual misconduct and the seriousness of the consequences.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 309)

paradārūpasēvī pamattō narō apuññalābhaṁ na nikāmaseyyaṁ tatiyaṁ nindaṁ catutthaṁ nirayaṁ cattāri ṭhānāni āpajjati

paradārūpasēvī: a man who goes to another person's wife; *pamattō:* thoughtless; *narō:* human being; *apuññalābhaṁ:* acquisition of sin; *na nikāmaseyyaṁ:* not getting comfortable, enough sleep; *tatiyaṁ:* thirdly; *nindaṁ:* shame; *catutthaṁ:* fourthly; *nirayaṁ:* being born in hell; *cattāri ṭhānāni:* to these four forms; *āpajjati:* will go

A thoughtless person, who goes to another man's wife, will suffer four evil results. Firstly, he will acquire demerit - what is not meritorious. Secondly, he will not get enough comfortable sleep. Thirdly, he will be disgraced. Fourthly, he will be born in hell.

Commentary

This was spoken by the Buddha while he was in residence at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Khēma, a treasurer's son, nephew of Anāthapiṇḍdika.

What was his former deed? It is said that in the dispensation of the Buddha Kassapa he was a champion wrestler, and that one day he planted two colored banners on the golden shrine of the Buddha, and made the following earnest wish, 'May all the women who look upon me, except my kinswomen and blood-relatives, fall in love with me.' This was his former deed. By reason of this, in the various places where he was reborn, other men's wives who saw him were unable to control themselves.

Khēma is said to have been an exceedingly handsome youth. All the women who saw him became so overpowered with desire that they were unable to control themselves. Khēma was given to running after other men's wives. One night the king's men took him prisoner and brought him before the king. Thought the king, "I feel shame for the great treasurer." So without saying a word to him, he let him go. But for all that, Khēma did not abandon his evil practices. A second time and a third time the king's men took him prisoner and brought him before the king, and each time the king just let him go. When the great treasurer heard what had happened, he went to the Buddha with his nephew, made him tell his story, and said to the Buddha, "Venerable, preach the Law to this youth." Thereupon the Buddha showed him the wrong involved in running after other men's wives by reciting the above stanzas.

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To the adulterer, 'tis limited pleasure and punishment's dread. A sin he should totally shun.

310. *Apuññalābhō ca gatī ca pāpikā*
bhītassa bhītāya ratī ca thōkikā
rājā ca daṇḍaṁ garukaṁ paṇēti
tasmā narō paradāraṁ na sēvē. (22:5)

Demerit's gained and evil birth,
scared man and woman - brief their joy,
the king decrees a heavy doom:
so none should sleep with one who's wed.

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SHUN ADULTERY

22 (4) The Story of Khēma the Guild Leader (Verse 309 & 310) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 310)

apuññalābhō ca pāpikā gatī ca bhītassa bhītāya ratī ca thōkikā rājā ca garukaṁ daṇḍaṁ paṇeti tasmā narō paradāraṁ na sēvē

apuññalābhō ca: acquiring sin; *pāpikā ca gatī:* lowly state deserved by sinners (will be his lot); *bhītassa:* a frightened man's; *bhītāya:* and a frightened woman's; *ratī:* embrace; *thōkikā:* is very slight; *rājā ca:* the king too; *garukaṁ daṇḍaṁ:* severe punishment; *paṇēti:* will impose; *tasmā:* because of this; *narō:* men; *paradāraṁ:* other's wife; *na sēvē:* should not associate

Merit will be acquired. The lowly state of hell, deserved by a sinner will be his lot. Since both the man and the woman are frightened, their embrace will generate very little pleasure. The king's law will impose severe punishment. Because of all these, a man will not covet another's wife.

Commentary

These verses spring from a misdeed of an eminent person who was a rephew of Anāthapindika. This is an instance of the nature of service the Buddha had to render to help and guide the people both in worldly and spiritual matters.

The Buddha was the embodiment of all the virtues that he preached. During his successful and eventful ministry of 45 years, he translated all his words into action. At no time did he ever express any human frailty or any base passion. The Buddha's moral code is the most perfect which the world has ever known.

For more than 25 centuries, millions of people have found inspiration and solace in his teaching. His greatness is like a sun that blots out the glory of lesser lights. His teaching still beckons the weary pilgrim to the security and peace of Nibbāna. No other person has sacrificed so much for the sake of suffering humanity.

The Buddha was the first religious leader in human history to admonish and to appeal to people not to harm any living creature, not to offer animal sacrifices.

To Buddha, religion was not a bargain but a way to enlightenment. He did not want followers with blind faith; he wanted followers who could think wisely.

All of us were relieved and comforted by the coming of the Buddha. The entire human race has been blessed with his presence.

There was never an occasion when the Buddha expressed any unfriendliness towards a single person. Not even to his opponents and worst enemies did the Buddha express any unfriendliness. There were a few prejudiced minds who turned against the Buddha and tried to kill him; yet the Buddha never treated them as enemies. The Buddha once said, "As an elephant in the battle-field endures the arrows that are shot into him so will I endure the abuse and unfriendly expression of others."

In the annals of history, no man is recorded as having so consecrated himself to the welfare of all living beings as has the Buddha. From the hour of his enlightenment to the end of his life, he strove tirelessly to elevate mankind. He slept only two hours a day. Though twenty-five centuries have gone since the passing away of this great teacher, his message of love and wisdom still exists in its great purity. This message is still decisively influencing the destinies of humanity. He was the most compassionate one who illuminated this world with loving-kindness.

After attaining Nibbāna, the Buddha left a deathless message that is still living with us in the world today. Today we are confronted by the terrible threat to world peace. At no time in the history of the world is his message more needed than it is now.

The Buddha was born to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to show the world how to get rid of suffering and disease, decay and death and all the worries and miseries of living beings.

According to some beliefs, a certain god will appear in this world from time to time to destroy the wicked people and to protect the good ones. Buddha did not appear in this world to destroy the wicked people but to show them the correct path.

In the history of the world until the Buddha's time, have we ever heard of any religious teacher who was so filled with such all-absorbing sympathy and love for suffering humanity like the Buddha? A few centuries after the Buddha, we heard of some wise men in Greece: Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. But these men were only dry thinkers and seekers after truth; they lacked any inspiring love for the suffering multitude.

The Buddha's way of saving mankind is to teach them how to find salvation. He was not interested in alleviating a few chance cases of physical or mental distress. He was more concerned with revealing a path that all people could follow.

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Ill-lived recluseship to hell-fire leads like kusa grass that cuts when wrongly grasped.

311. *Kusō yathā duggahitō*
hattham ēvānukantati
sāmaññaṁ dupparāmaṭṭhaṁ
nirayāyū'pakaḍḍhati. (22:6)

As blady grass when wrongly grasped
the hand does lacerate
so a mishandled monastic life
drags one off to hell.

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WRONG MONASTIC LIFE LEADS TO BAD STATES

22 (5) The Story of the Obstinate Monk (Verses 311 – 313)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to an obstinate monk.

Once, there was a monk who was feeling remorse for having unwittingly cut some grass. He confided about this to another monk. The latter was reckless and stubborn by nature, and he did not think much about committing small misdeeds. So, he replied to the first monk, "Cutting grass is a very minor offence; if you just confide and confess to another monk you are automatically exonerated. There is nothing to worry about." So saying, he proceeded to uproot some grass with both hands to show that he thought very little of such trivial offenses. When the Buddha was told about this, he reprimanded the reckless, stubborn monk.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 311)

yathā kusō duggahitō hattham ēva ānukantati
dupparāmaṭṭhaṁ sāmaññaṁ nirayāyū pakaḍḍhati

yathā: just as; *kusō:* a blade of kusa grass; *duggahitō:* held in the wrong way; *hattham ēva:* the hand itself will; *ānukantati:* get cut; *dupparāmaṭṭhaṁ:* wrongly practised; *sāmaññaṁ:* monastic life; *nirayāya:* to hell; *pakaḍḍhati:* will drag down

The blade of the kusa grass, if held wrongly, will cut one's hand. In the same way, if one were to handle monastic life in the wrong way - against the grain - it will pull the person down into hell.

Explanatory Translation (312)

sithilaṁ yaṁ kiñci kammaṁ saṅkiliṭṭhañ yaṁ
vataṁ ca saṅkassaraṁ brahmacariyaṁ taṁ mahapphalaṁ na hōti

sithilaṁ: casually; *yaṁ kiñci kammaṁ:* some act of merit; *saṅkiliṭṭhañ:* blemished; *vataṁ ca:* some practice; *saṅkassaraṁ ca:* dubious; *brahmacariyaṁ:* higher life; *taṁ:* all this; *mahapphalaṁ na hōti:* will not yield high results

Some act of merit may get committed casually. The practice of a religious rite may be tainted. Higher life may get led dubiously. All these will not yield high results.

Explanatory Translation (313)

cē kayirā ēnaṁ kayirātha daḷham parakkame hi
sithilo paribbājō bhiyyō rājaṁ ākirate

cē: if; *kayirā:* some act of merit is being performed; *kayirā ētaṁ:* do that act; *daḷham parakkamē:* with concern and commitment; *hi:* if for some reason; *sithilō:* casual; *paribbājō:* asceticism; *bhiyyō:* will profusely; *rajaṁ ākiratē:* will sprinkle

If you have to do an act of merit do it with a sense of commitment and concern. But, if the practice of monastic life is casual, instead of reducing the dust, much dust will be smeared.

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Slack in deeds, foul in ways and unreliable in the holy-life. These never lead to great results.

312. *Yaṁ kiñci sithilaṁ kammaṁ*
saṇkiliṭṭhañca yaṁ vataṁ
saṇkassaraṁ brahmacariyaṁ
na taṁ hōti mahapphalaṁ. (22:7)

Whatever of kammas slack,
whatever of vows corrupt,
a faltering in the holy life
never brings ample fruit.

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THREE THINGS THAT WILL NOT YIELD GOOD RESULTS

22 (5) The Story of the Obstinate Monk (Verses 311 – 313) (Contd.)

Commentary

These verses are an observation of the nature of right and wrong action. The Buddhist theory of action is embodied primarily in the Buddha's teachings on kamma.

Kamma is an impersonal, natural law that operates in accordance with our actions. It is a law in itself and does not have any law-giver. Kamma operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent, ruling agent.

Kamma can be explained in many different 'languages.'

Kamma can be put in the simple language of the child: Do good and good will come to you, now, and in the future. Do bad and bad will come to you, now, and in the future.

In the language of the harvest, kamma can be explained in this way: If you sow good seeds, you will reap a good harvest. If you sow bad seeds, you will reap a bad harvest.

In the language of science, kamma is called the law of cause and effect. Another name for this is the law of moral causation. Moral causation works in the moral realm just as the law of action and reaction works in the physical realm.

In the Dhammapada, kamma is explained in this manner: The mind is the chief (forerunner) of all good states. If you speak or act with a good mind, then happiness follows you just as the wheel follows the hoof of the ox.

Kamma is simply action. Within animate organisms there is a power or force which is given different names such as instinctive tendencies consciousness, etc. This innate propensity forces every conscious being to move. He moves mentally or physically, His motion is action. The repetition of actions is habit and habit becomes his character. In Buddhism, this process is called kamma.

In its ultimate sense, kamma means both good and bad, mental action or volition. "Kamma is volition," says the Buddha. Thus kamma is not an entity but a process, action, energy, force. Some interpret this force as 'action-influence'. It is our own doings reacting on ourself. The pain and happiness man experiences are the results of his own deeds, words, and thoughts reacting on themselves. Our deeds, words and thoughts produce our prosperity and failure, our happiness and misery.

Kamma is an impersonal, natural law that operates strictly in accordance with our actions. It is a law in itself and does not have any law-giver. Kamma operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent ruling agency. Since there is no hidden agent directing or administrating rewards and punishments Buddhists do not rely on prayer to influence any supernatural forces. According to the Buddha, kamma is neither predestination nor some sort of determinism imposed on us by some mysterious unknown powers or forces to which we must helplessly submit ourselves.

Buddhists believe that man reaps what he has sown; we are the result of what we were, and we will be the result of what we are. In other words, man is not absolutely what he was and he will not absolutely be what he is. This simply means that kamma is not complete determinism: The Buddha pointed out that if everything is determined, then there could be no free will and moral or spiritual life could not be possible. We would merely be the slaves of our past. On the other hand, if everything is undetermined, then there can be no cultivation of moral and spiritual growth. Therefore the Buddha accepted neither strict determinism nor strict indeterminism.

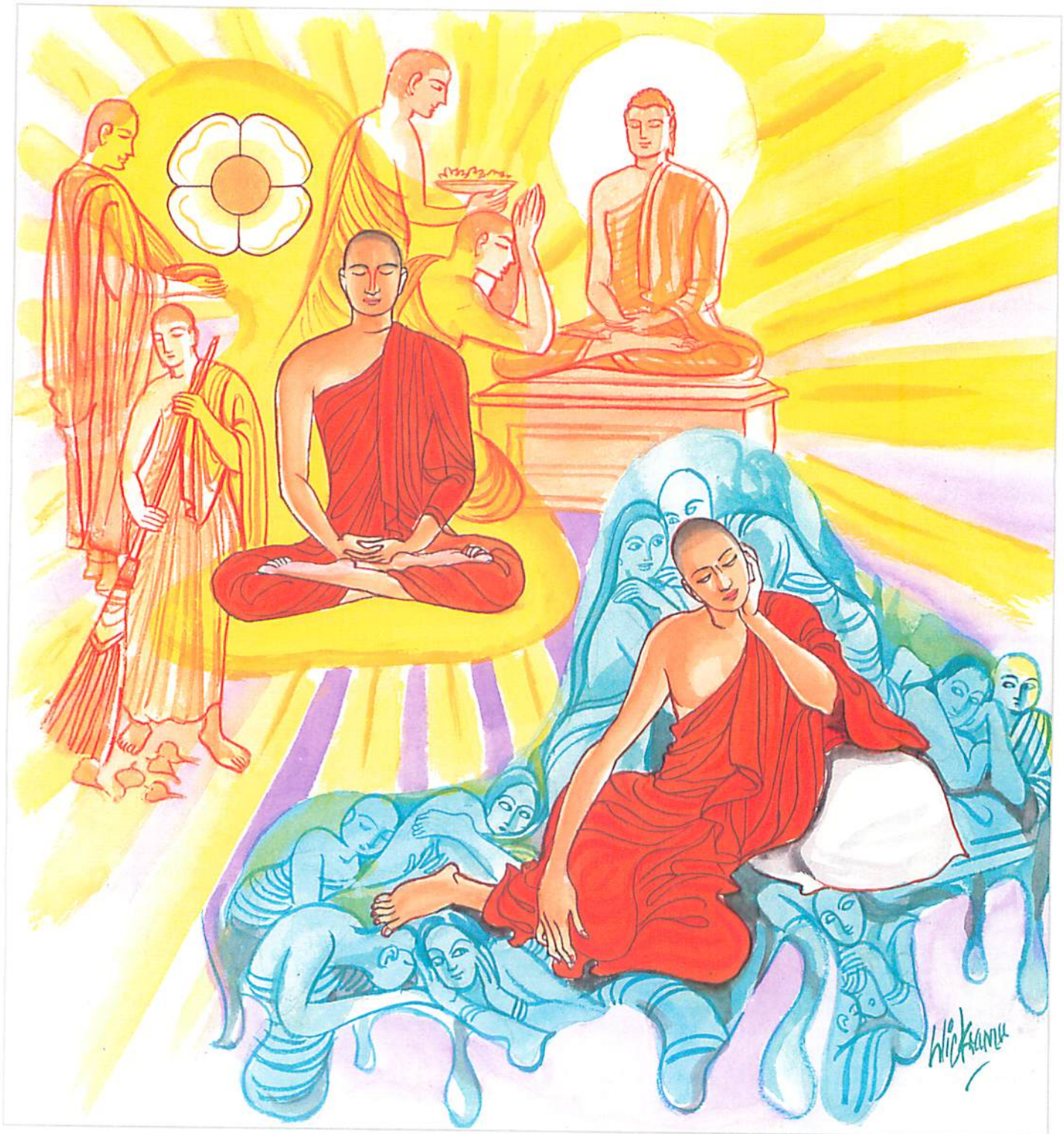
These misinterpretations or irrational views on kamma are stated in the *Anguttara Nikāya* which suggests that the wise will investigate and abandon the following: (1) there are some who believe that everything is a result of acts in previous lives; (2) there are others who believe that all is the result of creation by a Supreme Ruler; (3) there are others again who believe that everything arises without reason or cause. Then if a person becomes a murderer, a thief, an adulterer, etc., if his actions are due to past actions, or made by the creation of a supreme ruler, or if they happen by mere chance, then this person would not be responsible for his evil action.

Yet another misconception of kamma is that it operates only for certain people or for people in certain faiths. But the fate of a man in his next life does not in the least depend on what brand of religion he chooses. Whatever be his religion man's fate depends entirely on his deeds by body, speech and thoughts. It does not matter what religious label he gives himself, he is sure to be in a happy world in his next life so long as he does good deeds and lives a cultured life without harming others. He is sure to be born to lead a wretched life if he commits evil and harbours wicked thoughts in his mind. Therefore, Buddhists do not preach that they are the only blessed people who can go to heaven after their death. Whatever his faith, man alone determines his own position both in this life and in the next. The teaching of kamma does not indicate a postmortem justice. The Buddha, who had no ulterior, selfish motive, did not teach this law of kamma to protect the rich and to comfort the poor by promising illusory happiness in an after life.

Buddhists believe that kamma explains the inequalities that exist among mankind. These inequalities are due not only to hereditary, environment, and nature, but also to kamma or the results of our own actions.

Since kamma is an invisible force, we cannot see it working with our physical eyes. To understand how kamma works, we can compare it to seeds: The results of kamma are stored in the subconscious mind in the same way as the leaves, flowers, fruits and trunk of a tree are stored in its seed. Under favourable conditions, the fruits of kamma will be produced just as with moisture and light, the leaves and trunk of a tree will sprout from its tiny seed.

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In what's to be done, resolute ye be. Slackness truly degrades.

313. *Kayirā cē kayirāth'ētaṁ*
daḷham ētaṁ parakkamē
sithilō hi paribbājō
bhiyyō ākiratē rajaṁ. (22:8)

If there's aught that should be done
let it be done then steadily,
in truth a slack monastic life
all the more stirs up the dust.

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DO MERIT WITH COMMITMENT

22 (5) The Story of the Obstinate Monk (Verses 311 – 313) (Contd.)

Commentary

The working of kamma can also be compared to a bank account: A person who is virtuous, charitable and benevolent in his present life is like a person who is adding to his good kamma. But he must replace what he takes or else one day his account will be exhausted and he will be bankrupt. Then whom will he be able to blame for his miserable state? He can blame neither others nor fate. He alone is responsible. Thus a good Buddhist cannot be an escapist. He has to face life as it is and not run away from it. The kammic force cannot be controlled by inactivity. Vigorous activity for good is indispensable for ones own happiness. Escapism is the resort of the weak; but an escapist cannot escape the effects of the kammic law.

To understand the law of kamma is to realise that we ourselves are responsible for our own happiness and our own misery. We are the architects of our kamma. Buddhists believe that man has every possibility to mould his own kamma and thereby influence the direction of his life. Man is not a complete prisoner of his own actions; he is not a slave of his kamma. Nor is man a mere machine that automatically releases instinctual forces that enslave him. Nor is man a mere product of nature. Man has within himself the strength and the ability to control his kamma. He is mightier than his kamma and so the law of kamma can be made to serve man. Man does not have to give up his hope, effort, and intelligence in order to surrender himself to his kammic force. To off-set the reaction of his bad kamma that he has done previously, a man had to do meritorious deeds and to purify his mind rather than by praying, worshipping, or performing religious rites.

Man must use the material with which he is endowed to promote his ideal. The cards in the game of life are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to our past kamma; but we can call as we please, lead what suit we will and, as we play, we can gain and lose.

The radical transformations in the characters of Angulimāla and Asōka illustrate man's potential to gain control over himself.

Angulimāla was a highway robber who caused the deaths of many men. Can we judge him by his external actions? For within his life time, he became an arahat and thus erased all his past misdeeds.

Asōka, the Indian emperor, killed thousands and thousands to fight his war and to expand his empire. Yet after winning the battle, he completely reformed himself and changed his career to such an extent that today, 'Amidst the tens of thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majesties and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Asōka shines and shines almost alone, as a star.'

Although Buddhists believe that man can eventually control his kammic force, they do not believe that everything is due to kamma. They do not ignore the role played by other forces of nature. According to Buddhism, there are five orders or processes or natural laws (*niyamas*) which operate in the physical and mental worlds: (1) the physical laws (*utu niyāma*) relating to seasonal changes etc., (2) the biological laws (*bīja niyāma*) related to order of germs and seeds, (3) the kammic law (*kamma niyāma*) relating to moral causation or the order of act and result, (4) spiritual phenomena (*Dhamma niyāma*) relating to electric forces, movement of tides, etc., and (5) psychological laws (*citta niyāma*) which govern the processes of consciousness.

Kamma is considered only as one of the five natural laws that account for the diversity in this world.

Kamma is often influenced by external circumstances: Beneficent and maleficent forces act to counter and to support this self-operating law. These other forces that either aid or hinder kamma are: Birth, time or conditions, beauty, and effort.

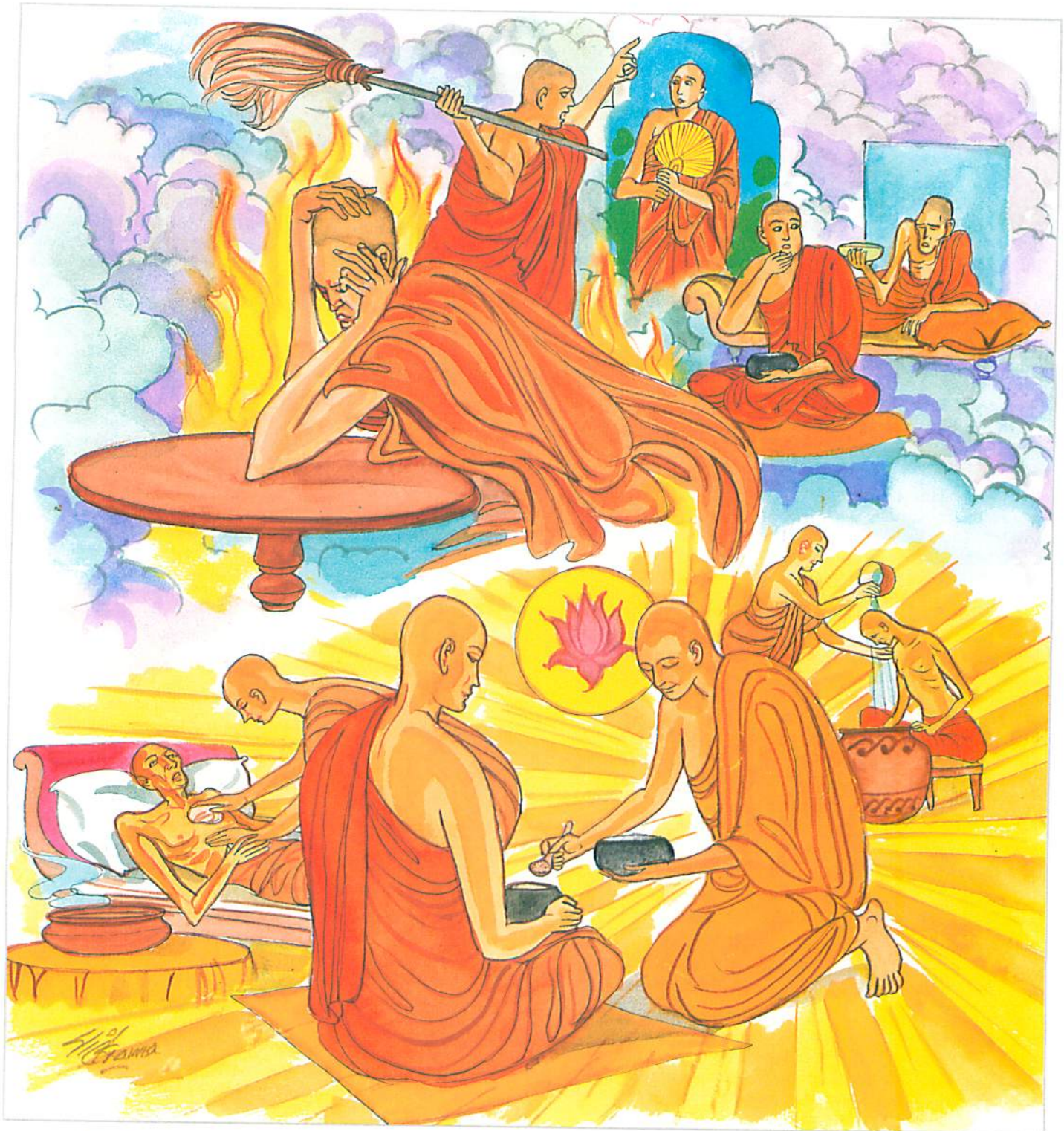
A favourable birth (*gati sampatti*) or an unfavourable birth (*vipatti*) can develop or hinder the fruitation of kamma. For instance, if a person is born to a noble family or in a state of happiness, his fortunate birth will provide an easy opportunity for his good kamma to operate. An unintelligent person who, by some good kamma, is born in a royal family, will, on account of his noble percentage, be honoured by the people. If the same person were to have a less fortunate birth, he would not be similarly treated.

Beauty (*upadi sampatti*) and ugliness (*upadi vipatti*) are two other factors that hinder or favour the working of kamma. If by some good kamma, a person obtains a good birth, but is born deformed by some bad kamma, then he will not be able to fully enjoy the beneficial results of his good kamma. Even a legitimate heir to a throne may not perhaps be raised to that high position if he happens to be physically or mentally deformed. Beauty, on the other hand, will be an asset to the possessor. A good looking son of poor parents may attract the attention of others and may be able to distinguish himself through their influence. Also, we can find cases of people from poor, obscure family backgrounds who rise into fame and popularity as film actors or actresses or beauty queens.

Time and occasion are other factors that influence the working of kamma. In the time of famine or during the time of war, all people without exception are forced to suffer the same fate. Here the unfavourable conditions open up possibilities for evil kamma to operate. The fabourable conditions, on the other hand, will prevent the operation of bad kamma.

Effort is perhaps the most important of all the factors that effect the working of kamma. Without effort, both worldly and spiritual progress is impossible. If a person makes no effort to cure himself of a disease or to save himself from his difficulties or to strive with diligence for his progress, then his evil kamma will find a suitable opportunity to produce its due effects. However, if he endeavours to surmount his difficulties, his good kamma will come to help him. When shipwrecked in deep sea, the Bodhisatta, Mahā Janaka, made an effort to save himself, while the others prayed to the gods and left their fate in the hands of these gods. The result was that the Bodhisatta escaped while the others were drowned.

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Evil is better undone. It does torment the doer. Good deeds done never to torments lead.

314. *Akataṁ dukkataṁ seyyō*
pacchā tappati dukkaṭaṁ
kataṁ ca sukataṁ seyyō
yaṁ katvā nānutappati. (22:9)

Better an evil deed not done
for misdeed later on torments.
Better done is deed that's good,
which done, does not torment.

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GOOD DEEDS NEVER MAKE YOU REPENT

22 (6) The Story of a Woman of Jealous Disposition (Verse 314)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a woman who was by nature very jealous.

Once, a woman with a very strong sense of jealousy lived with her husband in Sāvatthi. She found that her husband was having an affair with her maid. So one day, she tied up the girl with strong ropes, cut off her ears and nose, and shut her up in a room. After doing that, she asked her husband to accompany her to the Jētavana Monastery. Soon after they left, some relatives of the maid arrived at their house and found the maid tied up and locked up in a room. They broke into the room, untied her and took her to the monastery. They arrived at the monastery while the Buddha was expounding the Dhamma. The girl related to the Buddha what her mistress had done to her, how she had been beaten, and how her nose and ears had been cut off. She stood in the midst of the crowd for all to see how she had been mistreated. So the Buddha said, " Do no evil, thinking that people will not know about it. An evil deed done in secret, when discovered, will bring much pain and sorrow; but a good deed may be done secretly, for it can only bring happiness and not sorrow."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 314)

dukkataṁ akataṁ seyyō dukkataṁ pacchā tapati
yaṁ katvā n ānutappati sukataṁ katañca seyyō

dukkataṁ: a bad act; *akataṁ:* if not committed; *seyyō:* it is great; *dukkataṁ:* the bad act; *pacchā:* later; *tapati:* hurts; *taṁ:* if some act; *katvā:* having committed; *nā nutappati:* one does not repent; *sukataṁ:* that kind of virtuous act; *kataṁ:* if done; *seyyō:* that is very good

It is better not to do an evil deed; an evil deed torments one later on. It is better to do a good deed as one does not have to repent for having done it.

Commentary

These verse indicates the evil results of a bad action. The result of action (*kamma*) is described as *vipāka*. The following is a brief note on *kamma* and *vipāka*:

Kamma is action, and *vipāka*, fruit or result, is its reaction. Just as every object is accompanied by a shadow, even so every volitional activity is inevitably accompanied by its due effect. Like potential seed is kamma. Fruit, arising from the tree, is the *vipāka*, effect or result. As kamma may be good or bad, so may *vipāka*, fruit, be good or bad. As kamma is mental, so *vipāka* too is mental; it is experienced as happiness or bliss, unhappiness or misery, according to the nature of the kamma seed. *Ānisaṁsa* are the concomitant advantageous to material conditions, such as prosperity, health and longevity.

The other concomitant of *vipāka* are disadvantageous, and are known as *ādīnava* (evil consequences). They appear as poverty, ugliness, disease, short life span and the like.

By kamma is meant the moral and immoral types of mundane consciousness (*kusala akusala lōkiya citta*), and by *vipāka*, the resultant types of mundane consciousness (*lōkiya vipākacitta*).

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Guard oneself like a border town, against evils' onslaught. Neglect here leads one to ruin.

315. *Nagaraṁ yathā paccantaṁ*
guttaṁ santarabāhiraṁ
ēvaṁ gōpētha attānaṁ
khaṇo vē mā upaccagā
khaṇātitā hi sōcanti
nirayaṁhi samappitā. (22:10)

Even as a border town
guarded within and without,
so should you protect yourselves.
Do not let this moment pass
for when this moment's gone they grieve
sending themselves to hell.

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GUARD THE MIND

22 (7) The Story of Many Monks (Verse 315)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a group of monks who spent the raining season in a border town.

In the first month of their stay in that border town, the monks were well provided and well looked after by the townsfolk. During the next month the town was plundered by some robbers and some people were taken away as hostages. The people of the town, therefore, had to rehabilitate their town and reinforce fortifications. Thus, they were unable to look to the needs of the monks as much as they would like to and the monks had to fend for themselves. At the end of the raining season, those monks came to pay homage to the Buddha at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi. On learning about the hardships they had undergone during the raining season, the Buddha said to them, "Monks, do not keep thinking about this or anything else; it is always difficult to have a carefree, effortless living. Just as the townsfolk guard their town, so also, a monk should be on guard and keep his mind steadfastly on his body."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 315)

paccantaṁ santarabāhiraṁ guttaṁ nagaraṁ
yathā, ēvaṁ attānaṁ gōpētha hi khaṇātītā ni-
rayamhi samappitā socanti khaṇō vē mā upaccagā

paccantaṁ: situated at the frontier; *santarabāhiraṁ:* within and without; *guttaṁ:* protected; *nagaraṁ:* a city; *yathā ēvaṁ:* just like (that); *attānaṁ:* one's mind; *gōpetha:* protect; *hi:* if for some reason; *khaṇātītā:* a moment passes; *nirayamhi:* in hell; *samappitā:* having been born; *sōcanti:* one may repent; *khanō:* (therefore) the moment; *vē:* certainly; *mā upaccagā:* do not allow to escape - do not throw away

As a border town is guarded both inside and outside, so guard yourself. Let not the right moment go by. Those who miss this moment has come to grief when they fall into hell.

Commentary

In this verse the Buddha's advice is to guard one's mind just as rulers would guard a border town. The guarding of the mind comes within the field of mind concentration - *bhāvanā* — meditation, the central purpose of which is perpetual alterness of mind.

The Buddhist theory of meditation aims at the practice of right concentration *(sammā-samādhi)*, the culmination of the noble eightfold path which is expounded for the first time in the Buddha's inaugural sermon, known as *'Dhammacakkappavattana'*, the 'Turning of the Wheel of the Doctrine.' The noble eight-fold path as the method of self-enlightenment, which is the goal of Buddhist doctrine, is called *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the middle path. It is so called because it tends to moderation, avoiding the two extremes: On the one hand, of indulgence in sense pleasures, and, on the other, of adherence to the practices of self-mortification.

Hence the practice of this method is a medium between the two extremes, avoiding all excess. Excess in any direction must be avoided as it is dangerous. Buddhist meditation, therefore, cannot be practiced by the worldly man, who is unwilling to reduce his worldly desires, nor is it possible for one who is a fanatic in ascetic practices. In order to observe moderation it is necessary to have strength on the one side, and thoughtfulness on the other. So we find in the formula of the path that right concentration is well supported by the two principles of right effort and right mindfulness. Of these, right effort promotes the ability to rise in one who is prone to sink into sensual pleasure; while right mindfulness becomes a safeguard against falling into extremes of asceticism.

Right concentration is not possible without that moral purity which purges one of impure deeds, words and thoughts, and therefore it presupposes right speech, right action and right livelihood. These are the three principles of *sīla* or moral purity, which is necessarily the preparatory ground to meditation. The training in these principles is the most fundamental aspect of Buddhism and forms the vital factor in contemplative life. Hence, first of all, one must school himself in moral purity in accordance with the rules of the middle path, in order to attain full and immediate results of meditation in an ascending scale of progress. The disciple who conforms himself to these ideals will acquire self-confidence, inwads purity, absence of external fear, and thereby mental serenity, factors which are imperative for ultimate success in meditation.

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Those ashamed of what is not shameful, and unashamed of the shameful are all hell-bound.

316. *Alajjitāyē lajjanti*
lajjitāyē na lajjarē
micchādiṭṭhisamādānā
sattā gacchanti duggatiṁ. (22:11)

They are ashamed where shame is not
but where is shame are not ashamed,
so by embracing evil views
beings go to an evil birth.

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FALSE BELIEFS LEAD TO HELL

22 (8) The Story of A Group of Bad Ascetics (Verses 316 & 317)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to Niganṭha ascetics, who covered only the front part of their bodies.

One day, some Niganṭhas went on an alms-round with their bowls covered with a piece of cloth. Some monks, seeing them, commented, "These Niganṭha ascetics who cover the front part of the body are more respectable compared to those Acelaka ascetics who go about without wearing anything." Hearing this comment, those ascetics retorted, "Yes, indeed, we do cover up our front part (by covering our bowls); but we cover it up not out of shame in going naked. We only cover up our bowls to keep away dust from our feed, for even dust contains life it."

When the monks reported what the Niganṭha ascetics said, the Buddha replied, "Monks, those ascetics who go about covering only the front part of their bodies are not ashamed of what they should be ashamed of, but they are ashamed of what they should not be ashamed of; because of their wrong view they would only go to bad destinations."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 316)

alajjitāyē lajjanti lajjitāyē na lajjarē micchā diṭṭhi samādānā sattā duggatiṁ gacchanti

alajjitāyē: in what one should not be ashamed of; *lajjanti:* (if someone) were to be ashamed; *lajjitāyē:* and in what one should be ashamed of; *na lajjarē:* one is not ashamed; *micchā diṭṭhi samādānā:* embracing false beliefs; *sattā:* these beings; *duggatiṁ:* to woeful states (hell); *gacchanti:* depart

Those who are ashamed of what they should not be ashamed of, and those who are unashamed of what they should be ashamed of, all those who embrace false views go to woeful states (hell).

Explanatory Translation (317)

abhayē bhayadassinō, bhayē cabhayadassinō micchādiṭṭhisamādānā sattā duggatiṁ gacchanti

abhayē: in what should not be afraid of; *bhayadassinō ca:* those who see fear; *bhayē:* in what should be afraid of; *abhayadassinō ca:* seeing no fear; *micchādiṭṭhisamādānā:* embracing false beliefs; *sattā:* those beings; *duggatiṁ:* to woeful states (hell); *gacchanti:* depart

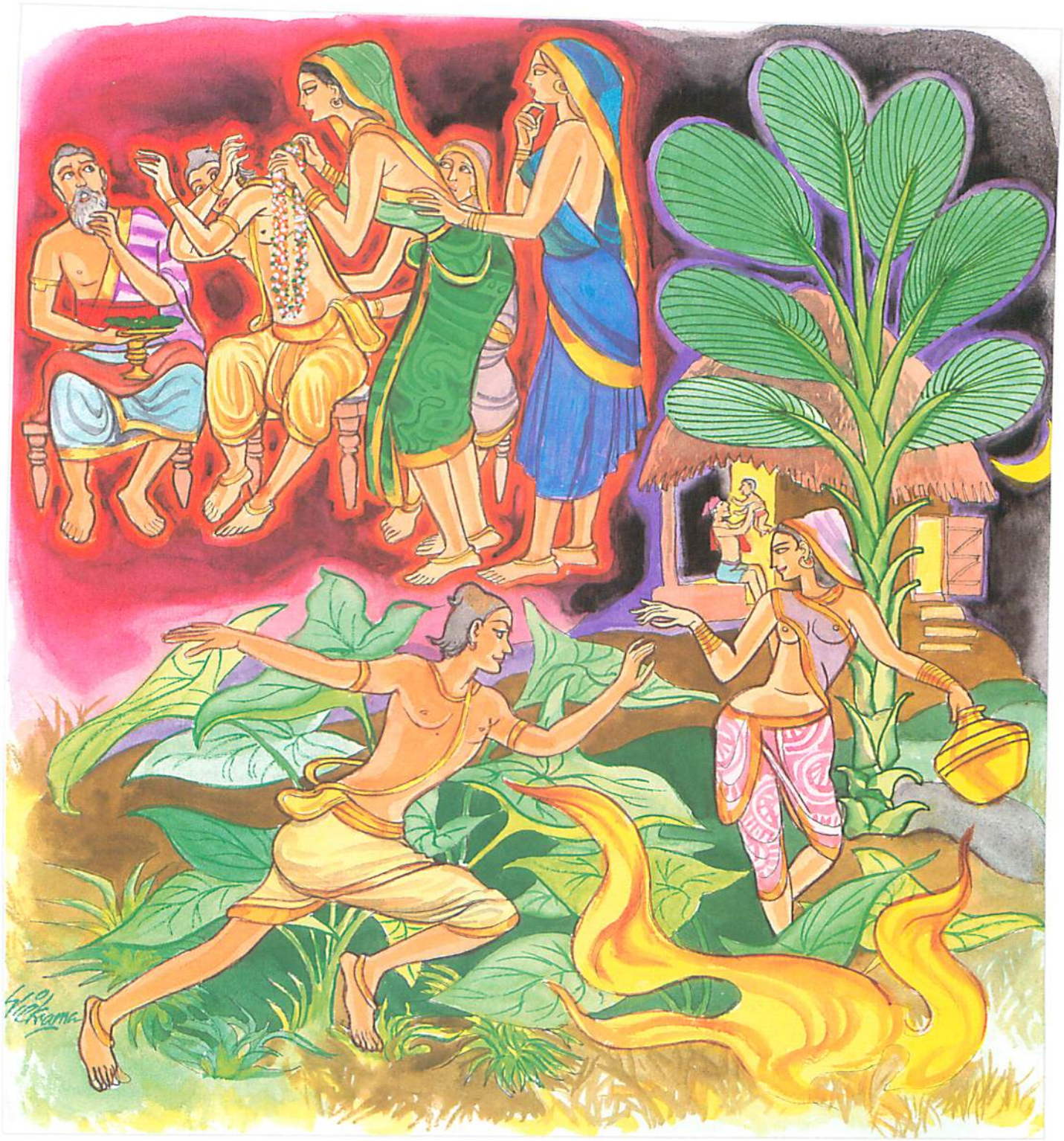
There are some who are afraid of what they should not fear. There are also some who are not afraid of what they should really fear. They, all, who embrace false beliefs go to woeful states.

Commentary

This was occasioned by the behaviour of group of *niganṭhas* (naked ascetics). In Buddha's day Jambudīpa teemed with various spiritual and religious systems led by a variety of persons.

There are frequent references in Buddhist literature to some six senior contemporaries of the Buddha, for instance, in the *dīgha-nikāya* (the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and its counterpart in Sanskrit). It appears from the contact of these references that Ajātasatru, the king of Magadha, met a number of these teachers and asked them each separately to state in clear and unambiguous terms the result of their ascetic practices. All of them were well known in the country as founders of religious schools with a large following. Their names and the special doctrines they held are briefly stated in the text. It is possible, however, that the information supplied is prejudiced as it emanates from their opponents; in fact, the misstatements they make are partly due to design and partly to ignorance. All the same, it is interesting to study their views in order to understand correctly as well as to appreciate the views of the founder of Buddhism.

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Those fearing what they should not, fearing not what they should are destined for birth in hell.

317. *Abhayē bhayadassinō*
bhayē cā'bhayadassinō
micchādiṭṭhisamādānā
sattā gacchanti duggatiṁ. (22:12)

They are afraid where fear is not
but where is fear are unafraid,
so by embracing evil views
beings go to an evil birth.

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FEAR AND FEARLESSNESS IN WRONG PLACES

22 (8) The Story of A Group of Bad Ascetics (Verses 316 & 317) (cont'd)

Commentary

Of these six thinkers, Niganṭha Nātaputta, who is no other than Mahāvīra, the founder, or, according to the *Jaina* tradition, the last prophet of the present world cycle, seems to have been slightly older than the Buddha. He preached ethical doctrines without apparently knowing that similar ideas had been held by an incomparably senior ascetic, Pārsva. The latter is now acknowledged to be Mahāvīra's predecessor and is believed to have lived two hundred and fifty years before Mahāvīra. Pārsva's ethical code consisted of four rules, whereas that of Mahāvīra consisted of five. Of these, the first three, viz., not to kill living things, not to take articles of use unless they are given, and not to tell a lie, are common to the schools of both Pārsva and Mahāvīra. The fourth rule in Pārsva's teaching, that of *aparigraha*, not to have any worldly possessions including a wife, was split up into two by Mahāvīra to make up his code of five. Not to take a wife or to lead a celibate life, which is the fourth rule in Mahāvīra's code, and not to have worldly possessions except clothes, which is the fifth rule in Mahāvīra's code, seem to constitute jointly the fourth rule of Pārsva. The main difference in the practical or external aspects of Pārsva's and Mahāvīra's code of conduct thus seems to have been that while Pārsva and his followers were *acēlakās* or naked, Mahāvīra and his followers wore white garments, but refused to have any other paraphernalia. In other words, the *Jaina* faith as preached by Mahāvīra is the same as Pārsva's, but somewhat more modern. It was natural therefore that these two schools should have become one as they actually did some two hundred fifty years after the death of Pārsva, when the disciples of Pārsva and those of Mahāvīra met at Srāvasti and brought about the Union. Later, the *Jainas* explained this fusion of schools differently by adding twenty-two prophets to precede Pārsva, thereby making Pārsva the twenty-third and Mahāvīra the twenty-fourth of their prophets. It would, however, be quite correct to hold that Pārsva and Mahāvīra independently evolved a philosophy and a religious system which had identical tenets.

In the Sāmaññaphala-sutta Niganṭha Nātaputta is mentioned as having held the doctrine of four-fold restraint: restraint from the use of cold water as it contains life, and from sinful activities such as killing and sexual intercourse. He was free from all sins and had purified himself. In the Udumbarika-sīhanāda-sutta the restraints ascribed to him are different, but identical with the four vows of Pārsva.

According to *Jaina* sources, however Jainism is not purely ethical system, but also a philosophy based on the doctrine of many possibilities, known as *anekānta* or *syādvāda*. The doctrine looks at two aspects of everything, the eternal and the non-eternal. The soul undergoes migration according to good or bad deeds. As Jainism regards the existence of *jīva* (life) in everything, it enjoins such behaviour as does not cause injury to any *jīva*. The soul becomes impure and is engulfed by *saṁsāra* if it is subjected to the influence of sense objects. In order to keep the soul pure from their contamination, and to secure its release, it is necessary to practice restraint. To achieve this one must resort to or acquire right knowledge, faith and conduct. Buddhist sources, for instance, the *Aṅguttara*, and the seventy-four sutta of the *ēkanipāta*, ridicule the *Jaina* doctrine, particularly its idea of overcoming sin, its restraint on movements and its insistence on certain types of clothing.

The next important contemporary of the Buddha was Makkhali Gōsāla. He belonged to the sect of the *acēlakās* or naked ones, and, as the first part of his name indicates, carried a staff of bamboo *(maskarin)*. It is said that he was, for some time, a disciple of Mahāvīra, but later broke away from him. Afterwards, he probably founded an independent school known as the Ājīvika school. Later writers mention two predecessors, Nanda Vaccha and Kisa Saṁkicca, thus giving this school three prophets. This sect is now extinct, but seems to have enjoyed popularity and even royal patronage. The doctrine advocated by Gōsāla is styled *saṁsāra-visuddhi* or the doctrine of attaining purity only by passing through all kind of existence. Gōsāla did not believe that there was any special cause for either the misery of human beings or for their deliverance. He did not believe that there was any special cause for either the misery of human beings or for their deliverance. He did not believe in human effort, and held that all creatures were helpless against destiny. He maintained that all creatures, whether wise or foolish, were destined to pass through *saṁsāra* and that their misery would come to an end at the completion of the cycle. No human effort would reduce or lengthen this period. Like a ball of thread, *saṁsāra* had a fixed term through which every being must pass.

The remaining four teachers, who are mentioned as contemporaries of the Buddha, did not leave their mark on posterity as did Mahāvīra and, to a lesser degree, Gōsāla.

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Seeing faults in the faultless and none in the faults, those misled are to pain destined.

318. *Avajjē vajjadassinō*
vajjē cā'vajjadassinō
micchādiṭṭhisamādānā
sattā gacchanti duggatiṁ. (22:13)

Faults they see where fault is not
but where is fault they see it not,
so by embracing evil views
beings go to an evil birth.

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RIGHT AND WRONG

22 (9) The Story of the Disciples of Non-Buddhist Teachers (Verses 318 & 319)

While residing at the Nigrodārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to some disciples of the Titthīs (non-Buddhist ascetics).

The disciples of the Titthīs did not want their children to mix with the children of the followers of the Buddha. They often told their children, "Do not go to the Jētavana Monastery, do not pay obeisance to the monks of the Sākyan clan." On one occasion, while the Titthi boys were playing with a Buddhist boy near the entrance to the Jētavana Monastery, they felt very thirsty. As the children of the disciples of Titthis had been told by their parents not to enter a Buddhist monastery, they asked the Buddhist boy to go to the monastery and bring some water for them. The young Buddhist boy went to pay obeisance to the Buddha after he had a drink of water, and told the Buddha about his friends who were forbidden by their parents to enter a Buddhist monastery. The Buddha then told the boy to tell the non-Buddhist boys to come and have water at the monastery. When those boys came, the Buddha gave them a discourse to suit their various dispositions. As a result, those boys became established in faith in the Three Gems i.e., the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

When the boys went home, they talked about their visit to the Jētavana Monastery and about the Buddha teaching them the Three Gems. The parents of the boys, being ignorant, cried, "Our sons have been disloyal to our faith, they have been ruined." Some intelligent neighbours advised the wailing parents to stop weeping and to send their sons to the Buddha. Somehow, they agreed and the boys, as well as their parents, went to the Buddha.

The Buddha, knowing why they had come recited the stanzas to them.

At the end of the discourse, all those people came to be established in faith in the Three Gems, and after listening to the Buddha's further discourse, they subsequently attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (318)

avajjē vajjadassinō vajjē cā vajjadassinō ca micchādiṭṭhisamādānā sattā duggatiṁ gacchanti

avajjē: what is not wrong; *vajjadassinō:* they take as wrong; *vajjēca:* in what is wrong; *avajjadassinō:* they see the wrong; *micchādiṭṭhisamādānā:* embracing such false beliefs; *sattā:* those beings; *duggatiṁ:* to woeful states; *gacchanti:* depart

Those who take what is correct as incorrect, and those who take what is not correct as correct, both these go to woeful states when they depart because of their false beliefs.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 319)

vajjañ ca vajjatō ñatvā, avajjañ avajjatō ca sammādiṭṭhisamādānā sattā suggatiṁ gacchanti

vajjaṁ: what is wrong; *vajjatō:* as wrong; *ñatvā:* having known; *avajjaṁ:* what is not wrong; *avajjatō:* as not wrong; *sammādiṭṭhisamādānā:* those who take right views; *sattā:* beings; *suggatiṁ:* to heaven; *gacchanti:* go

They regard error as error, and what is right as right. Those people who embrace right views go to heaven.

Commentary

The social environment of the Buddha's day saw an intricate mix of various religions and spiritual systems. Some of these systems were led by people who were antagonistic to the Buddha. The incident that gave rise to these verses shows how non-Buddhist parent tried to prevent their children entering Jētavana Monastery. Another note on religious leaders who were the contemporaries of the Buddha.

There are frequent references in Buddhist literature to some six senior contemporaries of the Buddha, for instance, in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* and its counterpart in Sanskrit). It appears from the context of these references that Ajātasattu, the king of Magadha, met a number of these teachers and asked them each separately to state in clear and unambiguous terms the result of their ascetic practices. All of them were well known in the country as founders of religious schools with a large following. Their names and the special doctrines they held are briefly stated in the text. It is possible, however, that the information supplied is prejudiced as it emanates from their opponents; in fact, the misstatements they make are partly due to design and partly to ignorance. All the same, it is interesting to study their views in order to understand correctly as well as to appreciate the views of the founder of Buddhism.

There were several individuals who were leading religious lives according to their respective convictions in quest of the truth. Among them there were six religious teachers who were well known in several kingdoms of North India, and who had considerable followings.

These six teachers were, Pūrana Kassapa, Makkhali Gōsāla, Ajita Kēsakambali, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Samjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta and Niganṭha Nāthaputta.

Besides these six teachers, there were other teachers such as Nanda Vaccha and Kisa Samkicca.

(cont'd on page 681)

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Knowing wrong as wrong and right as right, those well-guided ones are in heaven born.

319. *Vajjañ ca vajjatō ñatvā*
avajjañ ca avajjatō
sammādiṭṭhisamādānā
sattā gacchanti suggatiṁ. (22:14)

A fault they understand as such,
they know as well where fault is not,
so by embracing righteous views
beings go to a happy birth.

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22 (9) The Story of the Disciples of Non-Buddhist Teachers (Verses 318 & 319) (cont'd)

Commentary

Of these six thinkers, Niganṭha Nāthaputta, who is no other than Mahāvīra, the founder, or, according to the Jaina tradition, the last prophet of the present world cycle, seems to have been slightly older than the Buddha. He preached ethical doctrines without apparently knowing that similar ideas had been held by an incomparably senior ascetic, Pārsva. The latter is now acknowledged to be Mahāvīra's predecessor and is believed to have lived two hundred and fifty years before Mahāvīra. Pārsva's ethical code consisted of four rules, whereas that of Mahāvīra consisted of five. Of these, the first three, viz., not to kill living things, not to take articles of use unless they are given, and not to tell a lie, are common to the schools of both Pārsva and Mahāvīra. The fourth rule in Pārsva's teaching, that of aparigraha, not to have any worldly possessions including a wife, was split up into two by Mahāvīra to make up his code of five. Not to take a wife or to lead a celibate life, which is the fourth rule in Mahāvīra's code, and not to have worldly possessions except clothes, which is the fifth rule in Mahāvīra's code, seem to constitute jointly the fourth rule of Pārsva. The main difference in the practical or external aspects of Pārsva's and Mahāvīra's code of conduct thus seems to have been that while Pārsva and his followers were acelakas or naked, Mahāvīra and his followers wore white garments, but refused to have any other paraphernalia. In other words, the Jaina faith as preached by Mahāvīra is the same as Pārsva's, but somewhat more modern. It was natural therefore that these two schools should have become one as they actually did some two hundred fifty years after the death of Pārsva, when the disciples of Pārsva and those of Mahāvīra met at Srāvasti and brought about the Union. Later, the Jainas explained this fusion of schools differently by adding twenty-two prophets to precede Pārsva, thereby making Pārsva the twenty-third and Mahāvīra the twenty-fourth of their prophets. It would, however, be quite correct to hold that Pārsva and Mahāvīra independently evolved a philosophy and a religious system which had identical tenets.

In the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta Niganṭha Nāthaputta* is mentioned as having held the doctrine of four-fold restraint; restraint from the use of cold water as it contains life, and from sinful activities such as killing and sexual intercourse. He was free from all sins and had purified himself. In the Udumbarika-sīhanāda-sutta the restraints ascribed to him are different, but identical with the four vows of Pārsva.

The next important contemporary of the Buddha was Makkali Gōsāla. He belonged to the sect of the Acelakas or Naked Ones, and, as the first part of his name indicates, carried a staff of bamboo (maskarin). It is said that he was for some time a disciple of Mahāvīra, but later broke away from him. Afterwards, he probably founded an independent school known as the Ājīvika school. Later writers mention two predecessors, Nanda Vaccha and Kisa Smkicca, thus giving this school three prophets. This sect is now extinct, but seems to have enjoyed popularity and even royal patronage. The doctrine advocated by Gōsāla is styled samsāra-visuddhi or the doctrine of attaining purity only by passing through all kinds of existence. Gōsāla did not believe that there was any special cause for either the misery of human beings or for their deliverance. He did not believe in human effort, and held that all creatures were helpless against destiny. He maintained that all creatures, whether wise or foolish, were destined to pass through saṁsāra, and that their misery would come to an end at the completion of the cycle. No human effort would reduce or lengthen this period. Like a ball of thread, saṁsāra had a fixed term, through which every being must pass.

Makkhali Gōsala was born in a cattle shed (Gōsala). One day, he was following his master with a pot of oil on his head on a muddy ground, and was told (Mā Khali) 'Do not fall', but he slipped and fell down. In fear he took to his heels, but the master held him by his cloth. However, leaving the cloth in the hands of the master, he ran away, and in the village enjoyed the same reception as Pūrana Kassapa.

The remaining four teachers, who are mentioned as contemporaries of the Buddha, did not leave their mark on posterity as did Mahāvīra and, to a lesser degree, Gōsāla.

Pūrana Kassapa's clan name was Kassapa, and he was called Pūrana (one who completes) as he completed the list of one hundred slaves in a house, with his birth. As he was ill-treated in that house, he escaped from there only to be robbed of his clothes by thieves. As he did not know how to cover himself with anything else, such as grass or reeds, he entered a village without any clothing on. People who saw him thought that he was a sanctified ascetic, who had no attachment to anything and began to offer him food, and look after him. Though he received garments later, he did not want them, as the people honoured him for his non-attachment to clothes. Such was the beginning of his asceticism, and he in due course had a following of five hundred ascetics.

Ajitha Kēsakambali was so known as he used to wear a garment made of human hair which was cool in the cold season, and warm in the hot season, and which smelt foul and was uncomfortable to the body.

Pakudha Kaccāyana always avoided cold water. When he crossed a river or a stream, he considered his precepts violated, and would put up a stūpa of sand to restore his precepts.

Saṁjaya Bellaṭṭhiputta was the son of Bellaṭṭha. Niganṭha Nāthaputta was the son of Nātha, and claimed to have no attachment to anything, and never wore any garments.

Long before the enlightenment of the Buddha, these six teachers had been travelling in various kindgoms and preaching their religious tenets. They had established themselves as recognized religious teachers, and were well known among the people.

When they arrived at Sāvatthi, in the course of their wanderings, their followers went and told King Pasēnadi of the arrival in their city of these teachers and that they were enlightened. The king said:

"You yourselves may invite and bring them to the palace." The people went and informed them that the King invited them to meals at the palace. However, they showed no interest in accepting the invitation. As the people requested them repeatedly to come to the palace, they consented, out of courtesy to their followers, and went to the palace together.

The King offered them seats, but they did not sit on expensive seats, and sat on benches and on the floor. The King, knowing from their conduct that they could have no substance in their minds, offered them no food, but asked at once whether they were enlightened ones. They knew that if they professed to be enlightened, the King would question them as to their enlightenment, and on their failure to satisfy him he would inflict bodily injury on them. Therefore, in their own interest, they confessed that they were not enlightened. The King sent them out of the palace. As they were coming out of the palace, their followers asked:

"Did the King ask questions,and did he treat you well?" They said: "The King asked us whether we are enlightened, but as the King would be unable to understand what we say as enlightened ones, and would be displeased towards us, out of sheer sympathy for him, we said that we are not enlightened. As for us, we are enlightened, indeed, and our enlightenment cannot be washed out even with water."

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A great battle

The whole universe is a vast field of battle. Everywhere there is fighting. Existence is nothing but a vain struggle against germs of dreadful diseases, molecules against molecules, atoms against atoms, and electrons against electrons. Mind is still more a scene of battle. Forms, sounds, tastes etc. are resultants of counteracting and belligerent forces. The very existence of war proves that there is a state of Perfect Peace. It is what we call Nibbana.

Ven. Narada Thera, "The Bodhisatta Ideal"

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Chapter 23

NĀGA VAGGA

The Great

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As an elephant in battle endures arrows, abuse I endure. But many folks lack that strength.

320. *Ahaṁ nāgō'va saṇgāmē*
cāpātō patitaṁ saraṁ
ativākyaṁ titikkhissaṁ
dussīlō hi bahujjanō. (23:1)

Many folk are ill-behaved
but I shall endure abuse
as elephant on battlefield
arrows shot from a bow.

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NĀGA VAGGA (THE GREAT)
BUDDHA'S ENDURANCE

23 (1) On Subduing Oneself (Verses 320, 321 & 322)

While residing at the Ghōsitārāma Monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses, with reference to the patience and endurance manifested by himself when abused by the hirelings of Māgaṇḍiyā, one of the three queens of King Udēna.

Once, the father of Māgaṇḍiyā, being very much impressed by the personality and looks of the Buddha, had offered his very beautiful daughter in marriage to Gōtama Buddha. But the Buddha refused his offer and said that he did not like to touch such a thing which was full of filth and excreta, even with his feet. On hearing this remark both Māgaṇḍiyā's father and mother, discerning the truth of the remark, attained anāgāmi fruition. Māgaṇḍiyā, however, regarded the Buddha as her arch enemy and was bent on having her revenge on him.

Later, she became one of the three queens of King Udēna. When Māgaṇḍiyā heard that the Buddha had come to Kōsambī, she hired some citizens and their servants to abuse the Buddha when he entered the city on an alms-round. Those hirelings followed the Buddha and abused him, using such abusive words as thief, fool, camel, donkey, one bound for *niraya*. Hearing those abusive words, the Venerable Ānanda pleaded with the Buddha to leave the town and go to another place. But the Buddha refused and said, "In another town also we might be abused and it is not feasible to move out every time one is abused. It is better to solve a problem in the place where it arises. I am like an elephant in a battlefield; like an elephant who withstands the arrows that come from all quarters, I also will bear patiently the abuses that come from people without morality."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 320)

hi bahujjanō dussīlō saṅgāmē cāpātō patitaṁ saraṁ nāgō iva ahaṁ ativākyaṁ titikkhissaṁ

hi: as; *bahujjanō:* a majority; *dussīlō:* are unvirtuous; *sangāmē:* in the battle; *cāpātō:* released from the bow; *patitaṁ:* shot; *saraṁ:* like an arrow; *nāgō iva:* like an elephant; *ahaṁ:* I will; *ativākyaṁ:* abuses - words that go beyond the limits of propriety; *titikkhissaṁ:* endure

I will endure the words of the unvirtuous who make statements that go beyond the limits of decency. This is just as the elephant that endures arrows in battle. The unvirtuous, of course, are the majority in the world.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 321)

dantaṁ samitim nayanti dantaṁ abhirūhati yō ativākyaṁ titikkhati dantō manussēsu seṭṭhō

dantaṁ: the disciplined (elephant or horse); *samitiṁ:* to a gathering; *nayanti:* is led; *rājā:* the king; *abhirūhati:* mounts; *yō:* if someone; *ativākyaṁ:* harsh words; statements that go beyond the limits of decency; *titikkhati:* endures; *dantō:* disciplined; *sō:* he; *manussēsu:* among men; *seṭṭhō:* is great

It is the disciplined animal (elephant or horse) that is led to a gathering. The king mounts a disciplined elephant or horse. Among men the disciplined one is the greatest. He endures the harsh words of the people.

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The trained is led in pageant. Him the king mounts. Who endures abuse is best among men.

321. *Dantaṁ nayanti samitiṁ*
dantaṁ rājā'bhirūhati
dantō sēṭṭhō manussēsu
yō'tivākyaṁ titikkhati. (23:2)

The tusker tamed they lead in crowds,
the king he mounts the tamed,
noblest of humans are the tamed
who can endure abuse.

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THE DISCIPLINED ANIMAL

23 (1) On Subduing Oneself (Verses 320, 321 & 322) (Cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 322)

varaṁ assatarā ājānīyā ca sindhavā mahānāgā
kuñjarā dantā varaṁ tatō attadantō varaṁ

varaṁ: are noble; *assatarā:* the mules; *ājānīyā:* the thorough breds; *sindhavā:* the Sindhu horses; *mahānāgā kuñjarā:* the great tusked elephants; *dantā:* when tamed; *varaṁ:* are noble; *tatō:* more than all those; *attadantō:* the person who has disciplined himself

When well trained, mules are useful. Sindhu thoroughbreds are outstanding among horses. Of great elephants those of the Kuñjara breed are the greatest. But, of all, the best is the person who has tamed himself.

Commentary

Virtues of the Buddha: These verses extol the virtues of the Buddha. The Buddha himself declares that he will endure the unvirtuous words of indecent people. The Buddha is described as possessing nine intrinsic virtues they are:

(1) ***arahaṁ:*** The Buddha is depicted as an arahat in five aspects, namely:

(a) he has discarded all defilements;

(b) he has suppressed all the enemies connected with the eradication of defilements;

(c) he destroyed the spokes of the wheel of existence;

(d) he is worthy of being given offerings and paid homage, and

(e) he withheld no secrets in his character or in his teachings.

The Buddha was the greatest figure in human history, perfect, infallible, blameless and spotless. At the foot of the Bodhi-tree. He conquered all evil and attained the highest stage of sanctity. He put an end to all sufferings with His attainment of Nibbāna. He was the world honoured one so worthy of homage in all respects. His teaching contains no mysteries of secrets and is like an open book for all to come and see.

(2) ***sammā-saṁbuddhō:*** The Buddha was designated as *Sammā-Saṁbuddhō* because He comprehended the existence of the world in its proper perspective and He discovered the four noble truths through His own comprehension. Born a prince, He renounced the world and strove for six long years seeking enlightenment. During this period, He approached all the renowned teachers of the day and tried all the methods His teachers could teach Him. Having achieved the attainment even equivalent to that of His teachers. He still could not find the elusive goal of enlightenment. Finally, through His research and rational understanding and treading a middle path, thus departing from the traditional way of legendary religious beliefs and practices, He found the final solution to the universal problems of unsatisfactoriness, conflict and disappointments (*dukkha*). He discovered the law of dependent origination - the law of cause and effect which He assessed as the reality of the world, thereby becoming the supreme Enlightened One.

(3) ***vijjā-carana saṁpannō:*** This term *vijjā-carana saṁpannō*, meant that the Buddha was endowed with perfect clear vision and exemplary good conduct. It has two significant aspects as indicated in the three-fold knowledge and eight-fold wisdom. The three-fold knowledge is listed as follows:

(a) Firstly, the Buddha could recall His past birth and trace back His previous existence as well as that of others.

(b) Secondly, apart from being able to recount the past, He had the unique foresight of being able to see into the future and visualised the whole universe at any single moment.

(c) Thirdly, He had that deep penetrating knowledge pertaining to arahathood.

On the eightfold wisdom, the Buddha was listed as having the unique gift of insight, the power of performing supernormal feats, a divine ear, the power of reading other's thoughts, various physical powers, ability to recollect past births, a divine eye, and exquisite knowledge pertaining to a life of serene holiness.

With regard to the word *carana* or good conduct, this aspect is divided into fifteen different categories or types of virtues which were fully imbued in the Buddha. These additional virtues are classified as restraint in deed and word, restraint in the absorption of sense effects, moderation in the consumption of food, avoidance of excessive sleep, maintenance of crystal clear vision in faith, realisation of shame in committing evil, realisation of fear in committing evil, thirst for knowledge, energy, mindfulness and understanding - the four trends pertaining to the material sphere. *Pannā* and *karunā* are reflected as wisdom and compassion, both of which are the basic twin virtues of the Buddha. *Pannā* endowed him with wisdom whilst *karunā* bestowed him with compassion to be of service to mankind. He realised through his wisdom what is good and what is not good for all beings and through His compassion He led His followers away from evil and misery. The great virtues of the Buddha enabled Him to show in His dispensation the highest degree of brotherhood and the sterling qualities to be found in all beings.

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Trained horses and tuskers are excellent. The self-disciplined excels them all.

322. *Varaṁ assatarā dantā*
ājānīyā ca sindhavā
kuñjarā ca mahānāgā
attadantō tatō varaṁ. (23:3)

Excellent are mules when tamed
and thoroughbreds from Sindh,
noble the elephants of state,
better still one tamed of self.

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THE MOST DISCIPLINED ANIMAL

23 (1) On Subduing Oneself (Verses 320, 321 & 322) (Cont'd)

Commentary

(4) ***sugatō:*** The Buddha was also designated as *sugatō* which meant that His path is good, the destination is excellent and the words and methods used to show the path are harmless and blameless. The Buddha's path to the attainment of bliss is correct and pure, straight, direct and certain.

His words are sublime and infallible. Many well-known historians and great scientists have commented that the only religious teaching which has remained unchallenged by science and free-thinkers is the Buddha's Word.

(5) ***lōkavidū:*** The term *lōkavidū* is applied to the Buddha as the one with exquisite knowledge of the world. The Buddha had experienced, known and penetrated into all aspects of worldly life, physical as well as spiritual He was the first to make the observation that there were thousands of world systems in the universe. He was the first to declare that the world was nothing but conceptual. In His words, it is regarded pointless to speculate on the origin and the end of the world or universe. He taught that the origin of the world, its cessation and the path to the cessation thereof is to be found within the fathom long body - the human being with its perceptions and consciousness.

(6) ***anuttarō purisa-damma-sārathī:*** *Anuttarō* means matchless and unsurpassed. *Purisa-damma* refers to individuals to whom the gift of the Dhamma is to be endowed whereas *sāratī* means a leader. These three terms taken together imply an incomparable leader capable of bringing wayward men to the path of righteousness. Amongst those who were persuaded to follow the path of the Dhamma and to shun evil were notorious evil men like Angulimāla, Ālawaka and Nālāgiri, robbers, cannibals and recalcitrant such as Saccaka. All of them were brought into the fold of the Dhamma, and some even attained sainthood within their life-time. Even Dēvadatta, the arch-enemy of the Buddha, was rehabilitated by the Buddha through His great compassion.

(7) ***satthā dēva-manussānaṁ:*** The translation of this term is that the Buddha was a Buddha of dēvās and men. It is to be noted that dēvās as used in this context refers to beings who, by their own good *kamma*, have evolved beyond the human stage which is not regarded as the final stage of biological evolution. Dēvās in the Buddhist context have no connection with ancient traditional theological myths. The Buddha was a remarkable Buddha who was flexible and capable of devising diverse techniques suited to the calibre and different mentalities of dēvās and human beings. He instructed everyone to lead a righteous way of life. The Buddha was indeed a universal Buddha.

(8) ***Buddhō:*** This particular term, *Buddhō*, would appear to be a repetition of the second in this category, although it has its own connotation. Buddhō means that the Buddha, being omniscient, possessed extraordinary powers of being able to convince others of His great discovery through His exquisite art of teaching others His Dhamma. His techniques were unsurpassed by any other Buddha. The term *Buddhō* has its secondary meaning translated as awakened since the ordinary state of man is perpetually in a state of stupor. The Buddha was the first to be awakened and to shake off this state of stupor. Subsequently He convinced others to be awake and to steer clear from the stage of lethargic saṁsaric sleep or stupor.

(9) ***bhagavā:*** Of all the terms used to describe the Buddha, the words *Buddhō* and *bhagavā*, used separately or together as *Buddhō bhagavā* meaning the blessed one, and most popular and commonly used.

Deserving awe and veneration, Blessed is His name. Therefore, the world *bhagavā* has various meanings as suggested by some commendations. The Buddha was termed *bhagavā* or the blessed one because He was the happiest and most fortunate amongst mankind for having managed to conquer all evils, for expounding the highest Dhamma and for being endowed with supernormal and superhuman intellectual faculties.

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With a true discipline one gets to that ungone region of Nibbāna, and not by any other means.

323. *Nahi ētēhi yānēhi*
gaccheyya agataṁ disaṁ
yathā'ttanā sudantēna
dantō dantēna gacchati. (23:4)

Surely not on mounts like these
one goes the Unfrequented Way
as one by self well-tamed
is tamed and by the taming goes.

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THE RIGHT VEHICLE TO Nibbāna

23 (2) The Story of the Monk Who Had Been A Trainer of Elephants (Verse 323)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who had previously been an elephant trainer.

On one occasion, some monks saw an elephant trainer and his elephant on the bank of the river Aciravati. As the trainer was finding it difficult to control the elephant, one of the monks, who was an ex-elephant trainer, told the other monks how it could be easily handled. The elephant trainer hearing him did as told by the monk, and the elephant was quickly subdued. Back at the monastery, the monks related the incident to the Buddha. The Budddha called the ex-elephant trainer monk to him and said. "O vain bhikku, who is yet far away from *magga* and *phala*! You do not gain anything by taming elephants. There is no one who can get to a place where one has never been before (i.e., Nibbāna) by taming elephants; only one who has tamed himself can get there."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 323)

dantō dantēna sudantēna attanā agataṁ disaṁ
yathā gacchati ētēhi yānēhi nahi gaccheyya

dantō: the disciplined person; *dantēna:* due to the discipline; *sudantēna:* well disciplined; *attanā:* mind; *agataṁ:* not gone before; *disaṁ:* region; *yathā:* in such a way; *gacchati:* goes; *ētēhi yānēhi:* these vehicles; *nahi gaccheyya:* cannot go

Indeed, not by any means of transport (such as elephants and horses) can one go to the place one has never been before, but by thoroughly taming oneself, the tamed one can get to that place — Nibbāna.

Commentary

This stanza typifies the Buddha's attitude towards his pupils and towards the world at large. He insisted that each person must strive for his own salvation.

The Buddha disapproved of those who professed to have secret doctrines, saying: Secrecy is the hall-mark of false doctrine. Addressing the Venerable Ānanda, his personal attendant, the Buddha said, "I have taught the *Dhamma*, Ānanda, without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine, for in respect of the truth, Ānanda, the Buddha has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who hides some essential knowledge from the pupil. He declared the *Dhamma* freely and equally to all. He kept nothing back, and never wished to extract from his disciples blind and submissive faith in him and his teaching. He insisted on discriminative examination and intelligent enquiry. In no uncertain terms did he urge critical investigation when he addressed the inquiring Kālāmas in a discourse that has been rightly called 'the first charter of free thought.'"

To take anything on trust is not in the spirit of Buddhism, so we find this dialogue between the Buddha and his disciples:

- If, now, knowing this and preserving this, would you say: 'We honour our Master and through respect for him we respect what he teaches?'

- No. Venerable.

- That which you affirm, O' disciples, is it not only that which you yourselves have recognized, seen and grasped?

- Yes, Venerable.

And in conformity with this thoroughly correct attitude of true enquiry, it is said, in a Buddhist treatise on logic: 'As the wise test gold by burning, by cutting it and rubbing it (on a touchstone), so are you to accept my words after examining them and not merely out of regard for me.'

Buddhism is free from compulsion and coercion and does not demand of the follower blind faith. At the very outset the skeptic will be pleased to hear of its call for investigation. Buddhism, from beginning to end, is open to all those who have eyes to see and mind to understand.

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The elephant in rut, hardly restrainable, eats not in captivity, remembering its forest life.

324. *Dhanapālakō nāma kuñjarō*
kaṭukappabhēdanō dunnivārayō
baddhō kabalaṁ na bhuñjati
sumarati nāgavanassa kuñjarō. (23:5)

Hard to check the tusker Dhanapālaka,
in rut with temples running pungently,
bound, e'en a morsel he'll not eat
for he recalls the elephant-forest longingly.

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THE BOUND ELEPHANT

23 (3) The Story of an Old Brahmin (Verse 324)

While residing at the Vēluvana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to an old brahmin.

Once, there lived in Sāvatthi an old brahmin who had eight lakhs in cash. He had four sons; when each one of the sons got married, he gave one lakh to him. Thus, he gave away four lakhs. Later, his wife died. His sons came to him and looked after him very well; in fact, they were very loving and affectionate to him. In course of time, somehow they coaxed him to give them the remaining four lakhs. Thus, he was left practically penniless.

First, he went to stay with his eldest son. After a few days, the daughter-in-law said to him, " Did you give any extra hundred or thousand to your eldest son? Don't you know the way to the houses of your other sons? Hearing this, the old brahmin got very angry and he left the eldest son's house for the house of his second son. The same thing happened in the houses of all his sons. Thus, the old man became helpless; then, taking a staff and a bowl he went to the Buddha for protection and advice.

At the monastery, the brahmin told the Buddha how his sons had treated him and asked for his help. Then the Buddha gave him some verses to memorize and instructed him to recite them wherever there was a large gathering of people. The gist of the verses is this: "My four foolish sons are like ogres. They call me 'father, father", but the words come only out of their mouths and not from their hearts. They are deceitful and scheming. Taking the advice of their wives they have driven me out of their houses. So, now I have got to be begging. Those sons of mine are of less service to me than this staff of mine." When the old brahmin recited these verses, many people in the crowd, hearing him, went wid with rage at his sons and some even threatened to kill them.

At this, the sons became frightened and knelt down at the feet of their father and asked for pardon. They also promised that starting from that day they would look after their father properly and would respect, love and honour him. Then, they took their father to their houses; they also warned their wives to look after their father well or else they would be beaten to death. Each of the sons gave a length of cloth and sent every day a food-tray. The brahmin became healthier than before and soon put on some weight. He realized that he had been showered with these benefits on account of the Buddha. So, he went to the Buddha and humbly requested him to accept two food-trays out of the four he was receiving every day from his sons. Then he instructed his sons to send two food-trays to the Buddha.

One day, the eldest son invited the Buddha to his house for alms-food. After the meal, the Buddha gave a discourse on the benefits to be gained by looking after one's parents. Then he related to them the story of the elephant called Dhanapāla, who looked after his parents. Dhanapāla when captured pined for the parents who were left in the forest.

At the end of the discourse, the old Brahmin as well as his four sons and their wives attained sōtāpatti fruition.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 324)

dhanapālakō nāma kuñjarō kaṭukappabhēdana
dunnivārayō baddhō kabalaṁ na bhuñjati
kuñjarō nāgavanassa sumarati

dhanapālakō nāma: named Dhanapāla; *kabalaṁ:* food; *na bhuñjati:* does not eat; *kuñjarō:* elephant; *kaṭukappabhēdana:* deep in rut; *dunnivārayō:* difficult to be restrained; *baddhō:* shackled; *nāga vanassa:* the elephant - forest; *sumarati:* keeps on longing for

The elephant, Dhanapāla, deep in rut and uncontrollable, in captivity did not eat a morsel as he yearned for his native forest (i.e., longing to look after his parents).

Commentary

This stanza and the story that gave rise to it, have a marked validity for our own time when the neglect of the aged has become a crucial social issue.

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The stupid, slothful and greedy ones, like hogs fattened on swill, repeat births.

325. *Middhī yadā hōti mahagghasō ca*
niddāyitā samparivattasāyī
mahāvarāhō'va nivāpapuṭṭhō
punappunaṁ gabbhamupēti mandō.
(23:6)

A sluggard stupid, steeped in gluttony,
who's sleep-engrossed, who wallows as he lies,
like a great porker stuffed, engorged with swill,
comes ever and again into a womb.

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THE SLOTHFUL, GREEDY SLEEPER RETURNS TO SAṀSĀRA, OVER AND OVER

23 (4) The Story of King Pasēnadi of Kōsala (Verse 325)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to King Pasēnadi of Kōsala.

One day, King Pasēnadi of Kōsala went to the monastery to pay homage to the Buddha soon after having a heavy meal. The king was in the habit of taking one-quarter basketful (half a bushel of) cooked rice and meat curry. While he was in the presence of the Buddha, the king felt so drowsy that he kept on nodding and could hardly keep himself awake. Then he said to the Buddha, "Venerable! I have been in great discomfort since I have taken my meal." To him the Buddha replied, "Yes, O' king! Gluttons do suffer in this manner."

After hearing the discourse the king, having understood the message, gradually lessened the amount of food he took. As a result, he became much more active and alert and therefore also happy.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 325)

yadā middhī hōti mahagghasō ca nivāpapuṭṭhō
mahāvarāhō iva niddāyitā samparivattasāyī hōti
mandō punappunaṁ gabbham upēti

yadā: if at any time; *middhī hōti:* if man becomes lethargic; *mahagghasō ca:* if he also tends to overeat; *nivāpapuṭṭhō:* fattened on grain; *mahāvarāhō iva:* like a great pig; *niddāyitā:* if he sleeps; *samparivattasāyī:* rolling about; *mandō:* that ignorant person; *punappunaṁ:* repeatedly; *gabbham:* to the womb; *upēti:* keeps on coming back

The stupid one who is lazy, gluttonous, and drowsy, who just wallows like a well-fed pig, is subject to repeated rebirths.

Commentary

This stanza was occasioned by the sleepiness displayed by King Pasēnadi of Kōsala, when he met the Buddha after a heavy meal.

King Pasēnadi Kōsala, the son of King Mahā Kōsala, who reigned in the kingdom of Kōsala with its capital at Sāvatthi, was another royal patron of the Buddha. He was a contemporary of the Buddha, and owing to his proficiency in various arts, he had the good fortune to be made king by his father while he was alive.

His conversion must probably have taken place during the very early part of the Buddha's ministry. In the Saṁyutta Nikāya it is stated that once he approached the Buddha and questioning Him about His perfect Enlightenment referred to Him as being young in years and young in ordination.

The Buddha replied - 'There are four objects, O mahārāja, that should not be disregarded or despised. They are a *khattiya* (a warrior prince), a snake, fire, and a monk.

Then He delivered an interesting sermon on this subject to the king. At the close of the sermon the king expressed his great pleasure and instantly became a follower of the Buddha. Since then till his death he was deeply attached to the Buddha. It is said that on one occasion the king prostrated himself before the Buddha and stroked His feet covering them with kisses.

His chief queen, Mallikā, a very devout and wise lady, well versed in the Dhamma, was greatly responsible for his religious enthusiasm. Like a true friend, she had to act as his religious guide on several occasions.

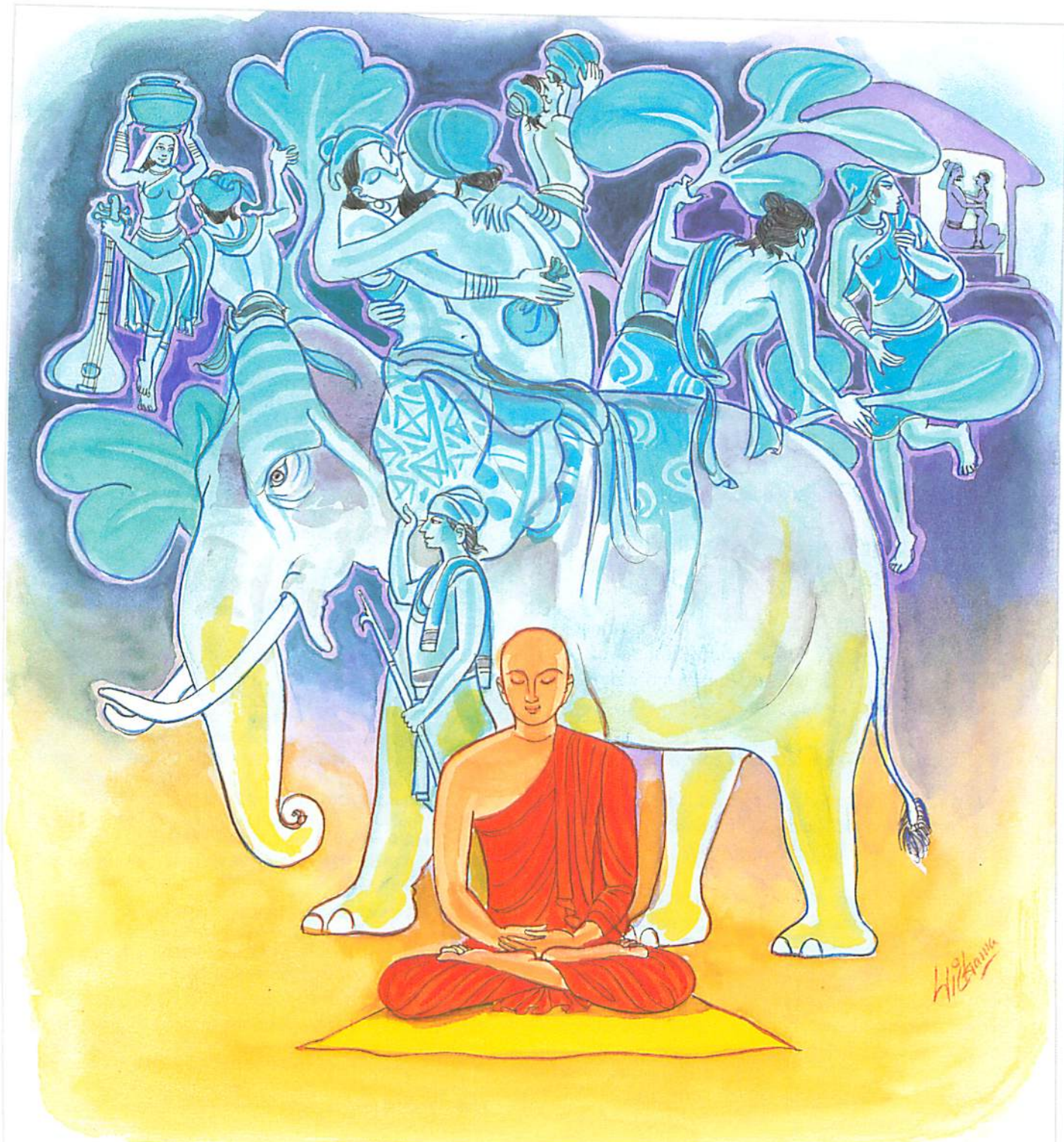
One day the king dreamt sixteen unusual dreams and was greatly perturbed in mind, not knowing their true significance. His brahmin advisers interpreted them to be dreams portending evil and instructed him to make an elaborate animal sacrifice to ward them off. As advised he made all necessary arrangements for this inhuman sacrifice which would have resulted in the loss of thousands of helpless creatures. Queen Mallikā, hearing of this barbarous act about to be perpetrated, persuaded the king to get the dreams interpreted by the Buddha whose understanding infinitely surpassed that of those worldly brahmins. The king approached the Buddha and mentioned the object of his visit. He related the sixteen dreams and the Buddha explained their significance fully to him.

Unlike King Biṁbisāra, King Pasēnadi had the good fortune to hear several edifying and instructive discourses from the Buddha. In the Saṁyutta Nikāya there appears a special section called the *Kōsala Saṁyutta* in which is recorded most of the discourses and talks given by the Buddha to the king.

Once while the king was seated in the company of the Buddha, he saw some ascetics with hairy bodies and long nails passing by, and rising from his seat respectfully saluted them calling out his name to them: 'I am the king, your reverences, Pasēnadi of the Kōsala.' When they had gone he came back to the Buddha and wished to know whether they were arahats or those who were striving for arahatship. The Buddha explained that it was difficult for ordinary laymen enjoying material pleasures to judge whether others are arahats or not and made the following interesting observations:

'It is by association (*saṁvāsēna*) that one's conduct (*sīla*) is to be understood, and that, too, after a long time and not in a short time, by one who is watchful and not by a heedless person, by an intelligent person and not by an unintelligent one. It is by converse (*saṁvōhārēna*) that one's purity (*sōceyyaṁ*) is to be understood. It is in time of trouble that one's fortitude is to be understood. It is by discussion that one's wisdom is to be understood, and that, too, after a long time and not in a short time, by one who is watchful and not by a heedless person, by an intelligent person and not by an unintelligent one.'

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Like a mahout an elephant in rut, I should today mindfully restrain my free roaving mind.

326. *Idaṁ purē cittamacārī cārikaṁ*
yē'nicchakaṁ yatthakāmaṁ yathāsukhaṁ
Tadajja'haṁ niggahessāmi yōnisō
hatthippabhinnaṁ viya aṇkusaggahō.
(23:7)

Formerly this wandering mind wandered
where it wished, where whim, where pleasure led.
Wisely this day will I restrain it
as trainer with hook an elephant in rut.

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RESTRAIN MIND AS A MAHOUT AN ELEPHANT IN RUT

23 (5) The Story of Sāmanēra Sanu (Verse 326)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a young sāmanēra named Sānu.

One day, Sāmanēra Sānu was urged by older monks to go up on the dais and recite parts of the Pāli texts. When he had finished his recitation he solemnly called out, "May the merits gained by me today for reciting these sacred texts be shared by my mother and my father." At that time, the dēvās and a female evil spirit who had been the mother of the young sāmanēra in a previous existence were listening to his recitation. When they heard his words, the evil spirit was elated and promptly cried out, "My dear son, how happy I am to share your merit; you have done well, my son. Well done ! Well done! (Sādhu! Sādhu!)." On account of Sāmanēra Sānu, the evil spirit came to be very much respected and was given precedence in their assemblies by the dēvās and other evil spirits.

As the sāmanēra grew older, he wanted to return to the life of a lay man; he went home and asked for his clothes from his mother. His mother did not want him to leave the order and tried to dissuade him from leaving it, but he was quite firm in his decision. So, his mother promised to give him the clothes after his meal. As his mother was busy cooking his meal, the evil spirit, who was his mother of a past existence, thought, "If my son Sānu leaves the Sangha, I shall be put to shame and become a laughing stock among other evil spirits and dēvās; I must try and stop him leaving the Sangha." So, the young sāmanēra was possessed by her; the boy rolled on the floor, muttering incoherently with saliva streaming out of his mouth. His mother was alarmed; neighbours came and tried to appease the evil spirits. Then the evil spirit spoke out, "This sāmanēra wants to leave the religious Sangha and return to the life of a lay man; if he does so he will not be able to escape from suffering." After saying those words, the evil spirit left the body of the boy and he became normal again.

Finding his mother in tears and the neighbours crowding around him, he asked what had happened. His mother told him everything that had happened to him and also explained to him that to return to lay life after leaving it was very foolish; in fact, even though living he would be like a dead person. The sāmanēra then came to realize his mistake. Taking the three robes from his mother, he went back to the monastery and was soon admitted again as a monk.

When told about Sāmanēra Sānu, the Buddha wishing to teach him about the restraint of mind said, "My son, one who does not restrain the mind which wanders about cannot find happiness. So, control your mind as a mahout controls an elephant."

At the end of the discourse, Venērable Sānu comprehended the four noble truths and later attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 326)

purē idaṁ cittam yēnicchakaṁ yatthakāmaṁ yathāsukhaṁ cārikaṁ acāri ahaṁ ajja taṁ pabhinnaṁ hatthiṁ viya aṅkusaggahō yōnisō niggahessāmi

purē: earlier; *idaṁ cittam:* this mind; *yēnicchakaṁ:* whichever way it likes; *yatthakāmaṁ:* wherever it likes; *yathāsukhaṁ:* happily; *cārikaṁ acāri:* roamed around; *ahaṁ:* I; *ajja:* today; *taṁ:* that mind; *pabhinnaṁ:* in rut; *hatthiṁ viya:* an elephant; *aṅkusaggahō:* like a mahout holding a bill-hook; *yonisō:* wisely; *niggahessāmi:* restrain

In the past, this mind has wandered as it liked, wherever it liked, at its own pleasure. Now I will control my mind wisely, as a mahout must use his goad to control an elephant.

Commentary

In Buddhist literature the image of the elephant being restrained is used as a parallel to the act of the spiritually advanced person restraining himself.

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Like an elephant sunk in mud, elevate yourselves out of the evil way, diligent and mindful.

327. *Appamādaratā hōtha*
sacittam anurakkhatha
duggā uddharath' attānaṁ
paṅkē sattō'va kuñjarō. (23:8)

Do you delight in heedfulness
and guard your own minds well!
Draw youselves from the evil way
as would elephant sunk in slough.

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THE ELEPHANT MIRED

23 (6) The Story of the Elephant Called Pāveyyaka (Verse 327)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the elephant called Pāveyyaka.

Pāveyyaka when young was very strong; in due course, he became old and decrepit. One day, as old Paveyyaka went into a pond he was stuck in the mire and could not get on to the shore. When King Pasēnadi of Kōsala was told about it, he sent an elephant trainer to help the elephant get out of the mire. The elephant trainer went to the site where the elephant was. There, he made the musicians strike up a martial tune. Hearing the military airs, the elephant felt as if he were in a battlefield; his spirits rose, he pulled himself with all his might, and was soon out of the mire.

When the monks told the Buddha about this he said, "Monks! Just as that elephant pulled itself out of the mire, so also, must you all pull yourselves out of the mire of moral defilements."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 327)

appamādaratā hōtha, sacittam anurakkhatha,
paṅkē sattō kuñjarō iva attānaṁ duggā
uddharatha

appamādaratā hōtha: take delight in diligence; *sacittam:* one's mind; *anurakkhatha:* protect; *paṅkē:* in mud; *sattō:* mired; *kuñjarō iva:* like an elephant; *attānaṁ:* one's mind; *duggā:* swampy road difficult to traverse; *uddharatha:* lift up

Take delight in mindfulness, guard your mind well. As an elephant stuck in mire pulls itself out, so also, pull yourself out of the mire of moral defilements.

Commentary

A method of instruction favoured by the Buddha was the culling of a moral or spiritual truth out of contemporary events. In this stanza the successful effort made by the mired elephant to pull itself out of the mud, was made the occasion to instruct the monks that they themselves should make an effort to pull themselves out of the mire of moral defilements.

There are other instances of the Buddha, utilizing an incident to teach people the truth. The following is one such:

A monk was suffering from diarrhoea, and being unable to get up was lying over his own excreta. The Buddha entered his residence in the company of Venerable Ānanda, and asked, "What is your ailment, monk?" "Venerable, I am suffering from diarrhoea," replied the monk. "Is there nobody to attend on you" "No, Venerable." "Why don't the fellow monks attend on you?" "As I do not attend on other monks, they, too, do not attend on me," said the monk.

The Buddha asked Venerable Ānanda to go and bring water. The Buddha poured water on the sick monk, and Venerable Ānanda washed him. The Buddha took him by the head, and Venerable Ānanda held him by his feet, and they placed him on a bed.

The Buddha called the monks, and advised them that they should attend on a sick monk, whether he had attended on them nor not. "The monks who attend on the sick, really attend on me," said the Buddha.

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If you can get a wise, blameless companion, keep his company joyfully, overcoming all troubles.

328. *Sacē labhētha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ*
saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhuvihāridhīraṁ
abhibhuyya sabbāni parissayāni
careyya tēn'attamanō satīmā. (23:9)

If for practice one finds a friend
prudent, well-behaved and wise,
mindful, joyful, live with him
all troubles overcoming.

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CHERISH THE COMPANY OF GOOD

23 (7) Admonition to Five Hundred Monks (Verses 328 — 330)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Protected Forest near Pārileyyaka, with reference to a company of monks. The story occurs in the *Yamaka Vagga* beginning with the words, 'The others do not understand.' For there it is said:

It became known all over the Land of the Rose-apple that the Buddha was residing in Protected Forest, attended by a noble elephant. From the city of Sāvatthi, Anāthapiṇḍika, Visākhā, the eminent female lay disciple, and other such great personages sent the following message to the Venerable Ānanda, "Venerable, obtain for us the privilege of seeing the Buddha." Likewise five hundred monks residing abroad approached the Venerable Ānanda at the conclusion of the rainy season and made the following request, "It is a long time, Ānanda, since we have heard a discourse on the Dhamma from the lips of the Buddha. We should like, brother Ānanda, if you please, to have the privilege of hearing a discourse on the Dhamma from the lips of the Buddha."

So Venerable Ānanda took those monks with him and went to Protected Forest. When he reached the forest, he thought to himself, "The Buddha has resided in solitude for a period of three months. It is therefore not fitting that I should approach him all at once with so many monks as I have with me." Accordingly he approached the Buddha alone. When the elephant Pārileyyaka saw the Venerable, he took his staff and rushed forward. The Buddha looked around and said to the elephant, "Come back, Pārileyyaka; do not drive him away. He is a servitor of the Buddha." The elephant immediately threw away his staff, and requested the privilege of taking the Venerable's bowl and robe. Venerable Ānanda refused. The elephant thought to himself, "If he is versed in the rules of etiquette, he will refrain from placing his own monastic requisites on the stone slab where the Buddha is accustomed to sit." Venerable Ānanda placed his bowl and robe on the ground. (For those who are versed in the rules of etiquette never place their own nomastic requisites on the seat or bed of their spiritual superiors.) After saluting the Buddha, he seated himself on one side.

The Buddha asked him, "Did you come alone?" The Venerable informed him that he had come with five hundred monks. "But where are they?" asked the Buddha. "I did not know how you would feel about it, and therefore I left them outside and came in alone." "Tell them to come in." The Venerable did so. The Buddha exchanged friendly greetings with the monks. Then the monks said to the Buddha, "Venerable, the Exalted One is a delicate Buddha, a delicate prince. You must have endured much hardship, standing and sitting here alone as you have during these three months. For of course you had no one to perform the major and minor duties for you, no one to offer you water for rinsing the mouth or to perform any of the other duties for you." The Buddha replied, "Monks, the elephant Pārileyyaka performed all of these offices for me. For one who obtains such a companion as he, may well live alone; did one fail to find such, even so that life of solitude is better."

Explanatory Translation (328)

nipakaṁ saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhuvihāriṁ dhīraṁ sahāyaṁ sacē labhētha sabbāni parissayāni abhibhuyya tēna attamanō satīmā careyya

nipakaṁ: wise; *saddhiṁ caraṁ:* associates with one; *sādhuvihārī:* lives virtuously; *dhīraṁ:* firm and intelligent; *sahāyaṁ;* companion; *sacē labhētha:* if you can have; *sabbāni parissayāni:* all evil; every danger; *abhibhuyya:* overcoming; *tēna:* with him; *attamanō:* with a happy mind; *satīmā:* with mindfulness; *careyya:* live

If you come upon a wise, mature companion whose ways are virtuous, you must associate with him as you can then lead a happy and alert life, overcoming all dangers.

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the absence of a fitting companion, lead a solitary life like a king in exile.

329. *Nō cē labhētha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ*
saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhuvīhāridhīraṁ
rājā'va raṭṭhaṁ vijitaṁ pahāya
ēkō carē mātaṅg'araññē'va nāgō. (23:10)

If for practice one finds no friend
prudent, well-behaved and wise,
like king be leaving conquered land,
fare as lone elephant in the wilds.

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THE LONELY RECLUSE

23 (7) Admonition to Five Hundred Monks (Verses 328 — 330) (Cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (329)

nipakaṁ saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhuvihāri dhīraṁ sahāyaṁ cē nō labētha vijitaṁ raṭṭhaṁ pahāya rājā iva araññē mātaṅgō nāgō iva ēkō carē

nipakaṁ: wise; *saddhiṁ caraṁ:* associates with one; *sādhuvihārī:* lives virtuously; *dhīraṁ:* firm and intelligent; *sahāyaṁ:* companion; *sacē nō labētha:* if you cannot have; *vijitaṁ:* defeated; lost; *raṭṭhaṁ:* kingdom; *pahāya:* abandoning; *rājā iva:* like the king; *araññē:* in the forest; *mātaṅgō nāgō iva:* like the elephant Mātanga, alone in the forest; *ēkō:* all alone; *carē:* go about

If you cannot come upon a wise, mature companion whose ways are virtuous, you must go about life all alone like a king who, abandoning his conquered kingdom, lives in exile, or like elephant Mātanga who roams about the forest living in solitude.

Explanatory Translation (330)

ēkassa caritaṁ seyyō bālē sahāyatā natthi araññē mātaṅgō nāgō iva appossukkō ēkō carē pāpāni na ca kayirā

ēkassa: the lone person's; *caritaṁ:* behaviour; *seyyō:* is great; *bālē:* with the ignorant; *natthi sahāyatā:* no companionship; *araññē:* in the forest; *mātaṅgō nāgō iva:* like the elephant Mātanga; *appossukkō:* with limited needs; ēkō carē: go about alone; *pāpāni na ca kayirā:* doing no evil

Leading a solitary life is more commendable. One cannot keep company with ignorant ones. With only a limited number of needs, let one lead a life of solitude, doing no wrong, like the elephant Mātanga.

Commentary

While residing in the Pārileyyaka Forest, where the elephant Pārileyyaka waited on him,the Buddha spoke these verses with reference to the monks from Kōsambi.

The Buddha was dwelling in the ninth year of His ministry, at the Ghōsitārāma, the monastery built by Ghōsita in Kōsambi. A certain monk who had committed a disciplinary offence considered it an offence, whereas the other monks considered it to be otherwise. Subsequently, the monk who committed the offence did not consider it so, whereas the other monks by this time held the opinion that he was guilty.

The alleged offence was leaving some water in the pot without emptying it after using the lavatory by the monk. The monk who was alleged to have committed the offence then admitted his fault when he was questioned by the other monks. So the other monks got together and pronounced an explosion order against him.

That monk was learned, scholarly, versed in the discourses and the discipline, and was well accomplished in knowledge and conduct. He went to his friends and well wishers in the order, and explained to them what took place, and convinced them of his innocence. These monks went to see the monks who pronounced the expulsion order against their friend, and entered into an argument with them, but the matter did not end happily.

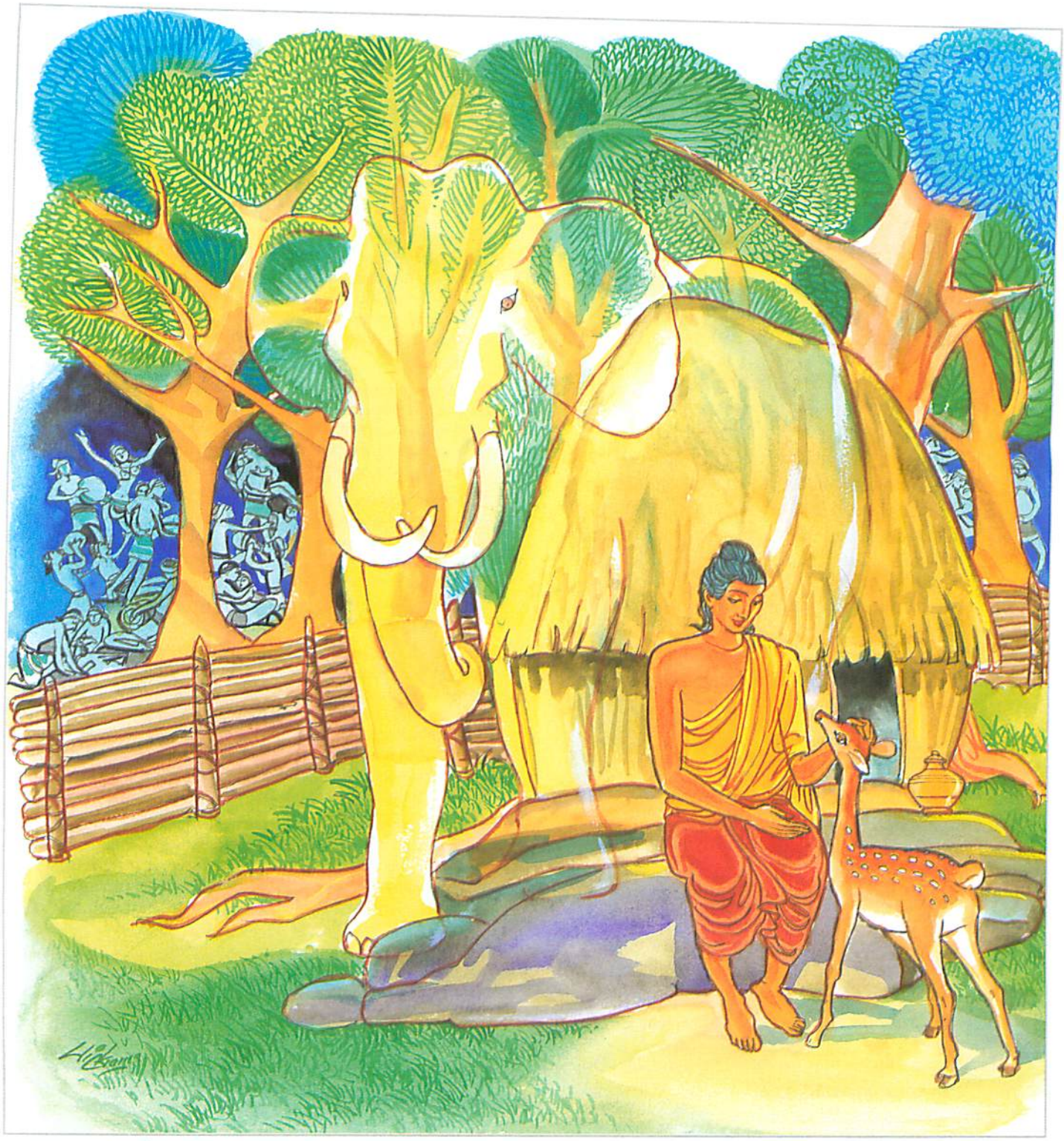
The monks got divided into two camps, and the matter reached the ears of the Buddha. The Buddha remarked that dissension has arisen in the fraternity of monks, and went up to the monks who pronounced the expulsion order. He explained to them the folly of their act as it would lead to dissension among the fraternity of monks. Next, the Buddha went to the followers of the other group, and disapproved of their conduct as that, too, could lead to unexpected dissension among the monks.

After the admonition of the Buddha, the monks who pronounced the expulsion order continued to conduct their disciplinary rites within the precincts of the monastery, whereas the other faction began to conduct their rites outside the limits of the monastery. When the attention of the Buddha was drawn to this situation, He found nothing wrong about it.

However, the matter did not end there. The monks of Kōsambi were divided into two camps, and they kept on quarrelling among themselves in the village, in the alms-hall, and wherever they met. The people in the villages were displeased at this conduct of the monks, and began to rebuke and revile them.

Some monks invited the Buddha to intervene in this matter and put an end to these disputes and dissensions in the fraternity of monks. Hence the Buddha came to the assembly of monks, and admonished them against their dissension. Then, the Buddha preached to them the story of King Brahmadatta of Kāsi, and of King Dīghiti of Kōsala, and the conduct of prince Dīghāyu to illustrate the evils of quarrels and the advantages of forbearance.

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Lonely, easy life, like a lordly elephant in the forest, avoiding evil, is better than evil company.

330. *Ēkassa caritaṁ seyyō*
natthi bālē sahāyatā
ēkō carē na ca pāpānī kayirā
appōssukkō mātaṅg'araññē'va nāgō. (23:11)

Better it is to live alone
for with a fool's no fellowship,
no evils do, be free of care,
fare as lone elephant in the wilds.

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FOR THE SOLITARY THE NEEDS ARE FEW

23 (7) Admonition to Five Hundred Monks (Verses 328, 329 & 330) (Cont'd)

Commentary

Referring to the forbearance and mildness of the kings themselves, the Buddha exhorted the monks to sink their differences and be patient since they were already leading the lives of monks. However, a spokesman of one faction of the quarrelsome monks said that the Buddha should keep out of their disputes and leave them alone.

The Buddha left the assembly, remarking: "These foolish people have lost control of themselves. It is difficult to admonish and convince them."

Next morning, the Buddha after His round for alms in Kōsambi, took the mid-day meal, and spoke in the midst of the fraternity of monks of the evils of enmity and disunity, and the advantages of solitude where one cannot find good company.

After speaking to the fraternity of monks, the Buddha left the city of Kōsambi all alone, proceeded to the village of Bālakalōnakārāma (Bālaka, the salt maker), and was received by the Venerable Bhagu. Thence, He proceeded to Pācina Vaṁsa park, where the Venerable Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila were staying.

The watcher of the park tried to stop the Buddha coming to the park, but the three monks rushed to receive the Buddha in reverence. After hearing that they were living in great unity and regard for one another, the Buddha admonished them, and left the grove for the Pārileyyaka forest.

The Buddha arrived at the Pārileyyaka forest, and entered the Rakkhita grove (sanctuary), and began to stay at the foot of a lofty Sāla tree.

The Buddha all alone, left to Himself, was feeling very happy and relieved, as He was away from the disputing and quarrelsome monks of Kōsambi who were in the habit of coming to Him with their complaints.

An elephant, a leader of a herd, who was sick of the herd in that forest, thought of solitary life. For, branches of trees brought by him were eaten up by others in the herd and his body was rubbed against by she-elephants as they were coming out of water. The elephant came up to the place where the Buddha was seated, and began to attend on the Buddha by cleaning up the place and bringing food and drinks with his trunk. Thus, he, too, took delight in his life of solitude. Then the Buddha spoke forth a solemn utterance of joy on the advantages of solitude.

After spending three months at the Pārileyyaka forest, the Buddha came back to the Jētavana Monastery. Now the citizens of Kōsambi were displeased with the quarrelsome monks and refused to give them alms or pay other respects. Then the monks told the lay devotees that they would go to see the Buddha and settle all their differences under Him.

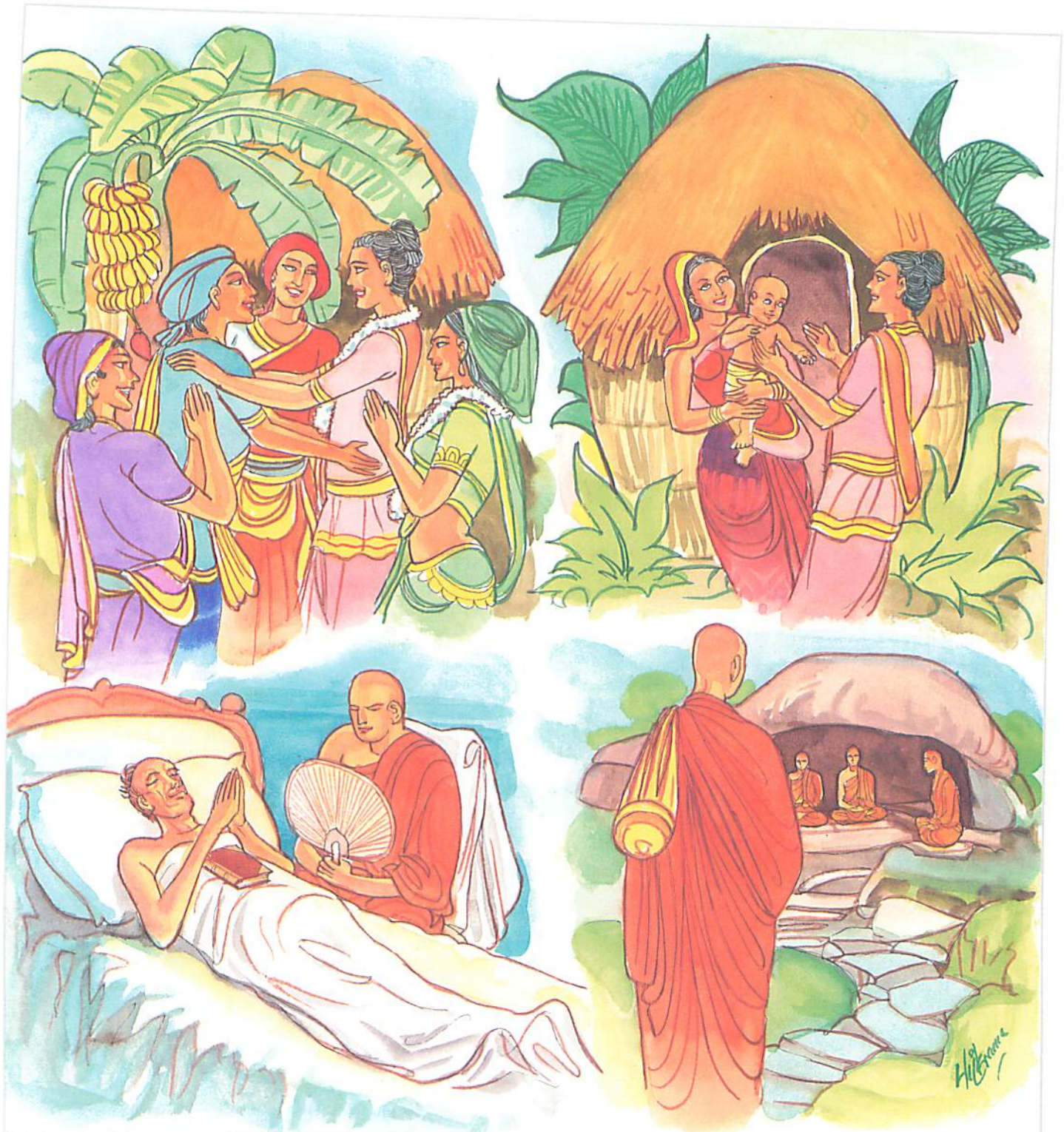
The Venerables Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahā Kassapa, Rēvata, Anuruddha, Upāli, Ānanda, and Rāhula heard of the intended visit of the quarrelsome monks, and sought the advice of the Buddha as to how they should be treated. The Buddha instructed them on the principles of discipline.

Similarly, Mahā Pajāpati Gōtamī, Anāthapiṇḍika, and Visākhā sought the advice of the Buddha as to what attitude to be adopted towards the two factions of quarrelsome monks. The Buddha admonished them to treat both factions with alms, etc., and to listen to both factions, but to follow the righteous side.

The two factions of monks settled their disputes, and went up to the Buddha and apologised to Him. The Buddha delivered them further admonitions and instructions on discipline.

Said the Buddha: "The elephant Pārileyyaka had been looking after me all this time. If one has such a good friend one should stick to him. But, if one cannot find a good friend, better to stay alone."

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Pleasant are friends in need, and goodness at life's end. Ending of dukkha is equally so.

331. *Atthamhi jātamhi sukhā sahāyā*
tuṭṭhī sukkhā yā itarītarēna
puññaṁ sukhaṁ jīvitasaṅkhayamhi
sabbassa dukkhassa sukhaṁ pahāṇaṁ. (23:12)

Blest to have friends when one's in need,
blest contentment with whatever is,
blessed is merit when life's at an end,
abandoning all dukkha is blessedness.

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THE BLISS

23 (12) The Story of Māra (Verses 331 — 333) (Contd.)

This doctrinal instruction was given by the Buddha while he was dwelling in a forest-hut in the Himālaya country with reference to Māra.

Tradition has it that at this time kings oppressed the subjects over whom they ruled. As the Buddha saw men punished and persecuted under the rule of these wicked kings, he was moved to compassion. And he considered thus within himself, "Is it not possible to exercise sovereignty without killing or causing to kill, without conquering or causing to conquer. without sorrow or causing sorrow,with justice and righteousness?" Now Māra the Evil One perceived within himself the thought that was passing through the mind of the Buddha, and thought thus, "The monk Gōtama is considering within himself. "Is it not possible to exercise sovereignty?" It must be that he now desires to exercise sovereignty. And this thing which is called sovereignty is an occasion of heedlessness. If he does exercise sovereignty, I may be able to catch him off his guard. I will therefore go and arouse his ambition."

Accordingly Māra encouraged the Buddha to exercise sovereignty; let the happy one exercise sovereignty, without killing or causing to kill, without conquering or causing to conquer, without sorrow or causing sorrow, with justice and righteousness. The Buddha said to Māra, "Evil one, what do you see in me that makes you speak thus to me?" Māra said, "Venerable, the Exalted One has developed to the full the four bases of magic power. For should the Buddha resolve, 'Let the Himālaya, king of mountains, be turned to gold,' gold would that mountain be. I too will do with this wealth all those things which can be done with wealth. Thus you shall rule justy and righteously." Then said the Buddha:

> The whole of a mountain of gold, even of fine gold.
> Were not enough for one.
> Knowing this, a man should walk justly.
> How can a man who has seen whence arises suffering
> devote himself to the pleasures of sense?

Let the man who has come to know that substratum of being which is called attachment in the world, train himself to subdue this alone.

With these Stanzas did the Buddha arouse and alarm Māra the evil one. Then he said to him, "I will admonish you yet again, evil one. I have nothing in common with you. Thus do I admonish you."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 331)

atthamhi jātamhi sahāyā sukhā itarītarēna yā
tuṭṭhī sukkhā jīvitasaṅkhayamhi puññaṁ sukhaṁ
sabbassa dukkhassa pahānaṁ sukhaṁ

atthamhi: when a task; *jātamhi:* arises; *sahāyā:* friends and associates; *itarītarēna:* if from some possessions; *yā tuṭṭhī:* there is satisfaction; *sukhā:* it is a comfort; *jīvitasaṅkhayamhi:* towards the end of life; *puññaṁ:* merit; *sukhaṁ:* is a comfort; *sabbassa:* all; *dukkhaṁ:* suffering; *pahānaṁ:* eradication; *sukhaṁ:* is a bliss

Friends in need are a comfort. Satisfaction with whatever little you have is a comfort. Merit, at the end of one's days, is a comfort. It is bliss, indeed, to eradicate all sufferings.

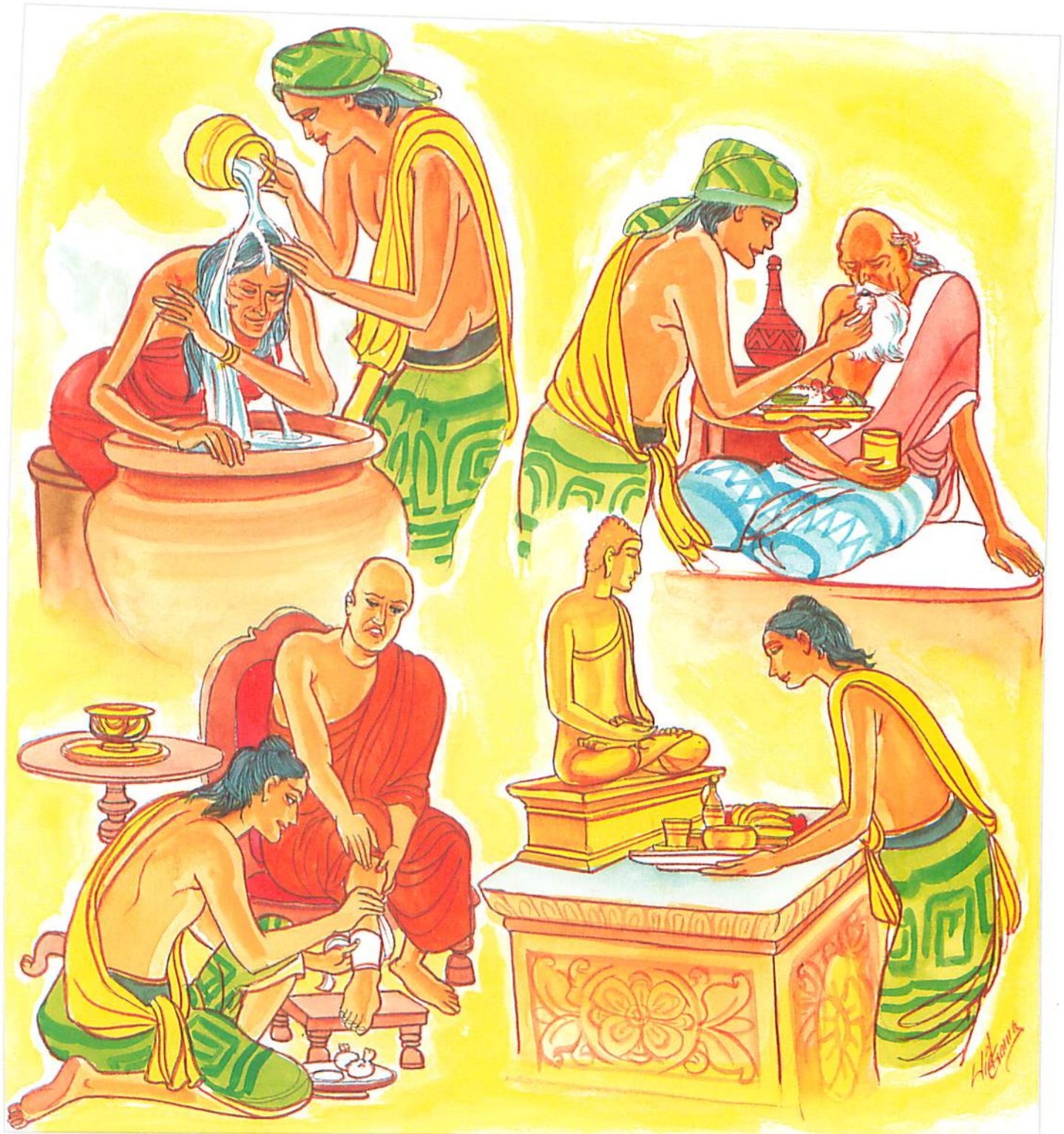
Explanatory Translation (332)

lōkē matteyyatā sukhā athō petteyyatā
brahmaññatā sāmaññatā sukhā

lōkē: in this world; *matteyyatā:* motherhood; *sukhā:* is a blessing; *athō:* in the same way; *petteyyatā:* fatherhood; *brahmaññatā:* the state of an Arahat; *sāmaññatā:* monkhood

In this world, motherhood is a blessing. In the same way, fatherhood, too, is a blessing. Monkhood is a blessing. Above all, arahathood is a blessing.

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'Tis lovely caring for one's mother and father. So it is to minister to ascetics and brahmins.

332. *Sukhā matteyyatā lōkē*
athō petteyyatā sukhā
sukhā sāmaññatā lōkē
athō brahmaññatā sukhā. (23:13)

Respect for one's mother brings happiness here
as well as respect for one's father.
Here happiness comes from respecting the monks
and those of virtue excellent.

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BLESSING TO BE AN ARAHAT

23 (13) The Story of Māra (Verses 331 — 333) (Cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (333)

yāva jarā sīlaṁ sukhaṁ saddhā patiṭṭhitā sukhā paññāya paṭilābhō sukhō pāpānaṁ akaraṇaṁ sukhaṁ

yāva jarā: until physical decay; *sīlaṁ:* in virtue; *sukhaṁ:* is a blessing; *patiṭṭhitā:* being firmly established; *paññāya:* wisdom; *paṭilābhō:* acquisition; *sukhō:* is a blessing; *pāpānaṁ:* unwholesomeness; *akaraṇaṁ:* non-commission

Pursuit of virtue until old age and decay is a blessing. The acquisition of wisdom is a blessing. It is a blessing to refrain from unwholesomeness.

Commentary

In these stanzas the Buddha places an emphasis on Sahāyas (friends and associates) and stresses the need to consider motherhood, fatherhood, monkhood and arahathood as blessings. The Buddha reminded young householder Sigāla, who was in the habit of worshipping the six directions, that there is yet another group of six directions he should worship. These six are made of a one's family members and social and religious persons to whom honour is due. So the story goes this way.

A young man named Sigāla used to worship the six cardinal points of the heavens — east, south, west, north, nadir and zenith — in obeying and observing the last advice given him by his dying father. The Buddha told the young man that in the 'noble discipline' (*ariyassa vinayē*) of his teaching the six directions were different. According to his 'noble discipline' the six directions were: east, parents; south: teachers; west: wife and children; north: friends, relatives and neighbours; nadir: servants, workers and employees; zenith: religious men.

"One should worship these six directions" said the Buddha. Here the word worship (*namasseyya*) is very significant, for one worships something sacred, something worthy of honour and respect. These six family and social groups mentioned above are treated in Buddhism as sacred, worthy of respect and worship. But how is one to worship them? The Buddha says that one could worship them only by performing one's duties towards them. These duties are explained in his discourse to Sigāla.

First: Parents are sacred to their children. The Buddha says: "Parents are called brāhma" (*brahmāti mātāpitarō*). The term *brahma* denotes the highest and most sacred conception in Indian thought, and in it the Buddha includes parents. So in good Buddhist families at the present time children literally worship their parents every day, morning and evening. They have to perform certain duties towards their parents according to the noble discipline: they should look after their parents in their old age; should do whatever they have to do on their behalf; should maintain the honour of the family and continue the family tradition; should protect the wealth earned by their parents; and perform their funeral rites after their death. Parents, in their turn, have certain responsibilities towards their children: they should keep their children away from evil courses; should engage them in good and profitable activities; should give them a good education; should marry them into good families; and should hand over the property to them in due course.

Second: The relation between teacher and pupil should respect and be obedient to his teacher; should attend to his needs of any; should study earnestly. And the teacher, in his turn, should train and shape his pupil properly; should teach him well; should introduce him to his friends; and should try to procure him security or employment when his education is over.

Third: The relation between husband and wife: love between husband and wife is considered almost religious or sacred. It is called *Sadāra-Brahmacariya* 'sacred family life'. Here, too, the significance of the term *Brahma* should be noted: the highest respect is given to this relationship. Wives and husbands should be faithful, respectful and devoted to each other, and they have certain duties towards each other: the husband should always honour his wife and never be wanting in respect to her; he should love her and e faithful to her; should secure her position and comfort; and should please her by presenting her with clothing and jewellery. (The fact that the Buddha did not forget to mention even such a thing as the gifts a husband should make to his wife shows how understanding and sympathetic were his humane feelings towards ordinary human emotions.) The wife, in her turn, should supervise and look after household affairs; should entertain guests, visitors, friends, relatives and employees; should love and be faithful to her husband; should protect his earnings; should be clever and energetic in all activities.

Fourth: The relation between friends, relatives and neighbours: they should be hospitable and charitable to one another; should speak pleasantly and agreeably; should work for each other;s welfare; should be on equal terms with one another; should not quarrel among themselves; should help each other in need; and should not forsake each other in difficulty.

Fifth: The relation between master and servant: the master or the employer has several obligations towards his servant or his Employee: work should be assigned according to ability and capacity; adequate wages should be paid; medical needs should be provided; occasional donations or bonuses should e granted. The servant or employee, in his turn, should be diligent and not lazy; honest and obedient and not cheat his master; he should be earnest in his work.

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Pleasant to be virtuous all one's life. Faith, wisdom and shunning evil are equally good.

333. *Sukhaṁ yāva jarā sīlaṁ*
sukhā saddhā patiṭṭhitā
sukhō paññāya paṭilābhō
pāpānaṁ akaraṇaṁ sukhaṁ. (23:14)

Blest is virtue till life's end
and blest the faith standing firm,
blest the attainment of wisdom
and blest the non-doing of evils.

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FOUR FORMS OF BLESSING

23 (14) The Story of Māra (Verses 331, 332 & 333) (Cont'd)

Commentary

Sixth: The relation between the religious (lit. recluses and brāhmanas) and the laity: lay people should look after the material needs of the religious with love and respect; the religious with a loving heart should impart knowledge and learning to the laity, and lead them along the good path away from evil.

Matteyyatā: This means attention and good conduct towards mothers - towards womankind. The Buddha has a unique place in world's religions, as a spiritual leader who was keenly concerned with providing privileges to women.

Women's position in Buddhism is unique. The Buddha gave women full freedom to participate in a religious life. The Buddha was the first religious teacher who had given this religious freedom to women. Before the Buddha, women's duty had been restricted to the kitchen; women were not even allowed to enter any temple or to recite anything religious. During the Buddha's time, women's position in society was very low. The Buddha was criticized very strongly by the prevailing establishment when he gave this freedom to women. His move to allow women to enter the holy order was extremely radical for the times. Yet the Buddha allowed women to prove themselves and to show that they too had the capacity like men to attain the highest position is the religious way of living by attaining Arahanthood. Every woman in the world must be grateful to the Buddha for showing them the real religious way of living and for giving such freedom to them for the first time in world history.

A good illustration of the prevailing attitude towards women during the Buddha's time is found in these words of Māra:

"No woman, with the two-finger wisdom which is hers, could ever hope to reach those heights which are attained only by the sages."

Undoubtedly the Buddha was vehement in contradicting such attitudes. The nun to whom Māra addressed these words, gave the following reply:

"When one's mind is well concentrated and wisdom never fails, does the fact of being a woman make any difference?"

King Kōsala was very much disappointed when he heard that his Queen had given birth to a baby girl. He had expected a boy. To console the sad King, the Buddha said:

"A female child, O Lord of men, may prove

Even a better offspring than a male.

For she may grow up wise and virtuous.

Her husband's mother reverencing, true wife.

The boy that she may bear may do great deeds.

And rule great realms, yes, such a son.

Of noble wife becomes his country's guide."

On one such occasion, he admitted that man is not always the only wise one; woman is also wise.

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Buddha is like a physician

The Buddha is like a physician. Just as a doctor must know the diagnosis of the different kinds of illness, their causes, the antidotes and remedies, and must be able to apply them, so also the Buddha has taught the Four Holy Truths which indicate the range of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way which leads to its cessation.

Dr. Edward Conze, "Buddhism"

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Chapter 24

TAṆHĀ VAGGA

Craving



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Craving born of heedlessness plunges man from birth to birth like a monkey's leap for fruit.

334. *Manujassa pamattacārinō*
taṇhā vaḍḍhati māluvā viya
sō plavati hurāhuraṁ
phalam icchaṁ'va vanasmiṁ vānarō. (24:1)

As creeping ivy craving grows
in one living carelessly.
Like this, one leaps from life to life
as ape in the forest seeking fruit.

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TAṆHĀ VAGGA (Craving)
THE INCREASE OF CRAVING

24 (1) The Story of the Past: The Insolent Monk. The Bandits. (Verses 334 – 337)

The story goes that in times long past, when Buddha Kassapa passed into Nibbāna, two brothers of a respectable family retired from the world and became monks under their disciples. The name of the older brother was Sodhana, and that of the younger was Red Kapila. Likewise their mother Sādhinī and their younger sister Tāpanā retired from the world and became nuns. After the two brothers had become monks, they performed regularly and faithfully the major and minor duties to their teachers and their preceptors. One day they asked the following question, "Venerable, how many burdens are there in this religion?" and received the following answer, "There are two burdens: the burden of study and the burden of meditation." Thereupon the older brother said, "I will fulfil the burden of meditation," and for five years stayed with his teacher and his preceptor. Obtaining a meditation topic leading to arahatship, he entered the forest, and after striving and struggling with might and main, attained arahatship.

Said the younger brother, "I am young yet; when I am old, I will fulfil the burden of meditation." Accordingly he assumed the burden of study and learned by heart the three *Pitakas*. By his knowledge of the texts, he gained a great following, and through his following, rich offerings. Drunk with the intoxication of great learning, and overcome with craving for gain, he was led by overweening pride of knowledge to pronounce a thing said by others, even when it was right, to be wrong; even when wrong, to be right; even when it was innocent, to be sinful; even when sinful, to be innocent. The kindly monks used to say to him, "Brother Kapila, do not speak thus:" and would admonish him, quoting to him the doctrine and the discipline. But Kapila would reply, "What do you know, empty-fists?" and would go about snubbing and disparaging others.

The monks reported the matter to his brother, Venerable Sōdhana. Sōdhana went to him and said, "Brother Kapila, for men such as you, right conduct is the life of religion; therefore you should not abandon right conduct, reject that which is right and proper and speak as you do." Thus did Sodhana admonish his brother Kapila. But the latter paid no attention to what he said. However, Sōdhana admonished him two or three times, but seeing that he paid no attention to his words, left him, saying, "Well, brother, you will become notorious for your doings." And from that time on, the rest of the kindly monks would have nothing to do with him.

Thus did the monk Kapila adopt an evil mode of conduct and go about with companions confirmed like himself in an evil mode of conduct. One day he said to himself, "I will recite the Pātimokkha in the hall of discipline." So taking a fan and seating himself in the seat of the Dhamma, he recited the Pātimokkha, asking the usual question, "Brethren, are there, among the monks who are here gathered together, any who have anything to confess?" The monks thought, "What is the use of giving this fellow an answer?" Observing that the monks all remained silent, he said, "Brethren, there is no doctrine or discipline; what difference does it make whether you hear the Pātimokkha or not?" So saying, he arose from the seat. Thus did he retard the teaching of the word of Buddha Kassapa.

Venerable Sōdhana attained Nibbāna in that very state of existence. As for Kapila, at the end of his allotted term of life, he was reborn in the great hell of *avīci*. Kapila's mother and sister followed his example, reviled and abused the kindly monks, and were reborn in that same Hell.

Now at that time there were five hundred men who made a living by plundering villages. One day the men of the countryside pursued them, whereupon they fled and entered the forest. Seeing no refuge there, and meeting a certain forest hermit, they saluted him and said to him, "Venerable, be our refuge." The Venerable replied, "For you there is no refuge like the precepts of morality. Do you take upon yourselves, all of you, the five precepts." "Very well," agreed the bandits, and took upon themselves the five precepts. Then the Venerable admonished them, saying, "Now that you have taken upon yourselves the Precepts, not even for the sake of saving your lives, may you transgress the moral law, or entertain evil thoughts." "Very well," said the former bandits, giving their promise.

(cont'd on page 717)

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Whomsoever craving overpowers, his griefs proliferate like Birana grass after rain.

335. *Yaṁ ēsā sahatī jammī*
taṇhā lōkē visattikā
sōkā tassa pavaḍḍhanti
abhivaṭṭhaṁ'va bīraṇaṁ. (24:2)

Whomsoever in the world
this wretched clinging craving routs
for such a one do sorrows grow
as grass well-soaked with rain.

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HOW CRAVING INCREASES

24 (1) The Story of the Past: The Insolent Monk. The Bandits. (Verses 334 – 337) (cont'd)

When the men of the countryside reached that place, they searched everywhere, and discovering the bandits, deprived all those bandits of life. So the bandits died and were reborn in the world of the gods; the leader of the bandits became the leading deity of the group. After passing through the round of existences forward and backward in the world of the gods for the period of an interval between two Buddhas, they were reborn in the dispensation of the present Buddha in a village of fishermen consisting of five hundred households near the gate of the city of Sāvatthi.

The leader of the band of deities received a new birth in the house of the leader of the fishermen, and the other deities in the houses of the other fishermen. Thus on one and the same day all received a new conception and came forth from the wombs of their mothers. The leader of the fishermen thought to himself, "Were not some other boys born in this village to-day?" Causing a search to be made, he learned that the companions had been reborn in the same place. "These will be the companions of my son," thought he, and sent food to them all for their sustenance. They all became playfellows and friends, and in the course of time grew to manhood. The oldest of the fishermen's sons won fame and glory and became the leading man of the group.

Kapila was tormented in hell during the period of an interval between two Buddhas, and through the fruit of his evil deeds which still remained, was reborn at this time in the Aciravatī River as a fish. His skin was of a golden hue, but he had a stinking breath.

24 (1) The Story of the Present: The Fishermen, and The Fish with a Stinking Breath. (Verses 334 – 337) (cont'd)

Now one day those companions said to themselves, "Let us snare some fish." So taking a net, they threw it into the river. It so happened that this fish fell into their net. When the residents of the village of fishermen saw the fish, they made merry and said, "The first time our sons snared fish, they caught a goldfish; now the king will give us abundant wealth." The companions tossed the fish into a boat and went to the king. When the king saw the fish, he asked, "What is that?" "A fish, your majesty," replied the companions. When the king saw it was a goldfish, he thought to himself, "The Buddha will know the reason why this fish has a golden hue." So ordering the fish to be carried for him, he went to the Buddha. As soon as the fish opened his mouth, the whole Jētavana stank. The king asked the Buddha, "Venerable, how did this fish come to have a golden hue? And why is it that he has a stinking breath?"

"Great king, in the dispensation of Buddha Kassapa this fish was a monk named Kapila, and Kapila was very learned and had a large following. But he was overcome with desire of gain, and would abuse and revile those who would not take him at his word. Thus did he retard the religion of Buddha Kassapa, was therefore reborn in the *avīci* hell, and because the fruit of his evil deed has not yet been exhausted. has just been reborn as a fish. Now since for a long time he preached the word of the Buddha and recited the praises of the Buddha, for this cause he has received a golden hue. But because he reviled and abused the monks, for this cause he has come to have a stinking breath. I will let him speak for himself, great king." "Venerable, by all means let him speak for himself."

So the Buddha asked the fish, "Are you Kapila?" "Yes, Venerable, I am Kapila." "Where have you come from?" "From the Great Hell of Avīci, Venerable." "What became of your older brother Sōdhana?" "He passed into Nibbāna, Venerable." "But what became of your mother Sādhinī?" "She was reborn in Hell, Venerable." "And what became of your younger sister Tāpanā?" "She was reborn in hell, Venerable." "Where shall you go now?" "Into the great hell of *avīci*, Venerable." So saying, the fish, overcome with remorse, struck his head against the boat, died then and there, and was reborn in hell. The multitude that stood by were greatly excited, so much so that the hair of their bodies stood on end. At that moment the Buddha, perceiving the disposition of mind of the company there assembled, preached the Dhamma in a way that suit the occasion:

A life of righteousness, a life of holiness,
This they call the gem of highest worth.

Beginning with these words, the Buddha recited in full the Kapila Sutta, found in the Sutta Nipāta.

(cont'd on page 719)

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Who so rids himself of craving, sorrows totally fall off him like water-drops from a lotus leaf.

336. *Yo c'ētaṁ sahatē jammiṁ*
taṇhaṁ lōkē duraccayaṁ
sōkā tamhā papatanti
udabindū'va pokkharā. (24:3)

But whoever in the world
routs wretched craving hard to quell,
from such a one do sorrows fall
like water drops from lotus leaf.

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ESCAPING CRAVING

24 (1) The Story of the Past: The Insolent Monk. The Bandits. The Story of the Present: The Fishermen, and The Fish with Stinking Breath. (Verses 334 – 337) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 334)

manujassa pamattacārinō taṇhā vaḍḍhati māluvā viya sō plavati hurādhuraṁ phalam icchaṁ vanasmiṁ vānarō iva

manujassa: man's; *pamattacārinō:* of slothful ways; *taṇhā:* craving; *vaḍḍhati:* grows; *māluvā viya:* like the creeper that destroys trees; *sō:* he; *plavati:* keeps on jumping; *hurāhuraṁ:* from birth to birth; *phalam icchaṁ:* fruit- loving; *vanasmiṁ:* in the forest; *vānarō iva:* like a monkey

Man's craving grows like the creeper *māluva*. At the end, the creeper destroys the tree. Like the monkey that is not happy with the fruit in the tree, the man of craving keeps on jumping from one existence to another.

Explanatory Translation (335)

jammī visattikā ēsā taṇhā lōkē yaṁ sahatī tassa abhivaṭṭhaṁ bīraṇaṁ iva sōkā

jammī: lowly; *visattikā:* the poisonous and clinging; *ēsā taṇhā:* this craving; *lōkē:* in this world; *yaṁ:* if some one; *sahatī:* crushes; *tassa:* to that person; *abhivaṭṭhaṁ:* exposed to repeated rains; *bīraṇaṁ iva:* like the bīraṇa grass; *sōkā:* his sorrows; *vaḍḍhanti:* increase.

If some one is overcome by craving which is described as lowly and poisonous, his sorrows grow as swiftly and profusely as *bīraṇa* grass, after being exposed to repeated rains.

Explanatory Translation (336)

lōkē yō ca jammiṁ duraccayaṁ ētaṁ taṇhā sahatī tamhā sōkā pokkharā udabindū iva papatanti

lōkē: here in this world; *yō ca:* if some one; *jammiṁ:* lowly; *duraccayaṁ:* that is difficult to be passed over; *ētaṁ taṇha:* this craving; *sahatī:* subdues; *tamhā:* from him; *sōkā:* sorrows; *pokkharā udabindū iva:* like water off the lotus leaf; *papatanti:* slip away

Craving is a lowly urge. It is difficult to escape craving. But, in this world, if some one were to conquer craving, sorrows will slip off from him like water off a lotus leaf.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 337)

yāvantō ettha samāgatā vō bhaddaṁ taṁ vō vadāmi usīratthō bīraṇaṁ iva taṇhāya mūlaṁ khanatha nalaṁ sōtō iva māro vō punappunaṁ mā bhañji

yāvantō: all those; *ettha:* here; *samāgatā:* have assembled; *vō:* all of you; *bhaddaṁ:* may be well; *taṁ:* therefore; *vō:* to you; *vadāmi:* I will give this advice; *usīratthō:* those who seek the sweet-smelling usīra grass-roots; *bīraṇaṁ iva:* as they dig out bīrana grass; *taṇhāya:* of craving; *mūlaṁ:* the root; *khanatha:* dig out; *nalaṁ iva:* uprooting the reeds; *sōtō:* the flood; *mārō:* death; *punappunaṁ:* over and over; *nabhañji:* may not torture you

All those here assembled, may you all be well. I will advise you towards your well being. The person who is keen to get sweet-smelling *usīra* roots must first dig up the *bīraṇa* grass roots. In the same way, dig up the roots of craving. If you did that, Māra — death — will not torture you over and over like a flood crushing reeds.

(cont'd on page 721)

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Root out craving like Birana grass for its fragrant root. Let not death repeatedly shatter you.

337. *Taṁ vō vadāmi bhaddaṁ vō*
yāvant'ettha samāgatā
taṇhāya mūlaṁ khaṇatha
usīratthō'va bīraṇaṁ
mā vō naḷaṁ'va sōtō'va
mārō bhañji punappunaṁ. (24:4)

Prosperity to you, I say,
to all assembled here!
When needing grass's fragrant root
so craving extirpate.
Don't let Māra break you again,
again as a torrent a reed!

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UPROOTING CRAVING

24 (1) The Story of the Past: The Insolent Monk. The Bandits. The Story of the Present: The Fishermen, and The Fish with Stinking Breath. (Verses 334 – 337) (cont'd)

Commentary

māluvā viya: like the *māluvā* creeper. *Māluvā* creeper is a parasite growing upon trees. The creeper embraces the tree and eventually destroys it. Similarly, the craving that grows in the mind of a person destroys it.

phalaṁ icchaṁ vānarō viya: like the monkey seeking fruit. The monkey is not happy with the fruit in the tree only. He keeps on jumping from tree to tree.

visattikā: the term *visattikā* is given to craving for several reasons. It is called so because it entangles. Because it is poisonous too, craving is given this name.

bīraṇa grass: This is a variety of grass that grows swiftly. After being exposed to repeated rains, it grows even faster. Sorrow is described as *bīraṇa* grass after several rains.

duraccayaṁ: craving is a potent temptation, It is difficult to be passed over - to be overlooked.

usīra grass: The root of the *usīra* grass smells sweet. In order to get at it, first the *bīraṇa* grass has to be cleared away. Therefore, in order to get to higher states, you must first uproot craving.

The verses in this instance arise out of an encounter with some people who caught a strange fish. This incident indicates the remarkable range of people the Buddha met. The following is another instance of the Buddha meeting with an ordinary farmer:

The hungry farmer of Ālavi: One morning, the Buddha left the Jētavana Monastery in the company of five hundred monks, and arrived at Ālavi for the sake of a poor farmer. The people of Ālavi invited the Buddha and the fraternity of monks to alms. After the meals, when the time came for the preaching and making over the merits, the Buddha remained silent.

The poor farmer who heard of the arrival of the Buddha in Ālavi had to look for a lost bull and spend the whole morning in the search of it. He came back, oppressed with hunger. However, without going home for food, he came to the place where the Buddha was seated, with the idea of worshiping the Buddha.

When the farmer came and saluted the Buddha, and remained aside, the Buddha asked the attendants whether any food is left. When they answered in the affirmative, the Buddha asked them to feed him. After he finished the meal, the Buddha delivered a discourse, and at the end of it the farmer realized the fruit of sōtāpatti.

On the way back, the monks began to talk about this sympathetic act of the Buddha. While standing on the road, the Buddha explained that no preaching could be understood by a person when afflicted with hunger. Several in the crowd realized fruits such as sōtāpatti.

Another instance of the Buddha's meetings with people in various human situations is presented by the following story:

The boys who were attacking a serpent: One day, while the Buddha was staying at the Jētavana Monastery in Sāvatthi, He was on his round for alms in the afternoon in the city. At a spot not far from the monastery, the Buddha saw a large number of boys attacking a serpent with sticks.

"What are you doing, boys" asked the Buddha.

"We are attacking this serpent with a stick", the boys replied.

"Why do you want to kill the serpent?" asked the Buddha.

"Out of fear that the serpent would bite us."

The Buddha admonished them thus: Those who, in search of happiness, attack others who desire happiness, gain nothing good in the end. Similarly, those who, in search of happiness, refrain from attacking others who desire happiness arrive at bliss afterwards.

At the end of the admonition, the boys realized the fruit of sotāpatti.

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With its roots intact, a felled tree grows again. With craving within, pain does ever rise.

338. *Yathā'pi mūlē anupaddavē daḷhē*
chinnō'pi rukkhō punar'ēva rūhati
ēvam'pi taṇhānusayē anūhatē
nibbattatī dukkham idaṁ punappunaṁ. (24:5)

As tree though felled shoots up again
if its roots are safe and firm
so this dukkha grows again
while latent craving's unremoved.

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CRAVING UNERADICATED BRINGS SUFFERING OVER AND OVER

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343)

The story goes that one day, as the Buddha was entering Rājagaha for alms, seeing a young sow, he smiled. Venerable Ānanda, seeing the circle of light which proceeded from his teeth and came forth from his open mouth, asked the Buddha his reason for smiling, saying, "Venerable, what is the cause of your smile?" The Buddha said to him, "Ānanda, just look at that young sow!" "I see her, Venerable."

"In the dispensation of exalted Kakusandha she was a hen that lived in the neighbourhood of a certain hall of assembly. She used to listen to a certain monk who lived the life of contemplation, as he repeated a formula of meditation leading to insight. Merely from hearing the sound of those sacred words, when she passed out of that state of existence, she was reborn in the royal household as a princess named Ubbarī.

"One day she went to the privy and saw a heap of maggots. Then and there, by gazing upon the maggots, she formed the conception of maggots and entered into the first trance. After remaining in that state of existence during the term of life allotted to her, she passed out of that state of existence and was reborn in the world of brahmā. Passing from that state of existence, buffeted by rebirth, she has now been reborn as a young sow. It was because I knew these circumstances that I smiled."

As the monks led by Venerable Ānanda listened to the Buddha, they were deeply moved. The Buddha, having stirred their emotions, proclaimed the folly of craving, and even as he stood there in the middle of the street, pronounced the following Stanzas:

338. *As a tree, though it be cut down, grows up again if its root be sound and firm, So also, if the inclination to craving be not destroyed, this suffering springs up again and again in this world.*

339. *He that is in the tow of the six and thirty powerful currents running unto pleasure, such a man, misguided, the waves of desires inclining unto lust sweep away.*

340. *The currents run in all directions; the creeper buds and shoots; when you see the creeper grown, be wise and cut the root.*

341. *Flowing and unctuous are a creature's joys; men devote themselves to pleasure and seek after happiness; therefore do they undergo birth and decay.*

342. *Pursued by craving, men dart hither and thither like a hunted hare; held fast by fetters and bonds, they undergo suffering repeatedly and long.*

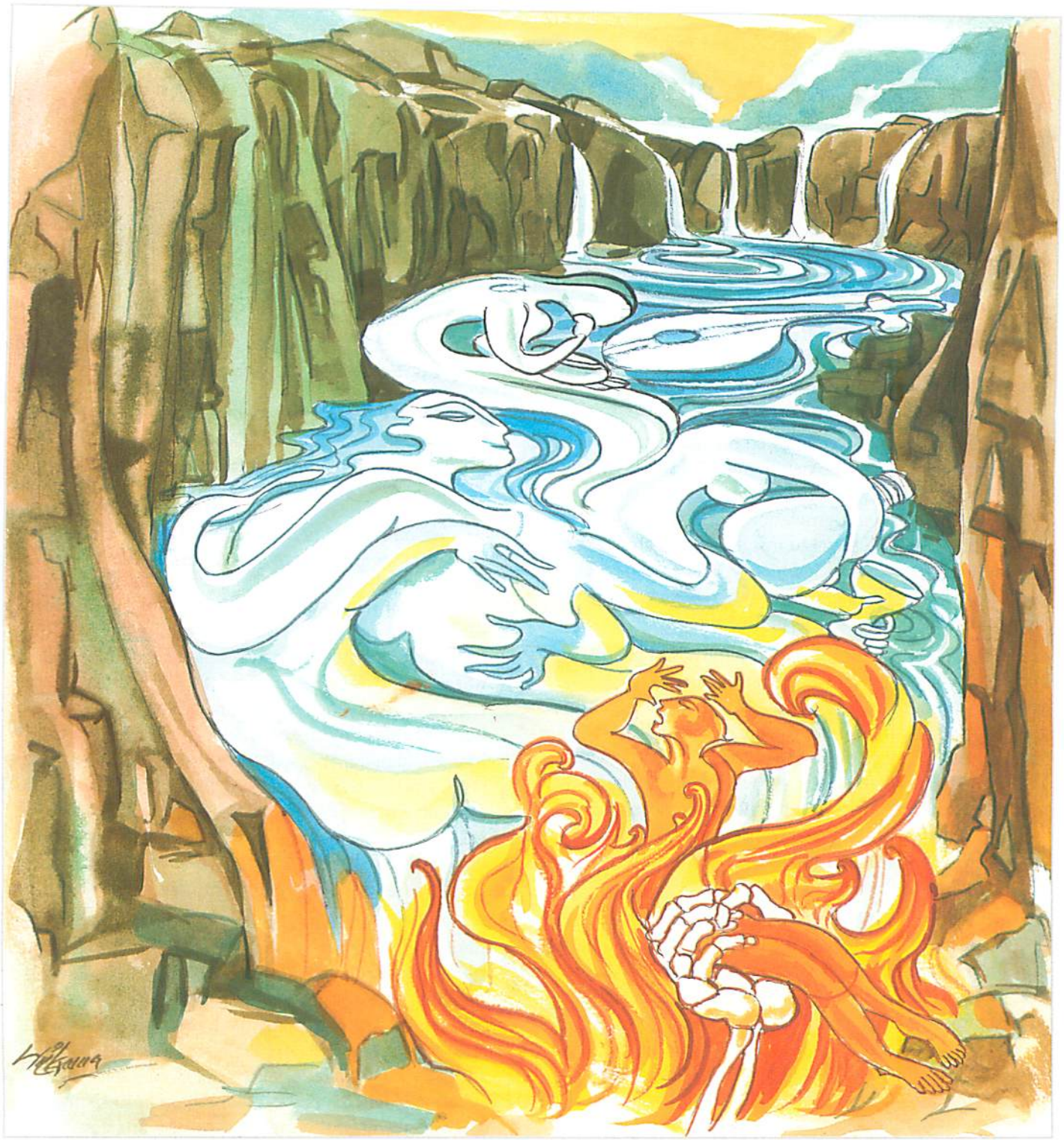
343. *Pursued by craving, men dart hither and thither like a hunted hare. Therefore a monk should banish craving, desiring for himself freedom from lust.*

The young sow, after passing out of that state of existence, was reborn in Suvaṇṇabhūmi in the royal household. Passing from that state of existence, she was reborn at Benāres; passing from that state of existence, she was reborn at Suppāraka Port in the household of a dealer in horses, then at Kāvīra Port in the household of a mariner. Passing from that state of existence, she was reborn in Anurādhapura in the household of a nobleman of high rank. Passing from that state of existence, she was reborn in the South country in the village of Bhokkanta as the daughter of a householder named Sumanā, being named Sumanā after her father.

When this village was deserted by its inhabitants, her father went to the kingdom of Dīghavāpi, and took up his residence in the village of Mahāmuni. Arriving here on some errand or other, Lakuṇṭaka Atimbara, minister of King Duṭṭhagāmanī, and met her, married her with great pomp, and took her with him to live in the village of Mahāpuṇṇa. One day Venerable Anula, whose residence was the Mahā Vihāra of Kōṭipabbata, stopped at the door of her house as he was going his round for alms, and seeing her, spoke thus to the monks, "Venerables, what a wonderful thing that a young sow should become the wife of Lakuṇṭaka Atimbara, prime minister of the king!"

(cont'd on page 725)

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Caught in alluring lustful thoughts, misjudging people are swept away by the flood of craving.

339. *Yassa chattiṁsatī sōtā*
manāpassavaṇā bhusā
vāhā vahanti duddiṭṭhiṁ
saṅkappā rāganissitā. (24:6)

For whom the six and thirty streams
so forceful flow to seemings sweet
floods of thought that spring from lust
sweep off such wrong viewholder.

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CAUGHT IN THE CURRENT OF CRAVING

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343) (cont'd)

When she heard his words, she uncovered her past states of existence, and she received the power of remembering previous births. Instantly she was deeply moved, and obtaining permission of her husband, retired from the world with great pomp and became a nun of the order of Pañcabālaka nuns. After listening to the recitation of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Suttanta* in Tissa Mahā Vihāra, she was established in the fruit of conversion. Subsequently, after the crushing of the Damiḷas, she returned to the village of Bhokkanta, where her mother and father lived, and took up her residence there. After listening to the *Āsīvisōpama Sutta* in *Kallaka Mahā Vihāra*, she attained arahatship. On the day before she passed into Nibbāna, questioned by the monks and nuns, she related this whole story to the community of nuns from the beginning to the end; likewise in the midst of the assembled community of monks, associating herself with the Venerable Mahā Tissa, a reciter of the Dhammapada and a resident of Maṇḍalārāma, she related the story as follows:

"In former times I fell from human estate and was reborn as a hen. In this state of existence my head was cut off by a hawk. I was reborn at Rājagaha, retired from the world, and became a wandering nun, and was reborn in the stage of the first trance. Passing from that state of existence, I was reborn in the household of a treasurer. In but a short time I passed from that state of existence and was reborn as a young sow. Passing from that state of existence, I was reborn in Suvaṇṇabhūmi; passing from that state of existence, I was reborn at Vārāṇasī passing from that state of existence, I was reborn at Suppāraka Port; passing from that state of existence, I was reborn at Kāvīra Port; passing from that state of existence, I was reborn at Anurādhapura; passing from that state of existence, I was reborn in Bhokkanta village. Having thus passed through thirteen states of existence, for better or for worse, in my present state of existence I became dissatisfied, retired from the world, became a nun, and attained arahatship. Everyone of you, work out your salvation with heedfulness." With these words did she stir the four classes of disciples with emotion; and having so done, passed into Nibbāna.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 338)

yathā api mūlē anupaddavē daḷhē chinnō api rukkho puna ēva rūhati ēvam api tanhānusayē anūhatē idaṁ dukkhaṁ punappunaṁ nibbattatī

yathā api: when; *mūlē:* the root; *anupaddavē:* unharmed; *daḷhē:* (and) strong; *chinnō api:* though cut down; *rukkho:* the tree; *puna ēva:* once again; *rūhati:* grows up; *ēvam api:* in the same way; *tanhānusayē:* the hidden traces of craving; *na ūhatē:* when not totally uprooted; *idaṁ dukkhaṁ:* this suffering; *punappunaṁ:* again and again; *nibbattatī:* will grow

Even when a tree has been cut down, it will group up again if its roots are strong and unharmed. Similarly, when traces of craving remain, the suffering is likely to arise again and again.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 339)

yassa chattiṁsatī sōtā manāpassavanā bhusā duddiṭṭhiṁ rāganissitā saṅkappā vāhā vahanti

yassa: in whom; *chattiṁsatī sōtā:* thirty-six streams; *manāpassavanā:* attractive to the mind; *bhusā:* (craving) are powerful; *duddiṭṭhiṁ:* unwise; *rāganissitā:* mixed with sensuality; *saṅkappā:* thoughts and feelings; *vāhā:* (are) very powerful; *vahanti:* (this) leads them (to hell)

If in a person the thirty-six streams flow strongly towards pleasurable thoughts, that person of depraved views will be carried away on those currents of craving.

(cont'd on page 727)

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Alluring thoughts nurture craving. Seeing it sprouted, with wisdom cut it at the root.

340. *Savanti sabbadhī sōtā*
latā ubbhijja tiṭṭhati
taṅ ca disvā lataṁ jātaṁ
mūlaṁ paññāya chindatha. (24:7)

Everywhere these streams are swirling,
up-bursting creepers rooted firm.
Seeing the craving-creeper there
with wisdom cut its root!

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THE CREEPER OF CRAVING

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 340)

sōtā savanti sabbadhī latā ubbhijja tiṭṭhati jātaṁ taṁ lataṁ ca disvā paññāya mūlaṁ chindatha

sōtā: the streams (of craving); *savanti:* flow; *sabbadhī:* everywhere; *latā:* the creeper; *ubbhijja:* has sprung up; *tiṭṭhati:* (and) stays; *jātaṁ:* that sprung up; *latā:* creeper (of craving); *disvā:* having seen; *paññāya:* with wisdom; *mūlaṁ:* the root; *chindatha:* cut down

The streams of craving flow towards objects everywhere. As a result, a creeper springs up and flourishes. The wise, when they see this creeper, should cut its root with wisdom.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 341)

saritāni sinēhitāni somanassāni jantunō bhavanti tē sātasitā sukhesinō tē narā vē jātijarūpagā

saritāni: flowing towards objects; *sinēhitāni:* soaked with craving; *sōmanassāni:* pleasures; *jantunō:* people; *bhavanti:* have; *tē:* they; *sātasitā:* seek pleasure; *sukhēsinō:* pursue happiness; *tē narā:* such persons; *vē:* certainly; *jātijarūpagā:* go to birth and decay

Craving arises in people like flowing streams. These flow towards pleasure and sensual satisfaction. Such people who are bent on pleasures will experience repeated cycles of birth and decay.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 342)

tasiṇāya purakkhatā pajā bādhitō sasō ēva parisappanti saññojanasaṅgasattā cirāya punappunaṁ dukkham upenti

tasiṇāya: by craving; *purakkhatā:* surrounded; *pajā:* masses; *bādhitō:* entrapped; *sasō ēva:* like a hare; *parisappanti:* tremble; *saññojanasaṅgasattā:* shackled by fetters; *cirāya:* for a long time; *punappunaṁ:* again and again; *dukkham:* to suffering; *upenti:* come

Surrounded by craving the masses tremble like a hare caught in a trap. Shackled by ten fetters and seven saṅgas, men and women suffer again and again over a long period of time.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 343)

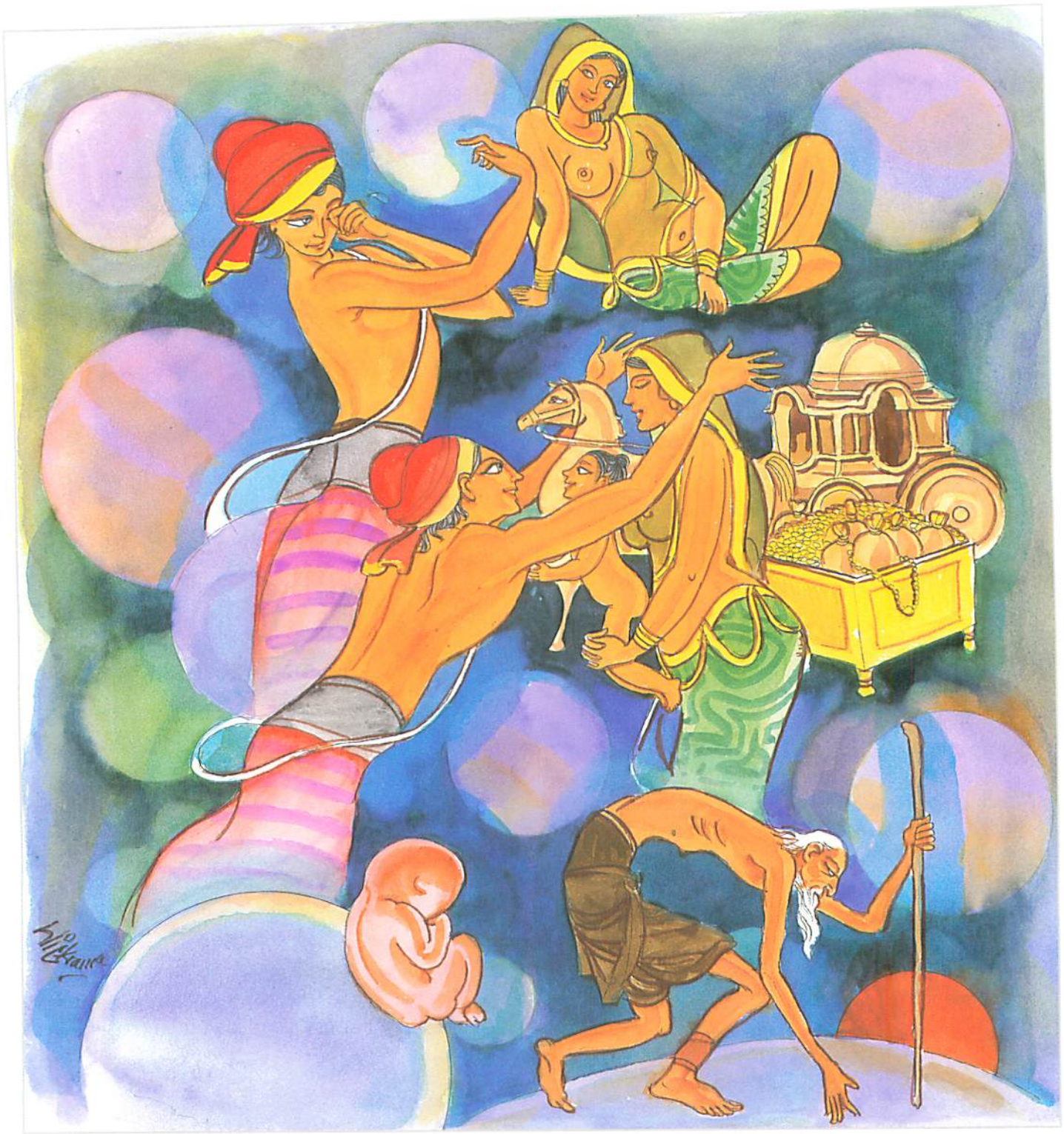
tasiṇāya purakkhatā pajā parisappanti sasō iva bādhitō tasmā tasiṇaṁ vinōdayē bhikkhu ākaṅkhī tasinaṁ vinōdayē

tasiṇāya: by craving; *purakkhatā:* surrounded; *pajā:* masses; *parisappanti:* tremble; *sasō iva:* like a hare; *bādhito:* entrapped; *tasmā:* therefore; *attanō:* to one's own self; *vinōdayē:* should shun; *bhikkhu:* the ascetic; *ākaṅkhī:* desiring; *tasiṇaṁ:* craving

Surrounded by craving, the masses tremble like a hare caught in a trap. Therefore, a monk desiring to attain detachment - Nibbāna - should shun craving.

(cont'd on page 729)

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Bound to delights and endearments pleasure-seekers are invariable victims of birth and decay.

341. *Saritāni sinēhitāni ca*
sōmanassāni bhavanti jantunō
tē sātasitā sukhesinō
tē vē jātijarūpagā narā. (24:8)

To beings there are pleasures streaming
sticky with desire,
steeped in comfort, happiness seeking,
such ones do come to birth, decay.

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BLISS DOES NOT COME THROUGH CRAVING

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343) (cont'd)

Commentary

anupaddavē daḷhē: The comparison is with a tree. Even if the tree is pruned, and if the roots are unharmed and strong, it will grow up again.

punarēva rūhati: If the roots are strong and unharmed, the tree will sprout again, although the trunk has been cut.

chattiṁ satī sōtā: thirty-six streams of craving. The eighteen bases (of craving) dependent on the internal and on the external *(āyatana)*: craving itself arising in one's stream of consciousness with regard to the six objects, pertaining to the past, future, and present, is called the 'eighteen bases of craving.' Thirty-six streams: Namely, the eighteen bases of craving that exist having the internal *āyatanas*, such as eyes, etc., as their sphere, and the eighteen bases of craving that exist having the external *āyatanas*, such as form, etc., as their sphere. Here, the thirty-six-fold craving exists in three dimensions, i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for existence, craving for the cessation of existence, having as its sphere the six internal *āyatanas* (i.e., 3 x 6 = 18), namely, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind, and the six external *āyatanas* (i.e., 3 x 6 = 18), namely, form, sound, smell, taste, touch, dharmas, is called the (18 + 18) thirty-six streams.

rāga nissitā: thoughts that are mixed with thoughts of passion and sensuality.

savanti: the streams of craving are flowing. Throughout the stanza, this idea is taken up.

latā ubbhijja tiṭṭhati: watered by the streams of craving, a creeper springs up - which is the creeper of craving.

mūlaṁ paññāya chindatha: cut off the root with wisdom.

saritāni: the idea of stream is being continued. *saritāni* implies flowing towards objects.

sātasitā: those who are gripped by craving. They take up delightful and pleasurable experiences.

bādhitō: entrapped; caught in a snare. The hare is generally a timid creature. Its fear will be far more pronounced when entrapped.

saññōjanasaṅga: ten fetters *(saṁyōjanas)* seven bonds *(saṅga)* bind the masses to *saṁsāra*. Ten *saṁyōjanas*, or defilements, are:

(1) holding to the opinion of enduring substantiality *(sakkāyadiṭṭhi)*,

(2) (skeptical) doubt *(vicikicchā)*,

(3) clinging to precept and practices *(sīlabbataparāmāsa)*,

(4) passion for sensual desires, *(kāmarāga)*,

(5) ill-will *(vyāpāda)*,

(6) passion for the fine-material (realm) *(rūparāga)*,

(7) passion for the formless (realm) *(arūparāga)*,

(8) self-estimation *(māna)*,

(9) agitation *(uddhaccaṁ)*, and

(10) ignorance *(avijjā)*.

They are of two modes: (i) pertaining to the upper part and (ii) pertaining to the lower part. They are called fetters because they bind beings in *saṁsāra* in the sense that they cause rebirth again and again there.
The five, beginning with holding to the opinion of enduring substantiality, and so on, are called those pertaining to the lower part because they are the cause for birth in the eleven realms of sensuality that are called lower (realms), and five, beginning with passion for the fine-material (realm), and so on, are called those pertaining to the upper part because they are the cause for birth in the fine-material realm and the formless realm, which are called upper. There is no liberation from *saṁsāra* for beings until these bonds of *saṁsāra*, which are of these two modes, are rooted out.

(cont'd on page 731)

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Worldly beings who are enmeshed in craving, like trapped hare, come to grief again and again.

342. *Tasiṇāya purakkhatā pajā*
parisappanti sasō'va bandhitō
saññōjanasaṅgasattakā
dukkham upenti punappunaṁ cirāya. (24:9)

Who follow craving are assailed,
they tremble as the hare ensnared,
held fast by fetters and by bonds
so long they come to dukkha again.

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THE BONDS THAT ENTRAP MEN

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343) (cont'd)

Commentary

Seven-fold attachments, *(saṅgayō)* are: craving, views, self-estimation, anger, ignorance, defilements and misconduct. Some say (they are) the seven latent dispositions *(anusaya)*, i.e., passion, hatred, self-estimation, views, (speculative) doubt, passion for existence, and ignorance. The activity of clinging with regard to the *saṁskāras*, having taken the five *skandhās* as a sentient being, a person, etc., is in the mode of either craving, views, etc., or passion, hatred, etc. Hence, they are called attachments.

ākaṅkhī virāgam: one who is desirous of attaining the state of detachment - Nibbāna.

Rebirth: This story, is replete with several layers of rebirth. Some of the rebirths referred to place even after the days of the Buddha. In some instances the rebirths take place in Sri Lanka. The concepts of the origin of life and of rebirth have being interpreted in various ways by scholars. Here is one point of view:

Rebirth, which Buddhists do not regard as a mere theory but as a fact verifiable by evidence, forms a fundamental tenet of Buddhism, though its goal, Nibbāna, is attainable in this life itself. The Bōdhisatta Ideal and the correlative doctrine of freedom to attain utter perfection are based on this doctrine of rebirth.

Documents record that this belief in rebirth is viewed as transmigration or reincarnation, in many great poems by Shelley, Tennyson and Wordsworth, and writings of many ordinary people in the East as well as in the West.

The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth should be differentiated from the theory of transmigration and reincarnation of other systems, because Buddhism denies the existence of a transmigrating permanent soul, created by a god, or emanating from a *paramātma* (divine essence).

It is kamma that conditions rebirth. Past kamma conditions the present birth; and present kamma, in combination with past Kamma, conditions the future. The present is the offspring of the past, and becomes, in turn, the parent of the future.

The reality of the present needs no proof as it is self-evident. That of the past is based on memory and report, and that of the future on forethought and inference.

If we postulate a past, a present and a future life, then we are at once faced with the problem — What is the ultimate origin of life?

One school, in attempting to solve the problem, postulates a first cause, whether as a cosmic force or as an almighty being. Another school denies a first cause for, in common experience, the cause ever becomes the effect and the effect becomes the cause. In a circle of cause and effect a first cause is inconceivable. According to the former, life has had a beginning; according to the latter, it is beginningless. In the opinion of some the conception of a first cause is like saying a triangle is round.

One might argue that life must have had a beginning in the infinite past and that beginning is the first cause, the creator.

In that case there is no reason why some may not make the same demand about a postulated creator.

With respect to this alleged first cause men have held widely different views. In interpreting this first cause, many names have been used.

Hindu traces the origin of life to a mystical *paramātma* from which emanate all *ātmās* or souls that transmigrate from existence to existence until they are finally reabsorbed in Paramātma. One might question whether these reabsorbed *ātmās* have further transmigration.

"Whoever," as Schopenhaeur says, "regards himself as having come out of nothing must also think that he will again become nothing; for that an eternity has passed before he was, and then a second eternity had begun, through which he will never cease to be, is a monstrous thought.

"Moreover, if birth is the absolute beginning, then death must be the absolute end; and the assumption that man is made out of nothing, leads necessarily to the assumption that death is his absolute end."

"According to the theological principles," argues Spencer Lewis, "man is created arbitrarily and without his desire, and at the moment of creation is either blessed or unfortunate, noble or depraved, from the first step in the process of his physical creation to the moment of his last breath, regardless of his individual desires, hopes, ambitions, struggles or devoted prayers. Such is theological fatalism.

In "Despair", a poem of his old age, Lord Tennyson, referring to theist theology, said:

> "I make peace and create evil.
> What I should call on that infinite love that has served us so well?
> Infinite cruelty rather that made everlasting hell.
> Made us, foreknew us, foredoomed us, and does what he will with his own.
> Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us groan."

"The doctrine that all men are sinners and have the essential sin of Adam is a challenge to justice, mercy, love and omnipotent fairness."

Huxley said: If we are to assume that anybody has designedly set this wonderful universe going, it is perfectly clear to me that he is no more entirely benevolent and just, in any intelligible sense of the words, than that he is malevolent and unjust.

According to Einstein: If this being is omnipotent, then every occurrence, including every human action, every human thought, and every human feeling and aspiration is also his work; how is it possible to think of holding men responsible for their deeds and thoughts before such an almighty being?

"In giving out punishments and rewards, He would to a certain extent be passing judgment on himself. How can this be combined with the goodness and righteousness ascribed to him?"

According to Charles Bradlaugh: The existence of evil is a terrible stumbling block to the theist. Pain, misery, crime, poverty confront the advocate of eternal goodness, and challenge with unanswerable potency his declaration of Deity as all-good, all-wise, and all-powerful."

Commenting on human suffering and creator, Prof. J.B.S. Haldane writes: Either suffering is needed to perfect human character, or God is not Almighty. The former theory is disproved by the fact that some people who have suffered very little but have been fortunate in their ancestry and education have very fine characters. The objection to the second is that it is only in connection with the universe as a whole that there is any intellectual gap to be filled by the postulation of a deity. And a creator could presumably create whatever he or it wanted."

Dogmatic writers of old authoritatively declared that the creator created man after his own image. Some modern thinkers state, on the contrary, that man created his creator after his own image. With the growth of civilization man's conception of God grows more and more refined. There is at present a tendency to substitute this personal creator by an impersonal god. Voltaire states that the conception of a creator is the noblest creation of man.

It is however impossible to conceive of such an omnipotent, omnipresent being, an epitome of everything that is good — either in or outside the universe.

(cont'd on page 733)

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Worldlings are trapped in their craving like a hare. Let a release-seeker his craving quell.

343. *Tasiṇāya purakkhatā pajā*
parisappanti sasō'va bandhitō
tasmā tasiṇaṁ vinōdayē
bhikkhu ākaṇkhī virāgamattanō. (24:10)

Who follow craving are assailed,
they tremble as the hare ensnared,
so let a bhikkhu craving quell
whose aim is passionlessness.

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NIBBĀNA BY SHUNNING CRAVING

24 (2) The Young Sow (Verses 338 – 343) (cont'd)

Commentary

Modern science endeavours to tackle the problem with its limited systematized knowledge. According to the scientific standpoint, we are the direct products of the sperm and ovum cells provided by our parents. But science does not give a satisfactory explanation with regard to the development of the mind, which is infinitely more important than the machinery of man's material body. Scientists, while asserting *"Omne vivum ex vivo"* "all life from life" maintain that mind and life evolved from the lifeless.

Now from the scientific standpoint we are absolutely parent-born. Thus our lives are necessarily preceded by those of our parents and so on. In this way life is preceded by life until one goes back to the first protoplasm or colloid. As regards the origin of this first protoplasm or colloid, however, scientists plead ignorance.

What is the attitude of Buddhism with regard to the origin of life? At the outset it should be stated that the Buddha does not attempt to solve all the ethical and philosophical problems that perplex mankind. Nor does He deal with speculations and theories that tend neither to edification nor to enlightenment. Nor does He demand blind faith from His adherents. He is chiefly concerned with one practical and specific problem — that of suffering and its destruction; all side issues are completely ignored.

"It is as if a person were pierced by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and his friends and relatives were to procure a surgeon, and then he were to say. 'I will not lead the holy life under the Buddha until He elucidated to me whether the world is eternal or not eternal, whether the world is finite or infinite...' That person would die before these questions had ever been elucidated by the Buddha.

"If it be the belief that the world is eternal, will there be the observance of the holy life? In such a case — No! If it be the belief that the world is not eternal, will there be the observance of the holy life? In that case also — No! But, whether the belief be that the world is eternal or that it is not eternal, there is birth, there is old age, there is death, the extinction of which in this life itself I make known."

"Mālunkyaputta, I have not revealed whether the world is eternal or not eternal, whether the world is finite or infinite. Why have I not revealed these? Because these are not profitable, do not concern the bases of holiness, are not conducive to aversion, to passionlessness, to cessation, to tranquility, to intuitive wisdom, to enlightenment or to Nibbāna. Therefore I have not revealed these." According to Buddhism, we are born from the matrix of action (*kammayōni*). Parents merely provide us with a material layer. Therefore being precedes being. At the moment of conception, it is kamma that conditions the initial consciousness that vitalizes the foetus. It is this invisible kammic energy, generated from the past birth, that produces mental phenomena and the phenomena of life in an already extant physical phenomena, to complete the trio that constitutes man.

Dealing with the conception of beings, the Buddha states:

"Where three are found in combination, there a germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together, but it is not the mother's fertile period, and the being-to-be-born (*gandhabba*) is not present, then no germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together,and it is the mother's fertile period, but the being-to-be-born is not present then again no germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together and it is the mother's fertile period, and the being-to-be-born is present, then by the conjunction of these three, a germ of life is there planted."

Here *gandhabba* (=*gantabba*) does not mean 'a class of dēvas said to preside over the process of conception', but refers to a suitable being ready to be born in that particular womb. This term is used only in this particular connection, and must not be mistaken for a permanent soul. For a being to be born here, somewhere this being must die. The birth of a being, which strictly means the arising of the aggregates (*khandhānaṁ pātubhāvō*), or psycho-physical phenomena in this present life, corresponds to the death of a being in a past life; just as,in conventional terms, the rising of the sun in one place means the setting of the same sun in another place. This enigmatic statement may be better understood by imagining life as a wave and not as a straight line. Birth and death are only two phases of the same process. Birth precedes death, and death, on the other hand, precedes birth. This constant succession of birth and death in connection with each individual life-flux constitutes what is technically known as *saṁsāra* - recurrent wandering.

What is the ultimate origin of life?

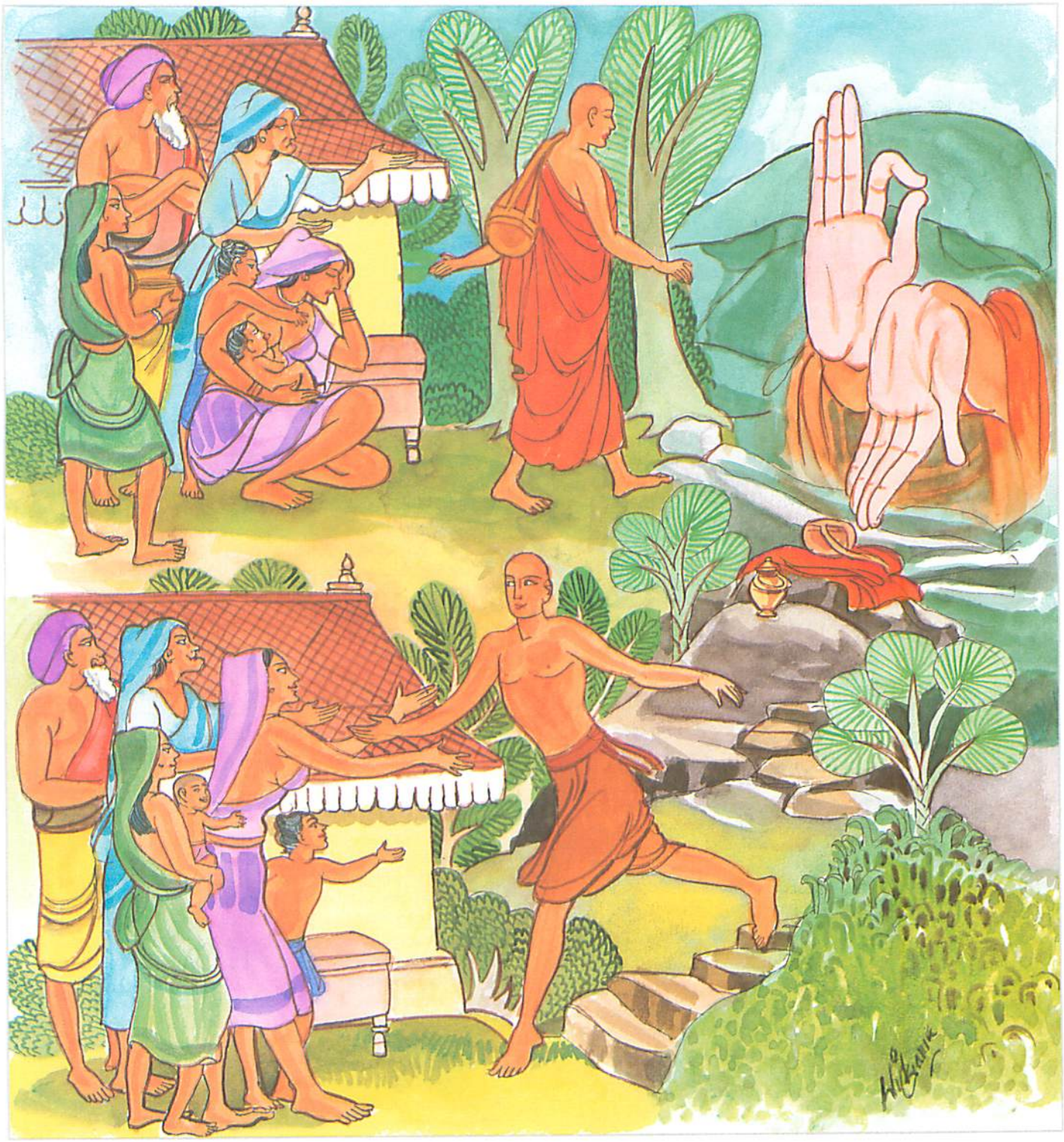
The Buddha positively declares: Without cognizable beginnings this *saṁsāra*, the earliest point of beings who, obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving, wander and fare on, is not to be perceived. This life-stream flows *ad infinitum*, as long as it is fed with the muddy waters of ignorance and craving. When these two are completely cut off, then only does the life-stream cease to flow, rebirth ends, as in the case of Buddhas and arahats. A first beginning of this life-stream cannot be determined, as a stage cannot be perceived when this life force was not fraught with ignorance and craving. It should be understood that the Buddha has here referred merely to the beginning of the life-stream of living beings.

Rebirth: But the four mental aggregates, viz, consciousness and the three other groups of mental factors forming *nāma* or the unit of consciousness, go on uninterruptedly arising and disappearing as before, but not in the same setting, because that setting is no more. They have to find immediately a fresh physical base as it were, with which to function - a fresh material layer appropriate and suitable for all the aggregates to function in harmony. The kammic law of affinity does this work, and immediately a resetting of the aggregates takes place and we call this rebirth.

But it must be understood that in accordance with Buddhist belief, there is no transmigration of a soul or any substance from one body to another. According to Buddhist philosophy what really happens, is that the last *javana* or active thought process of the dying man releases certain forces which vary in accordance with the purity of the five *javana* thought moments in that series. (Five, instead of the normal seven *javana* thought-moments). These forces are called *kamma vēga* or kammic energy which attracts itself to a material layer produced by parents in the mother's womb. The material aggregates in this germinal compound must possess such characteristics as are suitable for the reception of that particular type of kammic energy. Attraction in this manner of various types of physical aggregated produced by parents occurs through the operation of death and gives a favourable rebirth to the dying man. An unwholesome thought gives an unfavourable rebirth.

In brief, the combination of the five aggregates is called birth. Existence of these aggregates as a bundle is called life. Dissolution of these things is called death. And recombination of these aggregates is called rebirth. However, it is not easy for an ordinary man to understand how these so called aggregates recombine. Proper understanding of the nature of elements, mental and kammic energies and cooperation of cosmic energies is important in this respect. To some, this simple and natural occurrence - death, means the mingling of the five elements with the same five elements and thereafter nothing remains. To some, it means transmigration of the soul from one body to another; and to others, it means indefinite suspension of the soul; in other words, waiting for the day of judgment. To Buddhists, death is nothing but the temporary end of this temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being.

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He who greedless to greed flies back, behold him as flying from freedom to bondage again.

344. *Yō nibbanathō vanādhimuttō*
vanamuttō vanam'ēva dhāvati
taṁ puggalaṁ'ēva passatha
muttō bandhanam'ēva dhāvati. (24:11)

Who without woodness inclines to the wood,
free in the wood to woodness returns.
Do now regard that person well
who free returns to fetters.

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FREED FROM CRAVING RUNS BACK TO CRAVING

24 (3) The Story of a Monk who Disrobed (Verse 344)

While residing at the Veluvana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who was a pupil of the Venerable Mahākassapa.

As a pupil of the Venerable Mahākassapa, this monk had achieved the four mental absorptions *(jhānas)*. But one day, as he went for alms-food to his uncle's house, he saw a woman and felt a great desire to have her. Then he left the Sangha. As a layman, he was a failure as he did not work hard. So, his uncle drove him out of the house, and subsequently he became mixed up with some thieves. All of them were caught by the authorities and were taken to the cemetery to be executed. The Venerable Mahākassapa saw his pupil as he was being let out and said to him, "My pupil, keep your mind steadfastly on a subject of meditation." As instructed, he concentrated and let himself be established in deep mental absorption. At the cemetery, while the executioners were making preparations to kill him, the ex-monk was very much composed and showed no signs of fear or anxiety. The executioners and the onlookers were awe-struck and very much impressed by the man's courage and composure and they reported about him to the king and also to the Buddha. The king gave orders to release the man. The Buddha on hearing about the matter sent his radiance and appeared to the thief as if in person whereupon He gave the stanza.

At the end of the discourse, the thief who was steadfastly keeping his mind on the arising and perishing of the aggregates discerned the impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self nature of all conditioned things and soon attained sōtāpatti fruition. Later, he went to the Buddha at the Jētavana Monastery where he was again admitted to the Sangha by the Buddha and he instantly attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 344)

yō nibbanathō vanādhimuttō vanamuttō vanam ēva dhāvati taṁ muttō bandhanam ēva dhāvati taṁ puggalaṁ ēva passatha

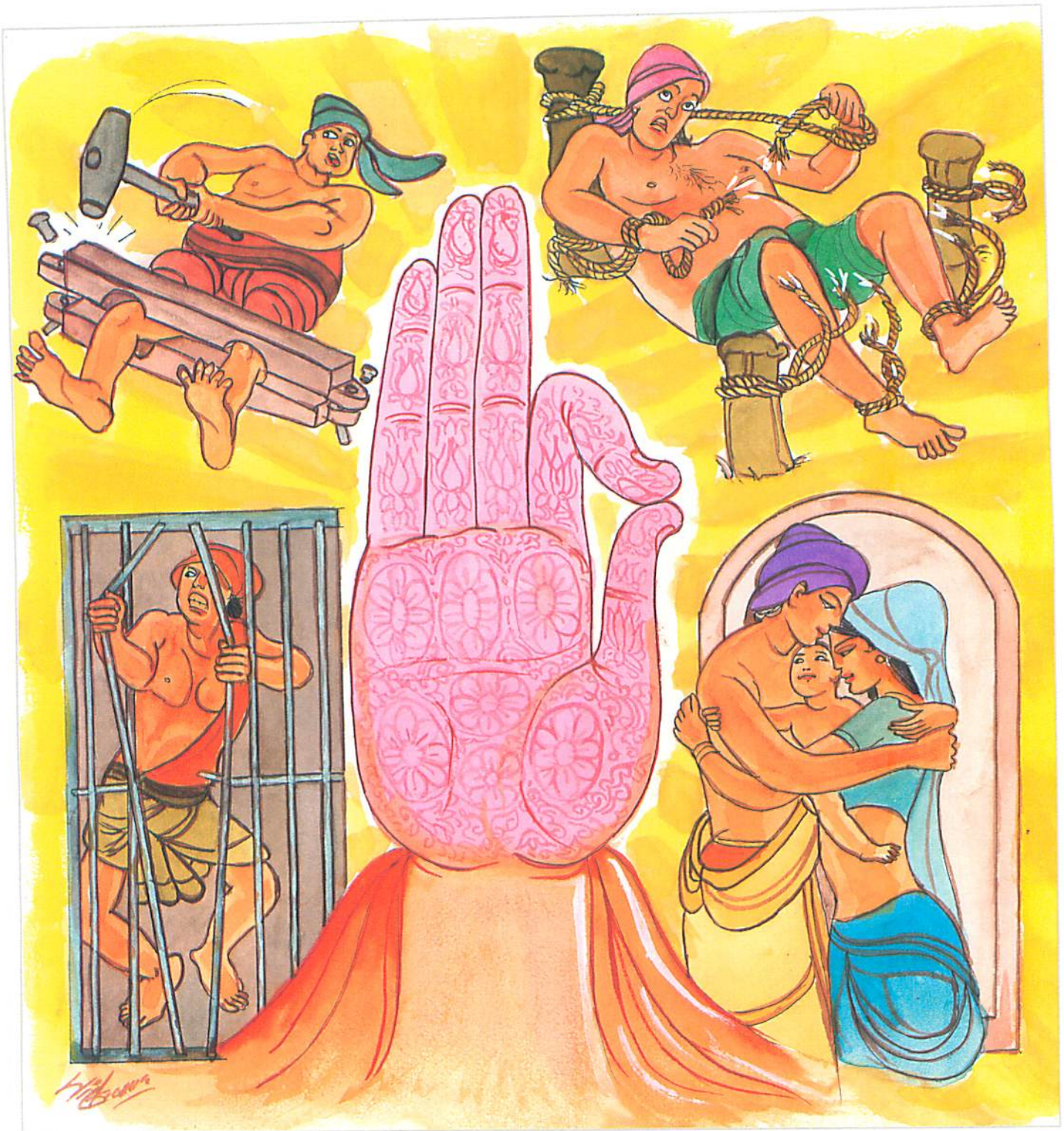
yō: some one; *nibbanathō:* free of forests (craving); *vanādhimuttō:* taking pleasure in the life of the forest-dwelling truth-seeker; *vanamuttō:* freed from the forest of craving; *vanaṁ ēva:* to that forest itself; *dhāvati:* runs; *muttō:* freed from the bonds of the householder; *bandhanaṁ ēva:* to the same bond; *taṁ puggalaṁ:* that person; *passatha:* behold

Having left the forest of desire (i.e., the life of a householder), he takes to the forest of the practice (i.e., the life of a monk); but when he is free from the forest of desire he rushes back to that very forest. Come, look at that man who having become free rushes back into that very bondage.

Commentary

In this verse, the image of forest *(vana)* is used to give several significance. Firstly, the person is free of the forest — meaning the underbrush of craving. Thus freed, he leaves the forest which signifies the solitude of the forest hermitage. Such a person, once free of the forest of craving, rushes back to the forest of worldly life. At the end of it all, he returns once more to the solitude of the forest hermitage.

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Fetters of iron, etc., are not reckoned as strong as desire for wife, children and worldly goods.

345. *Na taṁ daḷhaṁ bandhanamāhu dhīrā*
yadā'yasaṁ dārujaṁ babbajaṁ ca
sārattarattā maṇikuṇḍalēsu
puttēsu dārēsu ca yā apekkhā. (24:12)

Neither of iron nor wood nor hemp
is bond so strong, proclaim the wise,
as passion's yearn for sons, for wives,
for gems and ornaments.

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BONDS OF ATTACHMENTS

24 (4) The Prison-House (Verses 345 & 346)

The story goes that once upon a time, criminals, house-breakers, highwaymen, and murderers, were brought before the king of Kōsala. The king ordered them to be bound with fetters, ropes, and chains. Now thirty country monks, desiring to see the Buddha, came and saw the Buddha, saluted him and took their leave. On the following day, as they went about Sāvatthi for alms, they came to the prison-house and saw those criminals. Returning from their alms-round, they approached the Buddha at eventide and said to him, "Venerable, to-day, as we were making our alms-rounds, we saw many criminals in the prison-house. They were bound with fetters, ropes, and chains, and were experiencing much suffering. They cannot break these fetters and escape. Is there any bond stronger than these bonds?"

In reply to their question, the Buddha said, "Monks, what do these bonds amount to? Consider the bond of the evil passions, the bond which is called craving, the bond of attachment for wealth, crops, sons, and wives. This is a bond a hundredfold, nay, a thousandfold stronger than these bonds which you have seen. But strong as it is, and hard to break, wise men of old broke it, and going to the Himālaya country, retired from the world." So saying, he related the following

4a. Story of the Past: Husband and wife

In times long past, when Brahmadatta was ruling at Benāres, the future Buddha was reborn in the family of a certain poor householder. When he reached manhood, his father died; so he worked for hire and supported his mother. His mother, in spite of his protests, brought him a certain daughter of respectable family to wife. After a time his mother died. In the course of time his wife conceived a child in her womb.

Not knowing that she had conceived a child, the husband said to the wife, "Dear wife, make your living by working for hire; I intend to become a monk." Thereupon the wife said to the husband, "I have conceived a child in my womb. Wait until I give birth to the child and you see him, and then become a monk." "Very well," said the husband, promising to do so.

When the wife had given birth to her child, the husband took leave of her, saying, "Dear wife, you have given birth to your child in safety; now I shall become a monk." But the wife replied, "Just wait until your son has been weaned from the breast." While the husband waited, the wife conceived a second child.

The husband thought to himself, "If I do as she wishes me to, I shall never get away; I will run away and become a monk without so much as saying a word to her about it." So without saying so much as a word to his wife about his plans, he rose up in the night and fled away. The city guards caught him. But he persuaded them to release him, saying to them, "Masters, I have a mother to support; release me."

After tarrying in a certain place he went to the Himālaya country and adopted the life of an anchorite. Having developed the supernatural faculties and the higher attainments, he dwelt there, diverting himself wish the diversion of the trances. And as he dwelt there, he thought to himself, "I have broken this bond which is so hard to break, the bond of the evil passions, the bond of attachment for son and wife." So saying, he breathed forth a solemn utterance.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 345)

āyasaṁ dārujaṁ babbajañ yaṁ ca taṁ dhīrā
daḷhaṁ bandhanaṁ na āhu manikuṇḍalēsu sārattarattā puttēsu dārēsu ca yā apekkhā

āyasaṁ: iron; *dārujaṁ:* of wood; *babbajañ ca:* of babus grass; *taṁ:* all these bonds; *dhīrā:* wise ones; *daḷhaṁ bandhanaṁāhu:* do not describe as 'strenuous'; *manikuṇḍalēsu:* to gem studded ear ornaments; *sārattarattā:* strongly attached; *puttēsu:* to sons; *dārēsu:* wives; *yā apekkhā:* if there is any desire

(cont'd on page 739)

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Wise go forth, rejecting without a murmur the worldly pleasures, a lower but a tenacious bond.

346. *Ētaṁ daḷhaṁ bandhanamāhu dhīrā*
ōhārinaṁ sithilaṁ duppamuñcaṁ
ētam'pi chetvāna paribbajanti
anapekkhinō kāmasukhaṁ pahāya. (24:13)

That bond is strong, proclaim the wise,
down-dragging, pliable, hard to loose.
This passion severed, they wander forth
forsaking sensual pleasures.

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BONDS ARE STRONG, BUT THE WISE GET RID OF THEM

24 (4) The Prison House (Verses 345 & 346) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (346)

ētaṁ dhīrā daḷhaṁ bandhanam āhu ōhārinaṁ sithilaṁ duppamuñcaṁ ōhārinaṁ ētaṁ pi chetvāna anapekkhinō kāmasukhaṁ pahāya paribbajanti

ētaṁ: this bond; *dhīrā:* wise ones; *daḷhaṁ bandhanam āhu*: declare a strong bond; *ōhārinaṁ:* pulls down; depraves; *sithilaṁ:* slack; *duppamuñcaṁ:* not easy to get rid of; *ētaṁ pi:* this bond too; *chetvāna:* having cut off; *anapekkhinō:* with no yearning (for sensuality); *kāmasukhaṁ:* sensual pleasure; *pahāya:* having given up; *paribbajanti:* take to monastic life

The wise agree that this is a strong bond. It tends to deprave. Though this seems a lax knot, it is difficult to untie it to be free. However difficult the process is, freeing themselves from yearning for sensual pleasures, the wise leave household life and become ascetics.

Commentary

ayasaṁ; dārujaṁ; babbajaṁ: these are all materials out of which fetters, bonds are made - iron-wood and grass (for ropes).

maṇikuṇḍalēsu: gem-studded ear ornaments: jewellery.

sārattarattā: deeply attached.

ōhārinaṁ: possessing the tendency to drag down tending to depravity.

sithilaṁ:lax; slack. If a tie is lax, how can it prove a problem? Although it is lax, it restricts movement. One finds how restricting it is only when one tries to move towards the food.

duppamuñcaṁ: difficult to be untied.

anapekkhinō kāmasukhaṁ: In order to initiate the move towards renunciation one has to cease yearning for sensual pleasures.

Kāmasukhaṁ: The pleasures of the senses.

At the outset the Buddha cautioned his disciples to avoid the two extremes. His actual words were: There are two extremes (*antā*) which should not be resorted to by a recluse (*pabbajitēna*). Special emphasis was laid on the two terms *anta* which means end or extreme and *pabbajita* which means one who has renounced the world.

One extreme, in the Buddha's own words, was the constant attachment to sensual pleasures *(kāmasukhallikānuyōga)*. The Buddha described this extreme as base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and profitless.

This should not be misunderstood to mean that the Buddha expects all His followers to give up material pleasures and retire to a forest without enjoying this life. The Buddha was not so narrow-minded.

Whatever the deluded sensualist may feel about it, to the dispassionate thinker the enjoyment of sensual pleasure is distinctly short-lived, never completely satisfying, and results in unpleasant reactions. Speaking of worldly happiness, the Buddha says that the acquisition of wealth and the enjoyment of possessions are the source of pleasure for a layman. An understanding recluse would not however seek delight in the pursuit of these fleeting pleasures. To the surprise of the average man he might shun them. What constitutes pleasure to the former is a source of alarm to the latter to whom renunciation alone is pleasure.

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The wise cast away all dukkha, severing their lustful ties like a spider caught in its own web.

347. *Yē rāgarattā'nupatanti sōtaṁ*
sayaṁ kataṁ makkaṭako'va jālaṁ
ētam'pi chetvāna vajanti dhīrā
anapekkhinō sabbadukkhaṁ pahāya. (24:14)

Ensnared in passion back they fall
as spider on a self-spun web.
This passion severed, wander the wise
forsaking dukkha all.

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SPIDER WEB OF PASSION

24 (5) The Story of Thēri Khēmā (Verse 347)

While residing at the Vēluvana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Queen Khēmā.

Queen Khēmā was the chief queen of King Bimbisāra. She was very beautiful and also very proud. The king wanted her to go to the Vēluvana Monastery and pay homage to the Buddha. But she had heard that the Buddha always talked disparagingly about beauty and she therefore tried to avoid seeing the Buddha. The king understood her attitude towards the Buddha; he also knew how proud she was of her beauty. So the king ordered his minstrels to sing in praise of the Vēluvana monastery, about its pleasant and peaceful atmosphere, etc. Hearing them, Queen Khēmā became interested and decided to set out for the Vēluvana Monastery.

When Queen Khēmā arrived at the monastery, the Buddha was expounding the Dhamma to an audience. By his supernormal power, the Buddha made a very beautiful young lady appear, sitting not far from him, and fanning him. When Queen Khēmā came to the audience hall, she alone saw the beautiful young lady. Comparing the exquisite beauty of the young lady to that of her own, Khēmā realized that her beauty was much inferior to that of the young lady. As she looked again at the young lady her beauty began to fade gradually. In the end, she saw before her eyes an old decrepit being, which again changed into a corpse, her stinking body being attacked by maggots. At that instant, Queen Khēmā realized the impermanence and worthlessness of beauty.

The Buddha knowing the state of her mind remarked, "O' Khēmā! Look carefully at this decaying body which is built around a skeleton of bones and is subject to disease and decay. Look carefully at the body which is thought of so highly by the foolish. Look at the worthlessness of the beauty of this young girl." After hearing this, Queen Khēmā attained sōtāpatti fruition.

At the end of the discourse, Queen Khēmā attained arahatship and was admitted to the Sangha and became the chief female disciple of the Buddha.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 347)

rāgarattā yē sayaṁ kataṁ jālaṁ makkaṭakō iva
sōtaṁ patanti dhīrā ētaṁ api chetvāna
anapekkhinō sabbadukkhaṁ pahāya vajanti

rāgarattā: in the heat of passion; *yē:* they; *sayaṁ kataṁ:* made by one's own self; *jālaṁ:* web; *makkaṭakō iva:* like the spider; *sōtaṁ:* (into) the stream (of craving); *patanti:* fall; *dhīrā:* wise ones; *ētaṁ api:* even this; *chetvāna:* having cut off; *anapekkhinō:* with no yearning (for sensual pleasures); *sabbadukkhaṁ pahāya:* overcoming all suffering; *vajanti:* enter Nibbāna

Beings who are infatuated with lust fall back into the stream of craving they have generated, just as a spider does in the web it has spun. The wise cutting off the bond of craving, walk on resolutely, leaving all ills *(dukkha)* behind.

Commentary

makkaṭakō va jālaṁ: like the spider's web, made by itself. The spider follows the various streams (threads) of the web to capture its victims.

anupatanti sōtaṁ: Those in the heat of passion, too, follow their self-made streams of sensual pleasures and fall into these streams.

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Mind released everywhere, one's beyond birth and decay, having terminated life's journeying.

348. *Muñca purē muñca pacchatō*
majjhē muñca bhavassa pāragū,
sabbattha vimuttamānasō
na puna jātijaraṁ upehisi. (24:15)

Let go before, let go the after,
let go the middle, beyond becoming.
With mind released in every way
you'll come no more to birth, decay.

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REACHING THE FURTHER SHORE

24 (6) The Story of Uggasēna (Verse 348)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Uggasēna, a rich man's son who fell in love with a dancer.

Once, a wandering theatrical troupe consisting of five hundred dancers and some acrobats came to Rajagaha and performed on the grounds of the palace of King Bimbisāra for seven days. There, a young dancer who was the daughter of an acrobat sang and danced on top of a long bamboo pole. Uggasēna, the young son of a rich man, fell desperately in love with this dancer and his parents could not stop him from marrying her. He married the young dancer and followed the troupe. As he was not a dancer nor an acrobat, he was not of much use to the party. So, as the party moved from place to place, he had to carry boxes, to drive the carts, etc.

In course of time, a son was born to Uggasēna and his wife, the dancer. To this child, the dancer would often sing a song which ran thus" "O you, son of the man who keeps watch over the carts; the man who carries boxes and bundles! O you, son of the ignorant one who can do nothing!" Uggasēna heard the song; he knew that his wife was referring to him and he was very much hurt and depressed. So he went to his father-in-law, the acrobat, and requested him to teach him acrobatics. After a year's training, Uggasēna became a skilful acrobat.

Then, Uggasēna went back to Rājagaha, and it was proclaimed that Uggasēna would publicly demonstrate his skill in seven days' time. On the seventh day, a long pole was put up and Uggasēna stood on top of it. At a signal given him from below he somersaulted seven times on the pole. At about this time, the Buddha saw Uggasēna in his vision and knew that time was ripe for Uggasēna to attain arahatship. So he entered Rājagaha and willed that the audience should turn their attention to him instead of applauding Uggasēna for his acrobatic feats. When Uggasēna saw that he was being neglected and ignored, he just sat on top of the pole, feeling very discontented and depressed. The Buddha then addressed Uggasēna, "Uggasēna, a wise man should abandon all attachment to the khandha aggregates and strive to gain liberation from the round of rebirths."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 348)

purē muñca pacchatō muñca majjhē muñca
bhavassa pāragū sabbattha vimuttamānasō na
puna jātijaraṁ na upēhisi

purē: craving for the past physical forms; *muñca:* give up; free yourself from; *pacchatō:* craving for future physical forms; *majjhē:* craving for the present physical forms; *bhavassa:* of existence; *pāragū:* you have come to the end (you have gone to the other shore); *sabbattha:* everywhere; in everything; *vimuttamānasō:* (you are) of non-attached mind; *puna:* once again; *jātijaraṁ:* to birth and death; *na upēhisi:* you will not come

Give up the past, give up the future, give up the present. Having reached the end of existences, with a mind freed from all (conditioned things), you will not again undergo birth and decay.

At the end of the discourse, Uggasēna, who was still on top of the pole, attained arahatship. He came down and was soon admitted to the Sangha by the Buddha.

Commentary

bhavassa pāragū: having come to the end of existence — *bhava*. *Bhava*: becoming, process of existence, consists of three planes: sensuous existence *(kāma-bhava)*, fine-material existence *(rūpabhava)*, immaterial existence *(arūpa-bhava)*.

The whole process of existence may be divided into two aspects:

(1) *kamma*-process *(kamma-bhava)*, that is, the kammically active side of existence, being the cause of rebirth and consisting in wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions.

(2) *kamma*-produced rebirth or regenerating process *(uppatti-bhava)*, that is the kammically passive side of existence consisting in the arising and developing of the *kamma*-produced and, therefore, morally neutral mental and body phenomena of existence.

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With lust intense, on beauty dwelling, crushed by one's thoughts, craving productively grows.

349. *Vitakkapamathitassa jantunō*
tibbarāgassa subhānupassinō
bhiyyō taṇhā pavaḍḍhati
ēsa khō ḍaḷhaṁ karōti bandhanaṁ. (24:16)

For one who's crushed by thinking much
excessive lust from beauty's sight,
for that one craving grows the more,
that one makes strong the bonds.

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CRAVING TIGHTENS BONDS

24 (7) Young Archer the Wise (Verses 349 & 350)

The story goes that once upon a time a young monk took the ticket that fell to him, obtained ticket-porridge, went to the assembly hall, but finding no water there, went to a certain house for the purpose of obtaining water. There a young woman saw him, and no sooner saw him then fell in love with him. "Venerable," said she, "should you again require water, pray come right here; go nowhere else."

After that, whenever he failed to obtain drinking water, he went to her house and never went anywhere else. And she would take his bowl and give him water for drinking. As time went on, she gave him rice-gruel also. Again one day she provided a seat for him right there and gave him boiled rice. And seating herself near him, she started up a conversation, saying, "Venerable, it is very lonely indeed in this house; we never see so much as a traveler." After listening to her talk for a few days, the young monk became discontented.

One day some visiting monks saw him and asked him, "Brother, why is it that you are so very yellow?" "I am discontented." So they took him to his teacher and his preceptor. His teacher and his preceptor took him to the Buddha and reported the matter to him. The Buddha asked, "Monk, is the statement true that you are discontented?" "It is true," replied the young monk. Then said the Buddha, "Monk, why is it that after retiring from the world in the religion of a Buddha so vigorous as I, instead of causing it to be said of you that you have attained the fruit of conversion or the fruit of the second path, you allow it to be said of you that you are discontented? You are guilty of a grievous sin." Continuing, the Buddha asked the young monk, "Why are you discontented?" "Venerable, a certain woman said this and that to me."

"Monk, it is not at all strange that she should do such a thing as this. For in a previous state of existence, she had forsaken Dhanuggaha, the wisest man in all India, and conceiving a passion for a certain bandit on the spur of the moment, slew her husband." The monks asked the Buddha to make the matter clear, and in compliance with their request, he related the following:

7a. Story of the Past: Young Archer the Wise

In times past there lived a certain wise man named Young Archer the Wise, Culla Dhanuggaha. He acquired the arts and crafts at Takkasilā under a world-renowned teacher. His teacher was so pleased with the progress he made that he gave him his daughter in marriage. Young Archer the Wise took his wife and set out for Benāres. At the entrance to the forest he slew fifty bandits with fifty arrows. When his arrows were all gone, he seized the leader of the bandits and hurled him to the ground. "Wife, bring me my sword!" cried he. But the moment his wife saw that bandit, she conceived a passion for him, and placed the hilt of the sword in the hand of the bandit. The bandit straightway slew Young Archer the Wise. Then he took the woman with him and went his way.

As he proceeded on his way, he thought to himself, "Should this woman see another man, she will kill me too just as she did her husband. What use have I for such a woman? " Seeing a certain river, he left the woman on the near bank, took her ornaments, and said, "Remain where you are until I carry your ornaments across." Then and there he left her. When the woman discovered that the bandit had left her, she said, "Brahmin, you have taken all my ornaments and crossed to the other side. Return speedily, quickly; now take me too to the other side."

The bandit replied, "Woman, you have bartered a husband whom you have long known for me, a husband whom you know not; you have bartered a husband tried and true for a husband whom you have not tried. Woman, you may barter me for another man. Therefore I will go far from hence."

[In order to put the woman to shame, Sakka goes to the river accompanied by his charioteer and his musician. Sākka takes the form of a jackal, the charioteer that of a fish, and the musician that of a bird. The jackal takes a piece of meat in his mouth and stands in front of the woman. The fish leaps out of the water, and the jackal springs forward to catch the fish, dropping the piece of meat. The bird seizes the piece of meat and flies up into the air. The fish disappears in the water. Thus the jackal loses both fish and flesh. The woman laughs loudly.

(cont'd on page 747)

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To chop off Mara's bonds one must dwell on unwholesomeness and guard one's thoughts.

350. *Vitakkūpasamē ca yō ratō*
asubhaṁ bhāvayati sadā satō
ēsa khō vyantikāhiti
ēsa checchati Mārabandhanaṁ. (24:17)

But who delights in calming thoughts
develops foulness mindfully,
that one indeed will make an End,
will sever Mara's bonds.

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HE CUTS OFF BONDS OF MĀRA

24 (7) Young Archer the Wise (Verse 349 & 350) (cont'd)

[The jackal says:]

Who is this that laughs loud in the cassia thicket?
Here is no dancing or singing, or well-timed clapping of hands.
It is a time to weep, Shapely-Buttocks. Why pray do you laugh, fair one?

[The woman replies:]

Foolish, stupid jackal, little wisdom do you possess, jackal.
You have lost both fish and flesh; you mourn like a pauper.

[The jackal says:]

Easy to see are the faults of others, but hard to see are one's own.
You have lost both husband and lover. You too mourn, I doubt not.

[The woman says:]

So it is as you say, jackal, king of beasts.
Therefore I will go hence and submit to the will of a husband.

[The jackal says:]

He that will steal a vessel of clay, will also steal a vessel of copper.
You have done evil once, and will also do so again.

When the Buddha had related at length this Culla Dhanuggaha Jātaka, found in the fifth Nipāta, he said, "At that time you were Young Archer the Wise, the woman was this maiden here, and the king of the gods who came in the form of a jackal and put her to shame, was I myself. Even thus did this woman fall in love with a certain bandit at first sight and deprive of life the wisest man in all India. Monk, uproot and destroy the desire which has sprung up within you for this woman." Having thus admonished the monk, he expounded the Dhamma further, reciting the stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Versed 349)

vitakkapamathitassa tibbarāgassa subhānupassinō jantunō bhiyyō tanhā pavaḍḍhati ēsa khō bandhanaṁ daḷhaṁ karōti

vitakkapamathitassa : those assailed by doubts and suspicions; *tibbarāgassa:* with keen passions; *subhānupassinō:* taking the sensual pleasures as good; *jantunō:* in them; *bhiyyō:* greatly; *pavaḍḍhati:* increases; *ēsa khō:* this; *bandhanaṁ:* the grip of bonds; *daḷhaṁ karōti:* makes stronger

In those whose minds are agitated and assailed by doubts and suspicions, whose passions and sensualities are sharpened, craving increases more and more. This makes the bonds tighter.

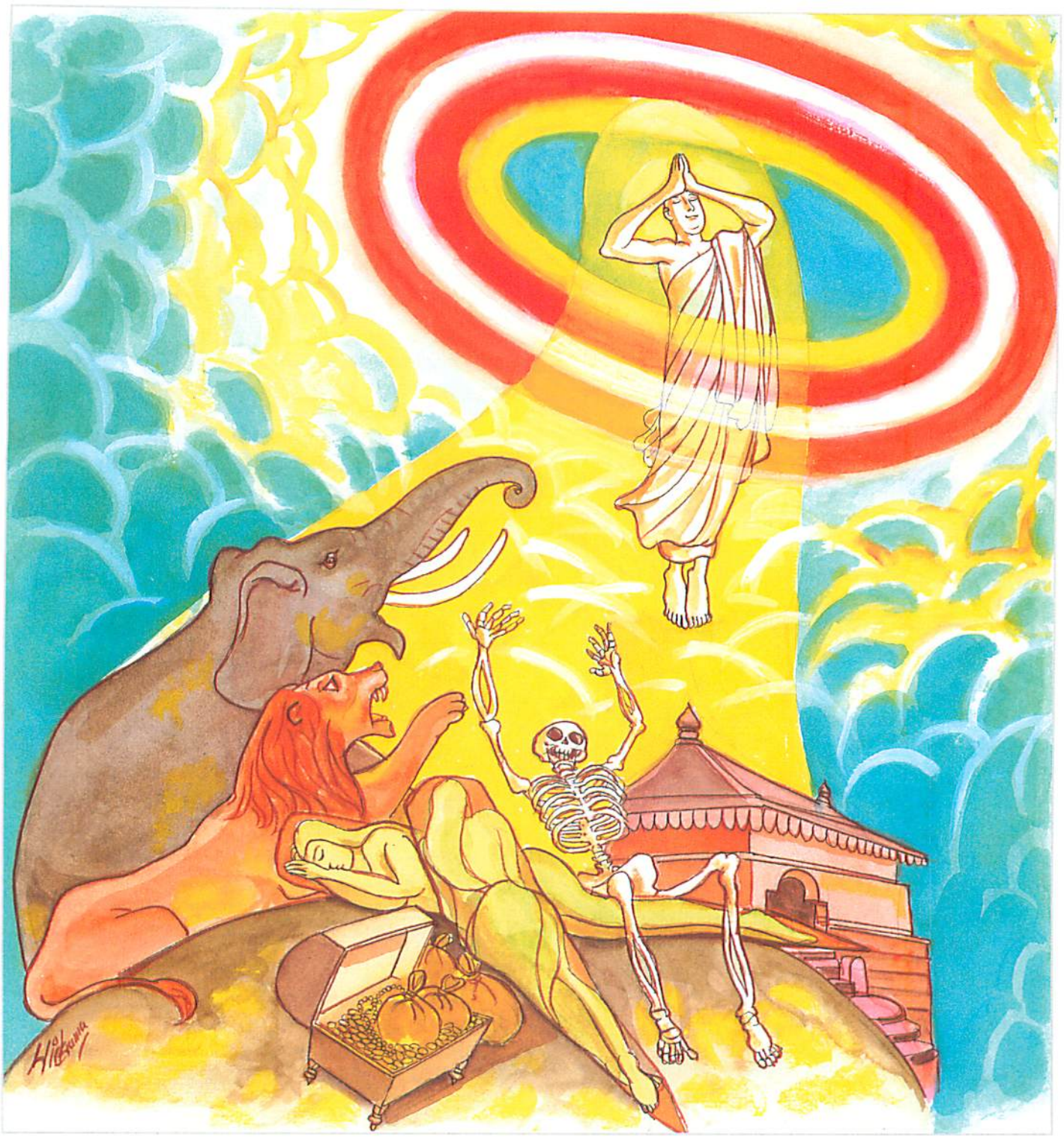
Explanatory Translation (Verse 350)

yō vitakkūpasamē ratō ca sadā satō asubham bhāvayati eso khō vyantikāhiti ēsa Mārabandhanaṁ checchati

yō: if some one; *vitakkūpasamē:* in the eradication of doubts and suspicions; *ratō:* is engaged; *sadā:* always; *satō:* mindful; *asubham:* the evil of the world of reality; *bhāvayati:* contemplates; *ēso khō:* that person; *vyantikāhiti:* will eradicate craving; *mārabandhanaṁ:* the bonds of Māra; *checchati:* will cut off

He who is constantly engaged in dispelling the doubts and suspicions that assail the mind, is earnest and ever alert, looks on the world of reality as not pleasant. He will eradicate craving and will cut off bonds of death.

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Without trembling, craving or blemishes, with one's end reached, this is the last bodily form.

351. *Niṭṭhangatō asantāsi*
vītataṇhō anaṅganō
acchindi bhavasallāni
antimō'yaṁ samussayō. (24:18)

One who's fearless, reached the End,
of craving and of blemish free,
who has becoming's thorn plucked out,
has this, a final body.

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THE PERSON WHO HAS REACHED THE GOAL

24 (8) Māra seeks in vain to frighten Rāhula (Verses 351 & 352)

For one day several Venerables entered the Jētavana Monastery at an unseasonable hour, and going to the quarters of Venerable Rāhula, woke him up. Rāhula, seeing no other place to sleep, went and lay down in front of the Buddha's perfumed chamber. This Venerable, although he was but eight years old, had already attained arahatship. As Māra Vasavattī, keeping his natural form, beheld him lying in front of the perfumed chamber, he thought to himself, "The son of the monk Gōtama lies outside the perfumed chamber, as though his finger hurt him; the monk himself reclines within the perfumed chamber, and if the finger of his son be pinched, he himself will feel a pinching." So Māra took the form of a gigantic elephant-king, and drawing near Rāhula, encircled his head with his trunk, and with a loud voice trumpeted the heron's call. The Buddha, even as he reclined in the perfumed chamber, perceived that it was Māra, and said, "Māra, with a hundred thousand like yourself, it would be impossible for you to frighten my son. My son is unafraid, devoid of craving, of mighty vigor, of great wisdom."

351. *He that has reached perfection, he that is unafraid, free from craving, devoid of lust, He that has cut out the arrows of being, such a man has reached his last state of existence.*

352. *He that is free from craving, he that is without attachment, He that is skilled to interpret words in the old dialect, He that knows the order of the letters from first to last, Such a man has received his last body, such a man is a great sage, a great man.*

At the conclusion of the lesson many obtained the fruit of conversion and the fruits of the second and third paths. Māra the evil one said to himself, "The monk Gōtama knows me," and then and there disappeared.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 351)

niṭṭhangatō asantāsi vītataṇhō anaṅganō
bhavasallāni acchindi ayaṁ antimō samussayō

niṭṭhangatō: who has reached the goal; *asantāsi:* free of trepidation; *vītataṇhō:* devoid of craving; *anaṅganō:* got rid of clinging defilements; *bhavasallāni:* the thorns of existence; *acchindi:* broken off; *ayaṁ:* this; *antimō samussayō:* is his final being

He has come to cessation. He has reached the goal of his monastic life. He is free of fear, craving and is blemishless. He has broken the thorns of existence. This is his final being

Explanatory Translation (Verse 352)

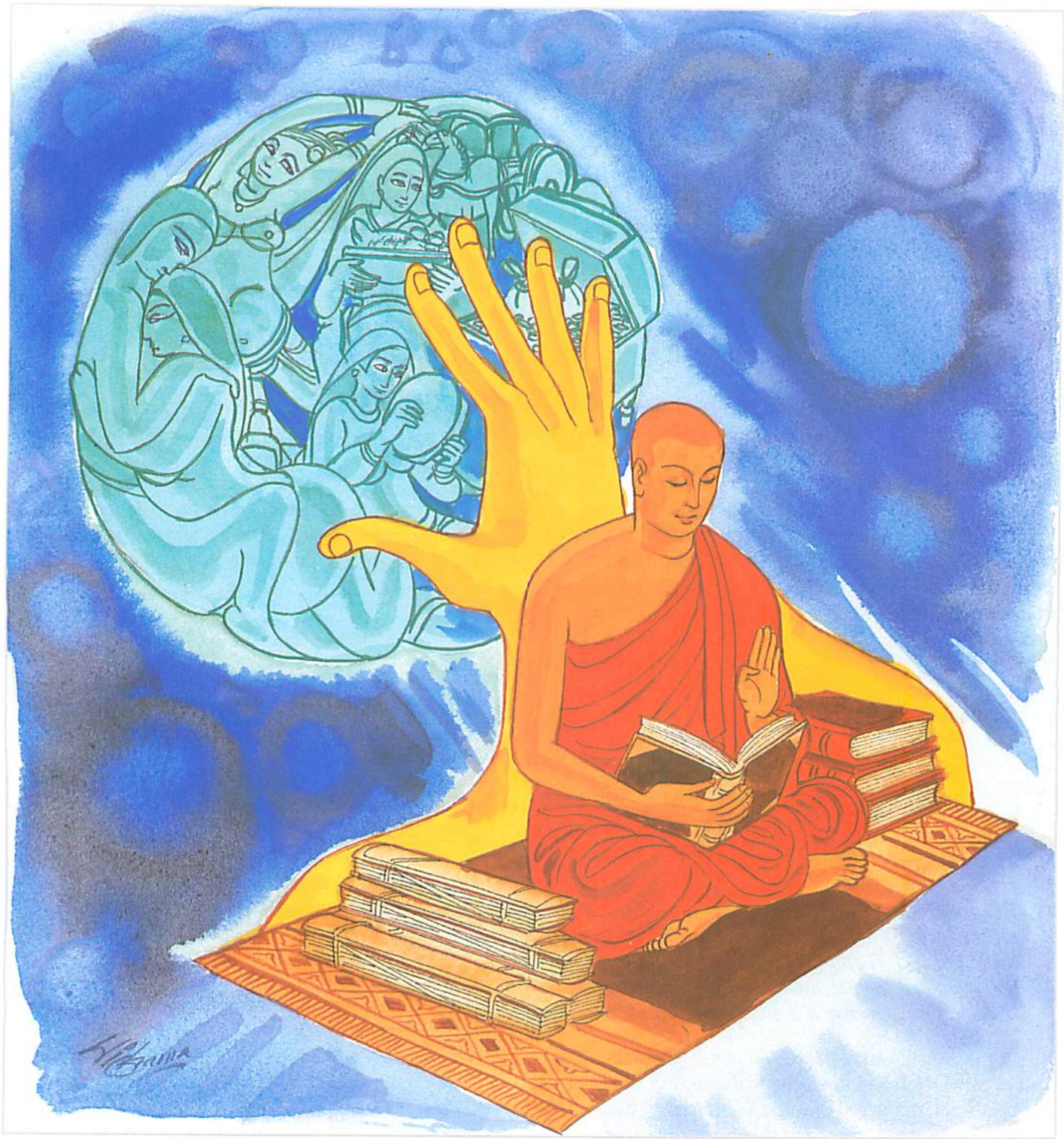
vītataṅhō anādānō niruttipadakōvidō akkharānaṁ
sannipātaṁ pubbaparāni ca jaññā antimasārīrō
sa vē mahāpaññō mahā purisō iti vuccati

vītataṅhō: ended craving; *anādānō:* without grasping; *niruttipadakōvidō:* well versed in the etymology and in usages; *akkharānaṁ:* aware of characters; *sannipātaṁ:* and their deployment into combinations; *pubbaparāni ca:* their sequence - what comes first and what later; *antimasārīrō:* who is in his last birth; *yō:* that person; *mahāpaññō:* the great wise man; *iti vuccati:* is called

He is free of craving and is devoid of grasping. He is well versed in etymology and in usages. He is aware of characters and their deployment into combinations. He knows the sequence of letters. He knows the old dialect. This is his last body. That person is a great wise man.

(cont'd on page 751)

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In this final body now freed of craving and grasping, he is the great being who is greatly wise.

352. *Vītataṇhō anādānō*
niruttipadakōvidō
akkharānaṁ sannipātaṁ
jaññā pubbāparāni ca
sa vē antimasārīrō
mahāpaññō mahāpurisō'ti vuccati. (24:19)

One of clinging-craving free,
who's skilled in ways of chanting,
knowing the wording-sequence,
of what precedes and follows,
possessed of final body,
one greatly wise, 'Great Person''s called.

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THE MAN OF GREAT WISDOM

24 (8) Māra seeks in vain to frighten Rāhula (Verses 351 & 352) (cont'd)

Commentary

Rāhula: In this dispensation Rāhula, the son of Prince Siddhattha, was born. When Gōtama Buddha, with the fine array of Mahā arahats, visited the home town of Kapilavatthu for the first time, Yasōdharā, the mother of Rāhula, who was only seven years old, pointing the Buddha to him, repeated a set of nine verses *(Narasīha gāthā)* so called as they gave a description of the king of men from foot to head while the last verse gave a graphic picture of Buddha among His disciples like the resplendent moon in the starry universe. Each Buddhist child had to learn these verses by memory.

Yasōdharā was also known as Bimbā Dēvi, so called due to her rosy complexion. After her ordination, she was known a Bhadda Kaccānā. The mother requested the child to ask for his inheritance from his father. The moment they met the young Rāhula was drawn towards the Buddha exclaiming, "Oh, how sweet is thy shade!" Rāhula, who was clamouring for his inheritance, followed the Buddha all the way to the temple while the Buddha remained silent. Addressing Venerable Sāriputta, the Buddha requested him to ordain Rāhula as worldly treasures would only prolong his samsaric existence. Instead, the seven-fold aryan treasure would be his on ordination. They consist in: (i) faith *(saddhā)*; (ii) virtue *(sīla)*; (iii) sense of shame towards unwholēsomeness; *(hiri)*, (iv) fear towards unwholesomeness *(ottappa)*, (v) learning through hearing discourses *(sutta)*, (vi) generosity *(cāgō)*, and (vii) insight *(paññā)*.

This led to an interesting sequel. King Suddhōdhana was grief stricken to learn that his grandson has been ordained. He hastened towards Buddha and laid bare his sorrow.

There was pathos in his lament. "It was so hard for me to find you, and first, Nanda, and now Rāhula, has left home one after another. This grief has penetrated to the very marrow of my bones. Please grant me a boon that hereafter, without the consent of the parents, that none of tender age would be ordained." It was readily granted by the Buddha.

By common consent, Rāhula was a strict adherent to the practice of the precepts. He was also an admirable pupil. Every morning it was a custom of his to throw up a handful of sand and wishing that he should get as ample admonition as those grains of sand. The Buddha preached to him that he should not tell a lie even for fun. The sermon is called *Ambalatthika Rāhulōvāda Sutta*. The Buddha compared a liar to an empty vessel. Once on begging rounds, Rāhula, who was then eighteen years old, was with the Buddha and was soon comparing himself with the Buddha and was fascinated by their similarity. The Blessed One promptly checked him by preaching the *Mahā Rāhulōvāda Sutta*. *Vāda* here means advice. There was a touching story of Rāhula spending one whole night at the lavatory used by the Buddha, being pressed for space. This was due to the Blessed One promulgating a rule. It wold appear that the laity had a habit of overstaying in the temple for days to hear religious discourses. Besides, some came from far away places. Most of these people disport themselves in various repulsive ways while asleep. It was not proper that monks should sleep in their midst. It is interesting to note that, in answer to a knock at the door of the lavatory by the Buddha, Rāhula exclaimed, "I Rāhula" instead of simply saying the meaningless "It is I" which many would say.

The Buddha forthwith summoned the monks headed by Sāriputta to narrate the episode.

The Buddha thereupon, relaxed the rule so that it operated only after the third day. This became the ruling topic of conversation of the monks. Venerable Rāhula, the son of the Buddha, was so modest and unassuming when he could be otherwise. Buddha, having heard this, narrated a small story called Tipalatthamiga Jātaka of the past to show that Rāhula's character was so even in the remote past.

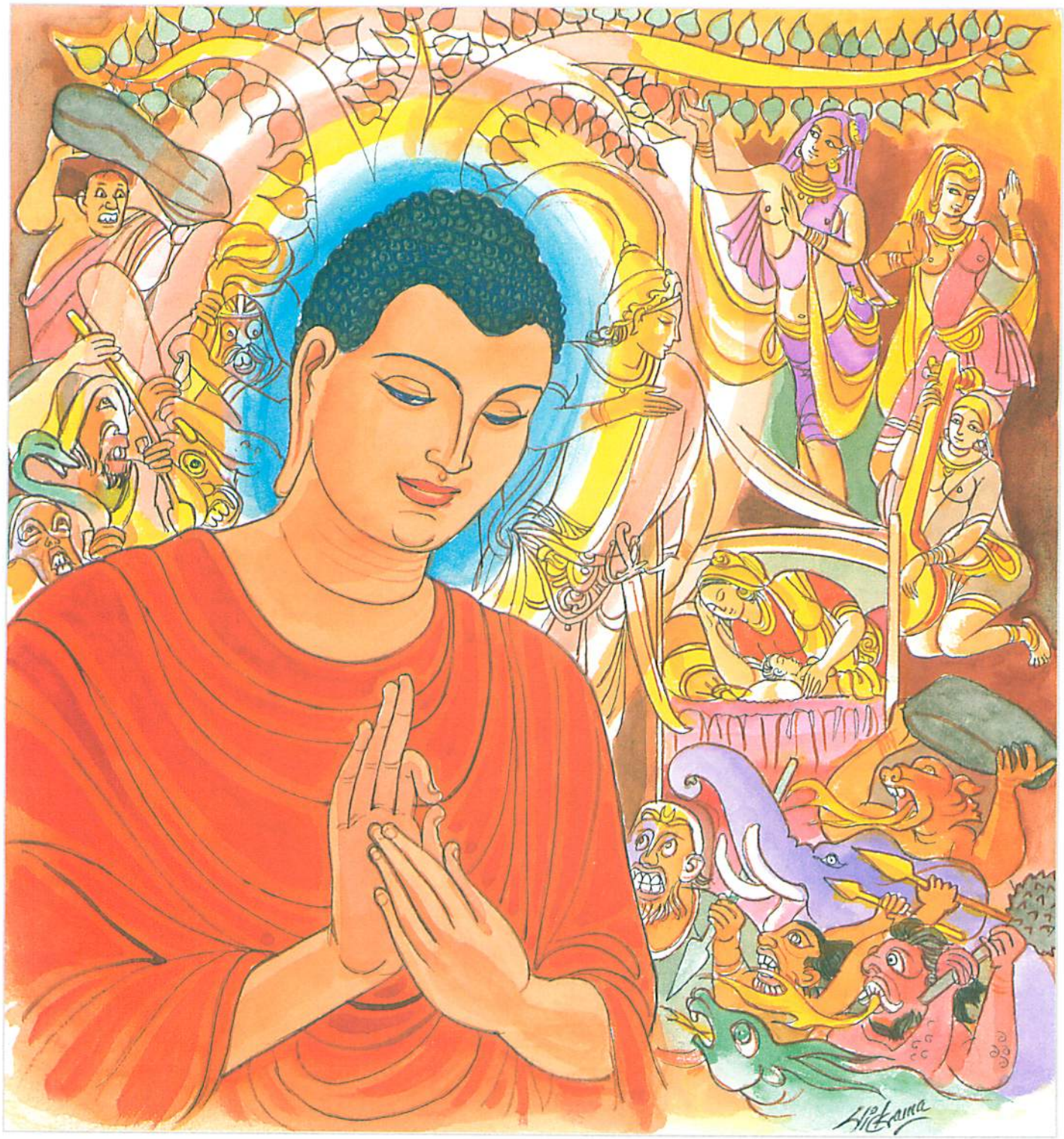
"Once upon a time in Vārāṇasī when Magada was the king and the Bōdhisatta was a leader of a herd of deer. This leader had a young nephew and, at the request of his mother, the leader undertook to teach him the arts and crafts by which they could outwit their enemies. One day, the young deer was trapped. So he fainted and feigned to be dead. His stomach got puffed up and he kept his breathing under control so much so that even the crows and flies were hovering about the body. The hunter, taking the deer to be dead, released the deer for making a meal of it on the spot. A fire was kindled. The young deer at once got up and took to his heels."

The *Thēragātha* contains four verses said to have been spoken by Rāhula. Buddha, addressing the monks, said that among his great arahats, Venerable Rāhula was pre-eminent for the observance of the precepts.

Rāhula was a great arahat foremost for the observance of precepts. The details of his life more or less coincide with those of the life of the Mahā arahat called Raṭṭhapāla. Born into wealthy families and though little was known of their previous lives, on coming of age like Sumēdha of old, they gave up their wealth. Both felt that it was foolish to amass wealth. They distributed the wealth among the poor to become hermits. At this time hermits enjoying psychic power come from the kingdom of the Nāga whose king was called Pathavindara, and the other came from the heavenly realm of the thirty-three deities *(tāvatiṁsa)*. Each hermit had a pupil. The hermits not only gave their blessing but also extolled the virtues of their respective abodes. On death, each hermit was born in the region from which each hailed. One was therefore, born in Pathavindhara as king of Nāgas and the other as Sākka in the heavenly abode.

Pathavindara and Sākka decided to be born together on Earth as a Buddha was appearing on Earth, and the two were Rāhula and Raṭṭhapāla

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All-conquering, all-knowing, detached from all, self-liberated, I am now my own Teacher.

353. *Sabbābhibhū sabbavidū'hamasmi*
sabbēsu dhammēsu anūpalittō
sabbañjahō taṇhakkhayē vimuttō
sayaṁ abhiññāya kam'uddiseyyaṁ? (24:20)

Beyond all being, wise to all,
unsoiled by dhammas all am I,
left all and freed by craving's end,
by self I've known, whom teacher call?

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BUDDHA IS TEACHERLESS

24 (9) The Story of Upaka (Verse 353)

The Buddha spoke this verse, in answer to the question put up by Upaka, a non-Buddhist ascetic, while He was on His way to the Deer Park (Migadāya) where the group of five monks (panca vaggis) were staying. The Buddha was going there to expound the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* to the *panca vaggis*, his old associates, viz., Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Assaji, and Mahānāma. When Upaka saw the Buddha, he was very much impressed by His radiant countenance and so said to him, "Friend, you look so serene and pure; may I know who your teacher is?" To him, the Buddha replied that he had no teacher.

At the end of the discourse, Upaka expressed neither approval nor disapproval but just nodded a few times and went on his way.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 353)

ahaṁ sabbābhibhū asmi sabbavidū sabbēsu dhammēsu anūpalitto sabbañ jahō taṇhakkhayē vimuttō sayaṁ abhiññāya kam uddiseyyaṁ

ahaṁ: I am; *sabbābhibhū:* one who has overcome all dhammas of the three planes (of existence); *asmi:* I am; *sabbavidū:* all knowing; *sabbēsu dhammēsu:* in all matters; *na ūpalittō:* not attached; *sabbañ jahō:* given up everything; *taṇhakkhayē:* in the state of cravinglessness (Nibbāna); *vimuttō:* I have achieved freedom; *sayaṁ:* by myself; *abhiññāya:* knowing absolutely well; *kaṁ:* whom; *uddiseyyaṁ:* can I call my teacher

I have overcome all, I know all, I am detached from all, I have given up all; I am liberated from moral defilements having eradicated craving, (i.e., I have attained arahatship). Having comprehended the four noble truths by myself, whom should I point out as my teacher?

Commentary

sabbābhibhū: The Buddha described himself as a *sabbābhibhū*. This expression means one who has overcome all the *Dhammas* of the three planes of existence.

sabba-vidū: All *Dhammas* of the four planes of consciousness have been understood. The four planes are: *kāma lōka* (the sphere of sensuality), *rūpa lōka* (the Fine Material Sphere), *Arūpa Lōka* (The Formless Sphere) and *Lōkuttara* (The World-transcending Sphere).

sabbēsu dhammēsu anūpalittō: untainted with cravings and wrong views in regard to all dhamma of the three planes of existence.

sabbañjahō: having given up all dhammas of the three worlds.

taṇhakkhayē vimuttō: liberated by going beyond all cravings.

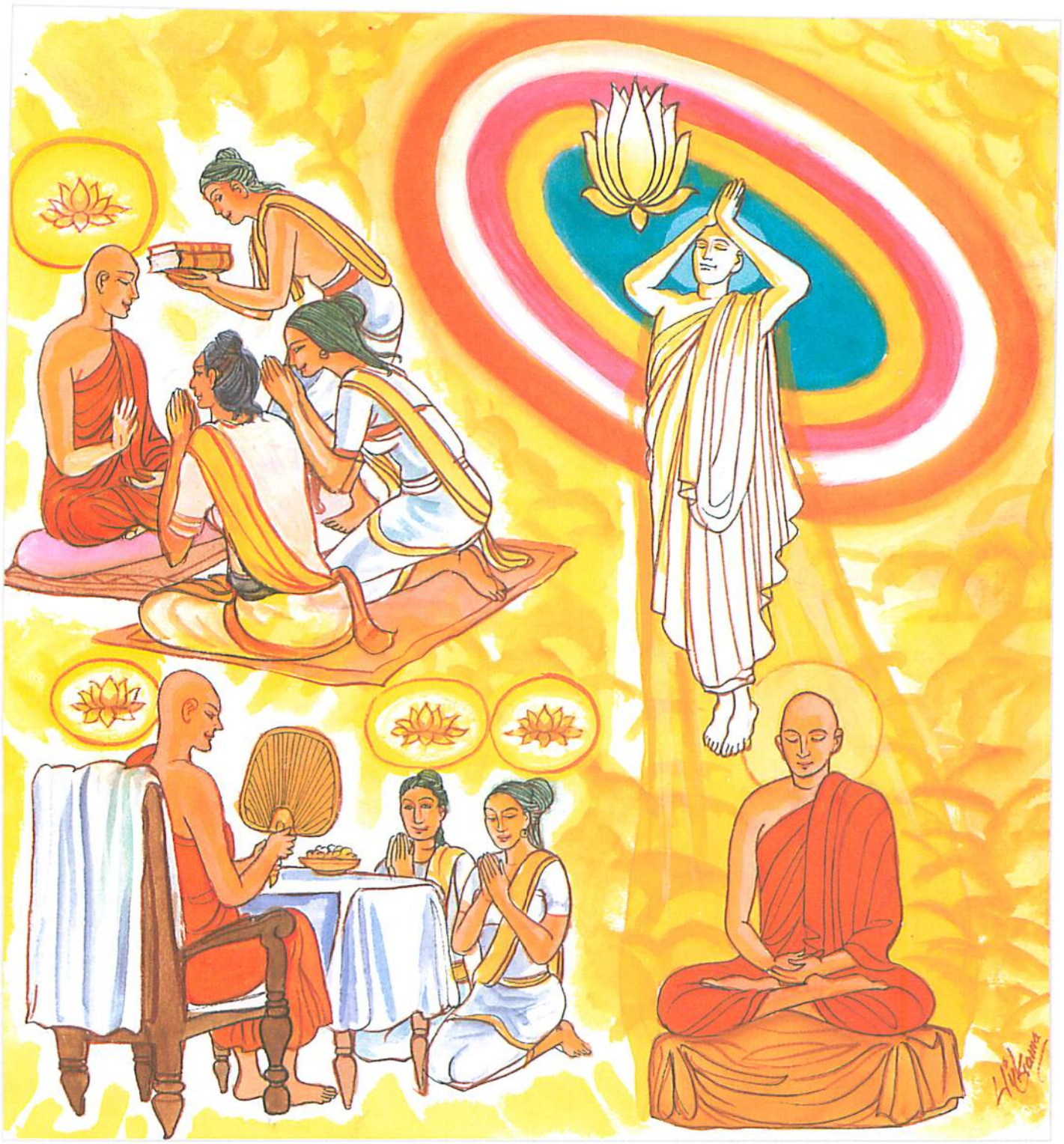
sayaṁ abhiññāya: having realized the higher knowledge entirely by myself.

After stating all these, the Buddha asks the question, "If I have achieved all these entirely through self-effort, whom shall I point to as my teacher *(kam uddiseyyaṁ)*?" The implication is there is no one who could be described as his teacher.

Since the Buddha had no teacher, but became enlightened by Himself He had initial doubts about others being able to fathom what he realized. This is embodied in:

> This, that through many toils I have won,
> Enough, why should I make it known?
> By folk with lust and hate consumed,
> This truth will not be understood.

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Dhamma is supreme as gift, flavour or delight. Extinction of craving triumphs over all ills.

354. *Sabbadānaṁ dhammadānaṁ jināti*
sabbaṁrasaṁ dhammarasō jināti
sabbaṁratiṁ dhammaratī jināti
taṇhakkhayō sabbadukkhaṁ jināti. (24:21)

Gift of Dhamma surpasses all gifts,
the Dhamma, its taste all other tastes beats,
delight in the Dhamma bests other delights,
destruction of craving conquers all ill.

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THE CONQUESTS OF ALL SUFFERING

24 (10) The Story of the Questions Raised by Sakka (Verse 354)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to four questions raised by Sakka, king of the dēvas.

On one occasion, at a meeting of the dēvas in the Tāvatiṁsa realm, four questions were raised, but the dēvas failed to get the correct answers. Eventually, Sakka took these dēvas to the Buddha at the Jētavana Monastery. After explaining their difficulty, Sakka presented the following four questions:

(1) Among gifts, which is the best?

(2) Among tastes, which is the best?

(3) Among delights, which is the best?

(4) Why is the eradication of craving said to be the most excellent?

To these questions, the Buddha replied, "O' Sakka, the Dhamma is the noblest of all gifts, the best of all tastes and the best of all delights. Eradication of craving leads to the attainment of arahatship and is, therefore, the greatest of all conquests."

At the end of the discourse, Sakka said to the Buddha, "Venerable, if the gift of the Dhamma excels all gifts why are we not invited to share the merit whenever gifts of the Dhamma are made? I pray that, from now on, we may be given a share in the merit of good deeds." Then the Buddha asked all the monks to assemble and exhorted them to share the merit of all their good deeds with all beings.

Since then, it has become a custom to invite all beings from the thirty-one realms *(bhumis)* to come and share merit whenever a good deed is done.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 354)

dhammadānaṁ sabbadānaṁ jināti sabbaṁ rasaṁ jināti dhammaratī sabbaṁ ratiṁ jināti dhammarasō taṇhakkhayō sabbadukkhaṁ jināti

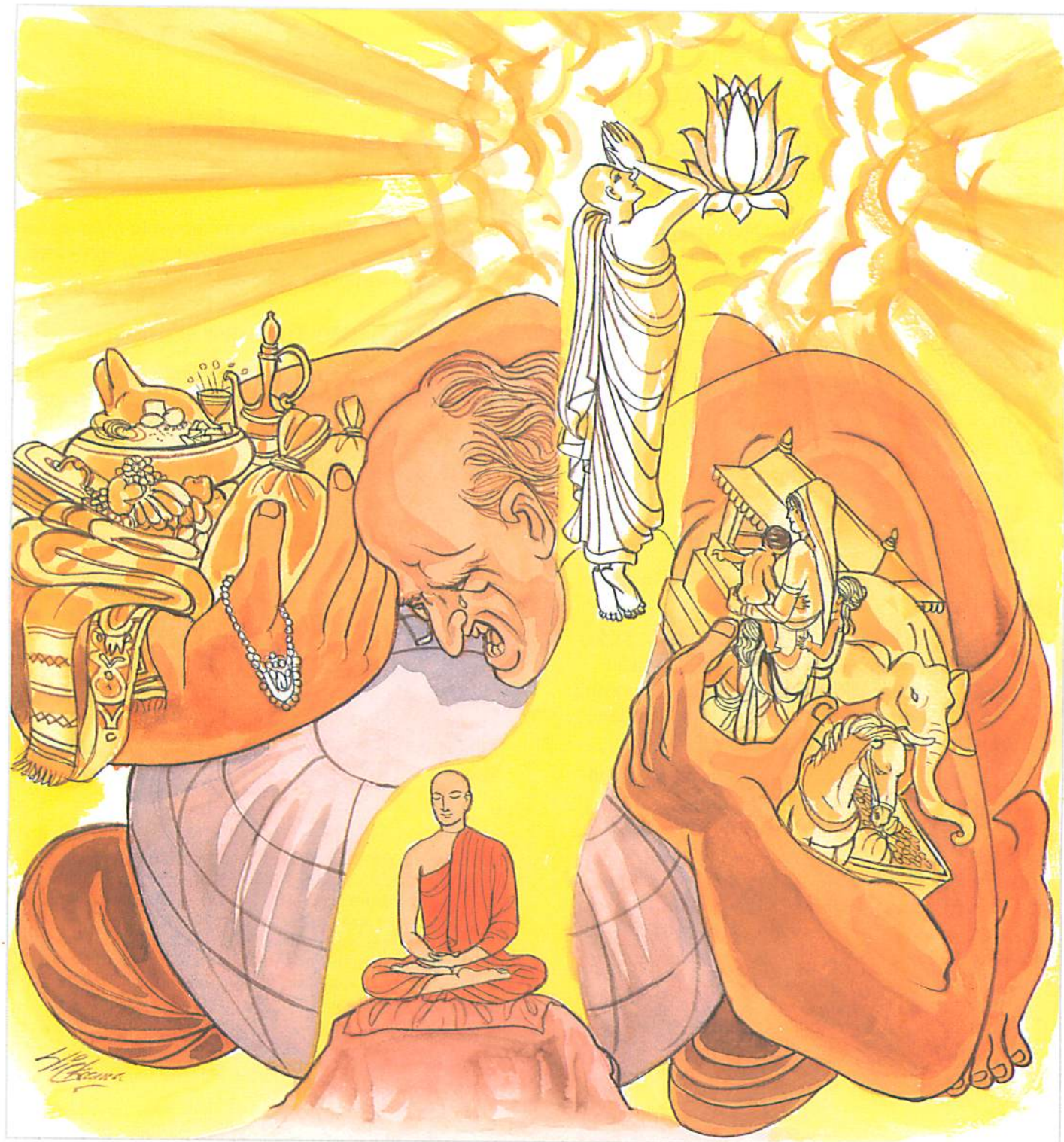
dhammadānaṁ: the gift of dhamma; *sabbadānaṁ:* all gifts; *jināti:* conquers; *dhammarasō:* the flavour of the dhamma; *sabbaṁ rasaṁ:* all flavours conquers; *jināti:* conquers; *dhammaratī:* the love of dhamma; *sabbaṁ ratiṁ:* all loves conquer; *taṇhakkhayō:* he who has got rid of craving; *sabbadukkhaṁ:* all sufferings; *jināti:* conquers.

The gift of the Dhamma excels all gifts; the taste of the Dhamma excels all tastes; delight in the Dhamma excels all delights. The eradication of craving (i.e., attainment of arahatship) overcomes all ills *(saṁsara dukkha)*.

Commentary

sabbadānaṁ Dhammadānaṁ: The gift of Dhamma conquers all gifts. The Buddha, elucidating this statement, further stated all the great and impressive material gifts to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha were made possible because, initially, the gift of Dhamma had been made. The gift of Dhamma persuaded the donors to make these other material donations. Even great saints achieved their high spiritual conquests entirely because of the gift of Dhamma they received.

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Wealth hunts down a fool. Greedy for wealth, the fool ruins himself as he were a stranger.

355. *Hananti bhōgā dummedhaṁ*
nō ca pāragavēsinō
bhōgataṇhāya dummēdhō
hanti aññē'va attanaṁ. (24:22)

Riches ruin a foolish one
but not one seeking the Further Shore,
craving for wealth a foolish one
is ruined as if ruining others.

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WEALTH DESTROYS THE IGNORANT

24 (11) The Story of a Childless Rich Man (Verse 355)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a childless rich man. On one occasion, King Pasēnadi of Kōsala came to pay homage to the Buddha. He explained to the Buddha that he was late because earlier that day a rich man had died in Sāvatthi without leaving any heirs, and so he had to confiscate all that man's property. Then, he proceeded to relate about the man who, although very rich, was very stingy. While he lived, he did not give away anything in charity. He was reluctant to spend his money even on himself, and therefore, ate very sparingly and wore cheap, coarse clothes only. On hearing this the Buddha told the king and the audience about the man in a past existence. In that existence also he was a rich man.

One day, when a *paccēkabuddha* (recluse Buddha) came and stood for alms at his house, he told his wife to offer something to the *paccēkabuddha*. His wife thought it was very rarely that her husband gave her permission to give anything to anybody. So, she filled up the alms-bowl with some choice food. The rich man again met the *paccēkabuddha* on his way home and he had a look at the alms-bowl. Seeing that his wife had offered a substantial amount of good food, he thought, "Oh, this monk would only have a good sleep after a good meal. It would have been better if my servants were given such good food; at least, they would have given me better service." In other words, he regretted that he had asked his wife to offer food to the *paccēkabuddha*. This same man had a brother who also was a rich man. His brother had an only son. Coveting his brother's wealth, he had killed his young nephew and had thus wrongfully inherited his brother's wealth on the latter's death.

Because the man had offered alms-food to the *paccēkabuddha*, he became a rich man in his present life; because he regretted having offered food to the *paccēkabhuddha*, he had no wish to spend anything even on himself. Because he had killed his own nephew for the sake of his brother's wealth he had to suffer in hell for seven existences. His bad kamma having come to an end he was born into the human world but here also he had not gained any good kamma. The king then remarked, "Venerable! Even though he had lived here in the lifetime of the Buddha Himself, he had not made any offering of anything to the Buddha or to his disciples. Indeed, he had missed a very good opportunity; he had been very foolish."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 355)

bhōgā dummedhaṁ hananti pāragavēsinō nō vē
dummedhō bhōgataṇhāya aññē iva attānaṁ hanti

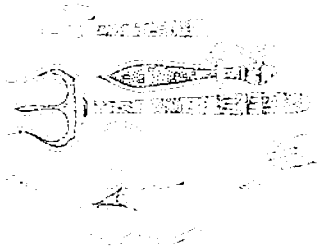
bhōgā: wealth; *dummēdhaṁ:* the ignorant; *hananti:* destroys; *pāragavēsinō:* those who seek the further shore (truth-seekers questing Nibbāna); *nō vē:* do not destroy; *dummēdho:* the ignorant one; *bhōgataṇhāya:* due to the greed for wealth; *aññē iva:* as if (destroying) others; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *hanti:* destroys

Wealth destroys the foolish; but it cannot destroy those who seek the other shore (i.e., Nibbāna). By his craving for wealth the fool destroys himself, as he would destroy others.

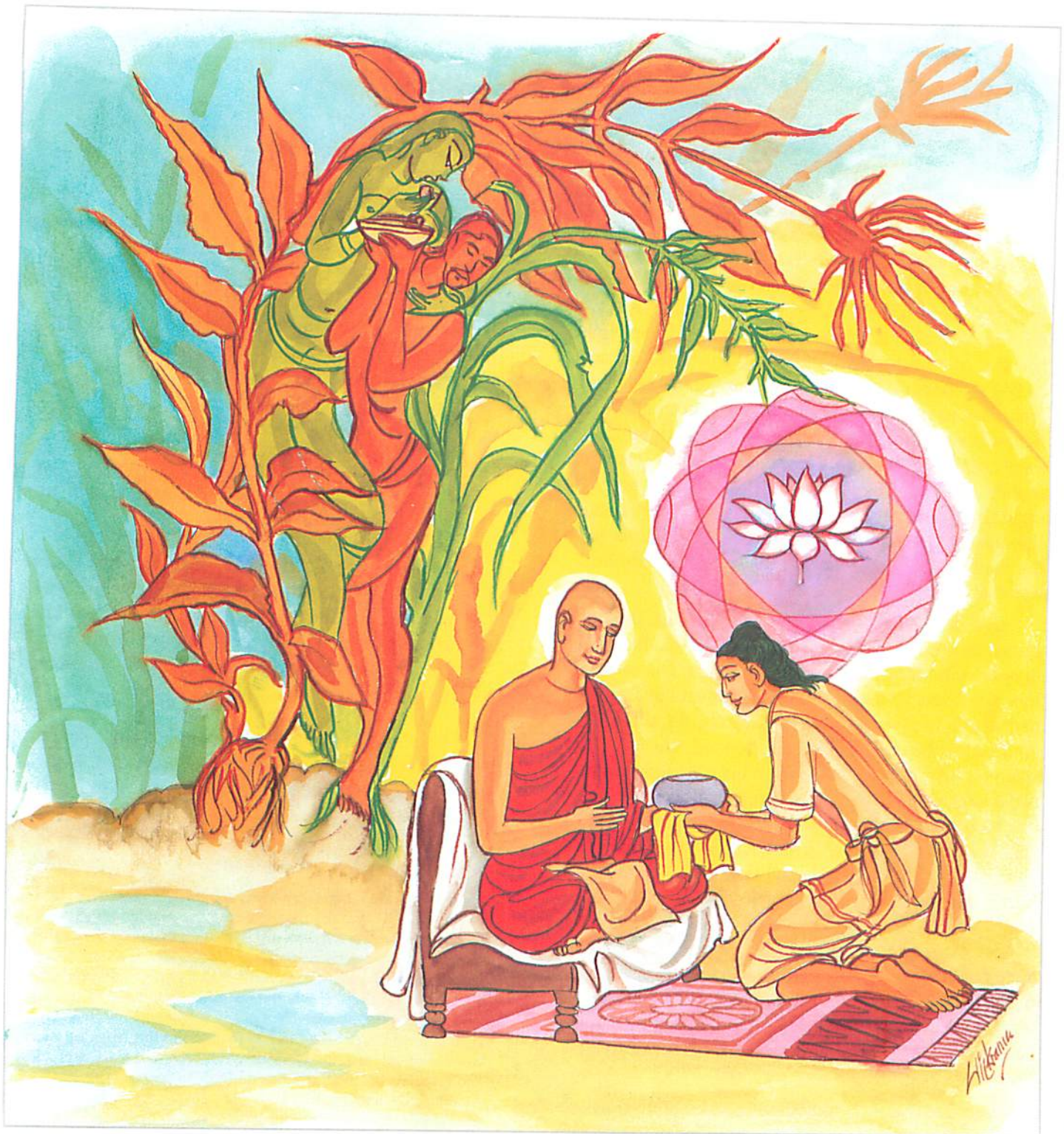
Commentary

paccēkabuddha: an independently enlightened one or separately, or individually *(=paccēka)* enlightened one (renderings as silent or private Buddha, are not very apt). The story that gave rise to this verse refers to *paccēkabuddhas. Paccēkabuddha* is a term for an arahat who has realized Nibbāna without having heard the Buddha's doctrine from others. He comprehends the four noble truths individually *(paccēka)*, independent of any teacher, by his own effort, He has, however, not the capacity to proclaim the Teaching effectively to others, and, therefore, does not become a teacher of gods and men, like a perfect or universal Buddha *(sammā-sambuddha)*. According to tradition, they do not arise in the dispensation of a perfect Buddha; but for achieving perfection after many aeons of effort, they have to make this aspiration before a perfect Buddha.

Canonical references are few: they are said to be worthy of a stūpa *(dagōba)*; the treasure-stone Sutta *(Nidhikhandha Sutta)* mentions *paccēka-bōdhi.*



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Weeds plague fields. Lust destroys men. Giving to the lust-less yields high returns.

356. *Tiṇadōsāni khēttāni*
rāgadōsā ayaṁ pajā
tasmā hi vītarāgēsu
dinnaṁ hōti mahapphalaṁ. (24:23)

Weeds are a fault of fields,
lust's a human fault,
thus offerings to the lustless
bear abundant fruit.

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THOSE WITHOUT THE BANE OF PASSION

24 (12) The Greater and the Lesser Gift (Verses 356 – 359)

It is said that on a certain occasion, when the Venerable Anuruddha entered the village for alms, Indaka, a dēva, gave him a spoonful of his own food. This was the good deed which he performed in a previous state of existence. Although Ankura had for ten thousand years set up a row of fire-places twelve leagues long and had given abundant alms, Indaka received a greater reward; therefore spoke Indaka thus. When he had thus spoken, the Buddha said, "Ankura, one should use discrimination in giving alms. Under such circumstances almsgiving, like seed sown on good soil, yields abundant fruit. But you have not so done; therefore your gifts have yielded no great fruit." And to make this matter clear, he said, "Alms should always be given with discrimination. Alms so given yield abundant fruit."

The giving of alms with discrimination is extolled by the happy one. Alms given to living beings here in the world who are worthy of offerings, Yield abundant fruit, like seeds sown on good ground.

Having thus spoken, He expounded the Dhamma.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 356)

khettāni tiṇadōsāni ayaṁ pajā rāgadōsā tasmā vītarāgēsu dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ hōti

khettāni: for fields; *tiṇadōsāni:* the grass is the bane; *ayaṁ pajā:* these masses; *rāgadōsā:* have passion as the bane; *tasmā:* therefore; *vītarāgēsu:* to the passionless ones; *dinnaṁ:* what is given; *mahapphalaṁ hōti:* will yield great results

Fields have grasses as their bane. The ordinary masses have passion as their bane. Therefore, high yields are possible only through what is given to the passionless ones.

Explanatory Translation (357)

khettāni tiṇadōsāni ayaṁ pajā tasmā hi dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ hōti

khettāni: for fields; *tiṇadōsāni:* the grass is the bane; *ayaṁ pajā:* these masses; *dōsadōsāni:* have ill-will as the bane; *tasmā:* therefore; *vītadōsā:* to those without ill-will; *dinnaṁ:* what is given; *mahapphalaṁ hōti:* will yield great results

Fields have weeds as their bane. The ordinary masses have ill-will as their bane. Therefore, high yields are possible only through what is given to those without ill-will.

Explanatory Translation (358)

khettāni tiṇadōsāni ayaṁ pajā mōhadōsā tasmā hi vītamohēsu dinnam mahapphalaṁ hōti

khettāni: for fields; *tiṇadōsāni:* the grass is the bane; *ayaṁ pajā:* these masses; *mōhadōsā:* have illusion as their bane; *tasmā:* therefore; *vītamōhēsu:* to the illusionless ones; *dinnaṁ:* what is given; *mahapphalaṁ hōti:* will yield great results

Fields have weeds as their bane. The ordinary masses have illusion as their bane. Therefore, high yields are possible only through what is given to the one without illusion.



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Weeds plague fields. Hatred destroys men. Offering to hateless yields fruit.

357. *Tiṇadōsāni khēttāni*
dōsadōsā ayaṁ pajā
tasmā hi vītadōsēsu
dinnaṁ hōti mahapphalaṁ. (24:24)

Weeds are a fault of fields,
hate's a human fault,
hence offerings to the hateless
bear abundant fruit.

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THOSE WITHOUT THE BANE OF ILL-WILL

24 (12) The Greater and the Lesser Gift (Verses 356 – 359) (Cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (359)

khettāni tiṇadōsāni ayaṁ pajā icchādōsā tasmāhi vigaticchēsu dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ hōti

khettāni: for fields; *tiṇadōsāni:* the grass is the bane; *ayaṁ pajā:* these masses; *icchādōsā:* have greed as their bane; *tasmā:* therefore; *vigaticchēsu:* to those devoid of greed; *dinnaṁ:* what is given; *mahapphalaṁ hōti:* will yield great results

Fields have weeds as their bane. The ordinary masses have greed as their bane. Therefore, high yields are possible only through what is given to the one without greed.

Commentary

In these verses, it is stated that high yields, in terms of merit, are possible only through what is given to those who are passionless, those who are without ill-will, those who are without illusion and those who are free of greed.

All these characteristics define Perfected Ones - arahats and those who are on their way to such achievement. Saints of this calibre are also described as *Ariya-puggala* (noble persons). Arahat, in Sanskrit, means the consummate one, the worthy one. This term *arahat*, applied exclusively to the Buddha and to His perfected disciples, was first used to describe the Buddha himself.

An arahat is one whose taints *(āsava)* are destroyed, who has lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained arahatship by stages, destroyed completely the bond of becoming, one who is free through knowing rightly. As his faculties have not been demolished, he experiences what is agreeable and disagreeable, he experiences pleasure and pain. The five aggregates remain. It is his extinction of lust, hate and delusion that is called the Nibbāna element with a basis remaining *(saupādisēsa nibbānadhātu)*.

The Buddha stated:

"And which, monks, is the Nibbāna element without a basis remaining *(anupādisēsa nibbānadhātu)*?"
"Here, monks, a monk is an arahat, one whose taints are destroyed, who has lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained arahatship by stages, destroyed completely the bond of becoming, one who is free through knowing rightly. All his feelings not being welcome, not being delighted in *(anabhinanditāni)*, will here and now become cool: it is this, monks, that is called the Nibbāna element without a basis remaining."
"These, monks, are the two Nibbāna elements."

This fact the Buddha declared:

Thus this is said:
These two Nibbāna elements are explained
By the Seeing One, steadfast and unattached:
When one element with basis belonging to this life
Remains, destroyed is that which to becoming leads;
When one without that basis manifests
In the hereafter, all becomings cease.

The minds of those who know this conditioned state
Are delivered by destroying that to which becoming leads:
They realize the Dhamma's essence and in stillness
Delighting, steadfast they abandon all becoming.

A being consists of the five aggregates or mind and matter. They change incessantly and are, therefore, impermanent. They come into being and pass away, for, whatever is of the nature of arising, all that is of the nature of ceasing.

Lust, hate and delusion in man bring about repeated existence, for it is said: Without abandoning lust, hate and delusion, one is not free from birth...

One attains arahatship, that is deliverance even while alive, by rooting out lust, hate and delusion. As stated above, this is known as the Nibbāna element with a basis remaining *(saupādisēsa nibbānadhātu)*. The arahat's five aggregates or the remaining bases are conditioned by the lust, hate and delusion of his infinite past. As he still lives his aggregates function, he, therefore, experiences the pleasant as well as painful feelings that his sense faculties entertain through contact with sense objects. But, since he is freed from attachment, discrimination and the idea of selfhood, he is not moved by these feelings.

Now, when an arahat passes away, his aggregates, his remaining bases, cease to function; they break up at death; his feelings are no more, and because of his eradication of lust, hate and delusion, he is not reborn, and naturally, there is then no more entertaining of feelings; and, therefore, is it said: His feelings will become cool *(sītibhavissanti)*.



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Weeds plague fields. Ignorance destroys men. Giving to the ignorance-free is fruitful.

358. *Tiṇadōsāni khettāni*
mōhadōsā ayaṁ pajā
tasmā hi vītamōhēsu
dinnaṁ hōti mahapphalaṁ. (24:25)

Weeds are a fault of fields,
delusion, human's fault,
so gifts to the undeluded
bear abundant fruit.

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THOSE WITHOUT THE BANE OF ILLUSION

24 (12) The Greater and the Lesser Gift (Verses 356 – 359) (Cont'd)

Commentary

The idea is expressed in the *Udāna* thus:

> The body broke up, perception ceased,
> All feelings cooled, all formations stilled,
> Consciousness disappeared.

This is known as the Nibbāna element without a basis remaining *(anupādisēsa nibbānadhātu)*.

When a person totally eradicates the trio, lust hate and delusion, that leads to becoming, he is liberated from the shackles of *saṁsāra*, from repeated existence. He is free in the full sense of the word. He no longer has any quality which will cause him to be reborn as a living being, because he has realized Nibbāna, the entire cessation of continuity and becoming *(bhava-nirōdha)*; he has transcended common or worldly activities and has raised himself to a state above the world while yet living in the world: His actions are issueless, are kammically ineffective, for they are not motivated by the trio, by the mental defilements *(kilēsa)*. He is immune to all evil, to all defilements of the heart. In him, there are no latent or underlying tendencies *(anusaya)*; he is beyond good and evil, he has given up both good and bad; he is not worried by the past, the future, nor even the present. He clings to nothing in the world and so is not troubled. He is not perturbed by the vicissitudes of life. His mind is unshaken by contact with worldly contingencies; he is sorrowless, taintless and secure *(asōkaṁ, virajaṁ, khēmaṁ)*.

Thus, Nibbāna is a 'state' realizable in this very life *(diṭṭhadhamma-nibbāna)*. The thinker, the inquiring mind, will not find it difficult to understand this state, which can be postulated only of the arahat and not of any other being, either in this world or in the realms of heavenly enjoyment.

Though the sentient being experiences the unsatisfactory nature of life, and knows, at first hand, what suffering is, what defilements are, and what it is to crave, he does not know what the total extirpation of defilements is, because he has never experienced it. Should he do so, he will know, through self-realization, what it is to be without defilements, what Nibbāna or reality is, what true happiness is. The arahat speaks of Nibbāna with experience, and not by hearsay, but the arahat can never, by his realization, make others understand Nibbāna. One who has slaked his thirst knows the release he has gained, but he cannot explain this release to another. However much he may talk of it, others will not experience it; for it is self-experience, self-realization. Realization is personal to each individual. Each must eat and sleep for himself, and treat himself for his ailments; these are but daily requirements, how much more when it is concerned with man's inner development, his deliverance of the mind.

What is difficult to grasp is the Nibbāna element without a basis remaing *(anupādisēsa-nibbāna)*, in other words, the *parinibbāna* or final passing away of the arahat.

An oft-quoted passage from the *Udāna* runs: Monks, there is the unborn, unoriginated, unmade and unconditioned. Were there not the unborn, unoriginated, unmade and unconditioned, there would be no escape for the born, originated, made and conditioned. Since there is the unborn, unoriginated, unmade and unconditioned, so there is escape for the born, originated, made and conditioned.

Here, there is neither the element of solidity (expansion), fluidity (cohesion), heat and motion, nor the sphere of infinite space, nor the sphere of infinite consciousness, nor the sphere of nothingness, nor the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, neither this world nor the other, nor sun and moon. Here, there is none coming, none going, none existing, neither death nor birth. Without support, non-existing, without sense objects is this. This, indeed, is the end of suffering *(dukkha)*.

Arahats are described also as *ariya puggala* or *ariya* (noble ones, noble persons).

The eight *ariya puggalas* are those who have realized one of the eight stages of holiness, i.e., the four supermundane paths *(magga)* and the four supermundane fruitions *(phala)* of these paths. There are four pairs:

(1) the one realizing the path of stream-winning *(sōtāpatti-magga)*;

(2) the one realizing the fruition of stream-winning *(sōtāpatti-phala)*;

(3) the one realizing the path of once-return *(sakadāgāmi-magga)*;

(4) the one realizing the fruition of once-return *(sakadāgāmi-phala)*.

(5) the one realizing the path of non-return *(anāgāmi-magga)*.

(6) the one realizing the fruition of non-return *(anāgāmi-phala)*;

(7) the one realizing the path of holiness *(arahatta-magga)* and

(8) the one realizing the fruition of holiness *(arahatta-phala)*.

Summed up, there are four noble individuals *(ariya-puggala)*: the stream-winner *(sōtāpanna)*, the once-returner *(sakadāgāmi)*, the non-returner *(anāgāmi)*, the holy one *(arahat)*.

According to the Abhidhamma, supermundane path, or simply path *(magga)*, is a designation of the moment of entering into one of the four stages of holiness - Nibbāna being the object - produced by intuitional insight *(vipassanā)* into the impermanency, misery and impersonality of existence, flashing forth and for ever transforming one's life and nature. By fruition *(phala)* are meant those moments of consciousness, which follow immediately thereafter as the result of the path, and which, in certain circumstances, may repeat for innumerable times during life-time.

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Weeds plague fields. Desire plagues men. Giving to desire-less is fruitful.

359. *Tiṇadōsāni khettāni*
icchādōsā ayaṁ pajā
tasmā hi vigaticchēsu
dinnaṁ hōti mahapphalaṁ. (24:26)

Weeds are a fault of fields,
desire's a human fault,
so gifts to the desireless
bear abundant fruit.

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THOSE WITHOUT THE BANE OF GREED

24 (12) The Greater and the Lesser Gift (Verses 356 – 359) (Cont'd)

Commentary

(1) Through the path of stream-winning *(sōtāpatti-magga)* one becomes free (whereas in realizing the fruition, one is free) from the first three fetters *(samyōjana)* which bind beings to existence in the sensuous sphere, to wit: (i) personality-belief *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi)*, (ii) skeptical doubt *(vicikicchā)*, (iii) attachment to mere rules and rituals *(sīlabbata-parāmāsa)*.

(2) Through the path of once-returning *(sakadāgāmi-magga)* one becomes nearly free from the fourth and fifth fetters, to wit: (iv) sensuous craving *(kāma-cchanda = kāma-rāga)*, (v) ill-will *(vyāpāda = dōsa)*.

(3) Through the path of non-returning *(anāgāmi-magga)* one becomes fully free from the above mentioned five lower fetters.

(4) Through the path of holiness *(arahatta-magga)* one further becomes free from the five higher fetters, to wit: (vi) craving for fine-material existence *(rūpa-rāga)*, (vii) craving for immaterial existence *(arūpa-rāga)*, (viii) conceit *(māna)*, (ix) restlessness *(uddhacca)*, (x) ignorance *(avijjā)*.

The stereotype sutta text runs as follows:

(1) After the disappearance of the three fetters, the monk has won the stream (to Nibbāna) and is no more subject to rebirth inlower worlds, is firmly established, destined for full enlightenment;

(2) After the disappearance of the three fetters and reduction of greed, hatred and delusion, he will return only once more; and having once more returned to this world, he will put an end to suffering;

(3) After the disappearance of the five fetters he appears in a higher world, and there, he reaches Nibbāna without ever returning from that world (to the sensuous sphere).

(4) Through the extinction of all cankers *(āsava-kkhaya)* he reaches already in this very life the deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom, which is free from cankers, and which he himself has understood and realized.

The seven-fold grouping of the noble disciples is as follows:

(1) the faith-devotee *(saddhānusāri)*,

(2) the faith-liberated one *(saddhā-vimutta)*,

(3) the body-witness *(kāya=sakkhī)*,

(4) the both-ways liberated one *(ubhatō-bhāga-vimutta)*,

(5) the Dhamma-devotee *(dhammānusāri)*,

(6) the vision-attainer *(diṭṭhi-ppatta)*,

(7) the wisdom-liberated one *(paññā-vimutta)*.

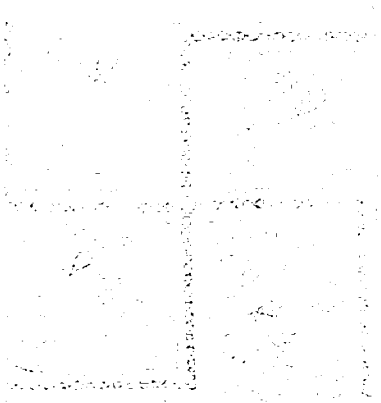
These four stanzas extol the virtues of *dāna*, generosity.

Dāna is the first *pāramī*. It confers upon the giver double blessing of inhibiting immoral thoughts of selfishness, while developing pure thoughts of selflessness: It blesseth him that gives him that takes.

A Bōdhisatta is not concerned as to whether the recipient is truly in need or not, for his one object in practicing generosity, as he does, is to eliminate craving that lies dormant within himself. The joy of service, its attendant happiness, and the alleviation of suffering are other blessings of generosity.

In extending his love with supernormal generosity, he makes no distinction between one being and another, but he uses judicious discrimination in this generosity. If, for instance, a drunkard were to seek his help, and, if he were convinced that the drunkard would misuse his gift, the Bōdhisatta, without hesitation, would refuse it, for such misplaced generosity would not constitute a *pāramī*.

Should anyone seek his help for a worthy purpose, then instead of assuming a forced air of dignity or making false pretensions, he would simply express his deep obligation for the opportunity afforded, and willingly and humbly render every possibly aid. Yet, he would never set it down to his own credit as a favour conferred upon another, nor would he ever regard the man as his debtor for the service rendered. He is interested only in the good act, but in nothing else springing from it. He expects no reward in return, nor even does he crave enhancement of reputation from it.



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First Missionary

Buddhism is the first missionary religion in the history of humanity with a universal message of salvation for all mankind. The Buddha after his Enlightenment sent out sixty-one disciples in different directions asking them to preach the doctrine for the weal and welfare of mankind.

Dr. K.N. Jayatilleke, "Buddhism and Peace"

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Chapter 25

BHIKKHU VAGGA

The Monk



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Restraint in eye, ear, nose and tongue is good. It yields good results.

360. *Cakkhunā saṁvarō sādhu*
sādhu sōtēna saṁvarō
ghānēna saṁvarō sādhu
sādhu jivhāya saṁvarō. (25:1)

Right is restraint in the eye,
restraint in the ear is right,
right is restraint in the nose,
restraint in the tongue is right.

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BHIKKHU VAGGA (The Monk)
SENSE DISCIPLINE

25 (1) The Story of Five Monks in Sāvatthi (Verses 360 & 361)

Once, there were five monks in Sāvatthi. It appears that each of these five monks guarded one of the five doors of the senses. One day they met and began to argue with each other, saying, "It is I who guard the door which is difficult to guard! It is I who guard the door which is difficult to guard!" Finally they said, "We can learn the truth of this matter by questioning the Buddha." So they approached the Buddha and asked him the following question, "Venerable, each one of us is guarding one of the five doors of the senses, and each one of us imagines that the particular door which he is guarding is the door of all other doors which is the most difficult to guard. Now we should like to have you tell us which one of us is guarding the door that is the most difficult to guard."

The Buddha carefully avoided placing anyone of the monks in a position inferior to that of his fellows and said in reply, "Monks, all of these doors are difficult to guard. But this is not the first time you have failed to control yourselves in these five particulars. In a previous state of existence also you failed to exercise restraint over your senses, and because you failed to exercise restraint over your senses, and because you refused to comply with the admonition of wise men, met destruction." "When was that, Venerable?" asked the five monks.

25 (1)a. Story of the Past: Takkasilā Jātaka

Complying with their request, the Buddha related in detail the Takkasilā Jātaka, telling them how, in the distant past, after the household of a king had been destroyed by female evil spirits, the Buddha, having received the ceremonial sprinkling of a king, seated on the royal throne under the white parasol, surveying his own majesty and glory, thinking to himself, "Men should exert the power of their will," spoke the following solemn utterance:

Because with firm courage I abode steadfast in the admonition of the good, because I showed nor fear nor dread, I did not come under the power of the female evil spirits. From great peril, I came steadfast.

Having recited this stanza, the Buddha summarized the Jātaka as follows: "At that time you were the five men who, when the great being went forth to take the kingdom of Takkasilā, stood round about him with weapons in your hands, guarding the road. But when, as you journeyed by the way, the female evil spirits tempted you with objects pleasing to the senses of sight and sound and smell and taste and touch, then you threw off all restraint, then you disregarded the admonitions of the wise man, then you yielded to the seductions of the female evil spirits; and they devoured you, and you were utterly destroyed. The wise man who restrained himself and yielded not to their temptations, who paid no attention to the ogress of celestial beauty that followed close upon his heels, and who reached Takkasilā in safety and became king, was I myself."

Having thus summed up the Jātaka, the Buddha said, "A monk should guard all the doors of the senses, for only by guarding the doors of the senses can he obtain release from all suffering."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 360)

cakkhunā saṁvarō sādhu sōtēna saṁvarō sādhu
ghāṇena saṁvarō sādhu jivhāya saṁvarō

cakkhunā saṁvarō: eye discipline; *sādhu:* is good; *sōtēna saṁvarō:* ear discipline; *sādhu:* is good; *ghāṇena saṁvarō:* nose discipline; *sādhu:* is good; *jivhāya saṁvarō:* tongue discipline

It is good to be disciplined in the eye. It is good to be disciplined in the ear. It is good to be disciplined in the nose. To be disciplined in the tongue is good.

(cont'd on page 771)

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Restraint in deed, in speech, in mind is good. Restrained fully, the monk ends suffering.

361. *Kāyēna saṁvarō sādhu*
sādhu vācāya saṁvarō
manasā saṁvarō sādhu
sādhu sabbattha saṁvarō
sabbattha saṁvutō bhikkhu
sabbadukkhā pamuccati. (25:2)

Right is restraint in the body,
restraint in speech is right,
right is restraint in the mind,
everywhere restraint is right.
The bhikkhu everywhere restrained
is from all dukkha free.

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SUFFERING ENDS WITH ALL-ROUND DISCIPLINE

25 (1) The Story of Five Monks in Sāvatthi (Verses 360 & 361) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (361)

kāyēna saṁvarō sādhu vācāya saṁvarō sādhu manasā saṁvarō sādhu manasā sabbattha saṁvaro sādhu sabbattha saṁvutō bhikkhu sabbadukkhā pamuccati

kāyēna saṁvarō: bodily discipline; *sādhu:* is good; *vācāya saṁvarō:* discipline in the use of words; *sādhu:* is good; *manasā saṁvarō:* discipline of mind; *sādhu:* is good; *sabbattha:* everywhere; *saṁvarō:* discipline; *sādhu:* is good; *sabbattha saṁvutō:* disciplined in everything and every way; *sādhu:* is good; *bhikkhu:* monk; *sabba:* of all; *dukkhā:* suffering; *pamuccati:* gets freed

It is good to be disciplined in body. It is good to be disciplined in words. It is good to be disciplined in mind. The monk who is disciplined in all these areas will achieve freedom from all suffering.

Commentary

In these verses, the Buddha admonishes the monks to be disciplined by guarding all 'doors of perception'. The only means of achieving this aim is meditation *(bhāvanā)*.

Meditation by means of mind development is called *bhāvanā*. Unlike other technical terms, *bhāvanā* is used to denote only the practical methods of mental training. It embraces in its vast connotation the whole system, together with the practices that have been developed from it. When the term *bhāvanā* occurs in the Scriptures, it generally indicates the practice or cultivation of meditation and the verb *bhāveti* is used to denote the act,'to practice', or 'to cultivate':

> *Mettaṁ, Rāhula, bhāvanaṁ, bhāvēhi.*
> Rāhula, practice the meditation upon friendliness.
> *Asubhāya cittaṁ bhāvēhi.*
> Cultivate the mind by the meditation upon impurities.

Unlike *jhāyati*, (which is only used to indicate thinking upon a mental object, or holding a mental image taken from an external object), *bhāvēti* is used of any form of mental development: *Kusalaṁ cittaṁ bhāvēti*, he cultivates or increases moral consciousness; *"Jhānaṁ bhāvēti, Samādhiṁ bhāvēti, Vipassanaṁ bhāvēti, maggaṁ bhāvēti,"* "he practises *jhāna, samādhi vipassanā* or the path."

The term *bhāvanā* is to be found compounded with words implying the subjects of meditation, as, *jhāna-bhāvanā, samādhi-bhāvanā, metta-bhāvanā*, and so on, in order to distinguish the different kinds of meditation.

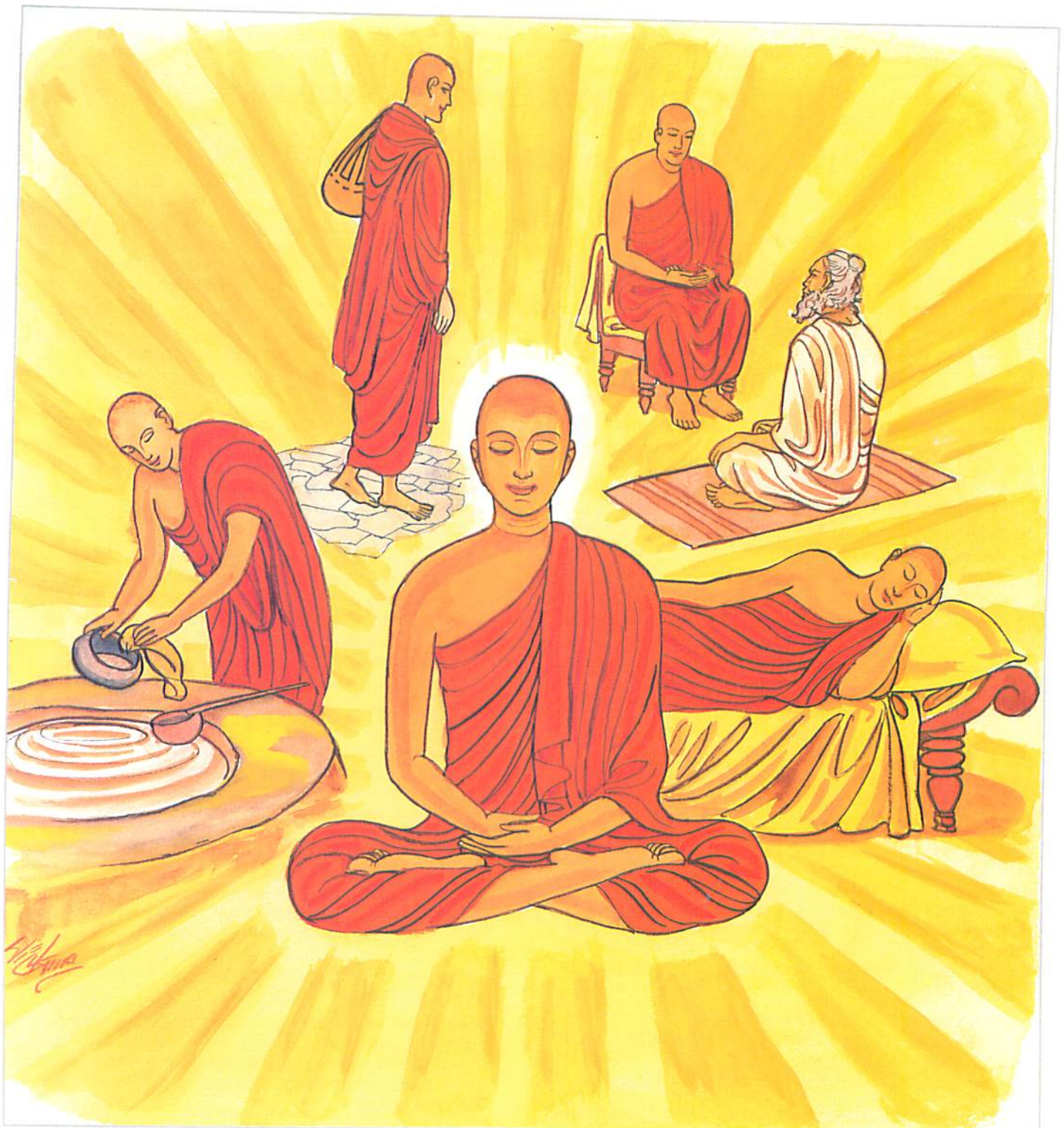
Buddhaghōsa Thera defined the verb *bhāvēti* as a derivation from the root *bhu* — to be or to become and compares it with *janēti* (begets), *uppādēti* (produces or causes to rise), *vaḍḍhēti* (increases or develops). He quotes passages from the Scriptures to show that *bhāvēti* is used in the sense of producing, *(uppādana)* and increasing *(vaddhana)*.

Bhāvanā has a meaning that is stronger and more active than that of the English word meditation. The word has various renderings, such as producing, acquiring, mastering, developing, cultivating, reflection and meditation. Here, we shall use the word in the sense of practice and cultivation, translations which bring out more clearly than the word 'meditation' its connection with the root to be or to become.

It is true that in *bhāvanā* there is a certain thought process, similar to that involved in mental prayer, and also the repetition of some particular words or phrases in different practices, such as be happy, be happy in the practice of *mettā*; or earth, earth, (in *Kasiṇa* practice), as in verbal prayer. But *bhāvanā* is more than that. It is thinking in a special manner, to edify something in oneself, something which is always good. The essential thing, therefore, in *bhāvanā* is its productive factor, that which produces or manifests the essential quality or truth that is contained in the object of thought, within one's character. For example, when one practises *mettā bhāvanā*, one not only thinks upon friendliness but also makes it come into being, and grow stronger and stronger in his mind, so as to eradicate thoughts of enmity, malice, aversion and the like; and finally, the aspirant becomes friendly towards all living things. In this sense, it is becoming.

In conclusion, let it be said that the word *bhāvanā* means the accumulation of all good qualities within oneself, to become apt and fit for the attainment of Nibbāna. Moreover, *bhāvanā* is the popular, current expression for meditation as a part of religious life in the Theravāda school.

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Restrained in limb and speech, totally composed with inward delight. He is called a bhikkhu.

362. *Hatthasaññatō pādasaññatō*
vācāya saññatō saññat'uttamō
ajjhattaratō samāhitō
ēkō santusitō tamā'hu bhikkhuṁ. (25:3)

With hands controlled and feet controlled,
in speech as well as head controlled,
delighting in inward collectedness
alone, content, a bhikkhu's called.

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THE TRUE MONK

25 (2) The Story of a Monk Who Killed a Swan (Haṁsa) (Verse 362)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a monk who killed a swan.

The story goes that two residents of Sāvatthi retired from the world, were admitted to full membership in the Sangha, and becoming fast friends, usually went about together. One day they went to the Aciravatī River, and after bathing, stood on the bank basking themselves in the rays of the sun, engaged in pleasant conversation. At that moment two geese came flying through the air. Thereupon one of the young monks, picking up a pebble, said, "I am going to hit one of these young geese in the eye." "You can't do it," said the other.

"You just wait," said the first; "I will hit the eye on this side of him, and then I will hit the eye on the other side of him." "You can't do that, either," said the second. "Well then, see for yourself," said the first, and taking a second pebble, threw it after the goose. The goose, hearing the stone whiz through the air, turned his head and looked back. Then the second monk picked up a round stone and threw it in such a way that it hit the eye on the far side and came out of the eye on the near side. The goose gave a cry of pain, and tumbling through the air, fell at the feet of the two monks.

Some monks who stood near saw the occurrence and said to the monk who had killed the goose. "Brother, after retiring from the world in the religion of the Buddha, you have done a most unbecoming thing in taking the life of a living creature." And taking the two monks with them, they arraigned them before the Buddha. The Buddha asked the monk who had killed the goose, "Is the charge true that you have taken the life of a living creature?" "Yes, Venerable," replied the monk, "it is true."

The Buddha asked, "Monk, how comes it that after retiring from the world in such a religion as mine, leading to salvation as it does, you have done such a thing as this? Wise men of old, before the Buddha appeared in the world, though they lived amid the cares of the household life, entertained scruples about matters of the most trifling character. But you, although you retired from the world in the religion of the Buddha, have felt no scruples at all?"

Explanatōry Translation (Verse 362)

hattha saññatō pāda saññatō vācāya saññatō saññatuttamō ajjhattharatō samāhitō ēkō santusitō taṁ bhikkhuṁ āhu

hattha saññatō: if someone is restrained in hand; *pāda saññatō:* if someone is restrained in foot; *vācāya saññatō:* restrained in words; *saññatuttamō:* restrained in body; *ajjhattharatō:* if he is focussed on his meditation object; *samāhitō:* if his mind is tranquil; *ēkō:* if he is in solitude; *santusitō:* if he is contented; *taṁ:* him; *bhikkhuṁ:* the monk; *āhu:* is called

He who controls his hand, controls his foot, controls his speech, and has complete control of himself; who finds delight in insight development practice and is calm; who stays alone and is contented they call him a monk.

Commentary

samāhitō: a mind that is tranquil: a mind that has attained *samādhi* — tranquility through total concentration.

The word *samādhi* is best rendered by concentration. Moreover, it is one of the original terms used by the Buddha himself; for it occurs in His first Sermon. It is used in the sense of *sammā-samādhi*, right concentration. *Samādhi* from the root *saṁādhā*, to put together, to concentrate, refers to a certain state of mind. In a technical sense it signifies both the state of mind and the method designed to induce that state.

In the dialogue between the sister Dhammadinnā and the devotee Visākhā, *Samādhi* is discussed both as a state of mind and a method of mental training. Visākha asked, "What is *Samādhi*?" The sister replied, "*Samādhi* is *cittassa ēkaggatā* (literally, one-pointedness of mind)." "What induces it?" "The four applications of mindfulness *(Satipaṭṭhāna)*, induce it." "What are its requisites?" "The four supreme efforts *(sammappadhāna)* are its requisites." "What is the culture *(Bhāvanā)* of it?" "Cultivation and increase of those self-same principles — mindfulness and supreme effort, are the culture of it."

In this discussion *samādhi*, as a mental state, is defined as *cittassa ēkaggatā*, and this appears to be the first definition of it in the Suttas. In the Abhidhamma this definition is repeated and elaborated with a number of words that are very similar, indeed, almost synonymous.

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Guarded in speech, with no conceit, the monk expounds with sweetness the Dhamma in full.

363. *Yō mukhasaññatō bhikkhu*
mantabhāṇī anuddhatō
atthaṁ dhammañ ca dīpēti
madhuraṁ tassa bhāsitaṁ. (25:4)

Whatever bhikkhu tongue-controlled
speaks wisely and who is not proud,
who theory and practice can expound,
sweet as honey is his speech.

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THE IDEAL MONK

25 (3) The Story of Monk Kōkālika (Verse 363)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha while he was in residence at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Kōkālika.

Now after Kōkālika had been reborn in the lotus hell, the monks in the hall of truth began a discussion of the occurrence, saying, "Alas, the monk Kōkālika went to perdition because he failed to hold his tongue! For even as he reviled the two chief disciples, the earth opened and swallowed him up." At that moment the Buddha approached and asked. "Monks, what subject are you discussing now as you sit here all gathered together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, this is not the first time Kōkālika has gone to perdition because of failure to hold his tongue; the same thing happened to him in a former state of existence also." The monks immediately desired to hear all about the matter. In compliance with their requests, to make the matter clear, the Buddha related the following.

Once upon a time a tortoise dwelt in a certain lake in the Himālaya country. One day two young geese, wandering about in search of food, struck up an acquaintance with him, and in a short time all became firm friends. One day the geese said to the tortoise, "Friend tortoise, we live in the Himālaya country on Mount Cittakūṭa in a golden cave, and it is a most delightful place to live in. Wouldn't you like to go there with us?" "Masters," replied the tortoise, "how am I to get there?" Said the geese, "If you can keep your mouth shut, we will carry you." The tortoise replied, "I will keep my mouth shut, friends. Take me with you, and let's be off." "Very well," said the geese. So the geese made the tortoise grip with his teeth the middle of a stick, and then, taking the two ends of the stick in their bills, flew up into the air.

Some village boys, seeing a tortoise carried along in this fashion by geese, immediately cried out, "See those two geese carrying a tortoise on a stick!" Thought the tortoise, "You vagabonds, what business is it of yours if my friends are carrying me with them?" And he opened his mouth, intending to say what was in his mind. Now the geese were flying very swiftly, and by this time they had reached a point directly over the royal palace in Vārāṇasī city. So when the tortoise let go of the stick, he fell to the ground right in the middle of the palace court, and the moment he struck the ground, split into two pieces.

Having related this Bahubhāṇi Jātaka, found in the second book, the Buddha said, "Monks, a monk should control him tongue, should live tranquilly, shout not allow himself to become puffed up, and should free his heart from the evil passions."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 363)

mukhasaññatō mantabhānī anuddhatō yo bhikkhu atthaṁ dhammañca dīpēti tassa bhāsitaṁ madhuraṁ

mukhasaññatō: disciplined in mouth; *mantabhānī:* speaking in moderation; *anuddhatō:* not proud; *yō bhikkhū:* a monk; *atthaṁ:* the significance; *dhamma:* the teaching; *dīpēti:* if demonstrates; *tassa:* his; *bhāsitaṁ:* utterance; *madhuraṁ:* sweet

The monk who controls his mouth (speech) who speaks wisely with his mind composed, who explains the meaning of the text of the Dhamma — sweet are the words of that monk.

Commentary

In this verse, the virtues of right speech (which is one segment of the noble eight-fold path) are upheld. The Buddha pointed out five disadvantages and dangers in unguarded, undisciplined speech. One who is not disciplined in speech is (i) given to lying; (ii) tending to slander; (iii) tending to be harsh and idle in speech; and (iv) born in evil states after death.

There are four virtues of right speech. They are:

(1) one abstains from lying. Such a person is sincere, upright and dependable;

(2) the person who practises right speech does not slander or bear tales. The person who avoids these forms of evil speech contributes towards social harmony;

(3) those who practise right speech refrain from using harsh words. This way, they give happiness to people and avoid the possibility of creating mental pain which is likely if harsh words are used and

(4) it enables the practitioner to avoid frivolous unprofitable words. The Buddha admonished that it was nobler to be silent than indulging in frivolous talk and gossip.

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Delighting in, pondering over and abiding by the Dhamma, such bhikkhu shall not degenerate.

364. *Dhammārāmō dhammaratō*
dhammaṁ anuvicintayaṁ
dhammaṁ anussaraṁ bhikkhuṁ
saddhammā na parihāyati. (25:5)

The bhikkhu who in Dhamma dwells,
in Dhamma delighting and pondering,
remembering the Dhamma—he
does not decline from Dhamma True.

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THE MONK ABIDES IN DHAMMA

25 (4) The Story of Venerable Dhammārāma (Verse 364)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Dhammārāma.

When it was made known to the disciples that the Buddha would realize parinibbāna in four months, most of the *puthujjana* monks (i.e., those who had not attained any of the *maggas*) felt extremely depressed and were at a loss and did not know what to do. They just stayed close to the Buddha, hardly ever leaving his presence. However, there was a monk by the name of Dhammārāma who kept to himself and did not go near the Buddha. His intention was to strive most ardently to attain arahatship before the passing away of the Buddha. So he strove hard in insight meditation practice. Other monks, not understanding his attitude and his noble ambition, misunderstood his behaviour.

Those monks took Dhammārāma to the Buddha and said to the Enlightened One, "Venerable! This monk does not seem to have any affection or regard or reverence for you; he has been staying by himself while all the time other monks are staying close to your presence." When other monks had said everything they wanted to say, Dhammārāma respectfully explained to the Buddha why he had not come to see the Buddha and also reported that he had been striving his utmost in insight meditation practice.

The Buddha was satisfied and was very pleased with the explanation and conduct of Dhammārāma and he said, "My son, Dhammārāma, you have done very well. A monk who loves and respects me should act like you. Those who made offerings of flowers, scents and incense to me are not really paying me homage. Only those who practice the Dhamma are the ones who truly pay homage to me."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 364)

dhammārāmō dhammaratō dhammaṁ anuvicintayaṁ dhammaṁ anussaraṁ bhikkhuṁ saddhammā na parihāyati

dhammārāmō: he has the Teaching as his abode; *dhammaratō:* attached to dhamma; *dhammaṁ anuvicintayaṁ:* he reflects upon the dhamma repeatedly; *dhammaṁ anussaraṁ:* memorising and remembering the dhamma; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *saddhammā:* from the noble Teaching; *na parihāyati:* does not go astray

The monk who abides in the Dhamma, who delights in the Dhamma, who meditates on the Dhamma, and is ever mindful of the Dhamma, does not fall away from the Dhamma of the virtuous.

Commentary

Virtues of the Dhamma: This verse was spoken by the Buddha in praise of a monk who dwelt with utter concentration on the virtues of the Dhamma.

Six outstanding virtues of the Dhamma are enumerated:

(1) *Svākkhātō Bhagavatā Dhammō:* The Dhamma has been well-expounded by the Buddha. It is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent at the end. The Dhamma always possesses just one flavour — that of Nibbāna;

(2) *Sandiṭṭhikō:* This implies that the beneficial results of the Dhamma will be manifested here and now;

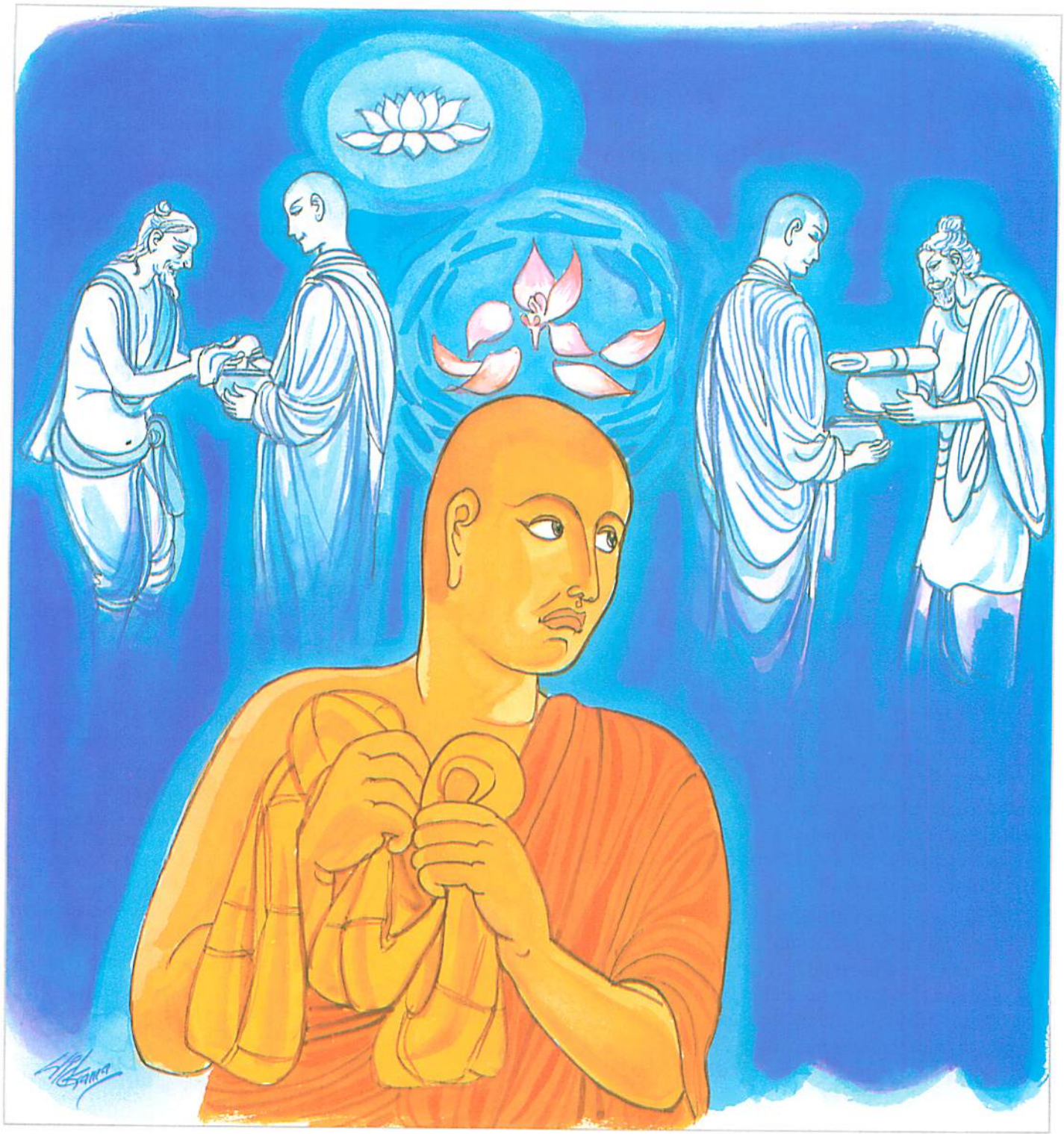
(3) *Akālikō:* The Dhamma is timeless. Since Dhamma is reality, it never withers with time;

(4) *Ēhipassikō:* Dhamma is open to anyone to come and see — *ēhipassikō* literally means come and see;

(5) *Ōpanayikō:* This means that all those who adhere to the Dhamma will tread along the path leading to eternal peace and happiness;

(6) *Vēditabbō Viññuhi:* This implies that Dhamma has to be comprehended by each wise individual for himself.

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Disdain not one's receipts nor envy other's. Envious bhikkhu reaches no tranquil mind.

365. *Salābhaṁ nā'timaññēyya*
nā'ññēsaṁ pihayaṁ carē
aññesaṁ pihayaṁ bhikkhu
samādhiṁ nā'dhigacchati. (25:6)

He should not disdain his gains
nor live of others envious,
the bhikkhu who is envious
does not attain collectedness.

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ACCEPT WHAT ONE RECEIVES

25 (5) The Story of the Traitor Monk (Verses 365 & 366)

Once, a monk of the Buddha was very friendly with a monk belonging to the faction led by Dēvadatta, the opponent of the Buddha. One day as he was returning from his breakfast, after accompanying his brother monks on their alms-round, the schismatic monk met him and asked him, "Where have you been?" "To such and such a place on my alms-round." "Did you get any food?" "Yes, I got some." "Here we receive rich gifts and offerings; stay with us here for a while." The monk did as his friend suggested, tarried with Dēvadatta's monks for several days, and then returned to his own community.

The monks reported his offense to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable, this monk has been enjoying the gifts and offerings bestowed upon Dēvadatta; he is a partisan of Dēvadatta." The Buddha caused the monk to be summoned before him and asked him, "Is the report true that you have done thus and so?" "Yes, Venerable, I tarried with Dēvadatta's monks for a few days on account of a young monk who is a personal friend of mine, but I do not favour Dēvadatta's views." Said the Buddha, "Granted that you do not hold erroneous views; yet you rove about as though you held the views of everyone you meet. But this is not the first time you have done such a thing; you did the same thing also in a previous state of existence."

Said the monks, "Venerable, we have seen with our own eyes what he did just now; but whose views did he hold in a previous state of existence? Pray tell us all about it." So in response to their request, the Buddha related the following story:

25 (5)a. Story of the Past: Elephant Damsel-face, Mahilāmukha Jātaka

After listening to the conversation of thieves and murderers, a well-behaved elephant becomes unruly and kills his keepers. But after listening to the conversation of sages and brāhmans, he becomes well-behaved again. The elephant damsel-face was the traitor monk.

After listening to the words of thieves of old,
Damsel-face ranged hither and thither, killing and destroying.
But after listening to the words of men of self-control,
This best of elephants recovered all of his good qualities.

When the Buddha had related this Mahilāmukha Jātaka, he said, "Monks, anyone who is a monk should be contented with just what he has received, and should not covet that which others have received. For if he covets that which others have received, he will attain neither trance nor spiritual insight nor paths nor fruits, — not one of these. But if he be content with that alone which he has himself received, all these things will be added unto him."

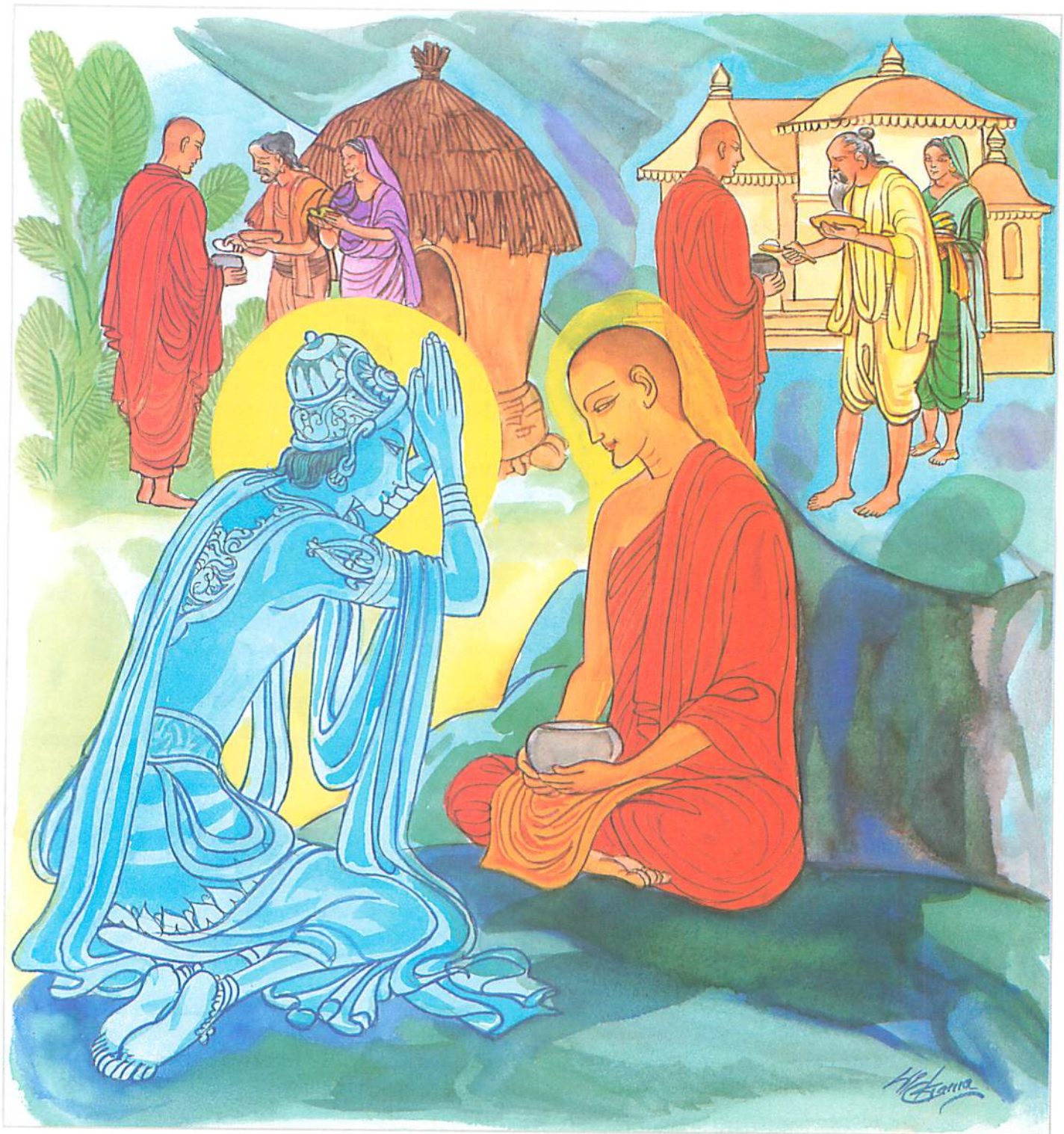
Explanatory Translation (365)

salābhaṁ nātimaññeyya āññesaṁ pihayaṁ na carē aññēsaṁ pihayaṁ bhikkhu samādhim na ādhigacchati

salābhaṁ: what one has given; *nātimaññeyya:* do not under estimate; *āññēsaṁ:* gain of others; *pihayaṁ:* expecting; *na carē:* do not go about; *aññēsaṁ pihayaṁ bhikkhu:* the monk who expects the gains of others; *samādhiṁ:* tranquility of mind; *nādhigacchati:* will not reach

Do not under estimate what you have received. And again, do not expect what others have got. If a monk covets what others have received, he will never attain tranquility of mind.

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The monk who belittles not even the little he gets, gods praise him as being pure and alert.

366. *Appalābhō'pi cē bhikkhu*
salābhaṁ nā'timaññati
taṁ vē dēvā pasaṁsanti
suddhājīviṁ atanditaṁ. (25:7)

Disdaining not his gains,
though little he receives,
pure of life and keen
that bhikkhu dēvas praise.

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GODS ADORE VIRTUOUS MONKS

25 (5) The Story of the Traitor Monk (Verses 365 & 366) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 366)

bhikkhu appalābhō api cē salābhaṁ nātimaññati
suddhājīvim atanditaṁ taṁ dēvā vē pasaṁsanti

bhikkhu: the monk; *appalābhō api:* even receiving very little; *cē:* if *salābhaṁ:* what has been received by one; *nātimaññati:* does not disregard; *suddhājīvim:* possessing pure lives; *atanditaṁ:* not lethargic; *taṁ:* that monk; *dēvā api:* even deities; *pasaṁsanti:* praise

The monk may have received only a little but he does not under estimate what was given him. He is satisfied with what he has received. Such a monk, who leads a pure livelihood, is praised by deities.

Commentary

In this verse the Buddha admonishes the monks to be content with what they receive. They are advised not to think of what others receive. Contentment with whatever you receive is described as *appicchatā* and *paccaya santosa. Appicchatā* — having only a few wishes (contentedness) — is one of the indispensable virtues of the monk. The four noble usages of a monk are: contentedness (of the monk) with any robe, contentedness with any alms food, contentedness with any dwelling, and delight in meditation and detachment. "Now, the monk is contented with any robe, with any alms food, with any dwelling, finds pleasure and enjoyment in mental training and detachment. But neither is he haughty on that account, nor does he look down upon others. Now, of a monk who herein is fit and indefatigable, who remains clearly conscious and mindful, of such a monk it is said that he is firmly established in the ancient, Noble Usages known as the most lofty ones."

The Bhikkhu Order: The Order of bhikkhus (the Buddhahood) started with the five-fold monks to whom the Buddha preached his first sermon. From that time the Sangha grew after the admission of Yasa to the Sangha.

In Vārāṇasī there was a millionaire's son, named Yasa, who led a luxurious life. Realizing the vanities of worldly life, he stole away from home, saying "Distressed am I, oppressed am I", and went in the direction of Isipatana where the Buddha was temporarily residing after having made the five monks attain arahantship.

Thereupon the Buddha said - "Here there is no distress, O Yasa! Here there is no oppression, O Yasa! Come hither, Yasa! Take a seat. I shall expound the Dhamma to you."

The distressed Yasa was pleased to hear the encouraging words of the Buddha. Removing his golden sandals, he approached the Buddha, respectfully saluted Him and sat on one side. The Buddha expounded the doctrine to him, and he attained the first stage of sainthood *(sōtāpatti)*.

At first the Buddha spoke to him on generosity *(dāna)*, morality *(sīla)*, celestial states *(sagga)*, the evils of sensual pleasure *(kāmādīnava)*, the blessings of renunciation *(nekkhammānisaṁsa)*. When He found that his mind was pliable and was ready to appreciate the deeper teachings He taught the four noble truths.

Yasa's mother was the first to notice the absence of her son and she reported the matter to her husband. The millionaire immediately dispatched horsemen in four directions and he himself went towards Isipatana, following the imprint of the golden slippers. The Buddha saw him coming from afar and, by His psychic powers, willed that he should not be able to see his son. The millionaire approached the Buddha and respectfully inquired whether He saw his son Yasa.

"Well, then, sir down here please. You would be able to see your son," said the Buddha. Pleased with the happy news, he sat down. The Buddha delivered a discourse to him, and he was so delighted that he exclaimed.

"Excellent! It is as if a man were to set upright that which was over turned, or were to reveal that which was hidden, or were to point out the way to one who had gone astray, or were to hold a lamp amidst the darkness, so that those who have eyes may see! Even so has the doctrine been expounded in various ways by the Buddha."

"I, take refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine and the Sangha. May the Buddha receive me as a follower, who has taken refuge from this very day to life's end!" He was the first lay follower to seek refuge with the therefold formula.

The hearing the discourse delivered to his father, Yasa attained arahantship. Thereupon the Buddha withdrew His will-power so that Yasa's father may be able to see his son. The millionaire beheld his son and invited the Buddha and His disciples for alms on the following day. The Buddha expressed His acceptance of the invitation by His silence.

After the departure of the rich man Yasa begged the Buddha to grant him the lesser and the higher ordination. "Come, O monks! What I taught is the Doctrine. Lead the holy life to make a complete end of suffering." With these words the Buddha conferred on him the higher ordination. With the Venerable Yasa the number of arahants increased to six.

As invited, the Buddha visited the rich man's house with his six disciples. Venerable Yasa's mother and his former wife heard the doctrine expounded by the Buddha and, having attained the first stage of sainthood, became His first two lay female followers."

Venerable Yasa had four distinguished friends named Vimala, Subāhu, Punnaji, and Gavampati. When they heard that their noble friend shaved his hair and beard, and, donning the yellow robe, entered the homeless life, they approached Venerable Yasa and expressed their desire to follow his example. Venerable Yasa introduced them to the Buddha, and, on hearing the Dhamma, they also attained arahantship.

Fifty more worthy friends of Venerable Yasa, who belonged to leading families of various districts, also receiving instructions from the Buddha, attained arahantship and entered the holy Sangha.

Hardly two months had elapsed since His Enlightenment when the number of arahants gradually rose to sixty. All of them came from distinguished families and were worthy sons of worthy fathers.

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He truly is the monk who thinks not as I and mine, and grieves not for what truly exists not.

367. *Sabbasō nāmarūpasmiṁ*
yassa natthi mamāyitaṁ
asatā ca na sōcati
sa vē bhikkhū'ti vuccati. (25:8)

For whom there is no making 'mine'
towards all name and form,
who does not grieve for what is not,
he's truly 'bhikkhu' called.

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HE IS A MONK WHO HAS NO ATTACHMENT

25 (6) The Story Of The Brahmin Who Offered Alms Food To The Buddha (Verse 367)

Once, there was a brahmin in Sāvatthi, who was very generous and always offered almsfood to the Buddha and his monks.

One day, the Buddha saw the brahmin and his wife in his vision and knew the couple would be able to attain Anāgāmi. Accordingly, the Buddha set out for their house and stood at the door. The brahmin who was then having his meal did not see him. His wife saw him but she was afraid that her husband on seeing the Buddha, would offer all his food to the Buddha. Then she would have to cook again. With this thought in her mind, she stood in front of her husband so that he would not be able to see the Buddha. Then she quietly stepped backwards and slowly came to where the Buddha was standing and whispered, "Venerable! We do not have any almsfood for you today." The Buddha just shook his head. Seeing his gesture, the brahmin's wife could not control herself and she burst out laughing.

At that instant, the brahmin turned round and saw the Buddha. At once he knew what his wife had done, and cried out, "Wife, I am ruined. When our Venerable Teacher stood at the door you should have informed me. By failing to do so you have embarrassed me greatly." Then, taking up his plate of rice, he approached the Buddha and apologetically requested, "Venerable! Please accept this rice which I have partly consumed. I am very sorry indeed that I have to offer you partly consumed food." To him the Buddha replied, "O brahmin! Any almsfood is suitable for me, whether it has been eaten or not." The brahmin was very happy because his offering of food was accepted by the Buddha and he next asked by what standard a monk was judged and how a monk was defined. The Buddha knew that both the brahmin and his wife had already learned something about mind and body (nāma-rūpa), so he answered, "O brahmin! One who is not attached to mind and body is called a monk." At the conclusion of the discourse, both the brahmin and his wife attained the third stage of sainthood.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 367)

yassa nāmarūpasmiṁ sabbasō mamāyitaṁ natthi
asatā ca na sōcati sō vē bhikkhū iti vuccati

yassa: for some one; *nāmarūpasmiṁ:* in name and form; *sabbasō:* in all forms; *mamāyitaṁ natthi:* there is no selfishness; *asatā ca:* even when they decay; *na sōcati:* there is no weeping; *sō:* that person; *cē:* certainly; *bhikkhū iti:* a monk; *vuccati:* is called

He has gone beyond the sense of his own name and form. To him, there is no existence of I, my or mine. If his name and form entity were to decay and deteriorate, he will not grieve. Such a person is called a monk.

Commentary

nāma-rūpasmiṁ: mind-and-body; mentality and corporeality. It is the fourth link in the dependent origination *(paṭiccasamuppāda)* where it is conditioned by consciousness, and on its part is the condition of the six-fold sense-base. In two texts which contain variations of the dependent origination, the mutual conditioning of consciousness and mind-and-body is described, and the latter is said to be a condition of sense-impression *(phassa)*.

The third of the seven purifications *(visuddhi)*, the purification of views, is defined as the correct seeing of mind-and-body and various methods for the discernment of mind-and-body by way of insight-meditation *(vipassanā)* are given there. In this context, mind *(nāma)* comprises all four mental groups, including consciousness.

In five-group-existence *(pañca-vōkāra-bhava)* mind-and-body are inseparable and interdependent; and this has been illustrated by comparing them with two sheaves of reed propped against each other: when one falls the other will fall, too; and with a blind man with stout legs, carrying on his shoulders a weak-legged person with keen eye-sight: only by mutual assistance can they move about efficiently.

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Dwelling in love with delight in Buddha's word, bhikkhu gets his bliss where conditions cease.

368. *Mettāvihārī yō bhikkhu*
pasannō Buddhasāsane
adhigacchē padaṁ santaṁ
saṇkhārū'pasamaṁ sukhaṁ. (25:9)

The bhikkhu in kindness abiding,
bright in the Buddha's Teaching
can come to the Place of Peace,
the bliss of conditionedness ceased.

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THE MONK WHO RADIATES LOVING-KINDNESS RADIATES PEACE

25 (7) The Story of a Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376)

Once upon a time, while Venerable Mahā Kaccāna was in residence in the Avanti country on a mountain near the city of Kurāraghāra, a lay disciple named Sōṇa Kūṭikaṇṇa, convinced of the truth of the Dhamma by the preaching of the monk, expressed a desire to retire from the world and become a monk under him. The Venerable kept saying, "Sōṇa, it is a difficult matter to eat alone and lodge alone and live a life of chastity," and twice turned him away.

But Sōṇa was determined to become a monk, and on asking the Venerable the third time, succeeded in obtaining admission to the Sangha. On account of the scarcity of monks in the South, he spent three years in that country, and then made his full profession as a member of the Sangha. Desiring to see the Buddha face to face, he asked leave of his preceptor, and taking a message from him, set out for Jētavana Monastery. On reaching Jētavana, he saluted the Buddha, who greeted him in a friendly manner and permitted him to lodge in the perfumed chamber alone with himself.

Soṇa spent the greater part of the night in the open air, and then, entering the perfumed chamber, spent the rest of the night on the couch assigned to him for his own use. When the dawn came, he intoned by command of the Buddha all of the sixteen octads. When he had completed his recitation of the text, the Buddha thanked him and applauded him, saying, "Well done, well done, monk!" Hearing the applause bestowed upon him by the Buddha, the deities, beginning with deities of the earth, nāgas and the supaṇṇas, and extending to the world of brahmā, gave one shout of applause.

At that moment also the deity resident in the house of the eminent female lay disciple who was the mother of the Venerable Sōṇa in Kuraraghāra city, at a distance of a hundred and twenty leagues from the Jētavana, gave a loud shout of applause. The female lay disciple said to the deity, "Who is this that gives applause?" The deity replied, "It is I, sister." "Who are you?" "I am the deity resident in your house." "You have never before bestowed applause upon me; why do you do so to-day?" "I am not bestowing applause upon you." "Then upon whom are you bestowing applause?" "Upon your son Venerable Kuṭikaṇṇa Sōṇa." "What has my son done?"

"Today, your son, residing alone with the Buddha in the perfumed chamber, recited the Dhamma to the Buddha. The Buddha, pleased with your son's recitation of the Dhamma, bestowed applause upon him; therefore I also bestowed applause upon him. For when the deities heard the applause bestowed upon your son by the Buddha, all of them, from deities of earth to the world of brahma, gave one shout of applause." "Master, do you really mean that my son recited the Dhamma to the Buddha? Did not the Buddha recite the Dhamma to my son?" "It was your son who recited the Dhamma to the Buddha."

As the deity thus spoke, the five kinds of joy sprang up within the disciple, suffusing her whole body. Then the following thought occurred to her, "If my son has been able, residing alone with the Buddha in the perfumed chamber, to recite the Dhamma to him, he will be able to recite the Dhamma to me also. When my son returns, I will arrange for a hearing of the Dhamma and will listen to his preaching of the Dhamma."

When the Buddha bestowed applause upon Venerable Sōṇa, the Venerable thought to himself, "Now is the time for me to announce the message which my preceptor gave me." Accordingly Venerable Sōṇa asked the Buddha for five boons, asking first for full admission to the Sangha community of five monks in the borderlands, of whom one was a monk versed in the Vinaya. For a few days longer he resided with the Buddha, and then, thinking to himself, "I will now go see my preceptor," took leave of the Buddha, departed from the Jētavana Monastery, and in due course arrived at the abode of his preceptor.

On the following day Venerable Kaccāna took Venerable Sōṇa with him and set out on his round for alms, going to the door of the house of the female lay disciple who was the mother of Sōṇa. When the mother of Sōṇa saw her son, her heart was filled with joy. She showed him every attention and asked him, "Dear son, is the report true that you resided alone with the Buddha in the perfumed chamber, and that you recited the Dhamma to the Buddha?" "Lay disciple, who told you that?" "Dear son, the deity who resides in this house gave a loud shout of applause, and when I asked, 'Who is this that gives applause?' the deity replied, 'It is I,' and told thus and so.

(cont'd on page 787)

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Bail thy boat, O monk. Emptied, it will swiftly move. Lustless and hateless in Nibbāna be.

369. *Siñca bhikkhu imaṁ nāvaṁ*
sittā tē lahumessati
chētvā rāgañ ca dōsañ ca
tatō nibbānamēhisi. (25:10)

O bhikkhu bail this boat,
when emptied it will swiftly go.
having severed lust and hate
thus to Nibbāna you'll go.

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GIVE UP LUST AND HATRED

25 (7) The Story of a Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (cont'd)

"

After I had listened to what he had to say, the following thought occurred to me, 'If my son has recited the Dhamma to the Buddha, he will be able to recite the Dhamma to me also.' Dear son, since you have recited the Dhamma to the Buddha, you will be able to recite it to me also. Therefore on such and such a day I will arrange for a hearing of the Dhamma, and will listen to your preaching of the Dhamma." He consented. The female lay disciple gave alms to the company of monks and rendered honour to them. Then she said to herself, "I will hear my son preach the Dhamma." And leaving but a single female slave behind to guard the house, she took all of her attendants with her and went to hear the Dhamma. Within the city, in a pavilion erected for the hearing of the Dhamma, her son ascended the gloriously adorned seat of the Dhamma and began to preach the Dhamma.

Now at this time nine hundred thieves were prowling about, trying to find some way of getting into the house of this female lay disciple. Now as a precaution against thieves, her house was surrounded with seven walls, provided with seven battlemented gates, and at frequent intervals about the circuit of the walls were savage dogs in leash. Moreover within, where the water dripped from the house-roof, a trench had been dug and filled with lead. In the daytime this mass of lead melted in the rays of the sun and became viscous, and in the night time the surface became stiff and hard. Close to the trench, great iron pickets had been sunk in the ground in unbroken succession. Such were the precautionary measures against thieves taken by this female lay disciple.

By reason of the defenses without the house and the presence of the lay disciple within, those thieves had been unable to find any way of getting in. But on that particular day, observing that she had left the house, they dug a tunnel under the leaden trench and the iron pickets, and thus succeeded in getting into the house. Having effected an entrance into the house, they sent the ringleader to watch the mistress of the house, saying to him, "If she hears that we have entered the house, and turns and sets out in the direction of the house, strike her with your sword and kill her."

The ringleader went and stood beside her. The thieves, once within the house, lighted a light and opened the door of the room where the copper coins were kept. The female slave saw the thieves, went to the female lay disciple her mistress, and told her, "My lady, many thieves have entered your house and have opened the door of the room where the copper coins are kept." The female lay disciple replied, "Let the thieves take all the copper coins they see. I am listening to my son as he preaches the Dhamma. Do not spoil the Dhamma for me. Go home." So saying, she sent her back.

When the thieves had emptied the room where the copper coins were kept, they opened the door of the room where the silver coins were kept. The female slave went once more to her mistress and told her what had happened. The female lay disciple replied, "Let the thieves take whatever they will; do not spoil the Dhamma for me," and sent her back again. When the thieves had emptied the room where the silver coins were kept, they opened the door of the room where the gold coins were kept. The female slave went once more to her mistress and told her what had happened. Then the female lay disciple addressed her and said, "Woman! you have come to me twice, and I have said to you, 'Let the thieves take whatever they wish to; I am listening to my son as he preaches the Dhamma; do not bother me.' But in spite of all I have said, you have paid no attention to my words; on the contrary, you come back here again and again just the same. If you come back here once more, I shall deal with you according to your deserts. Go back home again." So saying, she sent her back.

When the leader of the thieves heard these words of the female lay disciple, he said to himself, "If we steal the property of such a woman as this, Indra's thunderbolt will fall and break our heads." So he went to the thieves and said, "Hurry and put back the wealth of the female lay disciple where it was before." So the thieves filled again the room where the copper coins were kept with the copper coins, and the gold and silver rooms with the gold and silver coins. It is invariably true, we are told, that righteousness keeps whoever walks in righteousness. Therefore said the Buddha,

Righteousness truly protects him who walks in righteousness;
Righteous living brings happiness.
Herein is the advantage of living righteously:
He who walks in righteousness will never go to a state of suffering.

(cont'd on page 789)

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Cut five-fold fetters, in their opposites train. Then he is called Crossed-the-Flood monk.

370. *Pañca chindē pañca jahē*
pañca c'uttari bhāvayē
pañca saṅgātigō bhikkhu
ōghatiṇṇō'ti vuccati. (25:11)

Five cut off and five forsake,
a further five then cultivate,
a bhikkhu from five fetters free
is called a 'Forder of the flood.'

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FLOOD-CROSSER IS ONE WHO HAS GIVEN UP THE FETTERS

25 (7) The Story of a Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (cont'd)

The thieves went to the pavilion and listened to the Dhamma. As the night grew bright, the Venerable finished his recitation of the Dhamma and descended from the seat of the Dhamma. At that moment the leader of the thieves prostrated himself at the feet of the female lay disciple and said to her, "Pardon me, my lady." "Friend, what do you mean?" "I took a dislike to you and stood beside you, intending to kill you." "Very well, friend, I pardon you." The rest of the thieves did the same. "Friends, I pardon you," said the female lay disciple. Then said the thieves to the female lay disciple, "My lady, if you pardon us, obtain for us the privilege of entering the Sangha under your son."

The female lay disciple saluted her son and said, "Dear son, these thieves are so pleased with my good qualities and with your recitation of the Dhamma, that they desire to be admitted to the Sangha; admit them to the Sangha." "Very well," replied the Venerable. So he caused the skirts of the undergarments they wore to be cut off, had their garments dyed with red clay, admitted them to the Sangha, and established them in the Precepts. When they had made their full profession as members of the Sangha, he gave to each one of them a separate meditation topic. Then those nine hundred monks took the nine hundred meditation topics which they had severally received, climbed a certain mountain, and sitting each under the shadow of a separate tree, applied themselves to meditation.

The Buddha, even as he sat in the great monastery at Jētavana, a hundred and twenty leagues away, the Buddha scrutinized those monks, chose a form of instruction suited to their dispositions, sent forth a radiant image of himself, and as though sitting face to face with them and talking to them, gave the stanzas.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 368)

yō bhikkhu mettāvihārī buddhasāsanē pasannō saṅnkhārūpasamaṁ sukhaṁ santaṁ padaṁ adhigacchē

yō bhikkhu: if a given monk; *mettāvihārī:* is full of loving-kindness; *buddhasāsanē:* in the Teaching of the Buddha; *pasannō:* takes delight in; *saṅnkhārūpasamaṁ:* pacifying the agitation of the existence; *sukhaṁ:* bliss; *santaṁ padaṁ:* the tranquil state (Nibbāna); *adhigacchē:* reaches

The monk who extends loving-kindness to all, takes delight in the Teaching of the Buddha, will attain the state of bliss the happiness of Nibbāna, which denotes the pacifying of the agitation of existence.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 369)

bhikkhu imaṁ nāvaṁ siñca tē sittā lahum essati rāgañ ca dōsañ ca chētvā tatō nibbānam ēhisi

bhikkhu: O monk; *imaṁ nāvaṁ:* this boat; human life; *siñca:* empty; *tē:* by you; *sittā:* emptied (this boat); *lahum:* being lightened and swift; *essati:* will reach Nibbāna; *rāgañ ca:* passion; *dōsañ ca:* ill-will; *chētvā:* cut off; *tatō:* then; *nibbānam ēhisi:* reach Nibbāna.

O monk, your boat must be emptied of the water which, if accumulated, will sink it. Once the water is taken out and the boat is emptied, both lust and hate gone, it will swiftly reach the destination — Nibbāna.

(cont'd on page 791)

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Meditate, O monk, and brook no delay. Let no lust baffle you. Groan not as you face the fire.

371. *Jhāya bhikkhu Mā ca pamādō* Meditate bhikkhu! Don't be heedless!
mā tē kāmaguṇē bhamassu cittaṁ Don't let pleasures whirl the mind!
mā lōhaguḷaṁ giḷī pamattō Heedless, do not gulp a glob of iron!
mā kandi dukkham idan'ti ḍayhamāno. (25:12) Bewail not when burning, 'This is dukkha'!

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MEDITATE EARNESTLY

25 (7) The Story of a Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 370)

pañca chindē jahē pañca ca uttari bhāvayē pañca saṅgātigō bhikkhu ōghatiṇṇō iti vuccati

pañca: the five (lower fetters); *chindē:* break off; *pañca:* the five (upper fetters); *jahē:* get rid of; *pañca:* the five (the wholesome faculties); *uttari:* especially; *bhāvayē:* cultivate; *pañca saṅgātigō:* go beyond the five saṅga bonds; *ōghatiṇṇō iti:* having crossed the stream; *vuccati:* is called

One should break away from the five lower fetters. One must get rid of the five higher fetters. One must cultivate the five faculties. One must go beyond five attachments. A monk who has achieved these is described as the one who has crossed the flood.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 371)

bhikkhu jhāya mā ca pamādō tē cittaṁ kāmaguṇē mā bhamassu pamattō lohagulaṁ ma gilī ḍayhamānō idaṁ dukkham kandi

bhikkhu: O monk; *jhāya:* meditate; *mā ca pamādō:* do not be indolent; *te cittaṁ:* your mind; *kāmaguṇē:* in five-fold sensual attractions; *mā bhamassu:* do not allow to loiter; *pamattō:* being indolent; *lohagulaṁ:* iron balls; *mā gilī:* do not swallow; *ḍayhamānō:* burning; *idaṁ dukkham:* oh, this is suffering; *mā kandi:* do not bewail

O monk, meditate and do not be indolent. Do not allow your mind to loiter among sensual pleasures. If you allow it, you will have iron balls forced down your throat in hell. You will bewail your fate crying, "This is suffering." Do not allow that to happen.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 372)

apaññassa jhānam natthi ajhāyatō paññā natthi yamhi jhānañca paññā ca sō vē nibbānasantikē

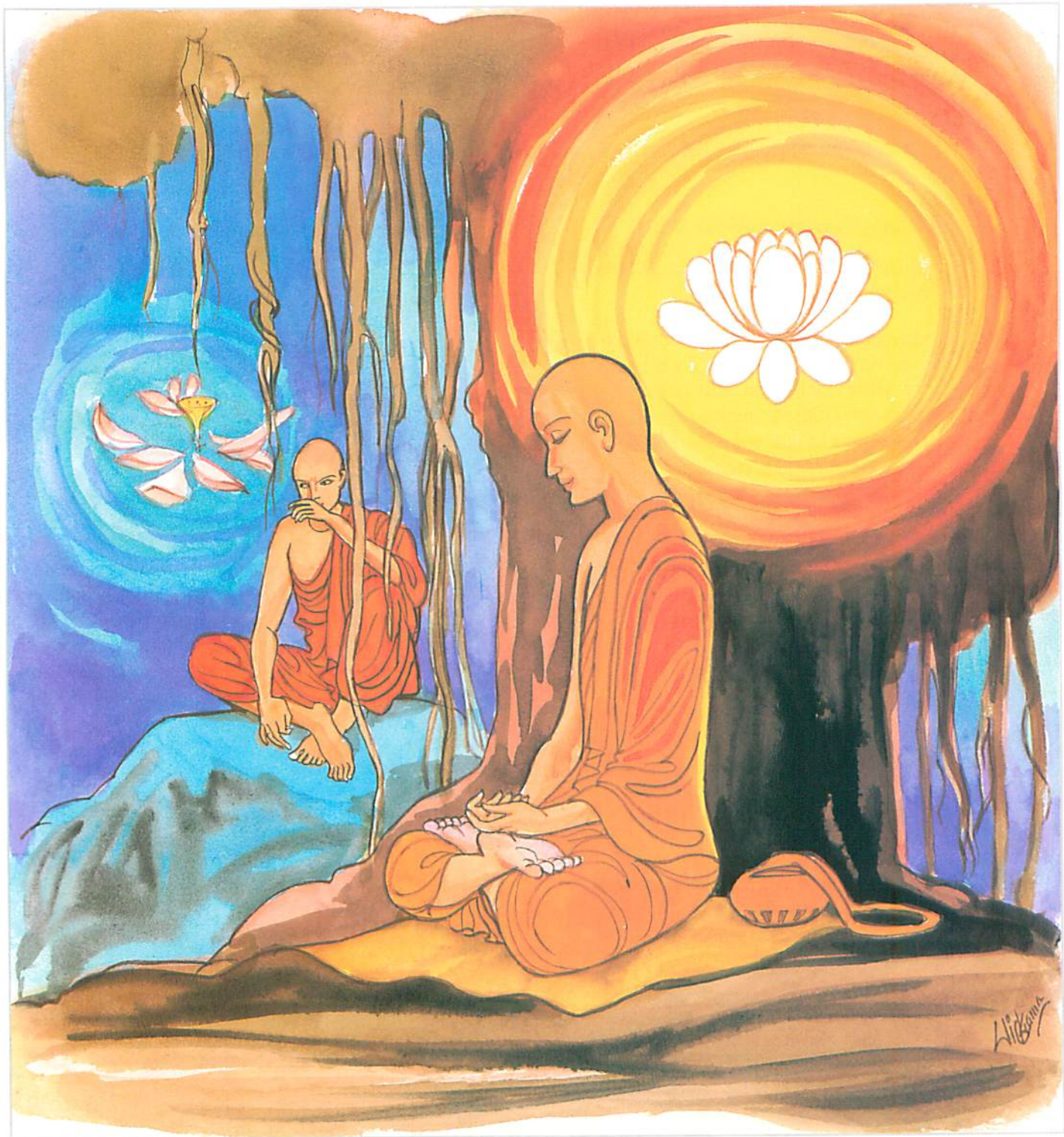
apaññassa: to the unwise; *jhānam natthi:* (there is) no meditation; *ajhāyatō:* to the one without meditation; *paññā natthi:* (there is) no wisdom; *yamhi:* in a person; *jhānañca:* meditation and; *paññā ca:* wisdom (are present); *sō:* that person; *vē:* certainly; *nibbānasantikē:* is close to Nibbāna

For one who lacks meditation there is no wisdom. Both these meditation and wisdom are essential and cannot be had without the other. If in a person, both meditation and wisdom are present, he is close to Nibbāna.

(cont'd on page 793)



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Unwise can meditate not. Meditating not, in wisdom fail. Wise and meditative reach thy goal.

372. *Natthi jhānaṁ apaññassa*
paññā natthi ajhāyatō
yamhi jhānañ ca paññā ca
sa vē nibbānasantikē. (25:13)

No concentration wisdom lacks,
no wisdom concentration lacks,
in whom are both these qualities
near to Nibbāna is that one.

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THERE IS NO WISDOM IN THOSE WHO DO NOT THINK

25 (7) A Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 373)

suññāgāraṁ paviṭṭhassa santacittassa dhammaṁ sammā vipassatō bhikkhunō amānusī ratī hoti

suññāgāraṁ: an empty house; *paviṭṭhassa:* to the one who has entered; *santacittassa:* to the person with a tranquil mind; *dhammaṁ:* the reality of things; *sammā:* good; *vipassatō:* has an insight into; *bhikkhunō:* the monk; *amānusī:* not known by ordinary mortals; *ratī:* an ecstasy; *hōti:* occurs

A monk who enters an empty house, whose mind is at peace, and who is capable of seeing the reality of things, experiences an ecstasy not known to ordinary mortals.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 374)

yatō yatō khandhānaṁ udayabbayaṁ sammasati pīti pāmōjjaṁ labhati taṁ vijānataṁ amataṁ

yatō yatō: as to when; *khandhānaṁ:* aggregates; *udayabbayaṁ:* arise and decay; *sammasati:* contemplate wisely; *pīti pāmōjjaṁ:* joy and ecstasy; *labhati:* will accrue; *taṁ:* this; *vijānataṁ:* to those who know; *amataṁ:* is the deathless

When the meditator reflects upon the rise and the decay of the bodily aggregates he experiences a joy and ecstasy which is a fore taste of Nibbāna (amata) for those who know it

Explanatory Translation (Verse 375)

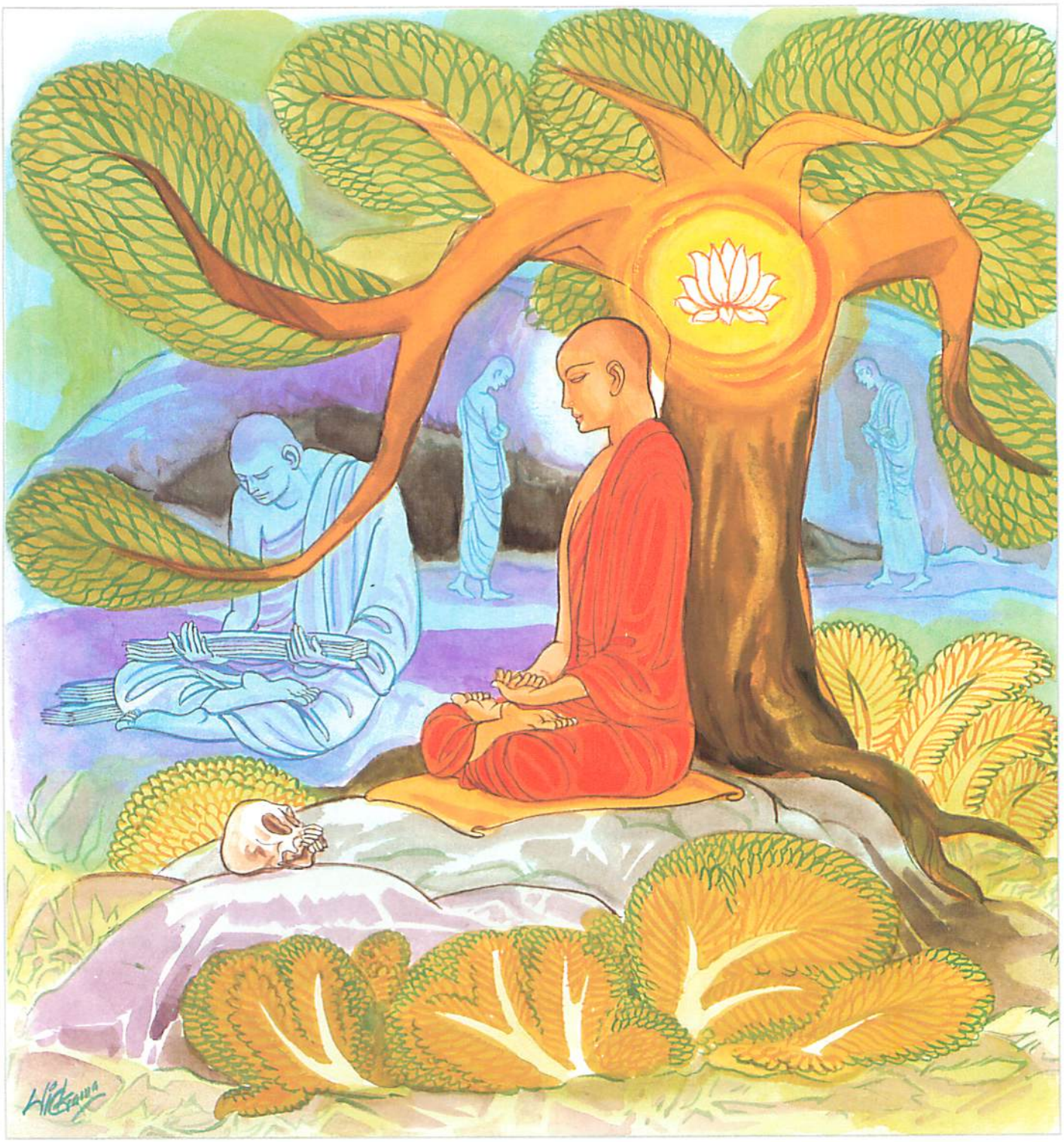
idha paññassa bhikkhunō tatra ayam ādi bhavati indriyagutti santuṭṭhī pātimokkhē ca saṁvarō ca suddhājīvē atanditē kalyānē mittē bhajassu

idha: in this Teaching; *paññassa:* to the wise meditators; *tatra:* in this contemplation of the rise and the decay; *ayaṁ:* thus; *ādi bhavati:* is the first step; *indriyagutti:* the guarding of the senses; *santuṭṭhī:* the three-fold contentment; *pātimokkhē:* in the code of discipline; *saṁvarō ca:* restraint; *suddhājīvē:* those with purity of life; *atanditē:* non-relaxed; *kalyānē mittē:* beneficial friends; *bhajassu:* associate

The joy experienced as a fore taste of Nibbāna, through the awareness of the rise and decay of the aggregates, is the first step for the wise meditator. Guarding the senses, even-mindedness, and discipline is the principal code of morality and the association with good friends who are unrelaxed in their effort and are pure in behaviour.

(cont'd on page 795)

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In solitude with a tranquilled mind, a monk who grasps the Dhamma will have bliss supreme.

373. *Suññāgāraṁ paviṭṭhassa*
santacittassa bhikkhunō
amānusī ratī hōti
sammā dhammaṁ vipassatō. (25:14)

The bhikkhu gone to a lonely place
who is of peaceful heart
in-sees Dhamma rightly,
knows all-surpassing joy.

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HE WHO IS CALM EXPERIENCES TRANSCENDENTAL JOY

25 (7) A Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (Contd.)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 376)

paṭisanthāravutiyassa ācārakusalō siyā tatō
pāmōjjabahulō dukkhassantaṁ

paṭisanthāravuti: courteous and pleasant behaviour; *assa:* one should be; *ācārakusalō:* skilful in the practice of religion; *tatō:* due to that; *pāmōjjabahulō:* being of high ecstasy; *dukkhassa antaṁ karissati:* you will end suffering

One should be courteous and of pleasant behaviour. One should be efficient in the conduct of the proper rites and rituals. Through these, one acquires a vast quantum of ecstasy, leading him to the ending of suffering.

Commentary

mettāvihāri: In the Buddhist system considerable emphasis is placed on living with loving-kindness which is *mettāvihāri.*

Mettā, unbounded benevolence or friendliness, in itself emphasizes the positive nature of the self-sacrifice and devoted service of the aspirant, which is not confined to any one part or portion of existence, but is extended over the whole universe tc include all beings, from the highest to the lowest, and from the greatest to the most minute form of life. *Mettā*, as exemplified in the Buddha and in his followers and expounded in the scriptures, is not an evanescent exhibition of emotion, but a sustained and habitual mental attitude of service, good-will and friendship, which finds expression in deed, word and thought. There are numerous passages which can be collated to testify to the vital importance attached to this divine state in the Buddha's Teaching.

The exercise of *mettā*, which, psychologically speaking, is a moral attribute, tends to the cultivation of the emotional sentiment of good-will, rather than meditation itself. The disciple should, however, practice *mettā* in conjunction with other forms of meditation;for it is indispensable to one who seeks to purify his mind from anger and malice. Moreover, he will find that it is an essential support in the exercise of meditation, bringing immediate success and providing the means of protection from external hindrances with which he may have to contend.

In the *Mahā Rāhulōvāda Sutta* we read of the Buddha advising his son, the Venerable Rāhula, to practice *mettā*, on the ground that, when it is cultivated, anger will disappear. In the *Mēghiya Sutta* it is recommended to the Venerable Mēghiya, who failed to achieve success in meditation at first, owing to the persistent arising of evil thoughts. He afterwards attained Arahatship, having expelled and excluded evil thoughts with the aid of the *mettā* he had developed.

Several methods of practicing *mettā*, as an independent form of meditation, are expounded in the canon in various connexions. In the treatment of this subject we should give more especial consideration to four methods that appear in the *Sutta Piṭaka.*

Of these four, the formula of the four-fold Brahmavihāra exercise which occurs most frequently in the *Nikāyas* and which may be found in the *Tēvijja Sutta*, deals principally with the method of 'Disāpharana'. This consists in suffusing the whole world with the thought of *mettā*, expanded in all directions, and is associated with the *jhāna* stages. We quote this formula here, together with its Pāli version, in order to show its distinctive character:

> *Sō mettāsahagatēna cētasā ēkaṁ disaṁ pharitvā viharati. Tathā dutiyaṁ, tathā catutthaṁ;*
> *iti uddhaṁ adhō, tiriyaṁ, sabbadhi, sabbattatāya, sabbāvantaṁ lōkaṁ mettāsahagatēna cētasā,*
> *vipulēna, mahaggatēna, appamāṇēna, averēna, abyāpajjēna pharitvā viharati.*

Literally rendered thus:

> He abides suffusing one quarter with (his) mind associated with friendliness.
> Likēwise, the second, the third, and the fourth; thus above, below, around, everywhere,
> all as himself, the whole wide world, he abides suffusing with mind associated with friendliness,
> abundant, grown great, immeasurable, free from enmity, free from ill-will.

This formula is discussed by Buddhaghōsa Thera in his *Visuddhimagga*, where he distinguishes it as *vikubbanā*, a term which also occurs in connection with the *iddhividha* as *vikubbanā-iddhi*, where it means exercising psychic power of various forms. It implies the establishment of an immense sphere of benevolent thought, which is increased to the *appaṇā* or the *jhāna* stage. Hence, this formula indicates the habitual mental attitude of him who has attained to *jhāna* by the practice of *mettā* and we find it repeated with the substitution, one by one, of the other altruistic emotions of *karuṇā, muditā* and *upekkhā.*

Being the statement of the special mode of living to be adopted by the religious aspirant, this formula emphatically expresses his mental attitude in relation to the external world, especially in the *jhāna* state. Furthermore, it describes the outlook of the man who neither tortures himself nor inflicts injury upon others, but lives satisfied, tranquil, and cool, enjoying the happiness of serenity, himself a brahma *(brahma bhūtēna attanā).* The special context of the formula corresponds to the *Upāli Sutta* where it is stated that those who have attained *jhāna* and psychic powers, but have not yet cultivated *mettā*, can destroy others by the mere disturbance of their minds through anger. It is said that in ancient days, the forests named Daṇḍaka, Kāliṅga, Mejjha, and Mātaṅga, became forests because of the anger of certain ancient sages *(pubbakā isayo).* But the disciple of the Buddha, as the formula says, abides suffusing the entire universe with his boundless love of *mettā*, free from all anger and malice.

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As one becomes aware of the rise and fall of the aggregates, one gets the joy of deathlessness.

374. *Yatō yatō sammasati*
khandhānaṁ udayabbayaṁ
labhati pītipāmōjjaṁ
amataṁ taṁ vijānataṁ. (25:15)

Whenever one reflects
on aggregates' arise and fall
one rapture gains and joy.
'Tis Deathlessness for Those-who-know.

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HE IS HAPPY WHO REFLECTS ON RISE AND FALL

25 (7) A Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verses 368 – 376) (Contd.)

Commentary

The well-known *Metta Sutta*, or *Karaṇīya Metta Sutta*, sets forth the manner in which *mettā* should be practiced, both as means of self-protection and as a *kammaṭṭhāna*. It is there emphasized as an essential duty of the disciple who follows this system of religious training, seeking happiness and peace. This Sutta is one of the most important discourses selected for reciting during religious services and chanting at the *Paritta* ceremony, which is usually held on auspicious occasions, or in cases of affliction, epidemic, or individual sickness. It has a special importance for the disciple of meditation.

In the *Yogāvacara's Manual*, we read that the *Metta Sutta* is to be recited in its Pāli form, as part of the invocation that should precede all exercises in meditation. The text of this Sutta is supposed to be so arranged that the words themselves have a certain sonorous power, to which importance is attached, and it is always chanted with a special intonation. But the main purpose of the Sutta is to expound the practice of *mettā* and to formulate a definite system of contemplative exercise. Moreover, it is a more special expansion of the method of suffusing *mettā* and corresponds to that shown in the formula of the *Tēvijja Sutta*. Furthermore, it is in this *Metta Sutta* that *mettā* is compared to motherly love and named especially as a *brahma-vihāra*. The practice of this meditation alone leads to emancipation from re-birth, as emphasized in the saying, 'So, shall he never come back again to re-birth.'

The other special application of *mettā* is found in the *Khandha Paritta*, where it is given as a safeguard against harm from snakes. This states that a certain monk of Sāvatthi died as the result of receiving a snake-bite. A number of monks brought the news to the Buddha, who is reported to have said, "The monk had not practiced *mettā* towards the four families of snakes. There are four families *(kula)* of snakes, namely, *virūpakkha, erāpatha, chabyāputta* and *kaṇhāgotamaka*. Had he practiced *mettā* towards these four kinds of snakes, he would not have died of snake-bite. I advise you, monks, to suffuse them with friendly thoughts (lit. mind — *mettēna cittēna pharitun*) for your own safeguard and protection."

The actual method of suffusing is given here in verses, and is to be extended gradually, proceeding from the four families of snakes, thus:

> May I have friendliness with the *virūpakkhas,*
> *May I have friendliness with the chabyāputtas,*
> *With the erāpathas may I friendliness have,*
> *With the kaṇhāgōtamakas may I have friendliness.*

The suffusion is then gradually extended, advancing in stages, and including different kinds of creatures; the footless, those that have two feet, the quadrupeds and the many-footed.

Thereafter, the disciple's aspiration follows thus:

> Let not the footless do me harm,
> Nor those that have two feet;
> Let not the quadrupeds me harm,
> Nor those with many feet.

He then continues, developing suffusion immeasurable:

> *Sabbē sattā sabbē pāṇā*
> *Sabbē bhūtā ca kēvalā —*
> *Sabbē bhadrāni passantu;*
> *Mā kañci pāpamāgamā.*
>
> May all beings, all living things,
> All that are born, and everyone,
> May all see happiness,
> And may no harm befall.

This stanza contains some of the actual words (such as *sabbē sattā, sabbē pānā, sabbē bhūtā* and on) that occur in the formula for meditation, as given in later works.

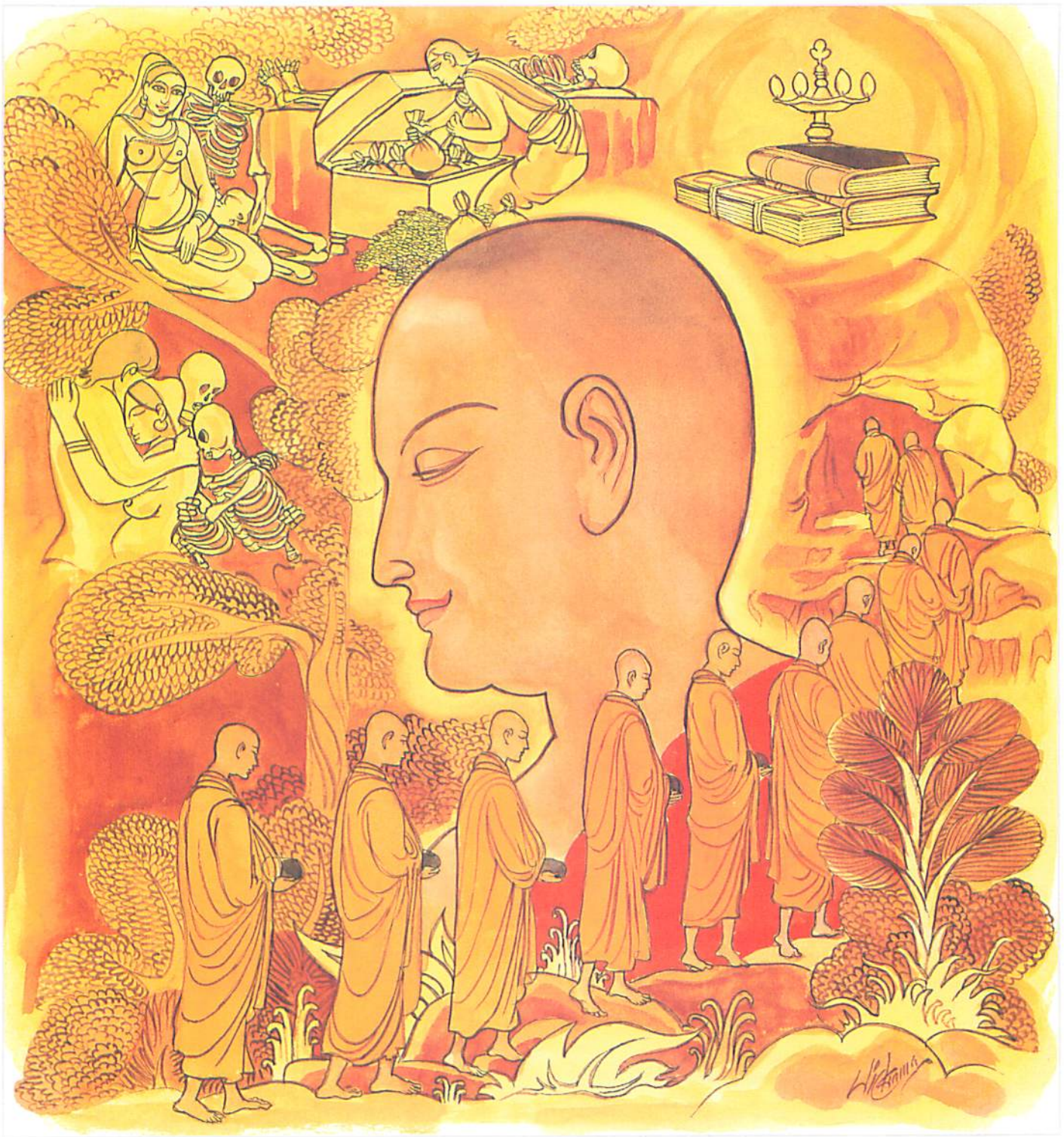
Then follows the invocation:

> Infinite is the virtue of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha;
> Finite are creeping things, such as snakes, scorpions, centipedes,
> spiders, house lizards, rats and mice.
> I have done my warding, my protection.
> Let all creatures turn away in peace.
> Reverence to the Buddha, reverence to the seven fully Enlightened Ones.

(cont'd on page 797)



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Sense-restraint, Pātimokkha discipline and noble friends: 'tis where the wise bhikkhu begins.

375. *Tatrāyaṁ ādi bhavati*
idha paññassa bhikkhunō
indriyaguttī santuṭṭhī
pātimokkhē ca saṁvarō
mittē bhajassu kalyāṇē
suddhājīvē atanditē. (25:16)

Here's indeed the starting-point
for the bhikkhu who is wise,
sense-controlled, contented too,
restrained to limit freedom ways,
in company of noble friends
who're pure of life and keen.

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A WISE MONK MUST POSSESS HIS CARDINAL VIRTUES

25 (7) A Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verse 368 – 376) (cont'd)

Commentary

This *sutta* has a very long and firmly established tradition. It occurs in the *Khandha-Vatta Jātaka* where the Bōdhisatta advised his followers to observe this *paritta* (which is given in the same form) as a protection against serpents; for they were living in a spot in the Himālayan valley where such poisonous creatures were abundant. Observing this advice, the ascetics are said to have long lived unharmed, during the period that the Bōdhisatta himself, who was practicing the *brahma-vihāras*, was bound to the brahma world. In relating this story of his past experience the Buddha advised the monks to observe the same *paritta*.

This meditational exercise is given in the *Khuddaka-Vatta-Khandhaka* of the *Cullavagga* as a rule of discipline and duty, and the special name *Khandha Paritta* is probably adopted from this connection.

Of these two *parittas*, the method expounded in the *Metta Sutta* corresponds to the practice as followed in the *jhāna* stage, as does also the formula found in the *Tevijja Sutta*; while the other seems to be a more primitive form of suffusion. Both, however, contain the *anōdhisō*, the unlimited, and the *ōdhisō*, the limited forms of suffusion, which are explained in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*, as will be seen below. Both methods, the unlimited and the limited, combine with that of *disāpharaṇa*, suffusing through all the directions or quarters given in the formula of the four-fold exercise. They may differ in the letter, but the spirit is the same everywhere.

A more widely extended suffusion of *mettā*, which corresponds to these formulae, is mentioned in the *Mettākathā* of the *Patisambhidā-magga*, where we find a detailed description of several methods, arranged in numerical order; they are combined severally with the *Bōdhipakkhiya* principles of the five *indriyas*, the five *balas*, the seven *bojjhaṇgas* and the eight-fold path. First, the *Mettānisaṁsa* is quoted, a discourse that occurs in the *Aṇguttara Nikāya* and sets forth eleven advantages of *Mettā-bhāvanā*. Then the following methods of suffusing *mettā* are enumerated: there are three methods, namely:

(1) *Anōdhisō Pharanā* — suffusing without a limit;

(2) *ōdhisō Pharanā* — suffusing with a limit and

(3) *Disā Pharanā* — suffusing through the directions or quarters.

(1) The *Anōdhisō* method is sub-divided into five, each section forming a separate meditation formula. They are:

(i) *sabbē sattā* — all beings;

(ii) *sabbē pāṇā* — all living things;

(iii) *sabbē bhūtā* — all creatures;

(iv) *Sabbē puggalā* — all persons or individuals and

(v) *sabbē attabhāva pariyāpannā* — all that have come to individual existence.

Each of these five is linked with the four copulas of aspiration:

(a) *avērā hontu* — let (them) be free from enmity;

(b) *abyāpajjā hontu* — let (them) be free from ill-will;

(c) *anighā hontu* — let (them) be rid of ill and

(d) *sukhī attānaṁ pariharantu* — let (them) keep themselves happy.

In the case of the above mentioned the full formula should be repeated, thus: Let all beings be free from enmity; be free from ill-will; be rid of ill or suffering; and let them keep themselves happy.

Likewise: Let all living things, all creatures, all individuals, and all that are existing (each successively), be free from enmity, hatred, ill, and let them keep themselves happy.

In following this method the aspirant includes all beings in his thought of loving-kindness and pervades them with it, without limitation — touching all without localization as the commentary says. Hence, it is *anōdhisō pharanā*, suffusing without a limit or boundary.

(2) There are seven forms of *ōdhisō pharanā*, or the limited method:

(i) *sabbā itthiyō* — all females;

(ii) *Sabbē Purisā* — all males;

(iii) *Sabbē ariyā* — all worthy ones, or those who have attained perfection;

(iv) *sabbē anariyā* — all unworthy ones, or those who are imperfect;

(v) *sabbē dēvā* — all gods;

(vi) *sabbē manussā* — all human beings;

(vii) *sabbē vinipātikā* — all those in unhappy states.

Each of these should be linked with the four aspirations and repeated separately or collectively during the period of meditation.

(cont'd on page 799)

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Convivial and courteous, a good disciple becomes extremely joyous and his suffering ends.

376. *Paṭisanthāravuty'assa*
ācārakusalō siyā
tatō pāmōjjabahulō
dukkhassantaṁ karissati. (25:17)

One should be hospitable
and skilled in good behaviour,
thereby greatly joyful
come to dukkha's end.

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A MONK SHOULD BE CORDIAL IN ALL HIS WAYS

25 (7) A Devout Lady and the Thieves (Verse 368 – 376) (cont'd)

Commentary

In employing this method the aspirant suffuses *mettā*, while dividing beings into groups according to their nature and condition. The meditation is, therefore, called *ōdhisō pharanā* or suffusing within a limit or portion.

(3) There are ten modes of suffusing *mettā* through the quarters and the intermediate quarters, starting from the East. They comprise the eight points of the compass: the four cardinal points, the four intermediate points, and above and below.

The formulas are:

> Let all beings in the East be free from enmity,
> hatred, ill, and let them keep themselves happy.

In like manner:

> Let all beings in the West, the North, the South, the North-east,
> the South-west, the North-west, the South-East,
> above and below, be free from enmity, etc.

In these three methods of suffusing *mettā* there are twenty-two (five, seven and ten) formulas; and each, according to the commentary, refers to the mettā that leads to the *appaṇā* or *jhāna* state.

Of the five *anōdhisō pharanās*,

> 'Let all beings be free from enmity' is one Appaṇā;
> 'Be free from ill-will' is another;
> 'Be rid of ill' is another;
> 'Let them keep themselves happy' is the fourth.

Thus, in the method of unlimited suffusion, there are twenty *appaṇās*, that is, four in each of the five formulas. In the same way, four *appaṇās* in each of the seven formulas give a total of twenty-eight belonging to the method of limited suffusion.

The five (i to v) formulas of the *ōdhisō* method have also been combined with the ten directions, thus:

Let all beings in the East be free from enmity" and so forth. In this way, there are two hundred *appaṇās*, twenty in each quarter.

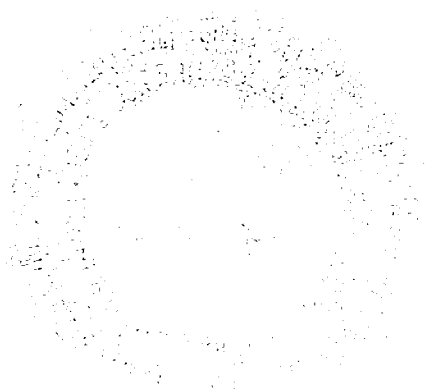
In like manner, the seven (i to vii) formulas, being combined with the ten directions as:

Let all women in the East...and so on give a total of two hundred and eighty *appaṇās*, that is, twenty-eight in each quarter.

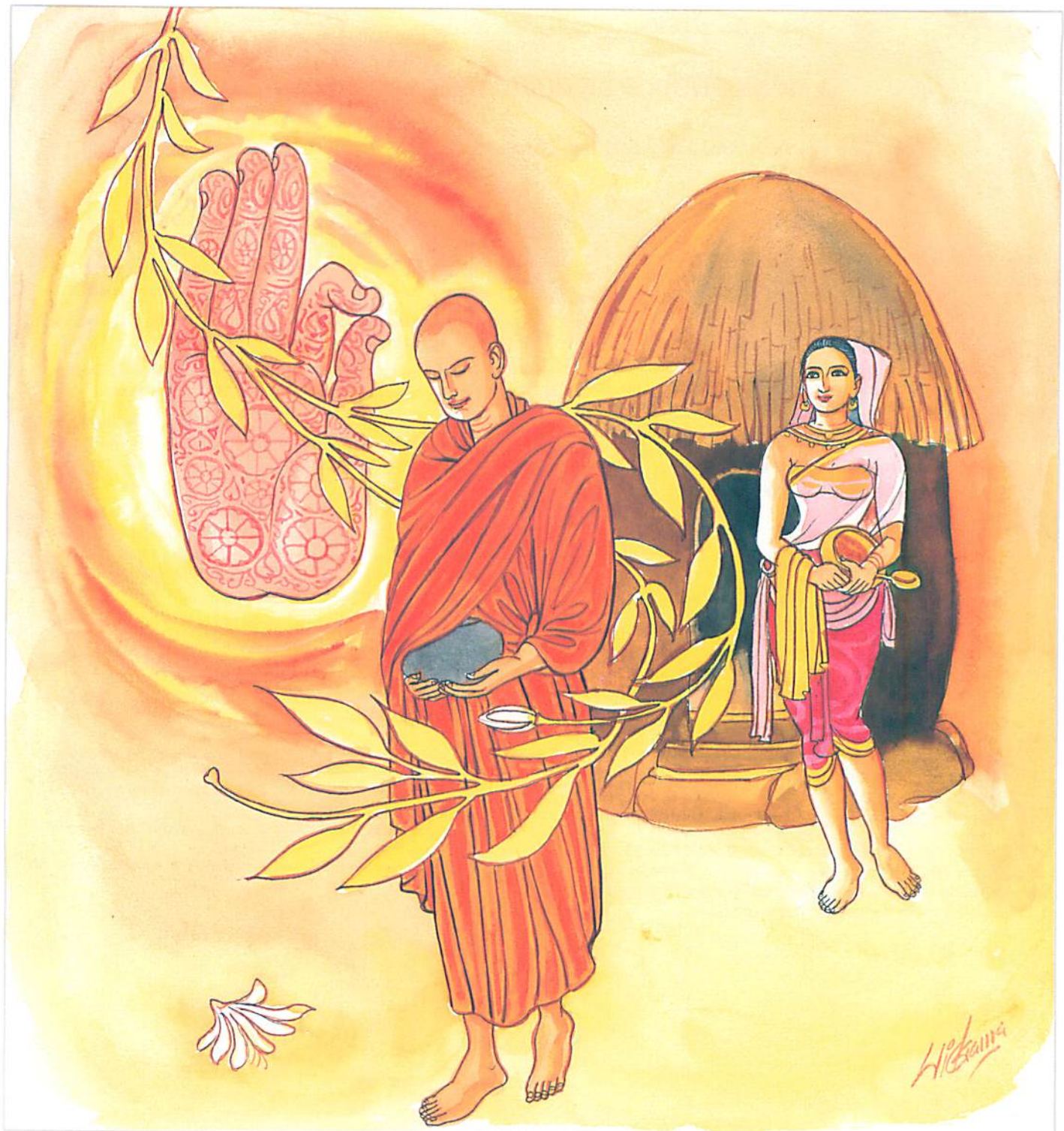
There are, thus, four hundred and eighty *appaṇās*. In all, there are five hundred and twenty-eight *appaṇās* (twenty, twenty-eight, two hundred and two hundred and eighty), mentioned in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*.

The commentary states that the other three *vihāras*, *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā*, are also employed with the same method of suffusing; and the disciple who practises them by means of any one of these *appaṇā* states, enjoys the eleven blessings spoken of in the following *Mettānisaṁsa Sutta* passage:

> Monks, from the practice of *mettā-cētovimutti or mind-release through friendliness, cultivated,*
> *increased, made a vēhicle (yānikatā), made a basis (vatthukatā), persisted in,*
> *made familiar, well set forth, eleven blessings are to be expected. What are the eleven?*
>
> *Happy he sleeps; happy he awakes; he dreams no bad dreams;*
> *he is dear to men; dear to non-human beings; Dēvās guard him;*
> *fire, poison, or sword come not near him; quickly his mind becomes concentrated;*
> *his complexion becomes clear; he dies with his mind free from confusion;*
> *if he realizes no further attainment, he goes to the brāhma-world.*



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Like a jasmine creeper its faded flowers, so ye bhikkhus, give up your lust and aversion.

377. *Vassikā viya pupphāni*
maddavāni pamuñcati
ēvaṁ rāgañ ca dōsañ ca
vippamuñcetha bhikkhavō. (25:18)

Just as the jasmine sheds
its shrivelled flowers all,
O bhikkhus so should you
lust, aversion shed.

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CAST OFF LUST AND HATRED

25 (8) The Story of Meditation on Jasmine Flowers (Verse 377)

A group of monks from Sāvatthi, after taking a meditation topic from the Buddha set out for the forest to practice meditation. While thus engaged, they saw jasmine flowers which had blossomed that very morning, dropping in the evening from the stem. Thereupon they thought to themselves, "We will obtain release from lust, hatred, and delusion, before you obtain release from your stems," and applied themselves to meditation with renewed vigor. The Buddha beheld those monks and said, "Monks, even as a flower is released from its stem, even so should a monk strive to obtain release from the pain of birth and rebirth." And even as he sat within the perfumed chamber, he sent forth a light and pronounced the following stanza,

"Monks! As the withered flower is shed from the plant, so also should a monk strive to free himself from worldly suffering."

At the conclusion of the lesson, all those monks were established in arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 377)

vassikā viya pupphāni maddavāni pamuñcati
ēvaṁ rāgañca dōsañca vippamuñcētha bhikkhavō

vassikā: the jasmine creeper; *pupphāni:* flowers; *maddavāni:* the withered; *pamuñcati viya:* just as (it) casts off; *ēvaṁ rāgañca:* passion; *dōsañca:* ill-will; *vippamuñcētha:* cast off from your mind; *bhikkhavō:* O' monks

The jasmine creeper casts off its withered flowers. Exactly in that manner, O monks, cast off your passion and ill-will.

Commentary

This verse relates to a group of monks who meditate upon a jasmine flowers falling on the ground — their stems detaching from the vine. In several instances, meditators achieved higher knowledge by concentrating on some object. The main purpose of the Buddha system of mind-training is to purify the mind from all defilements and corruptions in order to cultivate its intrinsic pliability so that perfect knowledge may be attained, which is the means of transcending the states of woe and sorrow.

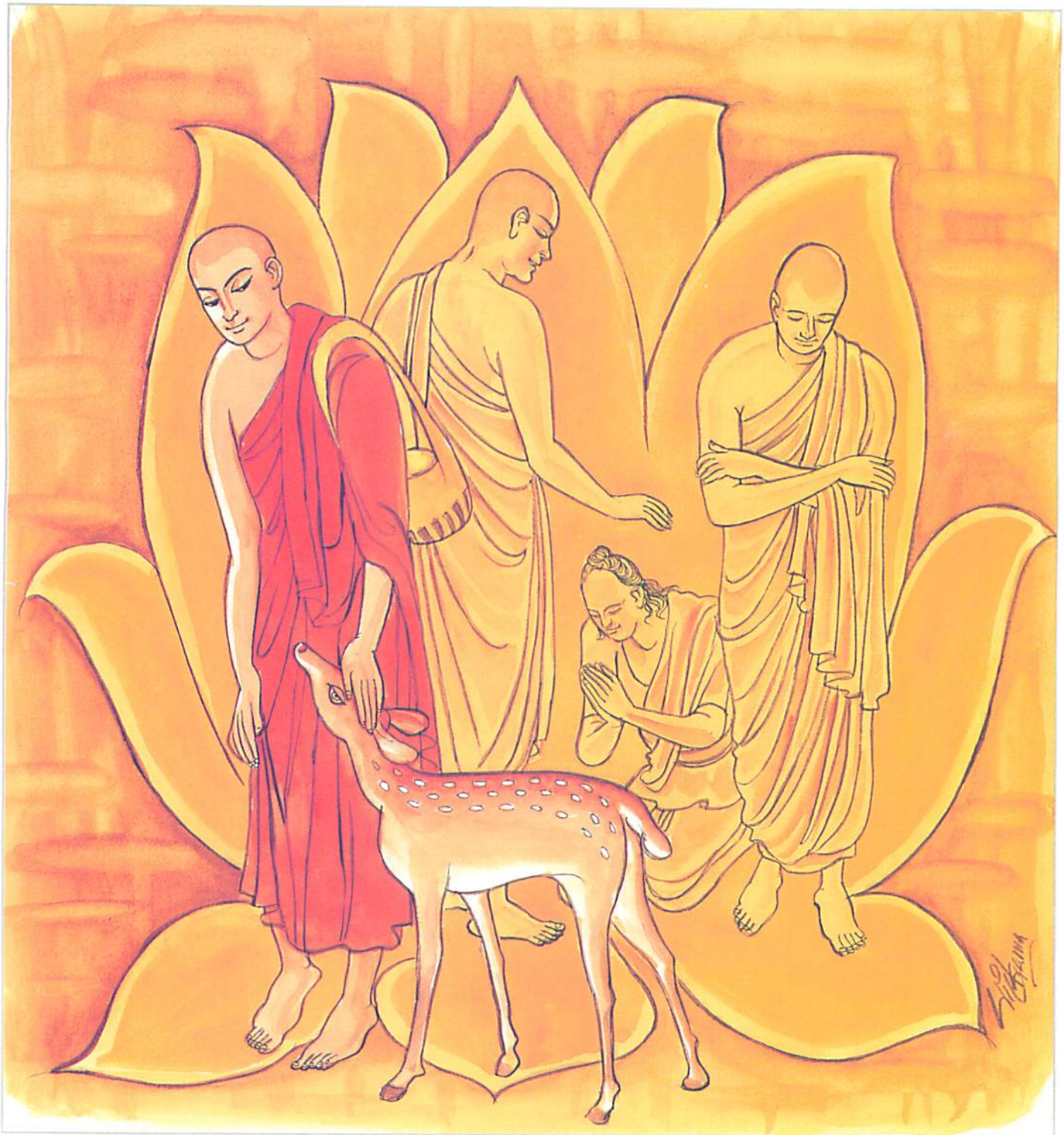
Furthermore, the mental training specified in Buddhism is training in higher thought, in lofty ideals and concentration of the mind upon some principle of a moral and virtuous character. The mind which is wholly given to a single perception of a salutary kind, becomes purely radiant and illuminate in its original state. *(pabhassaraṁidaṁ).*

In the very beginning, therefore, it is essential to focus the attention upon an object *(ārammaṇa)* entirely dissociated from the passions, in order to draw a pure mental picture. This picture the meditator retains as his ideal, and trains his mind to concentrate upon it. The mind becomes pure or impure, not through its own nature, but through the arising of pure and impure thoughts. The object for securing the preliminary attention must, therefore, be associated with purity, virtue and truth. Moreover, the object or the ideal selected for meditation must be such as to produce some psychological effect which is suited to the particular disposition of the meditator.

The scriptures record that the Buddha realized the diverse mental dispositions and innate tendencies of those who looked to him for deliverance, and recommended them various methods; and these methods have been ever increasingly developed as it became necessary to extend the opportunity of training in this system to a greater variety of mental types.

These methods were later modified, enlarged and grouped together in different ways forming different schemes of meditation, according to their psychological effect and value in inducing higher states of consciousness, and also with regard to their suitability for various individual characters. They are found in the *Nikāyas*, in the *Abhidhamma* and the commentaries, besides other works dealing with meditation, in the form in which they have been practiced and maintained in the *Theravāda* school.

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Physically restrained, gently tranquilled, rid of allurements, truly-pacified is the bhikkhu called.

378. *Santakāyō santavācō*
santavā susamāhitō
vantalōkāmisō bhikkhu
upasantō'ti vuccati. (25:19)

That bhikkhu calmed of body, speech,
calmed and well-composed of mind,
who world-enjoyments has renounced,
'one calmed' indeed is truly called.

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HE IS PEACEFUL WHO IS FREE FROM ALL WORLDLY THINGS

25 (9) The Story of Venerable Santakāya (Verse 378)

There was a monk named Santakāya, who had been a lion in his past existence. It is said of this monk that he was never guilty of any improper movement of hand or foot. He never yawned or stretched out his arms and legs, but always carried himself with composure and dignity. The story goes that this Venerable issued from the womb of a lioness. It is said of lionesses that if on any day they find prey, they enter one or another of the caves of silver, gold, jewels, and coral, and lie for the space of seven days on beds composed of the powder of red arsenic and yellow orpiment. On the seventh day they arise and survey the beds where they have lain, and if they notice that by reason of the movement of their tails or ears or forefeet or hindfeet, the powder of red arsenic and yellow orpiment has been scattered about, they say to themselves, "This does not become your birth or lineage," and lie down again and fast for seven days more. Then, provided the powder has not been scattered about, they say to themselves, "This becomes your birth and lineage," come forth from their lairs, yawn and stretch themselves, take a view of the cardinal points, roar the lion's roar three times, and go forth in search of prey. From the womb of such a lioness as this did this monk issue forth.

The composure and dignity of this monk attracted the attention of the other monks, and they said to the Buddha, "Venerable, we have never seen such a monk as Venerable Santakāya: for when he assumes a sitting posture, he never moves his hands; he never moves his feet; he never yawns, or stretches out his arms and legs." When the Buddha heard this, he said, "Monks, he that is a monk should be, like Venerable Santakāya, composed in action, speech, and thought."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 378)

santakāyō santavācō santavā susamāhitō vanta lōkāmisō bhikkhu upasantō iti vuccati

santakāyō: restrained in body; *santavāco:* restrained in speech; *santavā:* restrained in mind; *susamāhitō:* who is totally disciplined; *vanta lokāmisō:* who has abandoned material things; *upasantō iti vuccati:* is described as wholly tranquil

For a monk to be wholly and completely tranquil, he must be restrained in body and speech. This discipline derives from the restraint of mind. Then, when these three forms of restraints have been achieved, the monk is automatically wholly and completely tranquil.

Commentary

This verse is related to the exemplary restraint in demeanour of a monk whose name *Santakāya* echoes his behaviour (subdued in body). In the story that gives rise to the verse, the Venerable is described as having 'issued from the womb of a lioness'. This story goes on to describe the noble habits of a lioness. The Buddha has, in one context, referred himself, too, as a lion as he seems to be impressed by the noble qualities of lions.

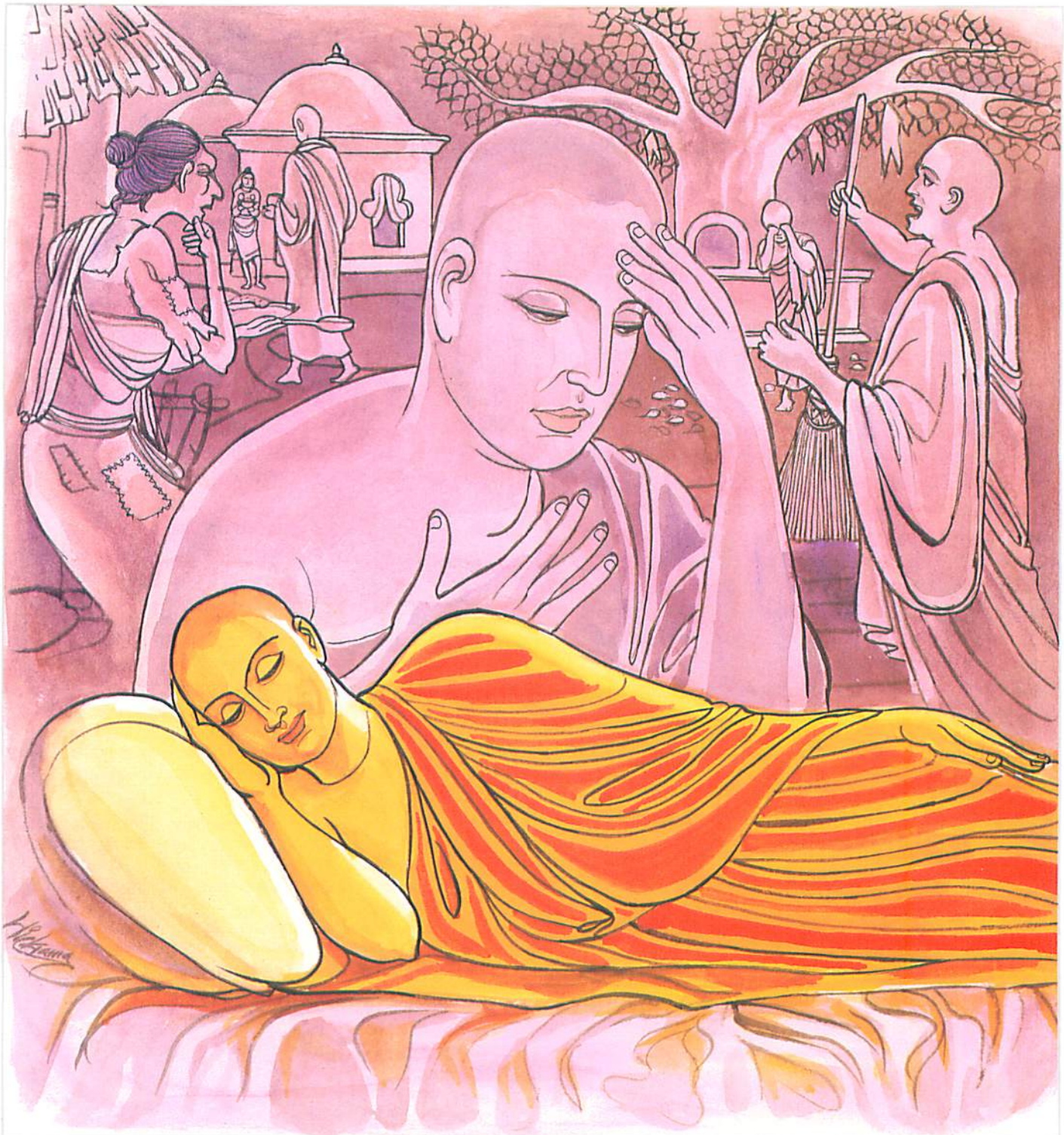
The Buddha said, "Monks, the lion, king of beasts, at even-tide comes forth from his lair. He stretches himself. Having done so, he surveys the four quarters in all directions. Having done that, he utters thrice his lion's roar. Having thrice spoken his lion's roar, he sallies forth in search of prey.

Now, monks, whatever animals hear the sound of the roaring of the lion, king of beasts, for the most part, they are afraid; they fall to quaking and trembling. Those that dwell in holes seek them; water-dwellers make for the water; forest-dwellers enter the forest; birds mount into the air.

Then whatsoever ruler's elephants in village, town or palace are tethered with stout leather bonds, they burst out and rend those bonds asunder; void their excrements and in panic run to and from. Thus potent, monks, is the lion, king of beasts, over animals. Of such mighty power and majesty is he.

Just so, monks, when a Buddha arises in the world, an arahat, a perfectly enlightened one, perfect in wisdom and in conduct, welfarer, knower of the worlds, the unsurpassed trainer of those who can be trained, teacher of deities and of men, a Buddha, an exalted one. He teaches the Dhamma. Such is the self; such is the way leading to the ending of the self.

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Exhort yourself, month after month, live mindfully and self-guarded. You'll indeed be happy.

379. *Attanā cōday'attānaṁ*
paṭimāsē attam attanā
sō attaguttō satimā
sukhaṁ bhikkhu vihāhisi. (25:20)

By yourself exhort yourself!
By yourself restrain yourself!
So mindful and self-guarded too,
happily, bhikkhu, will you live.

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HE WHO GUARDS HIMSELF LIVES HAPPILY

25 (10) The Story of Venerable Nañgala Kula (Verses 379 & 380)

The story goes that there was a certain poor man who made his living by working for other people. One day a monk saw him going along, clad only in a ragged loin-cloth, with his plough on his shoulder. Said the monk to the ploughman, "If this is the way you make your living, why shouldn't you become a monk?" "Venerable, who would make a monk of a man that gets his living as I do?" "If you will consent to become a monk, I will make a monk of you." "Very well, Venerable; if you will make a monk of me, I will become a monk." So that Venerable took him to Jētavana, bathed him with his own hands, and causing him to stand within the enclosure, made a monk of him. Having so done, the Venerable caused him to take his loin-cloth and his plough and hang them up on the branch of a tree that grew by the boundary of the inclosure. On making his full profession as a member of the Sangha, he received the name Nañgalakula Thēra, Venerable Ploughman.

After living for some time on the rich gifts and offerings which are bestowed upon the Buddhas, Venerable Ploughman became discontented. Unable to banish discontent, he said to himself, "I will no longer go about clad in yellow robes given by the faithful." So he went to the foot of the tree and all by himself admonished himself as follows, "You shameless, immodest fellow! So you have actually decided that you wish to put on these rags, return to the world, and work for hire!" After he had admonished himself in this fashion for a while, his resolution weakened, and he returned to the monastery again. After a few days, however, he became discontented once more. So he admonished himself in the same manner as before, and changed his mind again. And in this manner, whenever he became discontented, he would go to the foot of the tree and admonish himself.

The monks observed that he went repeatedly to the foot of the tree. So they asked him, "Brother Nañgalakula, why do you go there?" "Venerables, I go there to visit my teacher." After a few days he attained arahatship. Then the monks made sport of him and said, "Brother Nañgalakula, it appears that you no longer make use of the path by which you used to travel back and forth. Doubtless you go no more to visit your teacher." "Precisely so, Venerables; when I was of the world, I used to go back and forth; but now that I have severed connection with the world, I no longer do so." When the monks heard this, they reported the matter to the Buddha, saying, "This monk tells what is not true, utters falsehood." The Buddha said, "Monks, what he says is quite true. My son has admonished himself by himself, and has thus reached the consummation of the religious life."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 379)

attanā attānaṁ cōdaya attanā attam patimāsē
bhikkhu sō attaguttō satimā sukkhaṁ vihāhisi

attanā: one's own self; *attānaṁ cōdaya:* must prod one; *attanā:* by one's own self; *attam patimāsē:* should one be examined; *bhikkhu:* O monk; *sō:* therefore you; *attaguttō:* self- guarded; *satimā:* alert and mindful; *sukkhaṁ:* happily; *vihāhisi:* live

One's own self must prod one's self. You must yourself. You must assess and examine yourself. O' monk, this way, you must guard yourself. Be perpetually mindful. This way, live in bliss.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 380)

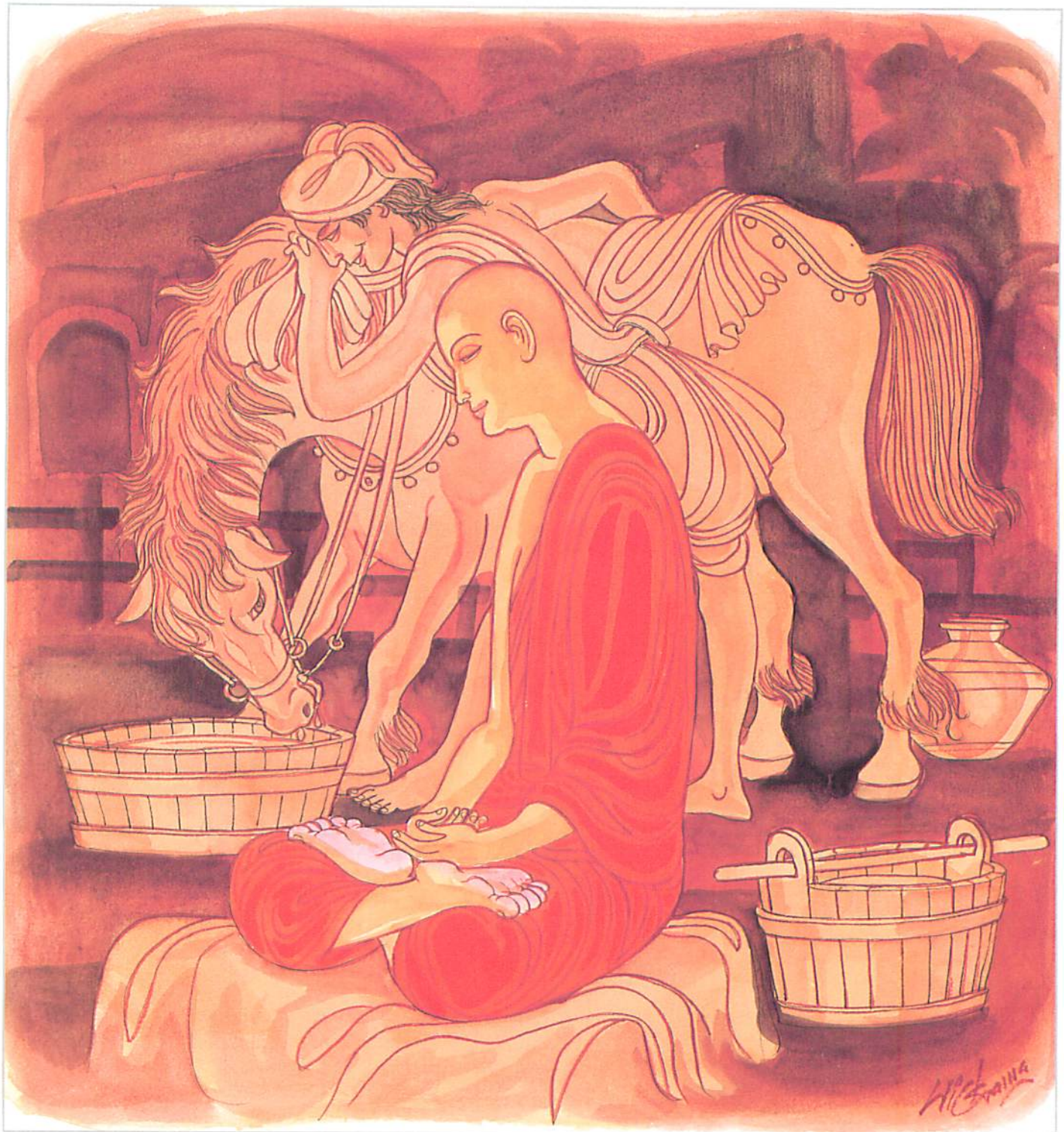
hi attā attanō nāthō hi attā attanō gati tasmā
bhadraṁ assaṁ vāṇijō iva attānaṁ saññamaya

hi: as things are; *attā:* one's own self; *attano:* to one's self; *nāthō:* the refuge; *attāhi:* one's own self, indeed; *attanō gati:* one's own guide; *tasmā:* therefore; *bhadraṁ assaṁ iva:* like an esteemed horse; *vāṇijō:* a merchant; *attānaṁ:* one's own self; *saññamaya:* discipline

Your own self is your own refuge. You yourself are your own guide. Therefore, exert discipline over yourself as a merchant would cherish and retrain a noble horse.

(cont'd on page 809)

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You lead yourself, you guide your way. Control your own self like a merchant his good horse.

380. *Attā hi attanō nāthō*
attā hi attanō gati
tasmā saññamay'attānaṁ
assaṁ bhadraṁ'va vāṇijō. (25:21)

Oneself is refuge of oneself
and one is haven for oneself,
therefore one should check oneself
as merchant with a splendid horse.

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YOU ARE YOUR OWN SAVIOUR

25 (10) Attachment to Old Clothes (Nañgala Kula) (Verses 279 & 380) (cont'd)

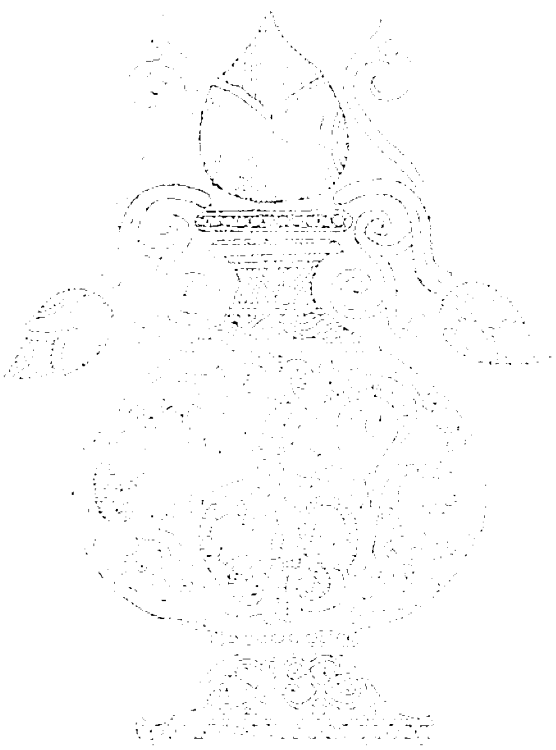
Commentary

attanā attānaṁ cōdaya: A person must propel himself, or herself, into spiritual action. This is a central concept of the Buddha. Knowing that no external sources, no faith or rituals can save him, the Buddhist feels compelled to rely on his own efforts. He gains confidence through self-reliance. But he must realize that the whole responsibility of his present life, as well as his future life, depends completely on himself alone. Each must achieve his salvation for himself. Achieving salvation can be compared to curing a disease: if one is ill, one must go to a doctor. The doctor diagnoses the ailment and gives proper medicines. He will never be cure by simply singing praise and giving proclamations of what a wonderful doctor he is. Nor will he be cured by holding festivals in honour of the doctor, or by trying to persuade others that he is the only doctor they should consult.

None of these actions will cure his disease. Nor is it enough for him to accept his written prescription, put it in a casket, place it on the back of an elephant and carry it in a procession to the accompaniment of music and dancing. This is not going to cure the patient either. Nor is it enough for him to obtain the medicine from the chemist, put it on a shelf and place before it a vase of flowers, burn incense and light candles to it, proclaiming, "How wonderful is this prescription given by the doctor. By this prescription, may my disease be cured!"

This is not enough. Nor is it enough for his anxious wife to say, "He is old and weak and feeble. And the medicine is very unpleasant for him to take. I will swallow this bitter medicine for him." This also will not cure him.

In order to be cured, he himself must follow the instructions given with regard to his diet and conduct. Only then will he be cured and, at last, realize that he has become healthy. Likewise, each must attain his own salvation by curing his greed, hatred and ignorance, by taking the necessary precautions given by the Buddha, and by taking the necessary precautions given by the Buddha, and by practicing the Buddha's advice. Only then will he be able to obtain his salvation. No one can find salvation simply by praising the Buddha or by offering something to him or by celebrating the occasions.



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A joyous bhikkhu who delights in the Buddha's way soon reaches the Samsāra's blissful end.

381. *Pāmōjjabahulō bhikkhu*
pasannō Buddhasāsanē
adhigacchē padaṁ santaṁ
saṅkhārū'pasamaṁ sukhaṁ. (25:22)

The bhikkhu full of joy and faith,
bright in the Buddha's Teaching
can come to the Place of Peace,
the bliss of conditionedness ceased.

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WITH JOY AND FAITH TRY TO WIN YOUR GOAL

25 (11) The Story of Monk Vakkali (Verse 381)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to Venerable Vakkali.

Venerable Vakkali, we are told, was reborn at Sāvatthi in the household of a brahman. One day after he had reached manhood he saw the Buddha enter the city for alms. Having surveyed the Buddha's beauty of person, not satisfied with the sight of the beauty of his person, be said to himself, "I will obtain the privilege of looking thus at all times upon the Buddha." He therefore retired from the world and became a monk under the Buddha. He always stood where he could see the possessor of the ten forces, and abandoning the recitation of the sacred word and the practice of meditation, he spent his whole time gazing upon the Buddha. The Buddha waited for his knowledge to ripen and said not a word. One day the Buddha perceive within himself, "Now his knowledge has ripened;" so he said to him, "Vakkali, what shall it profit you to look upon this mass of corruption which is called my body? Whosoever, Vakkali, beholds the Dhamma, he beholds me." Thus did the Buddha admonish Venerable Vakkali.

But in spite of the Buddha's admonition, Vakkali could not let the Buddha get out of his sight or leave his presence. Finally the Buddha thought, "Unless this monk receives a shock, he will never come to understand." Now the season of the rains was at hand, and the Buddha desired to enter upon residence. So on the day appointed to enter upon residence, the Buddha went to Rājagaha, turning Vakkali away with the words, "Go back, Vakkali." So for the space of three months Vakkali was unable to be with the Buddha and kept saying to himself, "The Buddha speaks to me no more." Finally he said to himself, "What is the use of my living any longer? I will throw myself headlong from the top of a mountain." And with this thought in mind, he climbed to the top of Mount Vulture Peak.

The Buddha, perceiving that he was depressed and weary of the world, thought to himself, "If this monk receives no comfort nor consolation from me, he will destroy his predispositions to the attainment of the paths and the fruits." Accordingly he sent forth a radiant image of himself and displayed himself before the gaze of the monk. The moment the monk saw the Buddha, the weight of sorrow which oppressed him vanished. Then the Buddha, as though filling the dry bed of a lake with a torrent of water, caused intense joy and satisfaction to spring up within the monk.

Venerable Vakkali thought, "I have seen the Possessor of the Ten Forces, and he speaks to me, saying, 'Come!'" Straightway he experienced profound joy. "How pray shall I go?" thought he. And standing there on the summit of the mountain, though he saw no path, he sprang into the air face to face with the Possessor of the Ten Forces, on hearing the first words of the stanza. And as he soared through the air, pondering the stanzas given by the Buddha, he completely suppressed the emotion of joy and attained arahantship together with the supernatural powers. And praising the Buddha, he descended and stood in the presence of the Buddha. On a subsequent occasion the Buddha assigned him the foremost place among those who possess the propensity for faith.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 381)

pāmōjjabahulō buddhasāsanē pasannō bhikkhu saṅkhārūpasamaṁ sukhaṁ santaṁ padaṁ adhigacchē

pāmōjjabahulō: of abundant ecstasy; *buddhasāsanē:* in the Teaching of the Buddha; *pasannō:* taking delight in; *bhikkhu:* the monk; *saṅkhārūpasamaṁ:* cessation of all conditioning; *sukhaṁ:* blissful; *santaṁ padaṁ:* state of tranquility (Nibbāna); *adhigacchē:* will reach

His ecstasy is abundant. He takes delight in the Teaching of the Buddha. Such a monk will reach the state of total tranquility — Nibbāna — through the blissful ending of all conditioning.

Commentary

saṁkhārūpasamaṁ: cessation of all conditioning. *saṇkhāra* is one of the five aggregates (five groups of existence or groups of clingings). *Saṇkhāra* is described as mental formation. These aggregates are also described as *khandas*. These *saṇkhāras* are made up of fifty mental phenomena of which eleven are general psychological elements, twenty-five lofty *(sobhana)* qualities and fourteen kammically unwholesome qualities. *Saṇkhāra* is the second link of the formula of dependent origination *(paticca samuppāda)*. *Saṇkhāra* is also used in the sense of anything formed, conditioned or composed.

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The tender bhikkhu on the Buddha's way, illumines this world like the moon out of the clouds.

382. *Yō havē daharō bhikkhu*
yuñjati buddhasāsanē
sō imaṁ lōkaṁ pabhāsēti
abbhā muttō'va candimā. (25:23)

Surely that youthful bhikkhu who
strives in the Buddha's Teaching
illumines all this world
as moon when freed from clouds.

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EVEN A YOUNG MONK, IF DEVOUT, CAN ILLUMINE THE WHOLE WORLD

25 (12) The Story of the Novice Monk Sumana who Performed a Miracle (Verse 382)

Sāmanēra Sumana was a pupil of Venerable Anuruddha. Although he was very young, due to his past good kamma he became an arahat endowed with supernormal powers. Once, when his teacher Anuruddha was ill, he fetched water from the anōtatta Lake, a lake which was very far away from monastery and difficult to reach. But because of his supernormal power, he was able to perform the journey through the air. Sometime later, Anuruddha took Sumana to pay homage to the Buddha at the Pubbārāma Monastery.

At the monastery, many sāmanēras teased Sumana and made fun of him because he was very young. The Buddha wanted to make those sāmanēras see the rare qualities of Sumana. So the Buddha announced that he wanted some sāmanēras to get a jar of water from the anōtatta Lake. However, none of them was able to undertake the job. Finally, at the request of Venerable Ānanda, Sumana went to get the jar of water for the Buddha. As before, he went to the anōtatta Lake and came back through the air by his supernormal power.

At the congregation of the monks in the evening, the monks told the Buddha about the wonderful trip made by Sumana. The Buddha said, "Monks, one who practises the Dhamma zealously is capable of attaining supernormal powers, even though he is young."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 382)

daharō yō bhikkhu Buddhasāsanē yuñjati sō abbhā muttō candimā iva imaṁ lokaṁ havē pabhāsēti

daharō: youthful; *yō bhikkhu:* some monk; *buddhasāsanē:* in the Teaching of the Buddha; *yuñjati:* exerts himself; *sō:* that monk; *abbhā muttō:* freed from a cloud; *candimā iva:* like the moon; *idhaṁ lōkaṁ:* this world; *ha vē:* will certainly; *pabhāsēti:* brilliantly illumine

This is true. If a youthful monk exerts himself strenuously in the Teaching of the Buddha, he will certainly illumine the world as brilliantly as a moon emerging from behind a dark cloud that hid it for a while.

Commentary

This verse is related to a very young novice monk who was capable of performing miracles. These miracles are an outcome of concentrated meditation.

Meditation as a means of self-development is a positive, dynamic force which leads to self-enlightenment, and not a mere negative escape from the uncertainties of life. It is, in fact, the superlative means of awakening the spiritual tendencies of man, so that he obtains two advantages: absolute freedom from vicious tendencies, and the super-normal power of spiritual wisdom.

With the steady increase of concentration during *samādhi* meditation the mind becomes free from lower impulses and sensory emotions, and thus, by overcoming hindrances, achieves negative goodness. The self-complacency of negative goodness is inevitably replaced by a living force of higher development which eventually gives rise to positive goodness. When the mind is well established in this positive goodness, it becomes a most admirable instrument which is apt and fit for super-human activities and divine visions such as would appear as miracles to ordinary minds.

The scriptures state that the disciple of meditation becomes skilled in super-human qualities *(uttari-manussa-dhamma)* which are the super-normal advantages of his practice. The disciples who have practiced the *jhāna* method of meditation receive in their life-time the happiness of experiencing *samāpatti*, the attainment of the ecstatic state of mental quiescence. In addition to that, those who have practiced the *kasiṇa* methods receive as super-normal advantages the powers of *abhiññā*, higher or special knowledge. The *visuddhimagga* explains these advantages in detail as given in the scriptures.

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Buddha is for whole mankind

The Buddha is not a property of Buddhists only. He is the property of whole mankind. His teaching is common to everybody. Every religion, which came into existence after the Buddha, has borrowed many good ideas from the Buddha.

A Non-Buddhist Scholar

A wise father

Buddha is one who sees his children playing in the consuming fire of worldliness and employs different expedients to bring them out of this burning house and lead them to the safe asylum of Nirvana.

Prof. Lakshimi Narasu, "The Essence of Buddhism"

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Chapter 26

BRĀHMAṆA VAGGA

The Brāhmaṇa

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Cut off the stream. Reject sensuality. Conditionality ended, be ye in Nibbāna.

383. *Chinda sōtaṁ parakkamma*
kāmē panuda brāhmaṇa
saṅkhārānaṁ khayaṁ ñatvā
akataññū'si brāhmaṇa. (26:1)

O brahmin, strive and cleave the stream,
desires of sense discard,
knowing conditioned things decay
be Knower-of-the-Uncreate.

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BRĀHMAṆA VAGGA (THE BRĀHMAṆA)
BE A KNOWER OF THE DEATHLESS

26 (1) The Story of the Brāhmin who had Great Faith (Verse 383)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brāhmin who showed extreme devotion to some monks.

The story goes that this brāhmin once heard the Buddha preach the Dhamma, and was so delighted that he thereafter gave food regularly to sixteen monks at his house. When the monks came, he would take their bowls and say, "May the Venerable arahats draw near! May the Venerable arahats sit down!" No matter whom he addressed, he greeted all of the monks with the title Arahats. Now those of the monks who had not yet attained the fruit of conversion thought to themselves, "This layman does not know that we have not attained arahatship." The result was that all of the monks became embarrassed and stopped going to his house.

This made the layman very sad and sorrowful. "Why pray do the noble monks no longer come to my house?" thought he. So he went to the monastery, saluted the Buddha, and told him what had happened. then the Buddha addressed the monks and asked them, "Monks, what does this mean?" The monks told him what had happened. Said the Buddha, "But, monks, do you not like to have him greet you as arahats?" "No, Venerable, we do not like it." "Nevertheless, monks, this is only an expression of the joy which men feel; and no fault can be found with an expression of joy. Now the love of the brāhmin for the arahats is boundless. Therefore, it is proper that you too should sever the stream of craving and be satisfied with nothing less than the attainment of arahatship."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 383)

brāhmaṇa parakkamma sōtaṁ chinda kāmē
panuda brāhmaṇa saṅkhārānaṁ khayaṁ ñatvā
akataññū asi

brāhmaṇa: O' brāhmin; *parakkamma:* try hard; make all the necessary effort; *chinda:* cut off; *sōtaṁ:* the stream; *kāmē:* sensual desires; *panuda:* get rid of; *saṅkhārānaṁ:* of the conditioned things; *khayaṁ:* erosion; *ñatvā:* having known; *akataññūsi:* become a knower of the uncreated

Exert all you can and cut off the stream of existence. Get rid of passion. Get to know the erosion of the conditioned things. And, they become a knower of the uncreated - Nibbāna.

Commentary

sōtaṁ chinda: cut the stream. Here, the stream is craving. one who has cut the stream will become a stream-winner - sōtāpanna. A stream-winner is no more a worldling *(puthujjana)*, but an *Ariya* (noble). On attaining this first stage of sainthood, he eradicates the following three fetters *(saṁyōjana)* that bind him to existence, namely:

(1) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* literally, view when a group or compound exists. Here kāya refers to the five aggregates of matter feeling, perception, mental states, and consciousness. the view that there exists an unchanging entity, a permanent soul, when there is a complex compound of psycho-physical aggregates is termed *sakkāya-diṭṭhi. Dhammasaṅgani* enumerates twenty kinds of such soul-theories. *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi* is usually rendered as self-illusion, theory of individuality, or illusion of individualism;

(2) *vicikiccā* — doubts. They are doubts about (i) the Buddha, (ii) the Dhamma, (iii) the Sangha, (iv) the disciplinary rules *(sikkhā)*, (v) the past, (vi) the future, (vii) both the past and the future, and (viii) dependent origination *(paticca-samuppāda)*;

(3) *sīlabbataparāmāsa* — adherence to (wrongful) rites and ceremonies.

The *Dhammasaṅganī* explains it thus: It is the theory held by ascetics and brāhmins outside this doctrine that purification is obtained by rules of moral conduct and rites.

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When in two things one's gone to the end, that knowledge rids him of all that binds him.

384. *Yadā dvayēsu dhammēsu*
pāragū hōti brāhmaṇō
ath'assa sabbē saṁyōgā
atthaṁ gacchanti jānatō. (26:2)

When by the twofold Dhamma
a Brahmin's gone beyond
all the bonds of One-who-Knows
have wholly disappeared.

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CULTIVATE CONCENTRATION

26 (2) The Story of Thirty Monks (Verse 384)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to thirty monks.

For one day thirty monks who resided in foreign parts came and saluted the Buddha and sat down. Venerable Sāriputta, knowing that they possessed the faculties requisite for the attainment of arahatship, went to the Buddha and, without sitting down, asked him the following question, "Venerable, two states are frequently spoken of; now what are the two states?" The Buddha replied, "By the two states, Sāriputta, are meant tranquility and insight."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 384)

brāhmaṇō yadā dvayēsu dhammēsu pāragū hōti
atha jānatō assa sabbē saṁyōgā atthaṁ gacchanti

Yadā: when; *dvayēsu dhammēsu:* in the 'two states'; *pāragū hōti:* has become an adept; *atha:* then; *jānatō:* (in him) who knows; *assa:* his; *sabbē saṁyōgā:* all fetters; *atthaṁ gacchanti:* disappear

When the brāhmaṇa — the seeker after truth — has understood the two states of concentration and insight through and through, then in that person who knows these, all the fetters wane, diminish and fade away.

Commentary

dvayēsu dhammēsu: in the two states. The two states are concentration *(samatha)* and insight *(vipassanā)*. These are the two systems of mind-discipline needed to take the truth-seeker to the other stage. The first of the two states is *Samatha* — concentration, tranquility, serenity. *Cittēkaggatā* (one-pointedness of mind) and *avikkhēpa* (undistractedness). It is one of the mental factors in wholesome consciousness.

The next is *vipassanā* - insight. Insight is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, the suffering and the impersonal and unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence. it is insight-wisdom that is the decisive liberating factor in Buddhism, though it has to be developed along with the two other trainings in morality and concentration. The culmination of insight-practice leads directly to the stage of holiness.

samādhi or ***samatha:*** concentration. Lit.: the (mental) state of being firmly fixed is the fixings of the mind on a single object. One-pointedness of mind *(cittassa ēkaggatā)* is called concentration. Concentration, though often very weak, is one of the seven mental concomitants inseparably associated with all consciousness.

Right concentration *(sammā-samādhi)*, as the last link of the eightfold path *(magga)*, is defined as the four meditative Absorptions *(jhāna)*. In a wider sense, comprising also much weaker states of concentration, it is associated with all karmically wholesome *(kusala)* consciousness. Wrong concentration *(micchā-samādhi)* is concentration associated with all karmically unwholesome *(akusala)* consciousness. Wherever in the texts this term is not differentiated by right or wrong, there right concentration is meant.

In concentration one distinguishes three grades of intensity:

(1) preparatory concentration *(parikamma-samādhi)* existing at the beginning of the mental exercise;
(2) neighbourhood concentration *(upacāra-samādhi)*, such as concentration approaching but not yet attaining the first absorption *(jhāna)* which, in certain mental exercises is marked by the appearance of the so-called counter-image *(paṭibhāga-nimitta)* and
(3) attainment concentration *(appaṇā-samādhi)*, such as that concentration which is present during the absorptions.

Concentration connected with the four noble path-moments *(magga), and fruition-moments* (phala), is called super-mundane *(lōkuttara)*, having Nibbāna as object. Any other concentration, even that of the sublimes absorptions, is merely mundane *(lōkiya)*.

The development of concentration *(samādhi-bhāvanā)* may procure a four-fold blessing: (i) present happiness through the four absorptions; (ii) Knowledge and Vision *(ñāṇa-dassana)* — here probably identical with the divine eye *(abhiññā)* — through perception

vipassanā: insight. Insight is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, the suffering and the impersonal and unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence. It is insight-wisdom *(vipassanā-paññā)* that is the decisive liberating factor in Buddhism, though it has to be developed along with the two other trainings in morality and concentration. The culmination of insight practice leads directly to the stages of holiness.

Insight is not the result of a mere intellectual understanding, but is won through direct meditative observation of one's own bodily and mental processes. In the commentaries the sequence in developing insight-meditation is given as follows:

(1) discernment of the corporeal *(rūpa)*;
(2) discernment of the mental *(nāma)*;
(3) contemplation of both *(nāmarūpa)* such as their pairwise occurrence in actual events, and their interdependence);
(4) both viewed as conditioned (application of the dependent origination, *(paṭiccasamuppāda)*;
(5) application of the three characteristics (impermanency, etc.) to mind-and-body-cum-conditions.

The stages of gradually growing insight are described in the nine insight-knowledge *(vipassanā-ñāṇa)*, constituting the sixth states of purification: beginning with the knowledge of rise and fall and ending with adaptation to truth.

Eighteen chief kinds of insight-knowledge (or principal insights; *(mahā-vipassanā)* are listed and described:

(i) contemplation of impermanence *(aniccānupassanā)*, (ii) contemplation of suffering *(dukkhānupassanā)*, (iii) contemplation of not-self *(anattānupassanā)*, (iv) contemplation of aversion *(nibbidānupassanā)*, (v) contemplation of detachment *(virāgānupassanā)*, (vi) of extinction *(nirōdhānupassanā)*, (vii) contemplation of abandoning *(paṭinissaggānupassanā)*, (viii) contemplation of waning *(khayānup.)*, (ix) contemplation of vanishing *(vayānup.)*, (x) contemplation of change *(vipariṇāmānup.)*, (xi) contemplation of the unconditioned (or signless; *animittānup.)*, (xii) contemplation of desirelessness *(appaṇihitānup.)*, (xiii) contemplation of emptiness *(suññatānup.)*, (xiv) contemplation of insight into phenomena which is higher wisdom *(adhipaññā-dhamma-vipassanā)*, (xv) knowledge and vision according to reality *(yathā-bhūta-ñāṇadassana)*, (xvi) contemplation of misery (or danger; *ādinavānupassanā)*, (xvii) reflecting contemplation *(paṭisaṇkhānup.)*, (xviii) contemplation of turning away *(vivaṭṭānupassanā)*.

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For whom a far or near exist not, with no anguish or entanglement, him a true brahmin I call.

385. *Yassa pāraṁ apāraṁ vā*
pārāpāraṁ na vijjati
vītaddaraṁ visaṁyuttaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:3)

For whom is found no near or far,
for whom's no near and far,
free of fear and fetter-free,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE UNFETTERED PERSON IS A BRĀHMAṆA

26 (3) The Story of Māra (Verse 385)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Māra.

On one occasion, Māra came to the Buddha disguised as a man and asked him, "Venerable! You often say the word *pāraṁ*; what is the meaning of that word?" The Buddha, knowing that it was Māra who was asking that question, chided him, "O' wicked Māra! The words *pāraṁ* and *apāraṁ* have nothing to do with you. *Pāraṁ* which means the other shore can be reached only by the arahats who are free from moral defilements."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 385)

yassa pāraṁ apāraṁ vā pārāpāraṁ na vijjati
vītaddaraṁ visaṁyuttaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ

Yassa: for whom; *pāraṁ:* the farther shore; *apāraṁ:* the near shore; *pārāpāraṁ:* hither and thither shores; *na vijjati:* do not exist; *vītaddaraṁ:* blemishless; *visaṁyuttaṁ:* free of all defilements; *taṁ:* that saint; *ahaṁ:* I; *brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ:* describe as a Brāhmaṇa

To him there is no further shore. To him there is no near shore either. To him both these shores are non-existent. He is free of anxiety and is freed from bonds. That person I describe as a Brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

pāraṁ: sense fields. Sense fields are twelve, six of which are personal sense-fields. the other six are external sense-fields. These are described as *āyatanas* — spheres, which is a name for the four immaterial absorptions. The twelve bases or sources on which depend the mental processes, consist of five physical sense-organs and consciousness, being the six personal *(ajjhattika)* bases; and six objects, the so-called external *(bāhira)* bases:

eye, or visual organ visible object,

ear, or auditory organ sound, or audible object,

nose, or olfactory organ odour, or olfactive object,

tongue, or gustatory organ taste, or gustative object,

body, or tactile organ body-impression, or tactile object,

mind-base, or consciousness mind-object *(manayatana) (dhammāyatana)*,

By the visual organ *(cakkhāyatana)* is meant the sensitive part of the eye *(cakkhu-pasāda)* built up of the four elements... responding to sense-stimuli *(sa-ppaṭigha)*. Similar is the explanation of the four remaining physical sense-organs.

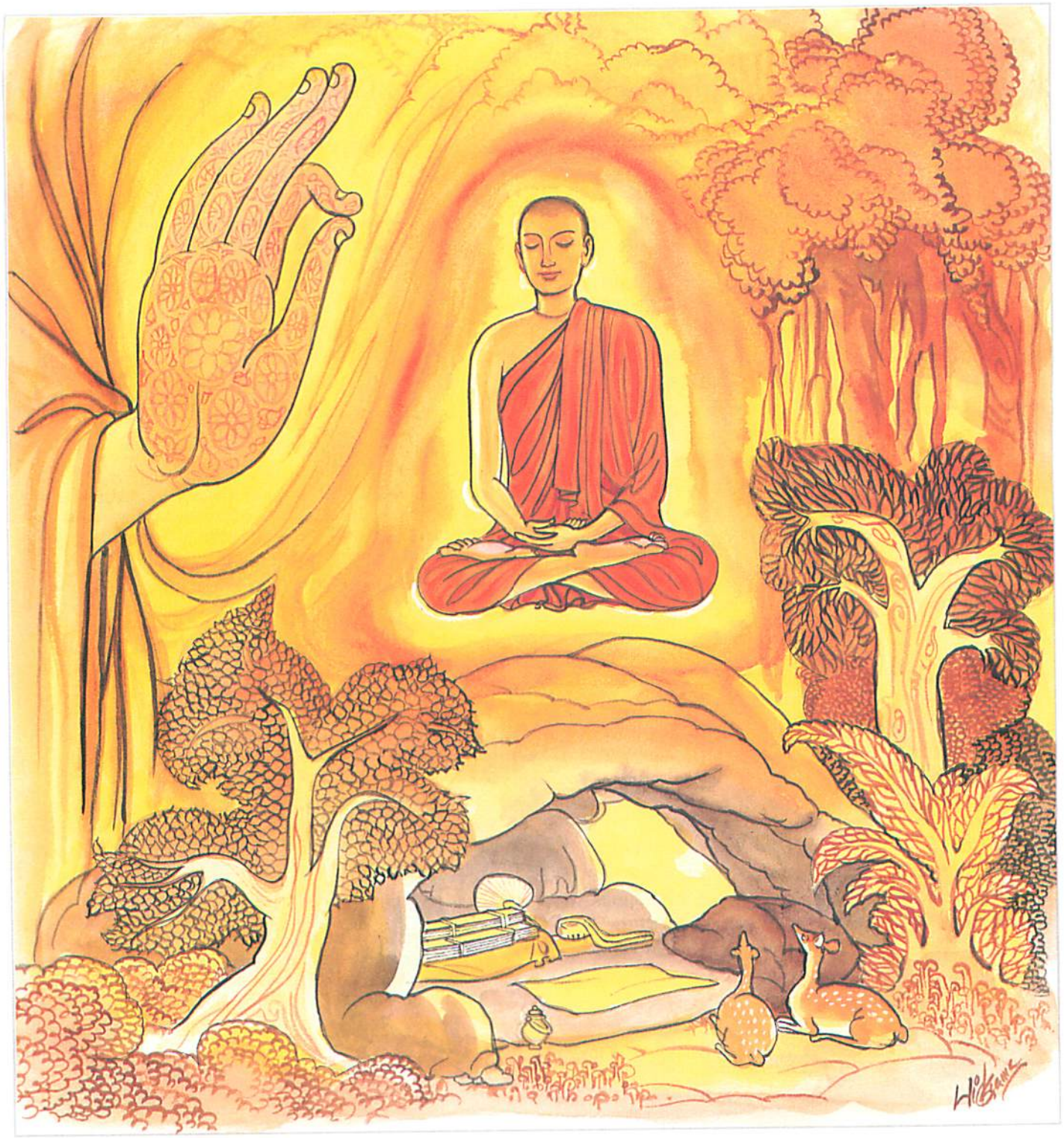
The mind-base *(manāyatana)* is a collective term for all consciousness, whatever, and should therefore not be confounded with the mind-element *(manō-dhātu)*, which latter performs only the functions of adverting *(vajjana)* to the sense-object, and of receiving *(sampaṭicchana)* the sense-object. On the functions of the mind *(viññāna-kicca)*:

The visible object *(rūpāyatana)* is described as that phenomenon which is built up of the four physical elements and appears as colours. What is seen by visual perception, let's say eye-consciousness *(cakkhu-viññāna)*, are colours and differences of light, but not three dimensional bodily things.

Mind-object-base *(dhammāyatana)* is identical with mind-object-element (*dhamma-dhātu* and *dhammārammaṇa*). It may be physical or mental, past present or future, real or imaginary.

The five physical sense organs are also called faculties *(indriya)*, and of these faculties it is said: Each of the five faculties owns a different sphere, and none of them partakes of the sphere of another one...; they have mind as their support... are conditioned by vitality... but vitality again is conditioned by heat... heat again by vitality, just as the light and flame of a burning lamp are mutually conditioned.

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Sitting meditative, dust free, duties done and highest goal reached, him a true brahmin I call.

386. *Jhāyiṁ virajamāsīnaṁ*
katakiccaṁ anāsavaṁ
uttamatthaṁ anuppattaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:4)

Seated stainless, concentrated,
who's work is done, who's free of taint,
having attained the highest aim,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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WHO IS CONTEMPLATIVE AND PURE IS A BRĀHMIN

26 (4) The Story of a Certain Brāhmin (Verse 386)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brāhmin.

The story goes that one day this brāhmin thought to himself, "The Buddha calls his own disciples 'Brāhmans', now I am by birth and lineage a brāhmin; therefore, he ought to apply this title to me also." So, he approached the Buddha and asked him about the matter. The Buddha replied, "I do not call a man a brāhmin merely because of his birth and lineage; I call by this title only that man who has reached the supreme goal, arahatship."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 386)

jhāyim virajam āsīnaṁ katakiccaṁ anāsavaṁ uttamatthaṁ anuppattaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

jhāyim: meditating; *virajaṁ:* free of blemishes; *āsīnaṁ:* seated in solitude; *katakiccaṁ:* who has fulfilled his tasks; *anāsavaṁ:* free of taints; *uttamatthaṁ:* the highest state (Nibbāna); *anuppattaṁ:* reached; *taṁ:* that person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ:* describe as a brāhmaṇa

He is given to concentrated contemplation. He is free of all blemishes - the dust that defiles a being. He sits in solitude. All his spiritual tasks and obligations are done. He has reached the highest goal. That person I describe as a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

uttamatthaṁ anuppattaṁ: who has attained the highest spiritual states - arahantship: sainthood, noble one, noble person. There are four noble individuals *(ariya-puggala)*: (1) The stream-winner *(sōtāpanna)*; (2) the once-returner *(sakadāgāmi)*; (3) the non-returner *(anāgāmi)*; and (4) the holy one *(arahat)*.

(1) Through the path of stream-winning *(sōtāpatti-magga)* one becomes free from the first three fetters *(samyōjana)* which binds beings to existence in the sensuous sphere, (i) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* - personality-belief; (ii) *vicīkiccā* - skeptical doubt; (iii) *sīlabbata-parāmāsa* - attachment to mere rules and rituals.

(2) Through the path of once-returning *(sakadāgāmi-magga)* one becomes nearly free from the fourth and fifth fetters. (iv) *kāmacchanda* - sensuous craving; (v) *vyāpāda* - ill-will.

(3) Through the path of non-Returning *(anāgāmi-magga)* one becomes fully free from the above mentioned five lower fetters.

(4) Through the path of holiness *(arahatta-magga)* one further becomes free from the five higher fetters. (vi) *rūparāga* — craving for fine-material existence; (vii) *arūpa-rāga* — craving for immaterial existence; (viii) *māna* — conceit; (ix) *uddacca* — restlessness; (x) *avijjā* — ignorance.

(1) *Sōtāpaṇṇa* - after the disappearance of the three fetters, the monk who has won the stream (to Nibbāna) and is no more subject to rebirth in lower worlds, is firmly established, destined for full enlightenment.

(2) *sakadāgāmi* - after the disappearance of the three fetters and reduction of greed, hatred and delusion, he will return only once more; and having once more returned to this world, he will put an end to suffering.

(3) *anāgāmi* - after the disappearance of the five fetters he appears in a higher world, and there he reaches Nibbāna without ever returning from the world (to the sensuous sphere).

(4) arahant - through the extinction of all cankers *(āsavakkhaya)* he reaches already in this very life the deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom, which is free from cankers, and which he himself has understood and realized.



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Sun and moon, a warrior in armour, an ardent sage. Above all these Buddha's radiance glows.

387. *Divā tapati ādiccō*
rattiṁ ābhāti candimā
sannaddhō khattiyō tapati
jhāyī tapati brāhmaṇō
atha sabbaṁ ahōrattiṁ
Buddhō tapati tejasā. (26:5)

The sun is bright by day,
the moon enlights the night,
armoured shines the warrior,
contemplative the Brahmin True.
But all the day and night-time too
resplendent does the Buddha sine.

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THE BUDDHA SHINES DAY AND NIGHT

26 (5) The Story of Venerable Ānanda (Verse 387)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Ānanda.

The story goes that, on the Great Terminal Festival, Pasēnadi Kōsala went to the monastery, adorned with all the adornments, bearing perfumes, garlands, and the like in his hands. At that moment Venerable Kāludāyi was sitting in the outer circle of the congregation, having entered into a state of trance. His body was pleasing to look upon, for it was of a golden hue. Now just at that moment the moon rose and the sun set. Venerable Ānanda looked at the radiance of the sun as the sun set, and of the moon as the moon rose; then he looked at the radiance of the body of the king and at the radiance of the body of the Venerable and at the radiance of the body of the Tathāgata. The Buddha far outshone the radiance of all the others.

The Venerable saluted the Buddha and said, "Venerable, as today I gazed upon the radiance of all these bodies, the radiance of your body alone satisfied me; for your body far outshone the radiance of all these other bodies." Said the Buddha to the Venerable, "Ānanda, the sun shines by day, the moon by night, the king when he is adorned, the arahat when he has left human associations behind and is absorbed in trance. But the Buddhas shine both by night and by day, and shine with five-fold brightness."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 387)

ādiccō divā tapati candimā rattiṁ ōbhāti khattiyō sannaddhō tapati brāhmaṇō jhāyī tapati atha sabbaṁ ahōrattiṁ Buddhō tējasā tapati

ādiccō: the sun; *divā:* during day; *tapati:* shines; *candimā:* the moon; *rattiṁ:* at night; *ōbhāti:* shines; *khattiyō:* the warrior; *sannaḍḍhō:* dressed in his armour; *tapati:* gleams; *brāhmanō:* the brāhmaṇa; *jhāyī:* in meditation; *tapati:* shines; *atha:* but; *sabbaṁ:* throughout; *ahōrattiṁ:* day and night; *Buddhō:* the Buddha; *tējasā:* in his glory; *tapati:* shines

The sun shines during day time. The moon beams at night. The warrior glows only when he has his armour on. The brāhmaṇa shines when he is concentrated on contemplation. All these people have various times to shine. But the Buddha glows all day and all night through his Enlightenment.

Commentary

jhāyī: meditating; as one meditates; as an individual practises *jhāna* (concentration). The absorption in *jhāna* is a mental state beyond the reach of the five-fold sense-activity. This state can be achieved only in solitude and by unremitting perseverance in the practice of concentration.

Detached from sensual objects, detached from evil things, the disciple enters into the first absorption, which is accompanied by thought-conception and discursive thinking, is born of detachment, and filled with rapture and happiness.

This is the first of the absorptions belonging to the fine-material sphere *(rūpāvacarajjhāna).* It is attained when, through the strength of concentration, the five-fold sense-activity is temporarily suspended, and the five hindrances are likewise eliminated.

The first absorption is free from five things, and five things are present. When the disciple enters the first absorption, there have vanished the five hindrances: lust, ill-will, torpor and sloth, restlessness and mental worry, doubts; and there are present: thought-conception *(vitakka),* discursive-thinking *(vicāra),* rapture *(pīti),* happiness *(sukha),* and concentration *(citt'ēkaggatā - samādhi).*

These five mental factors present in the first absorption are called factors (or constituents) of absorption *(jhānaṅga). Vitakka* (initial formation of an abstract thought) and *vicāra* (discursive thinking, rumination) are called verbal functions *(vācā-sankhāra)* of the mind; hence they are something secondary compared with consciousness. in *visuddhi-magga, vitakka* is compared with the taking hold of a pot, and *vicāra* with the wiping of it. In the first absorption both of them are present only in a weak degree, and are entirely absent in the following Absorptions.

And further, after the subsiding of thought-conception and discursive thinking, and by the gaining of inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters into a state free from thought-conception and discursive thinking, the second absorption, which is born of concentration *(samādhi)* and filled with rapture *(pīti)* and happiness *(sukha).*

In the second absorption, there are three factors of absorption: happiness and concentration.

And further, after the fading away of rapture, he dwells in equanimity, mindful, with clear awareness; and he experiences in his own person that feeling of which the noble ones say: Happy lives he who is equanimous and mindful- thus he enters the third absorption.

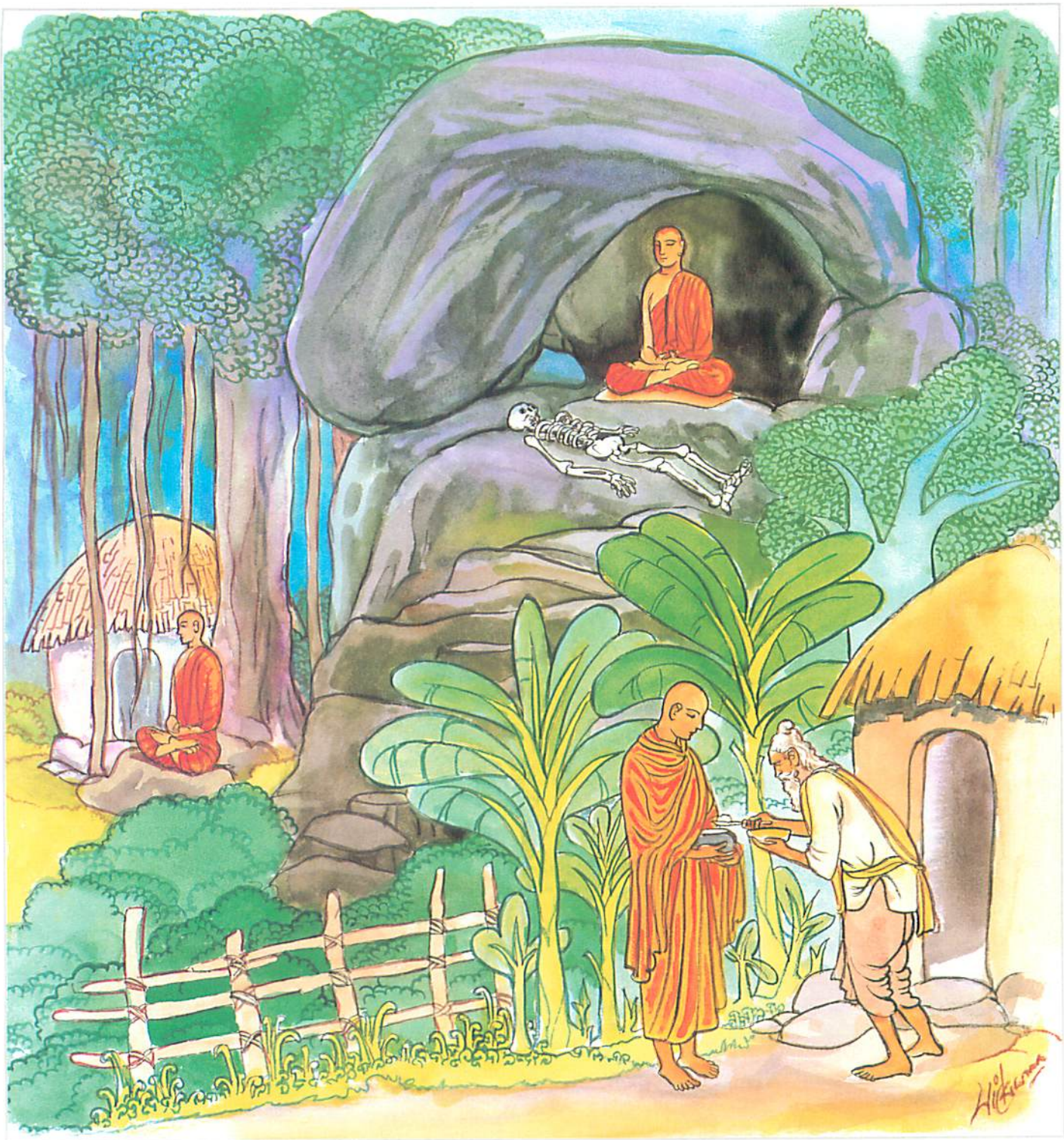
In the third absorption there are two cactors of absorption: equanimous happiness *(upekkhā-sukha)* and concentration *(citt'ekaggatā).*

And further, after the giving up of pleasure and pain, and through the disappearance of previous joy and grief, he enters into a state beyond pleasure and pain, into the fourth absorption, which is purified by equanimity and mindfulness.

In the fourth absorption there are two factors of absorption: concentration and equanimity *(upekkhā).*

In *visuddhi-magga* forty subjects of meditation *(kammaṭṭhāna)* are enumerated and treated in detail.

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Evil barred, a brahmin; by steady life, a monk; rid of stains, a hermit one truly is.

388. *Bāhitapāpō'ti brāhmaṇō*
samacariyā samaṇō'ti vuccati
pabbājay'attanō malaṁ
tasmā pabbajitō'ti vuccati. (26:6)

By barring-out badness a 'brāhmin' one's called
and one is a monk by conduct serene,
banishing blemishes out of oneself
therefore one's known as 'one who's left home'.

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HE WHO HAD DISCARDED ALL EVIL IS HOLY

26 (6) The Story of a Brāhmin Recluse (Verse 388)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a brāhmin ascetic.

The story is told of a certain brāhmin that he retired from the world under a teacher other than the Buddha, and having so done, thought to himself, "The Buddha calls his own disciples monks; I, too, am a monk, and he ought to apply that title to me too."

So he approached the Buddha and asked him about the matter. Said the Buddha, "It is not alone for the reason which you have given me that I call a man a monk. But it is because the evil passions and the impurities have gone forth from him that a man is called one who has gone forth, a monk."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 388)

bāhitapāpō iti brāhmaṇō vuccati samacariyā samaṇō iti vuccati attanō malaṁ pabbājayati tasmā pabbajitō iti vuccati

bāhitapāpō iti: because he has got rid of evil; *brāhmaṇō:* brāhmana; *vuccati:* is called; *samacariyā:* lives with serenity of senses; *samaṇō iti vuccati:* samaṇa he is called; *attanō malaṁ pabbājayati:* he gets rid of his defilements; *tasmā:* because of that; *pabbajitō iti vuccati:* he is called a *pabbajita*

One has got rid of sinful action is called a brāhmaṇa. One of serene senses is called *samaṇa*. A person is called *pabbajita* because he has done away with all his faults.

Commentary

brāhmaṇō, samaṇō, pabbajitō: a brāhmin, a monk, a wandering ascetic. These are all categories of priests in the religious landscape of the Buddha's day. They pursued a multitude of paths to *mōksha*. Here the Buddha explains who a real priest, monk or brahamin is. In His day, religious systems were many and varied. Of the contemporary religious sects, one of the most intriguing was the system created by Nighanṭhanāthaputta.

The life-story of Nighanṭhanāthaputta is very similar to that of the Buddha. Although these two great Teachers were contemporaries, wandering and preaching in the same region, nowhere is it recorded that they met each other. Nighanṭhanāthaputta preached in the *Ardha Māgadhi* language while the Buddha did so in *Suddha Māgadhi* (pure *Māgadhī*). In later times among the Jain there was a division into two sects: (1) *Svētāmbara Jaina* (the white-clad sect) and (2) *Dīghāmbara Jaina* (the nude sect).

Nighanṭhanāthaputta was not a believer in creation *(an-ishvaravādi)*. Never referring to the theory of *Ishṭhāpurthi* (creator) as given in the Vādas, he was a firm believer in kamma and its consequences. Regarding this doctrine there is recorded in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, in the Buddhist canon, the *Cētanā Saṁvara* and similarly in the *Upāli Sutta* there is mentioned the *Tridaṇḍa*. As mentioned in these records, Nighanṭanāthaputta's doctrine is one of extreme non-violence. *Tridaṇḍa* is divided into three types:

(1) *kāyadaṇḍa* (austere control and disciplining of the body);

(2) *vāgdaṇḍa* (austere control and disciplining of speech); and

(3) *manōdaṇḍa* (austere control and disciplining of thought).

According to this system the followers of Nighanthanāthaputta have to be constantly following the path of self-mortification in the practice of their religion. As in Buddhism with its concept of *cētanā* (will or volition). Jainism believed in kand its consequences. The people, to a very great extent, accepted this teaching. The Buddha had to lay down the *Sikkhāpada* (*Vinaya* rules) because of the influence of Jainism.

More specifically, the *Vinaya* rules regarding the rainy season *were laid down by the Buddha owing to Jainism. From this it is evident that during that period Jainism was highly esteemed socially. According to the Jaina teaching even plants had a soul. Those who wear even a thread show an attachment to worldly comforts. All animate and inanimate things possess a soul. Hence, owing to this belief Jains cover their mouth with a piece of cloth even when they go on a journey. The soul, according to Jainism, is of three kinds:*

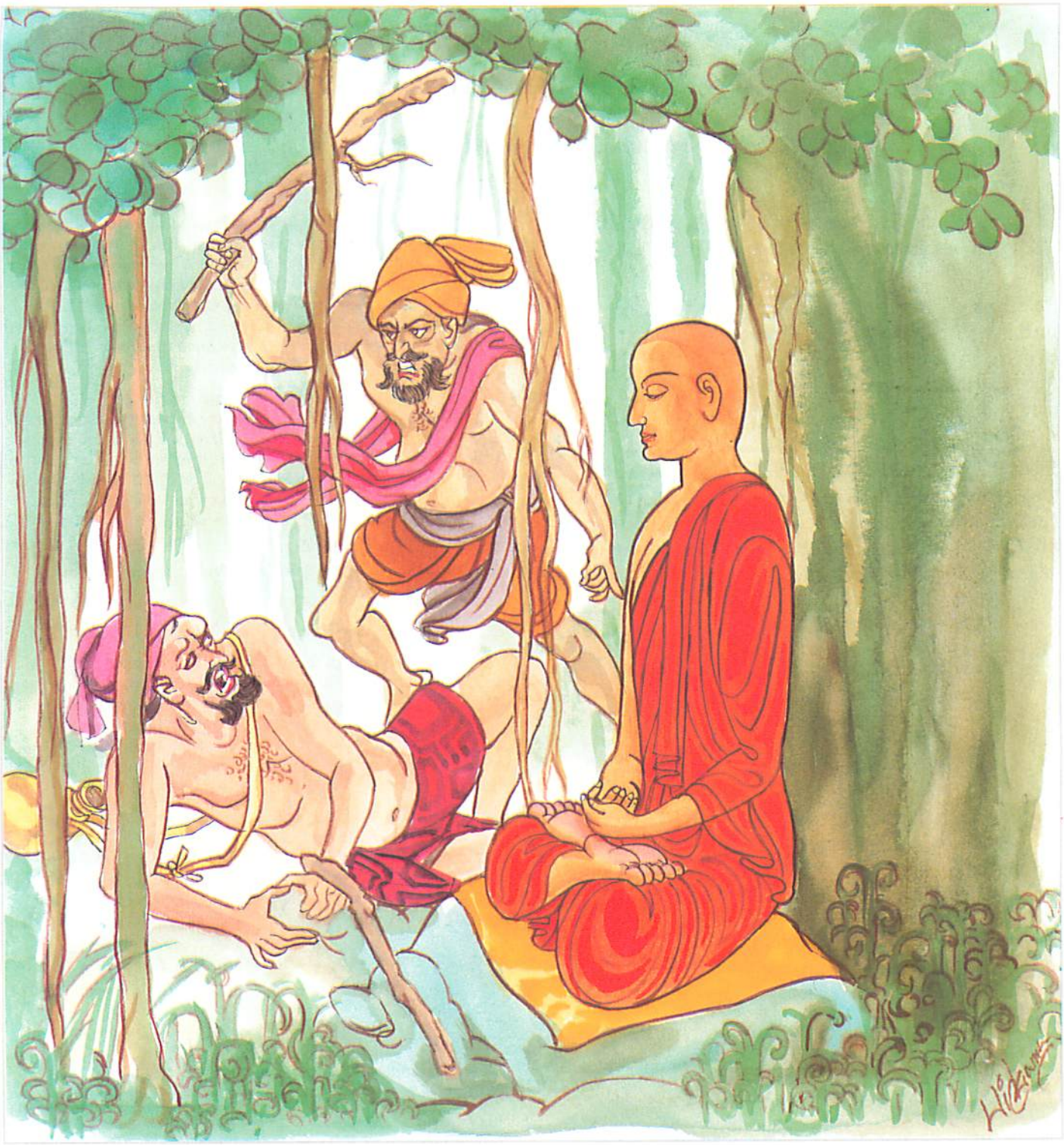
(1) *nityasiddhāṭmaya* (this is similar to the *paramāṭma* of the Hindus);

(2) *muktātmaya* (this is similar to the *Āsava* of the Buddhists);

(3) *baddhātmaya* (this is similar to the kamma of the Buddhists).

This *baddhātmaya* is said to pervade the cells of an individual's body as long as the soul is steeped in kamma. One cannot secure release from *saṁsāra*. It is only by self-mortification that one can rid oneself of kamma. This teaching is not at all in accord with Buddhism, which explains kamma in a very different way. According to the teachings of Jain there are one hundred and fifty eight different kinds of kamma.

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Strike not a brahmin, nor latter violently react. Shame on the former, the latter much worse.

389. *Na brāhmaṇassa pahareyya*
nā'ssa muñcētha brāhmaṇō
dhī brāhmaṇassa hantāraṁ
tatō dhī yassa muñcati. (26:7)

One should not a Brahmin beat
nor for that would He react.
Shame! Who would a Brahmin beat,
more shame for any should they react.

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HARM NOT AN ARAHAT

26 (7) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta (Verses 389 & 390)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke these Verses, with reference to Venerable Sāriputta.

The story goes that once upon a time several men gathered together at a certain place and rehearsed the noble qualities of the Venerable, saying, "Oh, our noble master is endowed with patience to such a degree that even when men abuse him and strike him, he never gets the least bit angry!" Thereupon a certain brāhmin who held false views asked, "Who is this that never gets angry?" "Our Venerable." "It must be that nobody ever provoked him to anger." "That is not the case, brāhmin." "Well then, I will provoke him to anger." "Provoke him to anger if you can!" "Trust me!" said the brāhmin; "I know just what to do to him."

Just then the Venerable entered the city for alms. When the brāhmin saw him, he stepped up behind him and struck him a tremendous blow with his fist in the back. "What was that?" said the Venerable, and without so much as turning around to look, continued on his way. The fire of remorse sprang up within every part of the brāhmin's body. "Oh, how noble are the qualities with which the Venerable is endowed!" exclaimed the brāhmin. And prostrating himself at the Venerable's feet, he said, "Pardon me, Venerable." "What do you mean?" asked the Venerable. "I wanted to try your patience and struck you." "Very well, I pardon you." "If, Venerable, you are willing to pardon me, hereafter sit and receive your food only in my house." So saying, the brāhmin took the Venerable's bowl, the Venerable yielding it willingly, and conducting him to his house, served him with food.

The bystanders were filled with anger. "This fellow," said they, "struck with his staff our noble Venerable, who is free from all offense; he must not be allowed to get away; we will kill him right here and now." And taking clods of earth and sticks and stones into their hands, they stood waiting at the door of the brāhmin's house. As the Venerable rose from his seat to go, he placed his bowl in the hand of the brāhmin. When the bystanders saw the brāhmin going out with the Venerable, they said, "Venerable, order this brāhmin who has taken your bowl to turn back." "What do you mean, lay disciples?" "That brāhmin struck you and we are going to do for him after his deserts." "What do you mean? Did he strike you or me?" "You, Venerable." "If he struck me, he begged my pardon; go your way." So saying, he dismissed the bystanders, and permitting the brāhmin to turn back, the Venerable went back again to the monastery.

The monks were highly offended. "What sort of thing is this!" they exclaimed; "a brāhmin struck the Venerable Sāriputta a blow, and the Venerable straightaway went back to the house of the very brāhmin who struck him and accepted food at his hands! From the moment he struck the Venerable, for whom will he any longer have any respect?" He will go about pounding everybody right and left." At that moment the Buddha drew near. "Monks," said He, "what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" "This was the subject we were discussing." Said the Buddha, "Monks, no brāhmin ever strikes another brāhmin; it must have been a householder-brāhmin who struck a monk-brāhmin; for when a man attains the fruit of the third path, all anger is utterly destroyed in him."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 389)

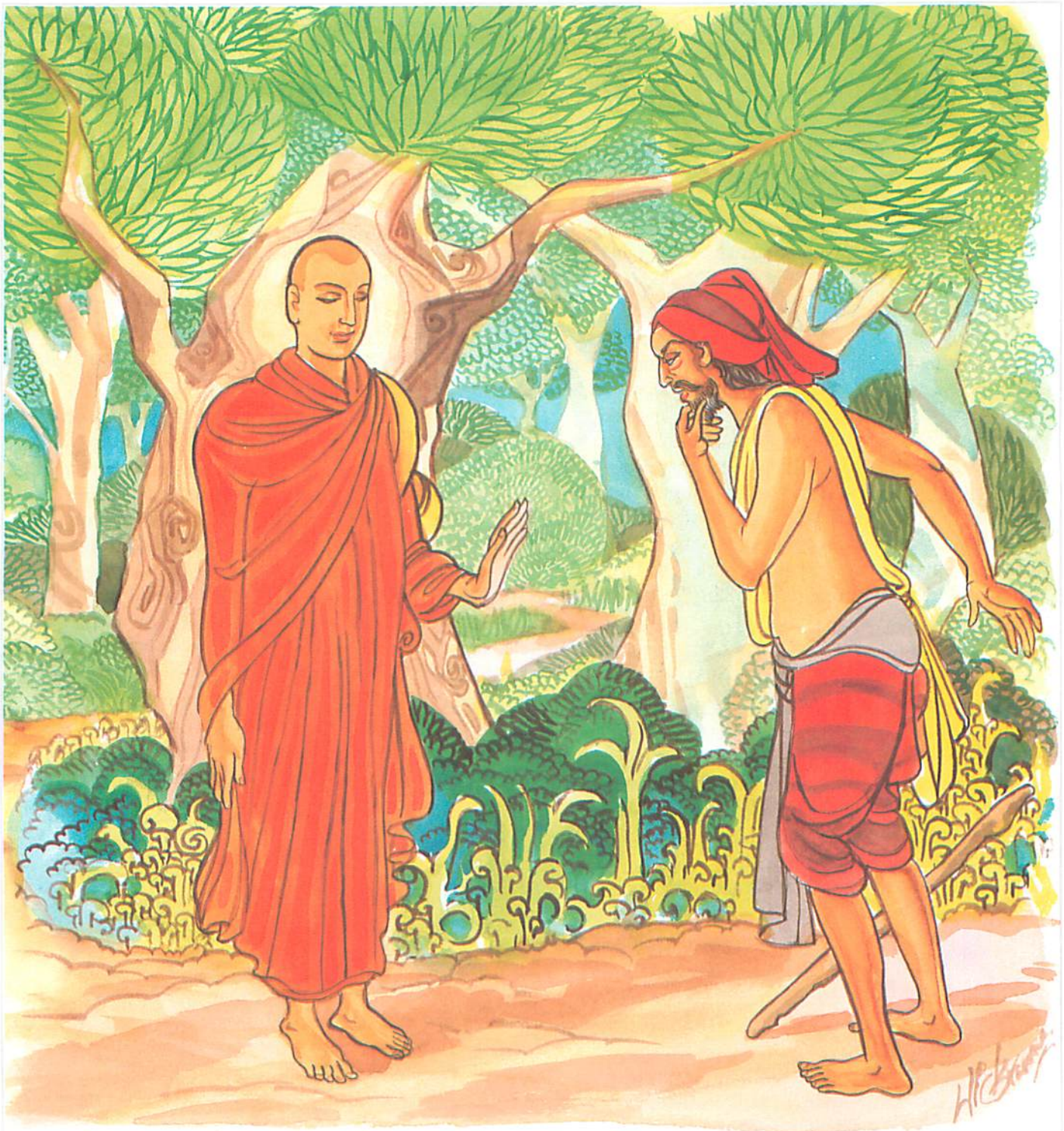
brāhmaṇassa na pahareyya brāhmaṇō assa na muñcētha brāhmaṇassa hantāraṁ dhī yassa muñcati tatō dhī

brāhmaṇassa: a brāhmaṇa; *na pahareyya:* do not attack; *assa:* towards the one who attacks him; *na muñcētha:* should not have hatred; *brāhmaṇassa hantāraṁ dhi:* I condemn him who attacks a brāhmin; *yassa muñcati:* he who gets angry; *tatō dhī:* the more I condemn

No one should strike a brāhmaṇa — the pure saint. The brāhmaṇa who has become the victim must refrain from attacking the attacker in return, or show anger in return. Shame on him who attacks a brāhmaṇa; greater shame on him who displays retaliatory anger.

(cont'd on page 831)

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Eschew things dear. 'Tis triumph for a monk. Abstain from violence. 'Tis pain at its end.

390. *Na brāhmaṇass'ētad'akiñci seyyō*
yadā nisēdhō manasō piyēhi
yatō yatō hiṁsamānō nivattati
tatō tatō sammatiēva dukkhaṁ. (26:8)

For brahmin no small benefit
when mind's aloof from what is dear.
As much he turns away from harm
so much indeed does dukkha die.

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AN ARAHAT DOES NOT RETALIATE

26 (7) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta (Verses 389 & 390) (cont'd)

Explanatory Translation (Verse 390)

ētaṁ brāhmaṇassa na kiñci seyyō yadā manasō
piyēhi (yo) nisēdho yatō hiṁsamānō nivattati tatō
tatō dukkhaṁ sammatimēva

brāhmaṇassa: of the brāhmaṇa; *akiñci seyyō na:* not at all a small asset; *yadā:* if; *ētaṁ:* this (non-retaliation); *manasō:* in the mind of him who hates; *piyēhi:* pleasant; *nisēdhō:* a thought free of ill-will occurs; *yatō yatō:* for some reason; *hiṁsamāno:* the violent mind; *nivattati:* ceases; *tatō tatō:* in these instances; *dukkhaṁ:* pain; *sammatimēva:* surely subsides

To the brāhmaṇa, the act of not returning hate is not a minor asset - it is a great asset, indeed. If,in a mind usually taking delight in hateful acts, there is a change for the better, it is not a minor victory. Each time the violent mind ceases, suffering, too, subsides.

Commentary

hiṁsamānō nivattati: intent to harm ceases. These stanzas are primarily concerned with the need to be compassionate, even to those who adopt an aggressive attitude to one. In the Buddhist system four noble virtues are advocated to counter aggressive behaviour. These four virtues are described as *Brahma Vihāra*. This could be rendered as Sublime Attitudes. These four attitudes are loving-kindness *(mettā)*, compassion *(karunā)*, appreciative joy *(muditā)* and equanimity *(upekkhā)*. All these four virtues curb aggressive, unfriendly behaviour and on the positive side promote non-violence, affection, kindness, compassion and sympathy. Of these four, loving-kindness *(mettā)* is first.

The second virtue that sublimates man is compassion *(karunā)*. It is defined as that which makes the hearts of the good quiver when others are subject to suffering, or that which dissipates the sufferings of others. Its chief characteristic is the wish to remove the woes of others.

The hearts of compassionate persons are even softer than flowers. They do not and cannot rest satisfied until they relieve the sufferings of others. At times, they even go to the extent of sacrificing their lives so as to alleviate the sufferings of others. The story of the *Vyāghri Jātaka* where the Bōdhisatta sacrificed his life to save a starving tigress and her cubs may be cited as an example.

It is compassion that compels one to serve others with altruistic motives. A truly compassionate person lives not for himself but for others. He seeks opportunities to serve others expecting nothing in return, not even gratitude.

Many amidst us deserve our compassion. The poor and the needy, the sick and the helpless, the lonely and the destitute, the ignorant and the vicious, the impure and the undisciplined are some that demand the compassion of kind-hearted, noble-minded men and women, to whatever religion or to whatever race they belong.

Some countries are materially rich but spiritually poor, while some others spiritually rich but materially poor. Both these pathetic conditions have to be taken into consideration by the materially rich and the spiritually rich.

It is the paramount duty of the wealthy to come to the successor of the poor, who unfortunately lack most of the necessities of life. Surely those who have in abundance can give to the poor and the needy their surplus without inconveniencing themselves.

Once, a young student removed the door curtain in his house and gave it to a poor person telling his good mother that the door does not feel the cold but the poor certainly do. Such a kind-hearted attitude in young men and women is highly commendable.

It is gratifying to note that some wealthy countries have formed themselves into various philanthropic bodies to help under-developed countries, especially in Jambudīpa, in every possible way. Charitable organizations have also been established in all countries by men, women and students to give every possible assistance to the poor and the needy. Religious bodies also perform their respective duties in this connection in their own humble way. Homes for the Aged, Orphanages and other similar charitable institutions are needed in under-developed countries.

As the materially rich should have compassion on the materially poor and try to elevate them, it is the duty of the spiritually rich, too, to have compassion on the spiritually poor and sublimate them though they may be materially rich. Wealth alone cannot give genuine happiness. Peace of mind can be gained not by material treasures but by spiritual treasures. Many in this world are badly in need of substantial spiritual food, which is not easily obtained, as the spiritually poor far exceed the materially poor numerically, as they are found both amongst the rich and the poor.

There are causes for these two kinds of diseases. Compassionate men and women must try to remove the causes if they wish to produce an effective cure. Effective measures have been employed by various nations to prevent and cure diseases not only of mankind but also of animals.

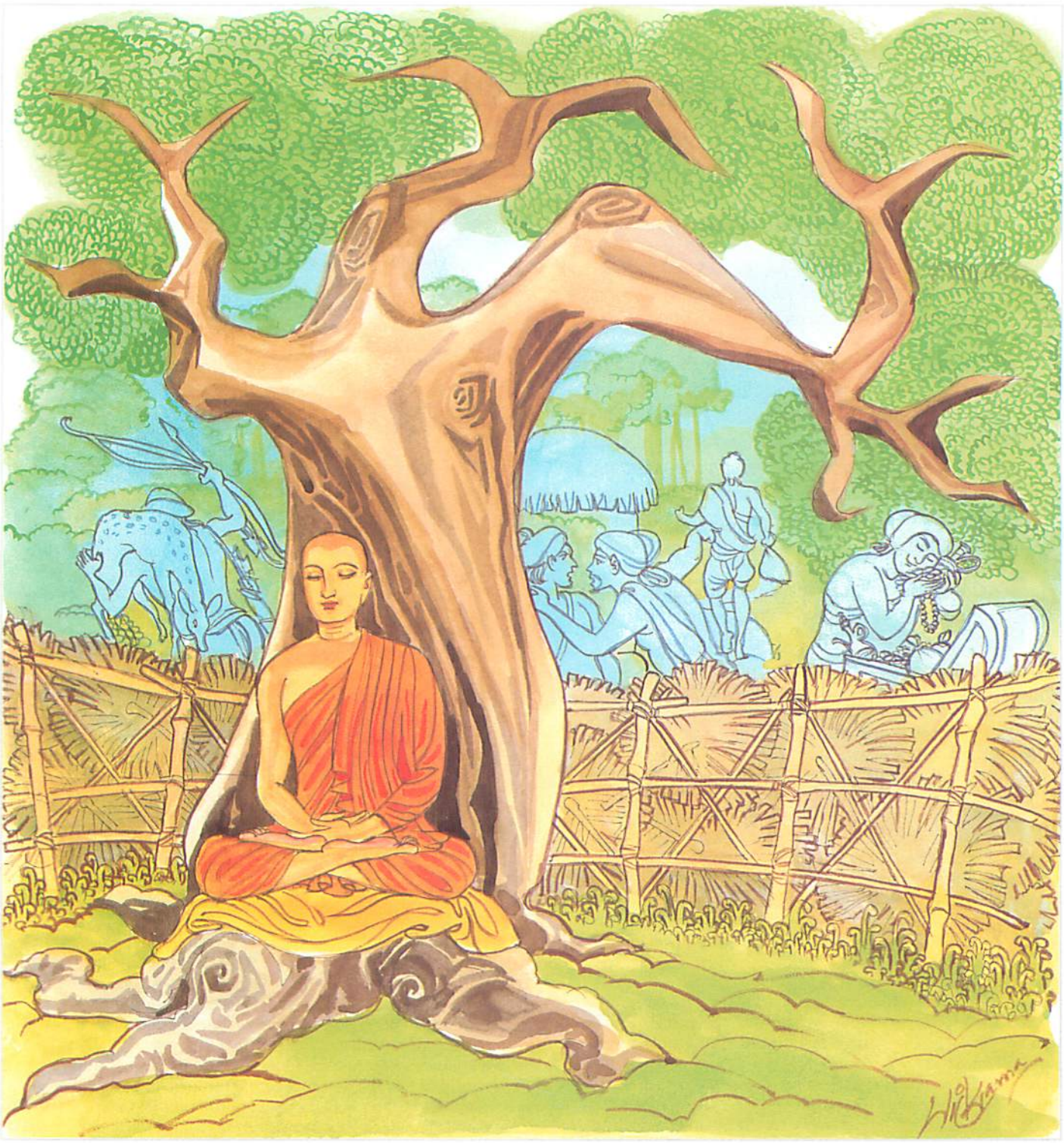
The Buddha set a noble example by attending on the sick Himself and exhorting His disciples with the memorable words:

"He who ministers unto the sick ministers unto me."

Some selfless doctors render free services towards the alleviation of suffering. Some expend their whole time and energy in ministering to the poor patients even at the risk of their lives. Hospitals and free dispensaries have become a blessing to humanity but more are needed so that the poor may benefit by them. In under-developed countries the poor suffer through lack of medical facilities. The sick have to be carried for miles with great inconvenience to the nearest hospital or dispensary for medical treatment. Sometimes, they die on the way. Pregnant mothers suffer most. Hospitals, dispensaries, maternity homes, etc., are essential needs in backward village areas.

The lowly and the destitute deserve the compassion of wealthy men and women. Sometimes, servants and workers are not well paid, well fed, well clothed and, more often than not, they are ill-treated. Justice is not meted out to them. They are neglected and are powerless as there is nobody to plead for them. Glaring cases of inhuman cruelty receive publicity in some exceptional cases. Many such cases are not known. these unfortunate ones have no other alternative but to suffer meekly even as the Earth suffers in silence. The Buddha's advocacy of compassion has tremendous validity in our own times.

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With no evil done through thought, word or deed, one guarded therein, a true brahmin he is.

391. *Yassa kāyēna vācāya*
manasā natthi dukkataṁ
saṁvutaṁ tīhi ṭhānēhi
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:9)

In whom is no wrong-doing
by body, speech or mind,
in these three ways restrained,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE WELL-RESTRAINED IS TRULY A BRĀHMIN

26 (8) The Story of Venerable Nun Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī (Verse 391)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Nun Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī.

For previous to the occasion of the public promulgation of the Eight Cardinal Precepts, the Buddha proclaimed them privately, and Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī accepted them by bowing her head, just as a person accustomed to the wearing of ornaments accepts a garland of fragrant flowers by bowing his head. So, likewise, did all the members of her retinue. No preceptor or teacher did she have other than the Buddha himself. Thus did she receive admission to full membership in the Sangha.

On a subsequent occasion the members of her retinue commented on the manner in which this nun was admitted to full membership in the Sangha, saying, "Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī has no teacher or preceptor; by herself alone and with her own hand she received the yellow robes." On hearing this, the other nuns were dissatisfied and thenceforth refused to keep Fast-day or to celebrate the terminal festival with her. And going to the Buddha, they reported the matter to him. The Buddha listened to what they had to say and then replied, "I myself conferred the eight cardinal precepts on Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī. I alone am her teacher; I alone am her preceptor. They that have renounced the sins of act and speech and thought, they that have rid themselves of the evil passions, such persons should never entertain feelings of dissatisfaction."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 391)

yassa kāyēna vācāya manasā dukkataṁ natthi
tīhi ṭhānēhi saṁvutaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ
brūmi

yassa: who; *kāyēna:* through the body; *vācāya:* through speech; *manasā:* through the mind; *dukkataṁ natthi:* has done no sin; *saṁvutaṁ:* guarded; *tīhi ṭhānēhi:* in these three areas; *tamahaṁ:* that individual; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* I call a brāhmaṇa

If an individual is well guarded in body, in speech, and in mind, and has done no wrong in these three areas, who is well restrained, I call that kind of person a true brāhmaṇa - the noble saint.

Commentary

Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī: The present stanza was occasioned by a discussion that pivoted round Nun Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī. Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī was the youngest sister of King Suppabuddha. Her elder sister was Queen Māha Māyā. Both were married to King Suḍdhōdana. She had a daughter named Nandā and a son named Nanda. Later, both of them entered the Sangha. When Mahā Māyā died she adopted her sister's son, Prince Siddhattha, entrusting her own son Nanda to the charge of nurses. Her family name was Gōtamī, and she was named Mahāpajāpatī because soothsayers predicted that she would be the head of a large following. When the Buddha visited the palace and preached the *Dhammapāla Jātaka* to His father she attained the first stage of sainthood. After the death of King Suddhōdana, as both Princes Siddhārtha and Nanda had renounced the world, she also decided to enter the noble Sangha and lead the Holy Life. When the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu to settle a dispute between the Sākyas and Kōliyas with regard to the irrigation of channels from the river Rōhini and was residing at the Nigrōdha park, Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī approached the Buddha and, begging Him to grant permission for women to enter the Sangha, pleaded thus: "It would be well, Lord, if women should be allowed to renounce their homes and enter the homeless state under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Buddha." Without stating His reasons, the Buddha straightaway refused, saying: "Enough, O' Gōtami, let it not please you that women should be allowed to do so." For the second and third time, Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī repeated her request, and the Buddha gave the same reply. Later, the Buddha, having stayed at Kapilavatthu as long as He liked, journeyed to Vēsāli, and arriving there in due course, resided at the Mahāvana in the Kūṭāgāra Hall.

Resolute Pajāpatī Gōtamī, without being discouraged by her disappointment, got her hair cut off, donned yellow garments, and surrounded by a great number of Sākya ladies, walked from Kapilavatthu to Vēsali, a distance of about 150 miles, experiencing many a hardship. With swollen feet, her body covered with dust, she arrived at Vēsāli and stood outside the porch of the Pinnacled Hall. Venerable Ānanda found her weeping and, learning the cause of her grief, approached the Buddha and said, "Behold, Lord, Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī is standing outside the porch, with swollen feet, body covered with dust, and sad. Please permit women to renounce home and enter the homeless state under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Buddha. It were well, Lord, if women should be allowed to renounce their homes and enter the homeless state." "Enough, Ānanda, let it not please you that women should be allowed to do so!" was the Buddha's reply. For the second and third time, he interceded on their behalf, but the Buddha would not yield.

So Venerable Ānanda made a different approach and respectfully questioned the Buddha: "Are women, lord, capable of realizing the state of a stream-winner *(sōtāpanna)*, once-returner *(sakadāgāmi)* never-returner *(anāgāmi)* and an arahat, when they have gone forth from home to the homeless state under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Buddha?" The Buddha replied that they were capable of realizing saintship. Encouraged by this favourable reply, Venerable Ānanda appealed again, saying, "If then, Venerable, they are capable of attaining saintship, since Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī had been of great service to the Buddha, when as aunt and nurse she nourished Him and gave Him milk, and on the death of His mother suckled the Buddha at her own breast, it were well, Lord, that women should be given permission to renounce the world and enter the homeless state under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Buddha." "If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gōtamī accepts the eight chief rules, let that be reckoned to her as the form of her ordination," said the Buddha, finally yielding to the entreaties of Venerable Ānanda.

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Him who teaches the true Buddha word one should honour, as does a brahmin the sacred fire.

392. *Yamhā dhammaṁ vijāneyya*
sammāsambuddhadēsitaṁ
sakkaccaṁ taṁ namasseyya
aggihuttaṁ'va brāhmaṇō. (26:10)

From whom one knows the Dhamma
by Perfect Buddha taught
devoutly one should honour them
as brahmin sacred fire.

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HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR IS DUE

26 (9) The Story of Venerable Sāriputta (Verse 392)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Venerable Sāriputta.

This Venerable, we are told, first heard the Dhamma from the lips of Venerable Assajī; and from the day when he attained the fruit of conversion, in whatever quarter he heard that Venerable Assajī was residing, in that direction he would extend his clasped hands in an attitude of reverent supplication, in that direction he would turn his head when he lay down to sleep. The monks said to each other, "Venerable Sāriputta holds false views; on this very day he is going about doing reverence to the cardinal points," and reported the matter to the Buddha.

The Buddha caused the elder to be summoned before him and asked him, "Sāriputta, is the report true that you are going about doing reverence to the cardinal points?" "Venerable, you know me, and you know of yourself whether or not I am going about doing reverence to the cardinal points." Then said the Buddha, "Monks, Sāriputta is not doing reverence to the cardinal points. The fact is that he first heard the Dhamma from the lips of Venerable Assajī, and that from the day when he attained the fruit of conversion, he has reverenced his own teacher. For a monk should reverence the teacher through whom he has learned the Dhamma with the same degree of reverence with which a brāhmin reverences the sacred fire."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 392)

yamhā sammāsambuddha dēsitaṁ dhammaṁ vijāneyya aggihuttaṁ brāhmaṇō iva taṁ sakkaccaṁ namasseyya

yamhā: from someone; *sammāsambuddha dēsitaṁ dhammaṁ:* Dhamma preached by the Enlightened One; *vijāneyya*: is learnt; *aggihuttaṁ brāhmaṇō iva*: like the brāhmin the sacrificial fire; *sakkaccaṁ:* meticulously; duly; *namasseyya:* (him) salutes

If a seeker after truth were to learn the Word of the Enlightened One from a teacher, that pupil must pay the Teacher due respect, like a brāhmin paying homage assiduously and with respect to the sacrificial fire.

Commentary

Venerable Assajī: This stanza was occasioned by Venerable Sāriputta's adoration of Venerable Assajī who was the last but by no means the least of the five monks who formed the vanguard of the noble Sangha.

His life followed closely the pattern of the other four monks. These five were enamoured of the ideal just as their five counterparts showed the way during the dispensation of Padumuttara Buddha. History or prehistory was repeating itself. He had the unique distinction of being the first arahat to show the way to Upatissa the brāhmin afterwards to become the chief disciple as Venerable Sāriputta. He quoted the stanza which became the world famous in the Buddhist world. The stanza afterwards became known as the Assajī stanza. At first Assajī tried to put Uptatissa off on the plea that he was a novice. But Upatissa insisted to hear the gist of the Dhamma whether it was long or short. As has been engraved in thousands of Buddhist votive shrines in India he said "Of all things that proceed from a cause, the Buddha has told — And also how they cease to be this too, the Buddha did unfold." In other words the Second and third Truths in the first sermon of the Buddha were revealed. It simply means that the Buddha not only showed how a being came into existence but also how that existence could cease forever. If there is a craving there must be a ceasing thereof. To Upatissa it was like opening a door to a familiar room. Before the second line was quoted the truth flashed before his vision and he entered the stream of saintship. Soon, Upatissa became the chief disciple. His was a rare intellect only second to the Buddha's.

It was said that actuated by the noble quality of gratitude ever afterwards the chief disciple slept wherever possible with his head turned towards the direction of the place where Venerable Assajī, his teacher, was said to be sojourning. The deportment of Assajī while going on rounds for food was so striking that it moved a great being like Upatissa to go closer to him.

> He was of the five the last,
> But to point the way the first.
> To Upatissa the Lord's chief,
> Dhamma's commander in chief

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'Tis not matted hair nor birth nor family, but truth and Dhamma which make a brahmin true.

393. *Na jaṭāhi na gottēna*
na jaccā hōti brāhmaṇō
yamhi saccañ ca dhammō ca
so sucī sō ca brāhmaṇō. (26:11)

By birth one is no brahmin,
by family, austerity.
In whom are truth and Dhamma too
pure is he, a Brahmin's he.

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ONE DOES NOT BECOME A BRĀHMIN MERELY BY BIRTH

26 (10) The Story of Jaṭila the Brāhmin (Verse 393)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to Jaṭila, a brāhmin ascetic who wore matted hair.

The story goes that this brāhmin said one to day to himself, "I am well born on my mother's side and on my father's side, for I was reborn in the family of a brāhmin. Now the monk Gōtama calls his own disciples brāhmins. He ought to apply the same title to me too." So the brāhmin went to the Buddha and asked him about the matter. Said the Buddha to the brāhmin, "Brāhmin, I do not call a man a brāhmin merely because he wears matted locks, merely because of his birth and lineage. But he that has penetrated the truth, him alone do I call a brāhmin."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 393)

jaṭāhi brāhmaṇō na hōti gottēna brāhmaṇō na hōti jaccā brāhmaṇō na hōti yamhi saccañca dhammō ca sō sucī sō ca brāhmaṇō

jaṭāhi: because of the matted hair; *brāhmaṇō na hōti:* one does not become a brāhmaṇa; *gottēna:* by clan; *brāhmaṇō na hōti:* one does not become a brāhmaṇa; *jaccā:* because of birth; *brāhmaṇō na hōti:* one does not become a brāhmaṇa; *yamhi:* in a person; *saccaṁ:* awareness of truth; *dhammō ca:* and spiritual reality (exist); *so suci:* if he is pure; *so ca brāhmaṇō:* he is the true brāhmin

One does not become a brāhmin by one's matted hair. Nor does one become a brāhmin by one's clan. Even one's birth will not make a brāhmin. If one has realized the Truth, has acquired the knowledge of the Teaching, if he is also pure, it is such a person that I describe as a brāhmin.

Commentary

na jaccā hōti Brāhmānō: one does not become a brāhmana merely by birth. This statement represents the Buddha's revolutionary philosophy which disturbed the brāhmin dominated upper-crust of Indian society. The brāhmins of the day considered themselves the chosen of Brahma and by birth, they deserved veneration by all others. Buddha dealt a blow to this entrenched concept.

Society at that time was divided into four sections called *varṇas*. It is clear that the Teachings of this great teacher denounced this *varṇa* or caste system. Indian society of that time especially benefitted from the doctrines of the Buddha because it was the first time that the rigid system of casteism was denounced. It would appear that the people of India, steeped in ignorance, received great consolation from this new doctrine of the Buddha. Owing to this important fact the great transcendental doctrine of the Buddha began to spread throughout all India.

There is a great store of varied information contained in the Buddhist literature of the Tripitaka concerning the complex society of Jambudīpa during the 6th Century B.C., when the Buddha lived and when many philosophies were expounded. Founders of different religions and philosophies preached diverse ways of salvation to be followed by human beings. The intelligentsia engaged themselves in the search to discover which of these proclaimed the truth.

The Buddhist system of thought provides an ethical realism in which the nature of the traditional social structure could be critically examined. Prior to the Buddha high spiritual pursuits were allowed only to privileged groups. But the Buddha opened the path of Enlightenment to all who had the potential to achieve spiritual liberation.

Since this was an assault on the entrenched system, many a brāhmin was provoked into entering into arguments with the Buddha about who a real brāhmin was. This verse arose from one such encounter.

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What of your matted hair and antelope-skin cloak? Foul within, only your outside you groom.

394. *Kiṁ tē jaṭāhi dummēdha!*
Kiṁ tē ajinasāṭiyā
abbhantaraṁ tē gahaṇaṁ
bāhiraṁ parimajjasi? (26:12)

Dimwit! What's the coiled hair for?
For what your cloak of skins?
Within you are acquisitive,
you decorate without!

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BE PURE WITHIN

26 (11) The Story of the Trickster Brāhmin (Verse 394)

What is the use of your matted locks? This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Pagoda Hall with reference to a certain trickster Brāhmin who imitated a bat.

This brāhmin, so the story goes, used to climb a certain kakudha tree that grew close to the gate of the city of Vēsāli, grasp a branch with his two feet, and swing himself from the branch, head downwards. And hanging thus, he would cry out, "Give me a hundred kapilas! Give me pennies! Give me a slave-woman! If you don't give me what I ask for, I will let myself drop from this tree and kill myself and make this city as though it had never been a city!"

As the Buddha, accompanied by the congregation of monks, entered the city, the monks saw this Brāhmin hanging from the tree, and when they departed from the city, still they saw him hanging there, just as he hung when they entered the city. The residents of the city thought to themselves, "This fellow has been hanging thus from this tree ever since early morning; should he fall, he is likely to make this city as though it had never been a city." And because of fear that their city might be destroyed, they complied with all of his demands and gave him all that he asked for. "We have given you all that you asked for," said they. Thereupon he descended from the tree and departed with the spoils.

The monks saw the trickster brāhmin wandering about in the neighborhood of the monastery, bellowing like a cow, and immediately recognized him. "Brāhmin," they asked, "did you get what you asked for?" "Yes," replied the Brāhmin, "I got what I asked for." The monks reported the incident to the Buddha within the monastery. Said the Buddha, "Monks, this is not the first time this Brāhmin has been a trickster and a thief; he was a trickster and a thief in a previous state of existence also. But while in his present state of existence he deceives the simple-minded, in his previous state of existence he failed to confound the wise." Complying with a request of the monks, the Buddha related the following story of the past about the false ascetic and the king of the lizards.

Once upon a time a certain ascetic lodged near a certain village of farmers, and this ascetic was a hypocrite. Now there was a certain family that used to look after his needs: by day, of the food, whether hard or soft, they always gave a portion to the ascetic just as they did to their own children; and in the evening they would set aside a portion of the food prepared for their supper, and give it to him on the following day.

Now not far from his leaf-hut, in a certain ant-hill, dwelt the king of the lizards, and it was the custom of the king of the lizards from time to time to call upon the ascetic and pay his respects to him. But on that particular day this ascetic said to himself, "I will kill that lizard," and concealing a stick in a fold of his garments, he lay down quite near that ant-hill and pretended to be asleep. When the king of the lizards came out of his ant-hill and approached the ascetic, observing the peculiar attitude in which the ascetic lay, he said to himself, "I don't like the way my teacher acts today," and turning around, wriggled off in the opposite direction. The ascetic, noticing that the lizard had turned around, threw the stick at him, intending to kill him, but the stick went wide of the mark. The king of the lizards crawled into the ant-hill, and poking his head out and looking around, said to the ascetic, "All this time I vainly imagined you to be an ascetic, but when just now you threw your stick at me, desiring to kill me, at that moment you ceased to be an ascetic. What is the use of matted locks to a man like you, who utterly lacks wisdom? What is the use of your skin, all furnished with claws? For there is a jungle within you; it is only the exterior that you polish and cleanse."

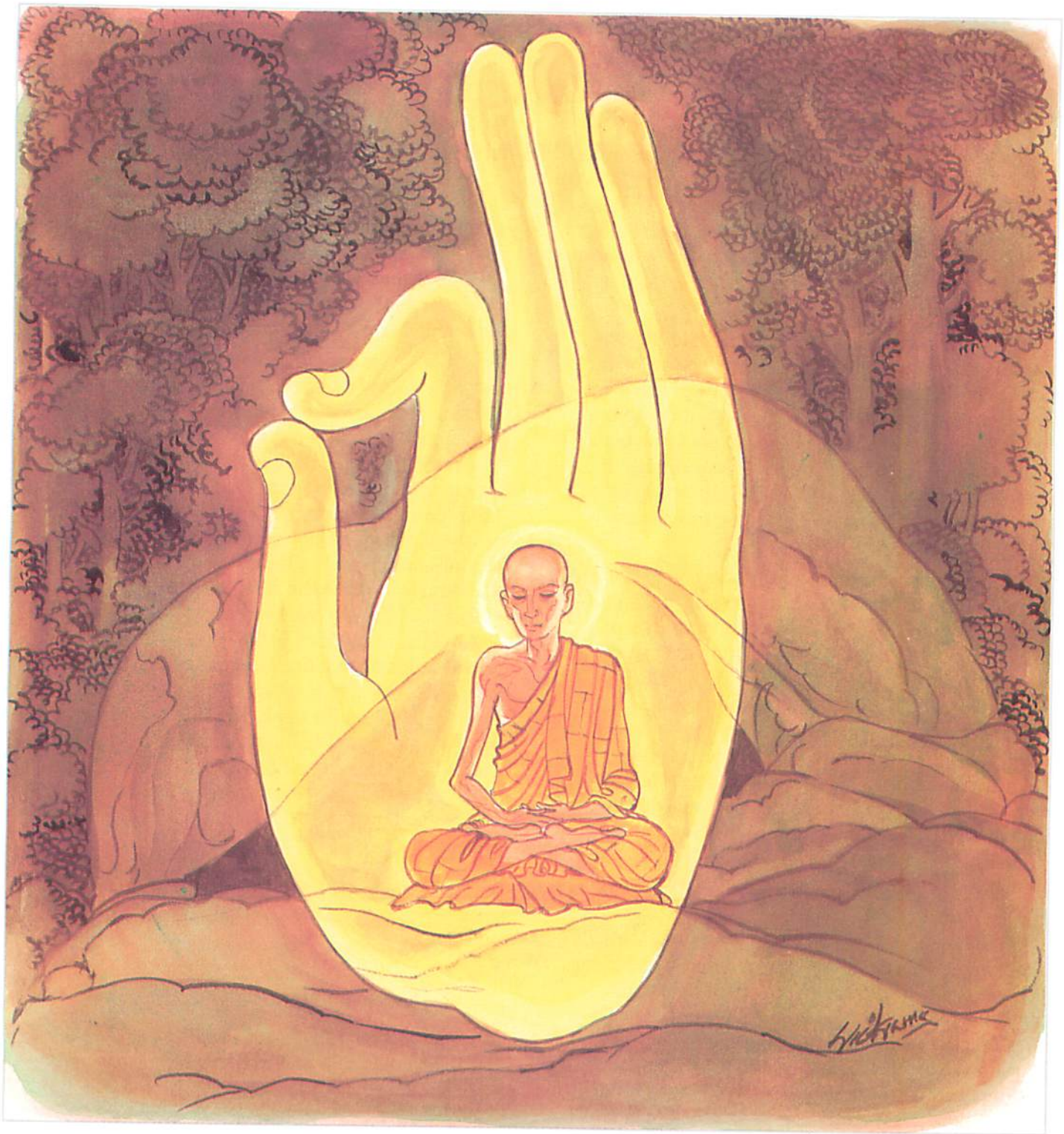
Explanatory Translation (Verse 394)

dummēdha tē jaṭāhi kiṁ tē ajinasāṭiyā kiṁ tē abbhantaraṁ tē gahaṇaṁ bāhiraṁ parimajjasi

dummēdha: o, unwise man; *tē:* yours; *jaṭāhi:* matted hair; *kiṁ:* of what use; *tē:* your; *ajinasāṭiyā:* the leopard skin; *kiṁ:* of what use; *tē abbhantaraṁ:* your inside; spirit; *gahaṇaṁ:* is replete with blemishes; *bāhiraṁ:* what is outside; *parimajjasi:* you decorate.

Of what use are your exterior sights of asceticism: your matted hair; your leopard skin garment? Your outside you keep clean and bright, while inside you are filled with defilements.

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Lone meditator in the wilds, dusty-robe clad, lean and worn out, him the true Brāhmin I call.

395. *Paṁsukūladharaṁ jantuṁ*
kisaṁ dhamanisanthataṁ
ēkaṁ vanasmiṁ jhāyantaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:13)

One enduring rag-robes, lean,
with body o'erspread by veins,
lone in the woods who meditates,
that one I call a Brāhmin True.

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WHO MEDITATES ALONE IN THE FOREST IS A BRĀHMAṆA

26 (12) The Story of Kisā Gōtamī, Wearer of Refuse-Rags (Verse 395)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Mount Vulture Peak with reference to Kisā Gōtamī.

For at that time, at the end of the first watch, Sakka, attended by a host of deities, drew near the Buddha, saluted him, sat down respectfully on one side, and listened to him as he preached the Dhamma in his usual pleasing manner. At that moment Kisā Gōtamī said to herself, "I will go to see the Buddha," and proceeded thither through the air. But when she saw Sakka, she turned back. Sakka saw her salute the Buddha and turn back, and straightway asked the Buddha, "Venerable, who is this that draws nigh to you, and then, seeing you, turns back?" The Buddha replied, "Great king, this is my daughter Kisā Gōtamī, foremost of the nuns who wear refuse-rags."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 395)

paṁsukūladharaṁ kisaṁ dhamanisanthataṁ
vanasmiṁ ēkaṁ jhāyantaṁ taṁ jantuṁ ahaṁ
brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

paṁsukūladharaṁ: one who wears robes made out of cast-off rags; *kisaṁ:* lean; *dhamanisanthataṁ:* with veins standing out; *vanasmiṁ:* dwelling in the forest; *ēkaṁ:* all alone; *jhāyantaṁ:* meditating; *taṁ jantuṁ:* that person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* brāhmin call

He wears robes made out of cast-off rags. He is so austere and lean that veins stand out in his body. All alone, he meditates in the forest. Such a seeker of truth, I describe as a brāhmaṇō.

Commentary

paṁsakūladharaṁ: wearing robes made out of refuse rags — cast-offs. The vow to wear only robes made from picked-up rags *(paṁsakūlikanga)* is one of the ascetic rules of purification. These rules are described as *dhutaṇga. Dhutaṇga* — means of shaking off (the defilements), means of purification, ascetic, or austere practices. These are strict observances recommended by the Buddha to monks, as a help to cultivate contentedness, renunciation, energy and the like. One or more of them may be observed for a shorter or longer period of time.

The monk training himself in morality should take upon himself the means of purification, in order to gain those virtues through which the purity of morality will become accomplished, to wit: fewness of needs, contentedness, austerity, detachment, energy, moderation, etc.

The thirteen *dhutaṇgas* consist in the vows of:

(1) wearing patched-up robes;

(2) wearing only three robes;

(3) going for alms;

(4) tot omitting any house whilst going for alms;

(5) eating at one sitting;

(6) eating only from the alms ḅowl;

(7) refusing all further food;

(8) living in the forest;

(9) living under the tree;

(10) living in the open air;

(11) living in the cemetery;

(12) being satisfied with whatever dwelling;

(13) sleeping in sitting position (and never lying down).

Vow number 1 is taken in the words: I reject robes offered to me by householders, or: I take upon myself the vow of wearing only robes made from picked-up rags. Some of the exercises may also be observed by the lay-adherent.

Here it may be mentioned that each newly ordained monk, immediately after his being admitted to the Sangha, is advised to be satisfied with whatever robes, alms food, dwelling and medicine he gets: "The life of the monks depends on the collected alms as food . . . on the root of a tree as dwelling . . on robes made from patched-up rags.

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He is no brahmin by mere lineage. Dispossessed, unattached, he is indeed the true brahmin.

396. *Na cā'haṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi*
yōnijaṁ mattisambhavaṁ
bhōvādi nāma sō hōti
sa cē hōti sakiñcānō
akiñcanaṁ anādānaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:14)

I call him not a brahmin though
by womb-born mother's lineage,
he's just supercilious
if with sense of ownership,
owning nothing and unattached:
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE NON-POSSESSIVE AND THE NON-ATTACHED PERSON IS A BRĀHMAṆA

26 (13) What is a Brāhman? (Verse 396)

The story goes that a certain Brāhman one day said to himself, "The monk Gōtama calls his own disciples 'Brāhmans.' Now I was reborn in the womb of a Brāhman mother; therefore he ought to apply this title to me too." So he approached the Buddha and asked him about the matter. Said the Buddha to the Brāhman, "I do not call a man a Brāhman merely because he received a new existence in the womb of a Brāhman mother. But he that is without worldly possessions, he that grasps not after the things of this world, him alone I call a Brāhman."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 396)

yōnijaṁ mattisambhavaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ ahaṁ na ca brūmi sa cē sakiñcānō hōti sō bhōvādi nāma hōti akiñcanaṁ anādānaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yōnijaṁ mattisambhavaṁ: born in the womb of a brahamin mother; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a brāhmin; *ahaṁ na ca brūmi:* I will not call; *sa cē sakiñcānō:* if he possesses blemishes; *sō bhōvādi nāma hōti:* he could be called a person who goes about addressing people 'Sir'; *akiñcanaṁ:* if he is free of defilements; *anādānaṁ:* free of the grip of craving; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* describe as a brāhmin

I would not call a person a brāhmaṇa merely because he is born out of a brāhmaṇa mother's womb. Nor would I call a person a brāhmin merely because he goes about addressing people as bhō (sir). These people are all full of defilements. I call a person a brāhmin who is free of faults and is not given to craving.

Commentary

brahman: In terms of this stanza, the unnamed brāhman, who met the Buddha, claimed the title Brāhman because he was *yōnijaṁ mattisambhavaṁ*, well-born from the womb of a brāhmin mother. But the Buddha stated that he will describe a person as a brāhmin only a non-possessor of such defilements as lust, and a person who is not given to grasping.

bhōvādi: As a habit, the brāhmins of the Buddha's days were adept in all the external rituals. They were polite and courteous and addressed people as *bhō* (sir). The Buddha stated that such polite and courteous behaviour was not sufficient. To qualify for the title Brāhmin they must be internally, spiritually pure. Otherwise, they remained mere *bhō* sayers.

brāhmin Dōṇa: Among the Brāhmanas who figure prominently in Buddhist literature is *Dōṇa*.

A portion of the remains of the Buddha was claimed by each of the following, namely, King Ajātassatu of Magadha, Licchavīs of Vēsāli, Sākyas of Kapilavatthu, Būlīs of Allakappa, Kōliyas of Rāmāgāma, Mallas of Pāvā, and a brāhmin of Vēṭhadīpa. But the Mallas of Kusinārā maintained that the Buddha passed away within their kingdom, and that they should give no part of the remains to anybody. The brāhmin Dōṇa settled the dispute of stating that it was not proper to quarrel over the remains of such a sacred personality who taught the world forbearance, and he measured the remains into eight portions and gave each claimant one measure of the remains. He asked for the empty measure and erected a Stūpa over it. Mōriyas of Pipphalivana, too, claimed a portion of the remains, but as there was nothing left for them, they took away the embers and built a mound over them, whereas the others who got the remains built Stūpas in their respective kingdoms embodying the sacred relics of the Buddha.

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He who's unfettered and craves no more and from bonds is freed, is the brahmin true.

397. *Sabbasaññōjanaṁ chetvā*
yō vē na paritassati
saṅgātigaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:15)

Who fetters all has severed
does tremble not at all,
who's gone beyond all bonds, unyoked,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO HAS DESTROYED ALL FETTERS

26 (14) The Story of Uggasēna the Acrobat (Verse 397)

This story has been related in detail in the commentary on the stanza beginning with the words, "Give up the things of the past, give up the things of the future."

For, at that time when the monks said to the Buddha, "Venerable, Uggasēna says, 'I have no fear;' without a doubt he says that which is not true, utters falsehood," the Buddha replied, "Monks, those who, like my son, have severed the attachments, have no fear."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 397)

yē sabbasaññōjanaṁ chetvā vē na paritassati saṅgātigaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yē: some one; *sabbasaññōjanaṁ:* all the ten fetters; *chetvā:* having got rid of; *vē:* certainly; *na paritassati:* is free of trepidation; fearless; *saṅgātigaṁ:* has gone beyond all forms of clinging; *visaṁyuttaṁ:* free of blemishes; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a brāhmin; *brūmi:* call

He has got rid of all fetters; In consequence, he is free of trepidation and is fearless. He has travelled beyond all bonds. Disengaged from bonds, he is no longer tied to the world. Such a person I describe as a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

sabba saññōjanaṁ chetvā: Having got rid of all the ten fetters which are

(1) personality-belief *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi)*;

(2) skeptical doubt *(vicikkichā)*;

(3) clinging to mere rules and ritual *(sīlabbata-parāmāsa)*;

(4) sensuous craving *(kāma-rāga)*;

(5) ill-will *(vyāpāda)*;

(6) craving for fine-material existence *(rūpa-rāga)*;

(7) craving for immaterial existence *(arūpa-rāga)*;

(8) conceit *(māna)*;

(9) restlessness *(uddhacca)*;

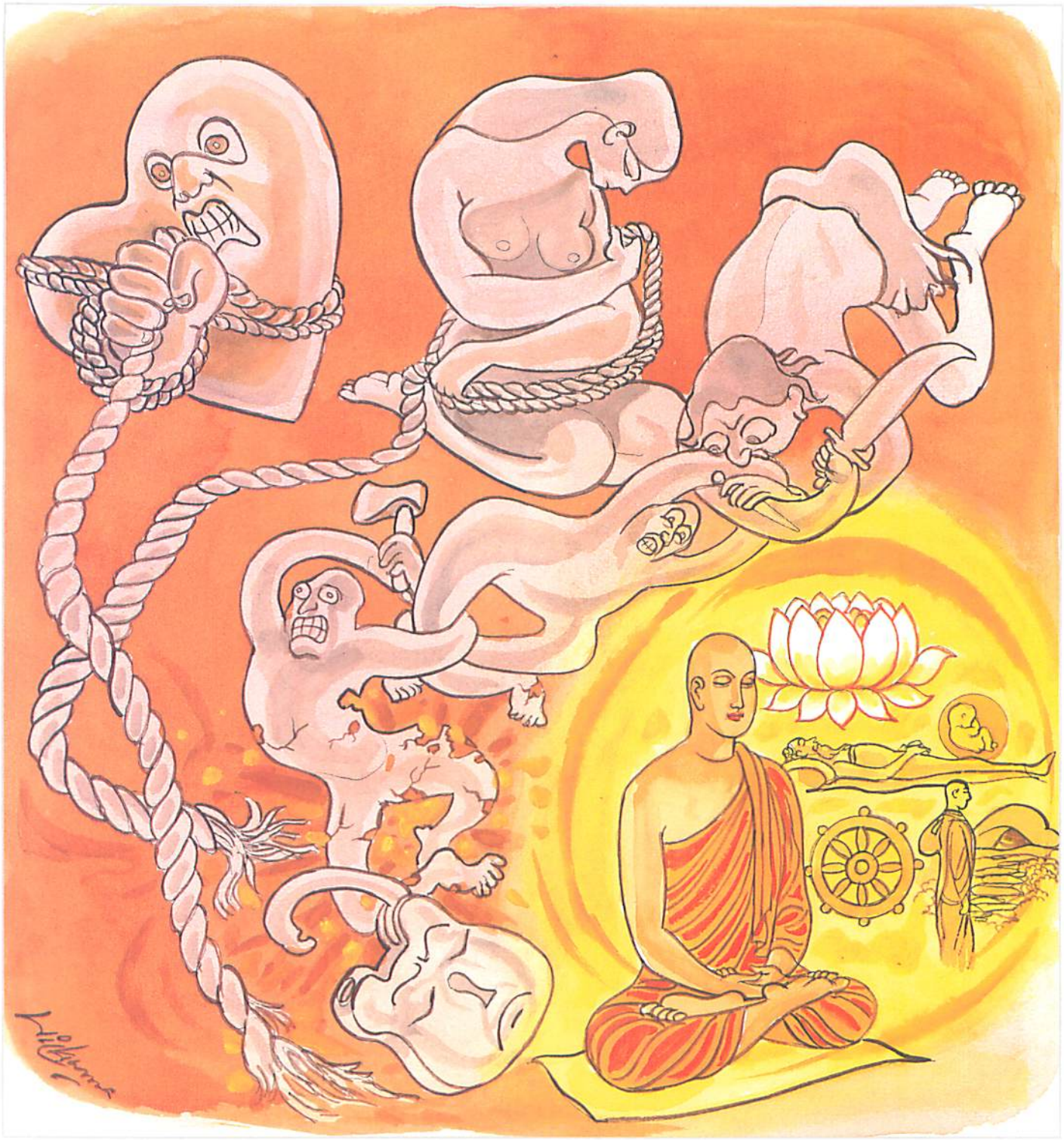
(10) ignorance *(avijjā)*.

The first five of these are called 'lower fetters' *(ōrambhāgīya-saṁyojana)*, as they tie to the sensuous world. The latter five are called 'higher fetters' *(uddhambhāgīya-saṁyōjana)*, as they tie to the higher worlds, i.e., the fine-material and immaterial world.

saṅgātigaṁ: The four forms of grasping, namely, lust, wrong view, clinging to precepts and rituals and holding a substantial first position *(attavāda)*.

na paritassati: does not tremble; is not agitated. Agitation comes to those who are still mired in the worldly. Those who have gone beyond the worldly have not trepidation; they are fearless.

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All trappings discarded, cross-bar barrier lifted up, that enlightened one I call a true brahmin.

398. *Chetvā nandhiṁ varattaṁ ca*
sandāmaṁ sahanukkamaṁ
ukkhittapaḷighaṁ buddhaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:16)

When cutting strap and reins,
the rope and bridle too,
tipping the shaft, he's Waked,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMANA IS HE WHO HAS NO HATRED

26 (15) The Story of a Tug of War (Verse 398)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Jētavana with reference to two brāhmins.

The story goes that one of these two Brāhmins had an oxen named Little Red, Culla Rōhita, and the other had an oxen named Big Red, Mahā Rōhita. One day they fell to arguing about the comparative strength of their respective oxen, saying, "My oxen is the strong one! my oxen is the strong one! " When they were tired of arguing, they said, "What is the use of our arguing about it? We can find out by driving the two oxens." Accordingly they went to the bank of the river Aciravati, loaded their cart with sand, and yoked up their oxen. At that moment some monks came to the bank of the river for the purpose of bathing. The Brāhmins whipped up their oxen, but the cart stirred not an inch. Suddenly the straps and the thongs broke. The Monks saw the whole proceeding, and when they returned to the monastery, told the Buddha all about it. Said the Buddha, "Monks, those are the external straps and thongs, which whoso may cut. But a monk must cut the internal strap of anger and the thong of Craving." So saying, he pronounced the following Stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 398)

nandhiṁ varattaṁ sahanukkamaṁ sandāmaṁ chetvā ukkhittapaḷighaṁ buddhaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmanaṁ brūmi

nandhiṁ: the strap of hatred; *varattaṁ:* the thong of craving; *sahanukkamaṁ sandāmaṁ:* the major shackle along with its links; *chetvā:* having several; *ukkhittapaḷighaṁ:* lifted the cross-bar; *buddhaṁ:* become aware of reality; *taṁ:* that person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmanaṁ brūmi:* described as the brāhmaṇa

He has got rid of the strap of ill-will. He has freed himself from the thong of craving. He has escaped the large shackle breaking all its links. These are the false views that curb the people. He has taken off the cross-bar of ignorance. He has become aware of the four noble truths. That person, I describe as a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

In this verse the seeker after truth is compared to a person who tends an oxen and a cart.

nandhiṁ: strap in the cart analogy. In the quest for spiritual liberation it is that which ties and binds a person.

varattaṁ: thong in the analogy of the cart and oxen. It is craving in the spiritual quest as it entraps.

sandāmaṁ sahanukkamaṁ: In the analogy of the cart and oxen, these expressions refer to cord together with the bridle. In the spiritual quest, these represent the sixty-two wrong views.

Buddha's attitude to what He hears: This verse, and many others, came to be spoken with regard to events the Buddha was informed. In the Buddha's method of communication He makes use of any event of incident that is likely to profit the listeners.

One day, as the Buddha entered Sāvatthi for alms, He saw some children catching fish and killing them in a dried up reservoir, not far from the Jētavana Monastery. The Buddha went up to the children and asked, "Children, Do you fear suffering, and do you dislike suffering?" "Yes, Venerable, we fear suffering, and we dislike suffering," said the children. The Buddha said, "If you fear and dislike suffering, do not do any evil act, whether in the open or in secrecy. If you do an evil act now, or in the future, you will have no escape from suffering, even if you try to run away from it."

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Unaffected he bears up abuse and beating, backed by patience, him I call a true brahmin.

399. *Akkōsaṁ vadhabandhaṁ ca*
aduṭṭhō yō titikkhati
khantībalaṁ balānīkaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:17)

Who angerless endures abuse,
beating and imprisonment,
with patience's power, an armed might:
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO IS PATIENT

26 (16) The Story of the Patient Subduing the Insolent (Verse 399)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to Akkōsa Bhāradvāja.

For Akkōsa Bhāradvāja had a brother named Bhāradvāja, and a wife named Dhananjānī who had attained the fruit of conversion. Whenever she sneezed or coughed or stumbled, she would breathe forth the solemn utterance, "Praise be to Him that is highly exalted, all-worthy, supremely enlightened!" One day, while distribution of food to Brāhmans was in progress, she stumbled, and immediately breathed forth that solemn utterance as usual with a loud voice.

The Brāhman was greatly angered and said to himself, "No matter where it may be, whenever this vile woman stumbles, she utters the praise of this shovelling monkling in this fashion." And he said to her, "Now, vile woman, I will go and worst that Teacher of yours in an argument." His wife replied, "By all means go, Brāhman; I have never seen the man who could worst the Buddha in an argument. Nevertheless, go ask the Buddha a question." The Brāhman went to the Buddha and, without even saluting him, stood on one side and asked Him a question, pronouncing the following Stanza,

> What must one destroy to live at ease? What must one destroy no more to sorrow?
> Of what single condition do you recommend the destruction, Gōtama?

In answer, the Buddha pronounced the following Stanza,

> Let a man destroy anger, and he will live at ease; let him destroy anger, and he will no more sorrow.
> Poisonous is the root of anger, and sweet is the top, brāhman.
> Therefore the noble applaud the destruction of anger,
> for when this is destroyed, there is no more sorrow.

The brāhman believed in the Buddha, retired from the world, and attained arahatship.

Now his younger brother, who was called Akkōsa Bhāradvāja, heard the report, "Your brother has retired from the world," and greatly angered thereat, went and abused the Buddha with wicked, ugly words. But the Buddha subdued him too by employing the illustration of the hard food given to strangers, and he too believed in the Buddha, retired from the world, and attained arahatship. Likewise Akkōsa Bhāradvāja's two younger brothers, Sundarī Bhāradvāja and Bilaṇgika Bhāradvāja, abused the Buddha, but the Buddha subdued them, and they too retired from the world and attained arahatship.

One day in the hall of truth the monks began the following discussion: "How wonderful are the virtues of the Buddhas! Although these four brothers abused the Buddha, the Buddha, without so much as saying a word, became their refuge." At that moment the Buddha drew near. "Monks," said He, "what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" "Such and such," replied the monks. Then said the Buddha, "Monks, because I possess the power of patience, because I am without sin among the sinful, therefore am I of a truth the refuge of the multitude."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 399)

yō akkōsaṁ vadhabandhaṁ ca aduṭṭhō titikkhati
khantībalaṁ balāṇīkaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō: if some person; *akkōsaṁ:* abuse; *vadhabandhaṁ ca:* torture, imprisonment; *aduṭṭhō titikkhati:* endures without losing one's temper; *khantībalaṁ:* (who) has patience as his power; *balāṇīkaṁ:* and his army; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a brāhmin; *brūmi:* call

He is abused and insulted. He is tortured, imprisoned and bound up. But he endures all these without being provoked or without losing his temper. Such an individual who has patience as his power and his army I describe as a true brāhmaṇō.

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Angerless, virtuous and dutiful, who's now in his last birth, him I call a true brahmin.

400. *Akkōdhanaṁ vatavantaṁ*
sīlavantaṁ anussutaṁ
dantaṁ antimasārīraṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:18)

Who's angerless and dutiful,
of virtue full and free of lust,
who's tamed, to final body come,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO IS NOT WRATHFUL

26 (17) The Story of Sāriputta being Reviled by His Mother (Verse 400)

At that time, so the story goes, the Venerable Sāriputta, accompanied by five hundred monks, while making his round for alms in the village of Nālaka, came to the door of his mother's house. His mother provided him with a seat, and as she served him with food, abused him roundly, saying, "Ho, eater of leavings! Failing to get leavings of sour rice-gruel, you therefore go from house to house among strangers, licking off the back of a ladle such sour rice-gruel as clings to it! And for this you renounced eighty billion of wealth and became a monk! You have ruined me! Eat now!" Likewise when she gave food to the monks, she said, "So you are the men who have made my son your own page-boy! Eat now!" The Venerable took the food and returned to the monastery.

Venerable Rāhula invited the Buddha to eat. Said the Buddha, "Rāhula, where did you go?" "To the village where my grandmother lives, Venerable." "And what did your grandmother say to your preceptor?" "Venerable, my grandmother abused my preceptor roundly." "What did she say?" "This and that, Venerable." "And what reply did your preceptor make?" "He made no reply, Venerable."

When the monks heard this, they began to talk about it in the hall of truth. Said they, "Brethren, how wonderful are the qualities of the Venerable Sāriputta! Even when his mother abused him in this fashion, he never got a bit angry." The Buddha drew near and asked the monks, "Monks, what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" "Such and such." Then said the Buddha, "Monks, they that have rid themselves of the evil passions are free from anger."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 400)

akkōdhanaṁ vatavantaṁ sīlavantaṁ anussutaṁ dantaṁ antimasārīraṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

akkōdhanaṁ: free of anger; *vatavantaṁ:* mindful of his duties and observances; *sīlavantaṁ:* disciplined in terms of virtuous behaviour; *anussutaṁ:* with no craving flowing out; *dantaṁ:* restrained; *antimasārīraṁ:* inhabiting the final body; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmanaṁ:* a brāhmin; *brūmi:* call

He is free of anger. He carefully performs his religious duties and is mindful of the observances. He is disciplined in terms of virtuous behaviour. He is restrained. This is the final body he will occupy as he has ended his cycle of births. I call that person a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

The story of Sāriputta: A name that inspires many in the Buddhist World is Sāriputta. Sāriputta was the foremost of the two chief disciples of the Blessed One. If Ānanda, the constant attendant on the Buddha, is called the Treasurer of the Dhamma, as he was well known for retentiveness of memory, so Sāriputta is known as the Commander-in-Chief of the Dhamma. In teaching and for wisdom he was second only to the Buddha.

Often he was prevailed upon to preach whenever the Blessed One required rest. Once, a brāhmin gave him a severe blow to test his capacity for patience. He was unmoved. Then the brāhmin asked for forgiveness which was readily given. Thereafter the brāhmin wished him to partake the midday meal, which offer was also readily accepted. Could such conduct be equalled save by the Blessed One Himself? His attitude to a seven-year-old sāmanēra is most touching. It speaks volumes for his modesty. Once he was going about with a corner of his under-garment trailing contrary to Vinaya rules. The sāmanēra pointed this out to him. He promptly thanked him in salutation and put the matter right. He had a special regard for Rāhula and his mother Rāhulamātā. When the latter was suffering from flatulence, he was responsible for getting a particular mango juice to serve as a medicine. When she was suffering from some stomach ailment he obtained from king Pasēnadi some rice mixed with ghee and flavoured with red fish to serve as a cure.

When Anāthapiṇḍika the treasurer lay dying he visited him with Ānanda and preached to him the sermon called *Anāthapiṇḍikōvāda Sutta.*

He was named after his mother Sāri the Brahamin lady. It was written that the two Chief Disciples should predecease the Buddha. Following custom Sāriputta went to his mother's residence at Nālagāmaka (Nalanda) after paying obeisance to the Buddha. It was on this occasion he is said to have remarked that his mortal eyes would never behold the august feet of his Master again. Saṁsāric existence was over. At the sick bed, his brother Cunda Samanuddesa attended on him.

It was on this last visit that the conversion of his diehard Hindu mother took place when the four guardian deities of the dēva realm, Sakka and Mahā Brahma each in turn, flooding the place with increasing brilliance of light, visited him on his sick bed.

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Not smeared with sensuality like water on a lotus leaf . . . him I call a true brahmin.

401. *Vāri pokkharapattē'va*
āraggēr'iva sāsapō
yō na lippati kāmēsu
taṁahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:19)

Like water on a lotus leaf,
or mustard seed on needle point,
whoso clings not to sensual things,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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HE IS A BRĀHMAṆA WHO CLINGS NOT TO SENSUAL PLEASURES

26 (18) The Story of Nun Uppalavaṇṇā (Verse 401)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to the nun Uppalavaṇṇā. The story has been related at length in the Commentary on the Stanza beginning with the words, 'As sweet as honey thinks a fool an evil deed.' For it is there said:

Some time later, the throng in the hall of truth began the following discussion: "To be sure those that have rid themselves of the Depravities gratify their passions. Why should they not? For they are not Kōlapa-trees or ant-hills, but are living creatures with bodies of moist flesh. Therefore they also like the pleasures of love." At that moment the Buddha drew near. "Monks," He inquired, "what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" "Such and such," was the reply. Said the Buddha, "No, monks, they that have rid themselves of the depravities neither like the pleasures of love nor gratify their passions. For even as a drop of water which has fallen upon a lotus-leaf does not cling thereto or remain thereon, but rolls over and falls off, even as a grain of mustard-seed does not cling to the point of a needle or remain thereon, but rolls over and falls off, precisely so two-fold love clings not to the heart of one that has rid himself of the depravities or remain there." And joining the connection, He preached the Dhamma with a stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 401)

pokkharapattē vāri iva āraggē sāsapō iva sō
kāmēsu na limpati taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

pokkharapattē: on the lotus leaf; *vāri iva:* like the water; *āraggē:* on the tip of a needle; *sāsapō iva:* like a mustard seed; *sō:* if someone; *kāmēsu:* in sensual pleasures; *na limpati:* is not attached; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* call a brāhmaṇa

The water does not get attached to the surface of the lotus leaf. The mustard seed does not get attached to the point of a needle. In the same way, the wise one's mind does not get attached to sensual pleasures. Such a non-attached person I describe as the true brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

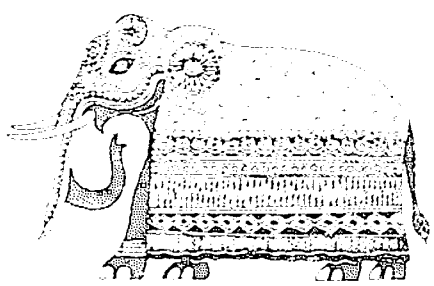
Story of Nun Uppalavaṇṇā: Uppalavaṇṇā was born in a wealthy family and was named after the lotus flower — Uppala-Vaṇṇā. When she came of age, proposals for marriage came from all quarters and the harassed father did not wish to offend any suitor by a refusal. To the father, ordination in the noble Sangha was the only solution.

The daughter, true to her destiny, agreed. Upon being ordained she was kept in charge of the convocation room where the nuns assembled for the confession of lapses. She had to tend the lamps. She observed that the light was sustained by the wick and the oil. Sometimes, the light goes out by going short of either or by a gust of wind. So life was due to kammic force. This kept her thinking till she became an arahat. She remembered her former past lives.

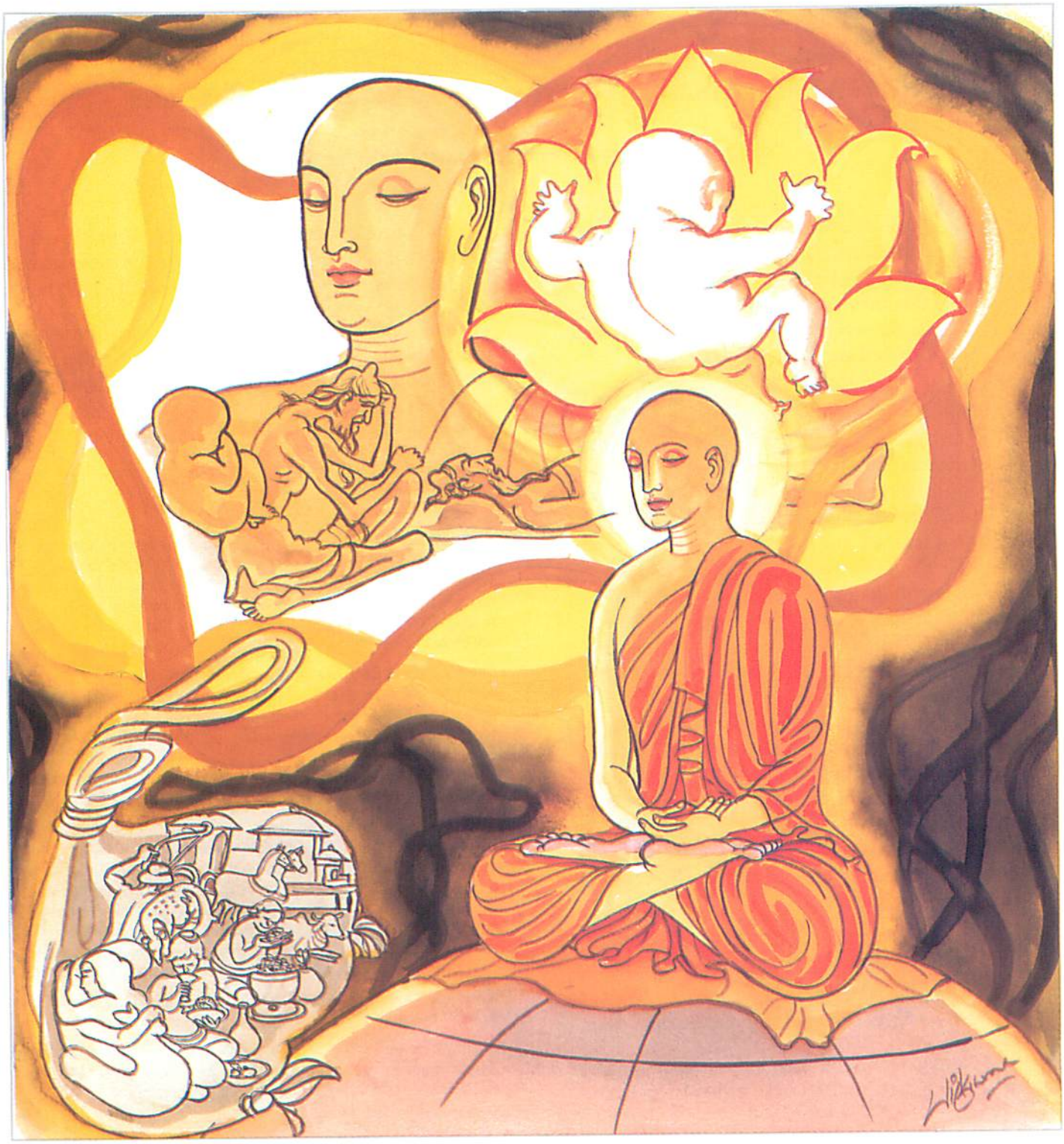
It was while living alone in a forest, a young shepherd named Nanda, a kinsman of hers, got infatuated with her and committed a sexual offence as soon as she returned from a round of alms. Coming from the noon day glare to the dark cave where her abode was, she could not see and hence, she was taken by surprise despite her protests. He committed the dire deed and was immediately born in the hell *(niraya)* when the earth yawned and swallowed the foolish young man. He was, however, dead before the yawning of the earth.

It was after this incident the Blessed One prohibited the female disciples of the noble Sangha to live in isolation in the forest.

Not long afterwards, the Buddha, addressing the monks, declared Uppala Vaṇṇā Mahā Thēri was foremost for psychic power as Venerable Mahā Mogallana was among the Mahā arahats.



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He who here itself sees the end of one's suffering, disburdened...him I call a true brahmin.

402. *yō dukkhassa pajānāti*
idh'ēva khayamattanō,
pannabhāraṁ visaṁyuttaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:20)

Whoso in this world comes to know
cessation of all sorrow,
laid down the burden, freed from bonds,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO HAS LAID THE BURDEN ASIDE

26 (19) The Story of a Slave who Laid Down His Burden (Verse 402)

The story goes that at a time previous to the promulgation of the precept forbidding the admission of run-away slaves to the Sangha, a certain slave of this Brāhman ran away, was admitted to the Sangha, and attained arahatship. The brāhman searched everywhere, but failed to find his slave. One day, as the former slave was entering the city with the Buddha, the brāhman saw him in the gateway, and took firm hold of his robe. The Buddha turned around and asked, "What do you mean by this, brāhman?" "This is my slave, Sir Gōtama." "His burden has fallen from him, Brāhman." When the Buddha said, "His burden has fallen from him," the Brāhman understood at once that his meaning was, "He is an arahat." Therefore, he addressed the Buddha again, saying, "Is that so, Sir Gōtama?" "Yes, Brāhman," replied the Buddha, "his burden has fallen from him."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 402)

yō idha ēva attanō dukkhassa khayam pajānāti pannabhāraṁ visaṁyuttaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō: if some one; *idha ēva:* in this life itself; *attanō:* one's; *dukkhassa khayam:* the end of suffering; *pajānāti:* knows fully; *pannabhāraṁ:* unburdened; *visaṁyuttaṁ:* (and is) freed from defilements; *taṁ:* that person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a true brāhmaṇa *brūmi:* declare

He has become aware, in this world itself, the ending of suffering. He is unburdened: he has put down the load. He has got disengaged from the bonds that held him. I call that kind of person a true brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

This verse refers to an instance of Buddha extending His assistance in a run-away slave who later became an arahat. Buddha has provided support to several slaves both men and women, who, through his Enlightened guidance, reached Nibbāna. One of them is Puṇṇa. Puṇṇa was a servant girl employed in the house of a millionaire of Rājagaha. One night after pounding paddy, she got out into the yard, and saw several monks out at night. Next morning, she prepared a rice cake, baked it, and took it with her to eat on her way to the well.

That day, the Buddha, on His round for alms, came to the same road, and saw Puṇṇa with a pot in her hand. She offered the Buddha her rice cake which the Buddha readily accepted. She was wondering whether the Buddha would throw it away and take His meal in a palace or a millionaire's house. But the Buddha sat there itself by the roadside on a mat laid by the Venerable Ānanda, and partook of the rice cake for His breakfast.

The Buddha explained to her that the monks were awake at night on their religious duties, and preached to her the doctrine. At the end of the preaching, Puṇṇa realized the fruit of sōtāpatti.

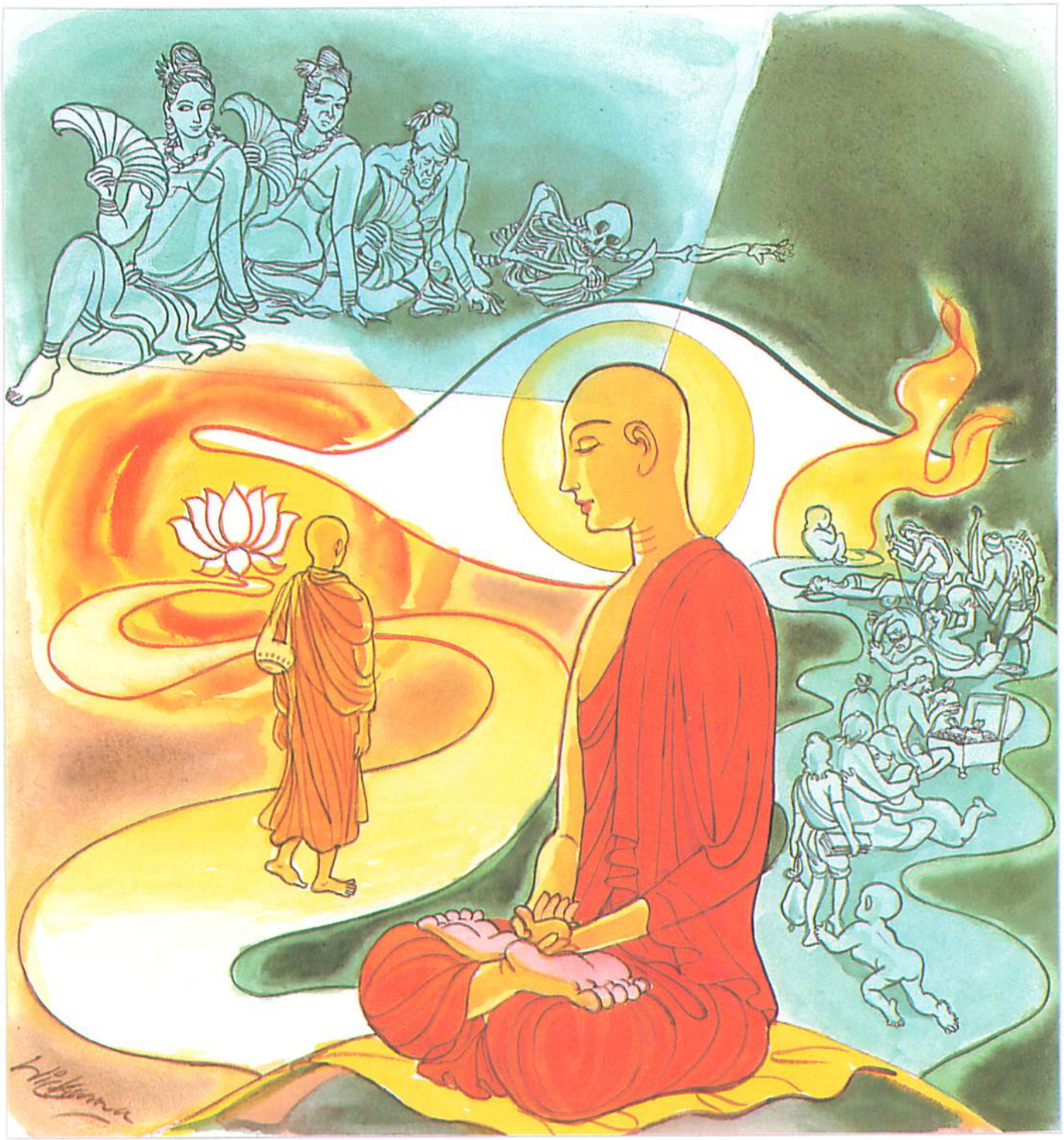
Another servant who became an arahat through Buddha's guidance was Rajjumālā, who was employed in a house in the village of Gayā, where she was subject to constant harassing and humiliation by her mistress. The mistress used to pull her by her hair and beat her. In order to escape such beating, she shaved off her hair, but the mistress tied a rope round her head and pulled her about. She came to be called Rajjumālā (one who has a rope as a garland) as she had a rope round her head.

Being fed up with this life under her mistress, Rajjumālā left the house as if she were going to bring water, but went to the forest and tried to hang herself. However, the Buddha, who saw her potentiality to realize the fruit of sōtāpatti, arrived at the spot, and preached to her. She realized the fruit of sōtāpatti, and went home, where she related the story of her meeting the Buddha.

The mistress, with her father-in-law, came and met the Buddha, and conducted Him to their house, and offered alms. The Buddha preached to them and said how Rajjumālā in a previous birth used to ill-treat her present mistress of the house. Rajjumālā was freed and adopted as a daughter by the father-in-law of her mistress. After her death, she was born in the Tāvatiṁsa heaven.



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Man of sound judgement who's reached his highest goal . . . him I call a true brahmin.

403. *Gambhīrapaññaṁ mēdhāviṁ*
maggāmaggassa kōvidaṁ
uttama'tthaṁ anuppattaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:21)

Whose knowledge is deep, who's wise.
who's skilled in ways right and wrong,
having attained the highest aim,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO HAS REACHED HIS ULTIMATE GOAL

26 (20) Khēmā the Wise (Verse 403)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence on Mount Vulture Peak with reference to the nun Khēmā.

For one day, immediately after the first watch, Sakka king of gods came with his retinue of deities, sat down, and listened to the Buddha as he discoursed in his usual pleasant manner on the Dhamma. At that moment the nun Khēmā said to herself, "I will go see the Buddha," and drew near to the presence of the Buddha. But when she saw Sakka, she saluted the Buddha, poised in the air as she was, turned around, and departed. Sakka saw her and asked the Buddha, "Who was that, Venerable, that drew near to your presence, and then, poised in the air as she was, saluted you and turned around and departed?" The Buddha replied, "That, great king, was my daughter Khēmā, possessed of great wisdom, knowing well what is the path and what is not the path."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 403)

gambhīrapaññaṁ mēdhāviṁ maggāmaggaṁ
kōvidaṁ uttamatthaṁ anuppattaṁ taṁ ahaṁ
brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

gambhīrapaññaṁ: of deep wisdom; *mēdhāviṁ:* full of insight; *maggāmaggaṁ:* discriminating the right and the wrong paths; *kōvidaṁ:* capable of; *uttamatthaṁ:* highest state; *anuppattaṁ:* (who has) reached; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a brāhmana; *brūmi:* declare

He possesses profound wisdom. He is full of insight. He is capable of discriminating the right path from the wrong path. He has reached the highest state. I call that person a true brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

The story of Khēmā: Khēmā was born in a princely family at Sāgala by the name of Khēmā. The colour of her complexion was that of gold. She was beautiful. She married King Bimbisāra of Kōsala. She was reluctant however, to visit the Buddha for fear that the Blessed One would moralise on the fleeting nature of beauty.

Evereytime she visited the temple she dodged meeting the Buddha. One day the king got his men to take her willy-nilly to the Buddha. On her arrival, the Buddha created a phantom of unsurpassing beauty to attend on Him. Khēmā was struck by her beauty. While she was thus engaged she felt that beauty could only beguile. The Buddha made the figure to go through youth middle age, old age and thereafter to extreme old age devoid of everything worthwhile. Beauty thus gave way to hideousness. It was a graphic picture. Khēmā understood the meaning and felt what was in store for her. *Anicca, dukkha* and *anatta* in other words transiency, sorrow and without any lasting entity called a soul.

To a mind thus prepared the Buddha preached. The seeds fell on good ground. She entered the stream of sainthood *(sōtāpanna)*. The Buddha illustrated. His sermon by bringing before her mind the lesson of the spider and the web. As soon as a fly strikes a web, the spider by the motion thus generated takes it as a signal and attacks by devouring the fly. This goes on. The spider became wedded to the web. So were the human beings wedded to passion and lust. Her mind saw all. She became an arahat. She asked permission from the king for her ordination. The king, himself a budding saint, readily consented. One day god Māra in the guise of a young man tempted Khēmā. The man met with a rebuff. His discomfiture was complete. He took to flight. One night Khēmā thought of visiting the Buddha. But the Buddha was with Sakka, king of the deities. Rather than disturb the Buddha, Khēmā wheeled round in the air and disappeared.

Sakka on seeing the vision was soon enlightened of the matter by the Buddha. The Buddha, addressing the monks and the laity, declared Khēmā was, among the female disciples, the most eminent for wisdom.

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Abstemious wanderer who keeps away both from monk and layman, him I call a true brahmin.

404. *Asaṁsaṭṭhaṁ gahaṭṭhēhi*
anāgārēhi cū'bhayaṁ
anōkasāriṁ appicchaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:22)

Aloof alike from laity
and those gone forth to homelessness,
who wanders with no home or wish,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO HAS NO INTIMACY WITH ANY

26 (21) The Story of The Monk and the Goddess (Verse 404)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to Venerable Tissa who dwelt in a mountain cave — *Pabbhāravāsī* Tissa Thēra.

Monk Tissa, after taking a subject of meditation, went to a mountain side. There, he found a cave which suited him and he spent the three months of the rainy season in that cave. He went to the village for almsfood every morning. In the village, there was a certain elderly woman who regularly offered him almsfood. In the cave there also lived a guardian spirit. As Tissa was one whose practice of morality was pure, she found it difficult to remain in the same cave as he was a noble monk. At the same time, she did not have the courage to ask him to leave the place. So she thought of a plan that would enable her to find fault with the monk and thus cause him to leave the cave.

The spirit decided to possess the youngest son of the woman to whose house Tissa usually went for his almsfood. She caused the boy to behave in a peculiar way, turning his head backwards, and rolling his wide open eyes. When the woman saw what had happened, she screamed and the spirit said, "I have possessed your son. Let your monk wash his feet with water and sprinkle that water on the head of your son. Only then will I release your son." The next day, when the monk came to her house for almsfood, she did what was demanded by the spirit and the boy was left in peace. The spirit went back to the cave and waited at the entrance for the monk. When Tissa returned, she revealed herself and said, "I am the spirit guarding this cave, O' you exorcist, don't enter this cave." The monk knew that he had lived a virtuous life from the day he had become a monk, so he replied that he had not broken the precept of abstaining from practicing exorcism or witchcraft. Then she accused Tissa of having treated the young boy possessed by a spirit at the house of the elderly woman. But the monk reflected that he had not practiced exorcism and realised that even the spirit could find no fault with him. That gave him a delightful satisfaction and happiness; he attained arahathood while standing at the entrance to the cave.

Since Tissa had now become an arahat, he told the spirit that she had wrongly accused a monk like him whose virtue was pure and spotless and also advised her not to cause further disturbances. Tissa continued to stay in the cave till the end of the *vassa*, and then he returned to the Jētavana Monastery. When he told the other monks about his encounter with the spirit, they asked him whether he had been angry with the spirit when he was forbidden to enter the cave. He answered in the negative. The other monks asked the Buddha, "Venerable Tissa claims he has no more anger. Is it true?" The Buddha replied, "Monks, Tissa is speaking the truth. He has indeed become an arahat; he is no longer attached to anyone; he has no reason to get angry with anyone."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 404)

gahaṭṭhēhi anāgārēhi ca ūbhayaṁ asaṁsaṭṭhaṁ ānōkasāriṁ appicchaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmanaṁ brūmi

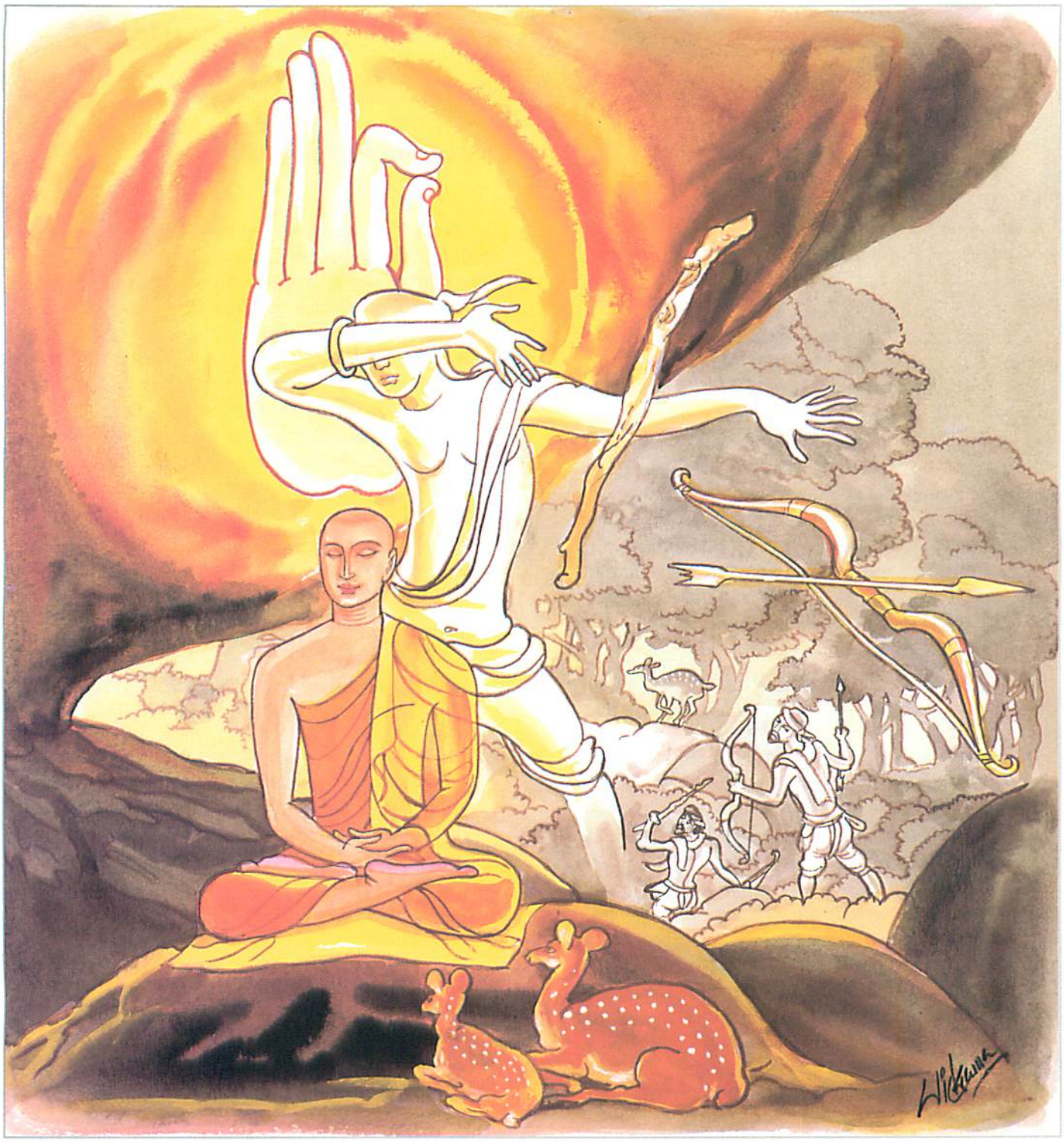
gahaṭṭhēhi: with laymen; *anāgārēhi:* with those who have renounced the world; *ca ūbhayaṁ:* with both these groups of people; *asaṁsaṭṭhaṁ:* establishing no contact; *ānōkasāriṁ:* not given to ways of craving; *appicchaṁ:* contented with little; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmanaṁ brūmi:* call a brāhamana

He does not establish extensive contact either with laymen or with the homeless. He is not attached to the way of life of the householder. He is contented with the bare minimum of needs. I call that kind of person a true brāhmana.

Commentary

In Buddhist literature there are numerous references to encounters between Buddhist monks and spirits of the forest and the wilderness. Forests and mountains were sought after by monks who followed the path of meditation to achieve liberation. In some of these encounters spirits are recorded to have been quite hostile. The discourse entitled *Karanīya Metta Sutta*. The chant of loving-compassion was created by the Buddha as a means of bringing about rapport and harmony between men and spirits.

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Shunning the rod he neither harasses nor kills. Him I call a brahmin true.

405. *Nidhāya daṇḍaṁ bhūtēsu*
tasēsu ṭhāvarēsu ca
yō na hanti na ghātēti
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:23)

Who blows to beings has renounced
to trembling ones, to bold,
who causes not to kill nor kills,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO IS ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS

26 (22) The Story of the Monk and the Woman (Verse 405)

This verse was spoken by Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to a certain monk.

It appears that this monk, upon receiving a meditation topic from the Buddha, retired to the forest, applied himself diligently to the practice of meditation, and attained arahatship. Thereupon he said to himself, "I will inform the Buddha of the great blessing which I have received," and set out from the forest. Now a woman living in a certain village through which he passed, had just had a quarrel with her husband, and as soon as her husband was out of the house, said to herself, "I will return to the house of my family." So saying, she set out on the road. As she went along the road, she saw the Venerable. "I'll keep not far from this Venerable," thought she, and followed close behind him. The Venerable never looked at her at all.

When her husband returned home and saw his wife nowhere about the house, he concluded to himself, "She must have gone to the village where her family lives," and followed after her. When he saw her, he thought to himself, "It cannot be that this woman would enter this forest all by herself; in whose company is she going? " All of a sudden he saw the Venerable. Thought he, "This monk must have taken her away with him," and went up to the monk and threatened him. Said the woman, "This good monk never so much as looked at me or spoke to me; do not say anything to him." Her husband replied, "Do you mean to tell me that you took yourself off in this fashion? I will treat him as you alone deserve to be treated." And in a burst of rage, out of hatred for the woman, he beat the Venerable soundly, and having so done, took the woman with him and returned home.

The Venerable's whole body was covered with weals. After his return to the monastery the monks who rubbed his body noticed the weals and asked him, "What does this mean?" He told them the whole story. Then the monks asked him, "Brother, but when this fellow struck you thus, what did you say? or did you get angry?" "No, brethren, I did not get angry." Thereupon the monks went to the Buddha and reported the matter to Him, saying, "Venerable, when we asked this monk, 'Did you get angry?' he replied, 'No, brethren, I did not get angry.' He does not speak the truth, he utters falsehood." The Buddha listened to what they had to say and then replied, "Monks, they that have rid themselves of the evil passions have laid aside the rod; even for those that strike them, they cherish no anger."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 405)

yō tasēsu thāvarēsu ca bhūtēsu daṇḍaṁ nidhāya
na hanti na ghātēti taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō: if some one; *tasēsu:* that become frightened; *thāvarēsu:* that are stubborn and unfrightened; *ca:* or; *bhūtēsu:* beings; *daṇḍaṁ:* the rod; *nidhāya:* having set aside; *na hanti:* does not hurt; *na ghātēti:* or does not get anyone else to hurt or to kill; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ:* a true brāhmin; *brūmi:* I call

He has discarded the rod and set aside weapons. He does not hurt neither the frightened, timid beings, nor stubborn, fearless beings. I call that person a brāhmana.

Commentary

tasēsu: Those who tremble in fear and those who are in trepidation due to fright brought about by craving.

thāvarēsu: Those who are firm, stable and unshaken, since they have given up craving.

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Free from hostility, violence and passionate grasping one emerges a true brahmin.

406. *Aviruddhaṁ viruddhēsu*
attadaṇḍēsu nibbutaṁ
sādānēsu anādānaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:24)

Among the hostile, friendly,
among the violent, cool,
detached amidst the passionate,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO IS FRIENDLY AMONGST THE HOSTILE

26 (23) The Story of The Four Novices (Verse 406)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to four novices. The story goes that the wife of a certain brāhmin prepared food for four specially designated monks, and said to the brāhmin her husband, "Go to the monastery, pick out four old brāhmins, and bring them here." The brāhmin went to the monastery and brought four seven-year-old novices who had attained arahatship, Saṁkicca, Paṇḍita, Sōpāka, and Rēvata. The brāhmin's wife had expensive seats prepared and stood waiting. At sight of the novices, she weas filled with rage, and sputtering as when salt is dropped on a brazier, she said to her husband, "You have gone to the monastery and brought back with you four youngsters not old enough to be your grandsons." She refused to let them sit on the seats which she had prepared, but spreading some low seats for them, said to them, "Sit here!" Then she said to her husband, "Brāhman, go look out some old brāhmins and bring them here." The brāhmin went to the monastery, and seeing Venerable Sāriputta, took him back home with him. When the Venerable reached the house and saw the novices, he asked, "Have these brāhmins received food?" "No, they have received no food." Knowing that food had been prepared for just four persons, he said, "Bring me my bowl," and taking his bowl, departed. Said the brāhmin's wife, "It must be that he did not wish to eat; go quickly, look out another brāhmin and bring him here." The brāhmin went back to the monastery and brought Venerable Mahā Moggallānaback home with him. When Venerable Moggallāna the Great saw the novices, he said the same thing as had Venerable Sāriputta, and taking his bowl, departed. Then said the brāhmin's wife to her husband, "These Venerables do not wish to eat; go to the brāhmin's pale and bring back with you a single old brāhmin." Sakka, disguising himself as an old brāhmin, worn out by old age, he went to the brāhmin's pale and sat down in the most conspicuous seat of the brāhmins. When the brāhmin saw him, he thought to himself, "Now my wife will be delighted," and saying, "Come, let us go home," he took him and went back home with him. When the brāhmin's wife saw him, her heart was filled with delight. She took the rugs and mats which were spread over two seats, spread them over one, and said to him, "Noble Sir, sit here." When Sakka entered the house, he saluted the four novices with the five rests, and finding a place for himself at the edge of the seats where the novices were sitting, sat down cross-legged on the ground. When the brāhmin's wife saw him, she said to the brāhmin, "To be sure you have brought a brāhmin, you have brought back with you one old enough to be your father. He is going about saluting novices young enough to be his grandsons. What use have we for him? Put him out!" The brāhmin seized him first by the shoulder, then by the arm, finally by the waist, and tried his best to drag him out, but he refused to stir from where he sat. Then the brāhmin's wife said to her husband, "Come, brāhmin, you take hold of one arm and I will take hold of the other." So the brāhmin and his wife both took hold of his two arms, belabored him about the back, and dragged him through the door out of the house. Nevertheless, Sakka remained sitting in the same place in which he had sat before, waving his hands back and forth. When the brāhmin and his wife returned and saw him sitting in the very same place in which he had sat before, they screamed screams of terror and let him go. At that moment, Sakka made known his identity. Then the brāhmin and his wife gave food to their guests. When those five persons had received food, they departed. One of the novices broke through the circular peak of the house, the second broke through the front part of the roof, the third broke through the back part of the roof, the four plunged into the earth, while Sakka departed from the house by another route. Thus did those five persons depart from the house by five different routes. From that time on, so it is said, that house was known as the house with the five openings. When the novices returned to the monastery, the monks asked them, "What was it like?" "Pray don't ask us," replied the novices. "But were you not angry with them for what they did?" "No, we were not angry." When the monks heard their reply, they reported the matter to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable, when these monks say, 'We were not angry,' they say what is not true, they utter falsehood." Said the Buddha, "Monks, they that have rid themselves of the evil passions oppose not them by whom they are opposed."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 406)

viruddhēsu aviruddhaṁ attadaṇḍēsu nibbutaṁ sādānēsu anādānaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

viruddhēsu: among those who are hostile; *aviruddhaṁ:* not hostile; *attadaṇḍēsu:* among those bearing arms; *nibbutaṁ:* peaceful; *sādānēsu:* among the selfish; *anādānaṁ:* selfless; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brahmaṇaṁ brūmi:* call a brāhmana

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Lust, hate and pride totally felled, like a mustard off a needle. Him I call a brahmin true.

407. *Yassa rāgō ca dōsō ca*
mānō makkhō ca pātitō
sāsapōr'iva āraggā
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:25)

From whomever lust and hate,
conceit, contempt have dropped away,
as mustard seed from a needle point,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO HAS DISCARDED ALL PASSIONS

26 (24) The Story of Venerable Mahā Panthaka (Verse 407)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha while He was in residence at Vēluvana Monastery with reference to Venerable Mahā Panthaka.

When Culla Panthaka was unable to learn by heart a single stanza in three months, Mahā Panthaka expelled him from the monastery and closed the door, saying to him, "You lack the capacity to receive religious instruction, and you have also fallen away from the enjoyments of the life of a householder. Why should you continue to live here any longer? Depart hence." The monks began a discussion of the incident, saying, "Venerable Mahā Panthaka did this and that. Doubtless anger springs up sometimes even within those who have rid themselves of the Depravities." At that moment the Buddha drew near and asked them, "Monks, what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" When the monks told him the subject of their conversation, he said, "No, monks, those who have rid themselves of the depravities have not the contaminations, lust, hatred, and delusion. What my son did he did because he put the Dhamma, and the spirit of the Dhamma, before all things else."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 407)

yassa rāgō ca dōsō ca mānō makkhō ca āraggā
sāsapōr'iva pātitō taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yassa: by some one; *rāgō ca:* lust; *dōsō ca:* ill-will; *mānō:* pride; *makkhō ca:* (and) ingratitude; *āraggā:* from the point of a needle; *sāsapō iva:* like a seed of mustard; *pātitō:* slipped; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmana

His mind just does not accept such evils as lust, ill-will, pride and ingratitude. In this, his mind is like the point of a needle that just does not grasp a mustard seed. An individual endowed with such a mind I describe as a brāhmana.

Commentary

The story of the two brother monks: Mahā Panthaka (Big Road) and Culla Panthaka (Small Road). Cullapanthaka was associated with his elder brother who is called Mahā Panthaka. As both were born on the road they were called Panthaka. Culla Panthaka was distinguished from all the mahā arahats by the power to form any number of corporeal figures by the psychic power and also by his ability to practice mystic meditation in the world of form.

They were the offspring of a daughter of a treasurer entering into a clandestine marriage with a servant of her father's household. This explains the birth of the first child while the expectant mother was on the way to meet her parents with her paramour. They both returned home as the child was born on the road. This was repeated in the case of the second child too. The elder child desired to enter the noble Sangha. He got the younger brother to follow him. But the younger brother paid no heed to reciting. Venerable brother though a mahā arahat having to play the teacher to his younger brother nearly ended badly. Culla Panthaka was asked to memorise a verse of four lines but he was unable to do so for four months with the result the elder brother felt that he was of no use to the dispensation. Culla Panthaka was asked to quit.

So crestfallen Culla Panthaka was sobbing in a corner of the temple. His grief was all the more when his elder brother made preparations to attend an almsgiving of Jīvaka the physician to many monks, with Buddha at the head, less one meaning himself, on the following day.

The Buddha came to his rescue. He gave him a piece of linen of spotless white and asked him to stroke it facing the sun saying that nothing is so clean that doesn't turn impure. The words were Rajōharanam.

In due course, perspiration from the palm of his hand made the cloth exceedingly dirty. The universality of change *(anicca)* which is the key note of the doctrine of Buddhism was grasped. So Chulla Panthaka became an arahat.

At the same time, the latent power was manifested. He got the psychic power to create any number of corporeal figures which was soon put to a practical test. The almsgiving, came to pass. Buddha promptly put His hand over the bowl, when food was offered. The reason was Culla Panthaka, who was left out, must participate. So an attendant was sent to the temple, that was close by, to fetch him. He was amazed to see in the temple over a thousand monks all looking alike. So it was duly reported to Jīvaka who redirected him to say that Culla Panthaka was expected. On the second visit the wonder grew. For as soon as the name of Culla Panthaka was mentioned all the monks began saying "I am Chulla Panthaka". In the meanwhile the alms-giving was held up by the rapidly developing situation. So the attendant was asked by Jīvaka as directed by the Buddha to go again and this time to catch hold of the robe of the first monk nearest to him saying that the Buddha wants Culla Panthaka. When this was done,the temple appeared deserted except for the monk whose robe he was holding. So the younger brother took his due place in the almsgiving. It is to him that the Blessed One turned to tender merit by a short sermon called *puññānumodanā* in Pāli. Afterwards a discussion ensured among the monks about the feat of the Buddha.

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Polite, instructive and honest in speech, he offends none. Him I call a brahmin true.

408. *Akakkasaṁ viññāpaṇiṁ*
giraṁ saccaṁ udīrayē
yāya nā'bhisajē kañci
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:26)

Who utters speech instructive,
true and gentle too,
who gives offence to none,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO GIVES OFFENCE TO NONE

26 (25) The Story of Venerable Piliṇdavaccha (Verse 408)

This verse was recited by the Buddha while he was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to Venerable Pilindavaccha.

It seems that this elder monk was in the habit of accosting both laymen and monks with the epithet commonly applied only to outcasts. "Come, vile fellow! Go, vile fellow," he would say to everyone he met. One day several monks complained about his conduct to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable Piliṇdavaccha accosts the monks with an epithet applicable only to outcasts." The Buddha caused him to be summoned before him. "Is the charge true, Vaccha," said the Buddha, "that you accost the monks with an epithet applicable only to outcasts?" "Yes, Venerable," replied Piliṇdavaccha, "the charge is true."

The Buddha called before his mind the previous abodes of that elder monk and said, "Monks, be not offended with the Venerable Vaccha. Monks, it is not because Venerable Vaccha entertains feelings of hatred within him, that he accosts his brother monks with an epithet applicable only to outcasts. The fact is, the Venerable Vaccha has passed through five hundred states of existence, and in everyone of these states of existence he was reborn in the family of a brāhmin. The use of this epithet has been habitual with him for such a long time that he now applies it to everyone he meets simply from the force of habit. He that has rid himself of the evil passions never makes use of words that are harsh and cruel, never makes use of words that cut hearers to the quick. It is solely from the force of habit that my son speaks thus."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 408)

yāya kiñci n'ābhisajē akakkasaṁ viññāpaṇiṁ saccam giraṁ udīrayē taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yāya: if through even a word; *kiñci:* anyone; *na ābhisajē:* does not provoke; *akakkasaṁ:* not harsh; *viññāpaṇiṁ:* well-meaning; *saccam giraṁ:* truthful words; *udīrayē:* if someone utters; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* describe as a brāhmana

His speech is true. His words are well-meaning, constructive and not harsh. By his words he will not give offence to anyone. Nor will his words provoke people. Such a person I declare a true brāhmana.

Commentary

Story of Pilindivaccha: Pilindivaccha was born a brāhmin at Srāvasti. Having listened to a sermon of the Buddha he was instantly converted. He sought ordination.

He had a habit of addressing all and sundry both in the Sangha and in the Laity by the term *vasala* signifying a person of low caste. He had acquired this habit during five hundred lives when he was born a brāhmin, for, brāhmins regarded all others as below them. Pilindavaccha could not get rid of this lapse by force of habit. It is said habit is second nature. In a person who had got rid of all defilements, still the habit acquired during a long period persisted. The Buddha was the sole exception. So when it became intolerable, monks complained to the Buddha.

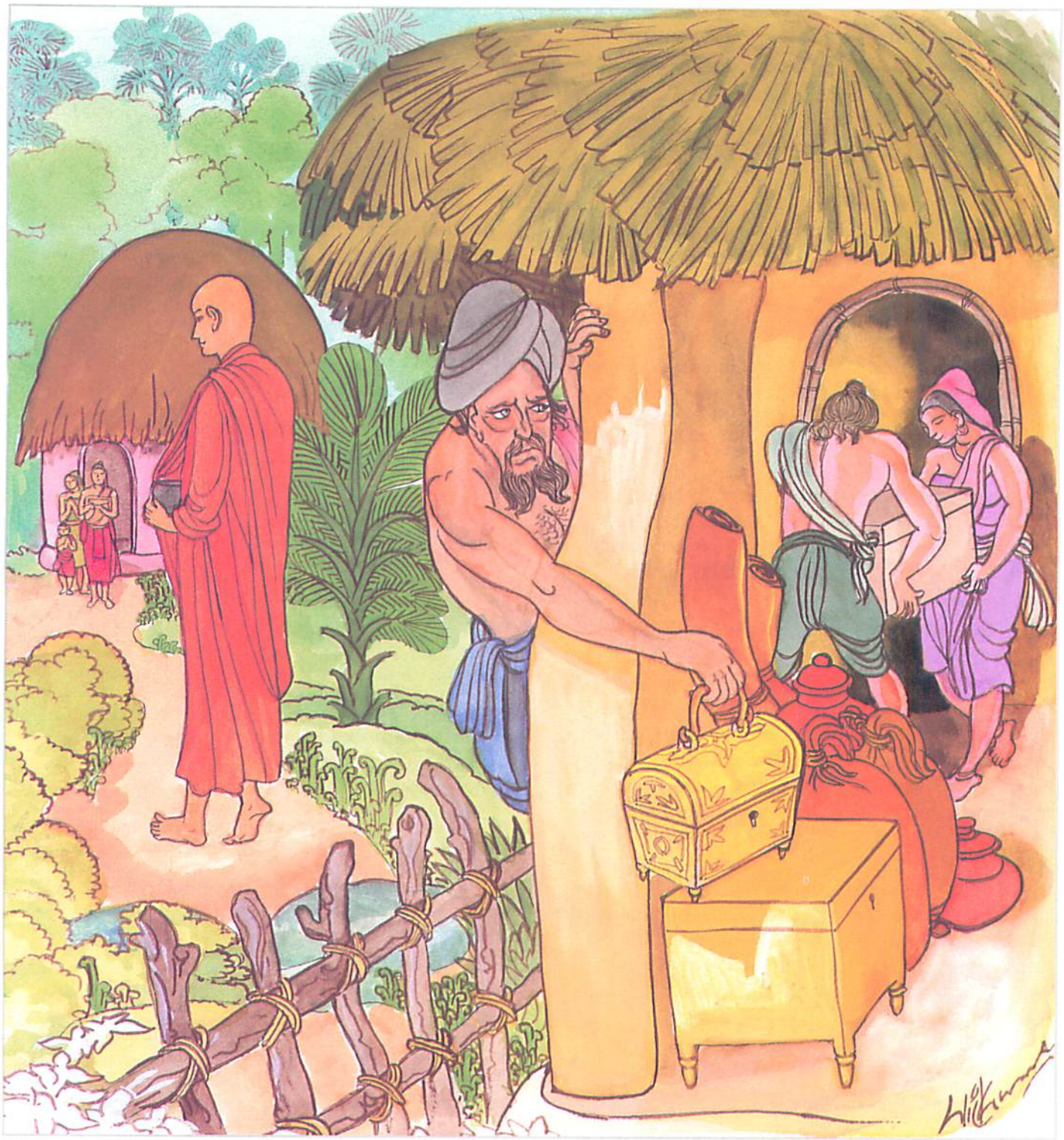
The Buddhas explained to the audience what had happened. The Venerable Piliṇdivaccha had no trace of hatred or ill-will when using the word. It was purely a habit. He had no venom. The Buddha proceeded to say Venerable Mahā arahat was free from all defilements. Such a person Buddha would call a brāhmin.

One day a seller of tippili or long pepper ran into serious trouble. Knowing not who Venerable Pilindavaccha was, he was taking a waggon load of tippili for sale, having a sample of specimen tippili in a basket. When he met one morning the mahā arahat at the gate of Jētāwanārama proceeding on a journey, as usual, mahā arahat addressed the seller as *vasala* and inquired what the basket contained. The seller was dumb founded. He retorted by saying excreta of mice. "Be it so", said the Mahā arahat and went on his way. There was a striking similarity between long pepper and excreta of mice and the seller to his horror discovered that the specimen and then the wagon in turn consisted no longer of long pepper but excreta of mice.

The deities saw to it that the goods were turned into excreta of mice, even though it caused distress to the trader. The trader's stock had sunk to zero. The poor man's grief knew no bounds. In desperation he sought the Thēro to give vent to his anger for he felt convinced that he was the cause. He met a well meaning person who questioned him. On hearing the story, he explained to the trader that Venerable Piliṇdavaccha was a Mahā arahat and the remedy lay in his own hands. He was asked to meet the Mahā Thēra again in the same way as in the fateful morning and when addressed, in the usual way, to be careful to reply simply that they were tippili. Then the Venerable Pilindavaccha would say, "Be it so". Then you would discover the true nature of your goods. The seller did so and was glad to retrieve his fortune for instantly the goods of the trader were in the original state by the same process.

Afterwards, the Buddha addressing the noble Sangha and the laity declared that among his mahā arahats Pilindavaccha was most pleasing to the deities.

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He who takes nothing ungiven of another, great or small. Him I call a brahmin true.

409. *Yō'dha dīghaṁ va rassaṁ vā*
aṇuṁ thūlaṁ subhāsubhaṁ
lōkē adinnaṁ nā'diyati
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:27)

Who in the world will never take
what is not given, long or short,
the great or small, the fair or foul,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO STEALS NOT

26 (26) The Story of the Monk who was accused of Theft (Verse 409)

The story goes that a certain brāhman of false views who lived at Sāvatthi, for fear his outer cloth might catch the odour of his body, took it off, laid it aside, and sat down facing his house. Now a certain monk who was an arahat, on his way to the monastery after breakfast, saw that cloth, and looking about and seeing no one, and therefore concluding that it had no owner, adopted it as a refuse-rag, and took it with him. When the brāhman saw him, he went up to him and abused him, saying, "Shavelling, you are taking my cloth." "Is this your cloth, brāhman?" "Yes, monk." "I saw no one about, and thinking it was a refuse-rag, took it with me; here it is." So saying, the Venerable gave the brāhman back his cloth. Then he went to the monastery and related the incident to the monks in detail.

When the monks heard his story, they made fun of him, saying, "Brother, is the cloth you took long or short, coarse or fine?" "Brethren," replied the monk, "never mind whether the cloth is long or short, coarse or fine; I have no attachment for it. I took it, supposing it to be a refuse-rag." When the monks heard his reply, they reported the matter to Buddha, saying, "Venerable, this monk says what is not true and utters falsehood." The Buddha replied, "No, monks, what this monk says is quite true; they that have rid themselves of the evil passions do not take what belongs to other people."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 409)

idha lōkē yō dīghaṁ vā rassaṁ vā aṇuṁ thūlaṁ vā subhāsubhaṁ adinnaṁ na ādiyati taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

idha lōkē: in this world; *yō:* if some one; *dīghaṁ vā:* either long; *rassaṁ vā:* or short; *aṇuṁ:* or minute; *thūlaṁ vā:* or large; *subhāsubhaṁ:* good or bad; *adinnaṁ:* something that was not given; *na ādiyati:* does not take; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* describe a true brāhmana

In this world if there is some person who does not take anything that is not given, whether long or short, minute or large or good or bad, him I declare a true brāhmana.

Commentary

brāhmins: The Enlightened One and His disciples had extensive encounters with brāhmins of various types. The story that gives rise to the present stanza is such an encounter. But, there are more profound philosophic encounters between the Buddha and the brāhmins.

Here is one such: Brāhmanic orthodoxy intolerantly insisted on believing and accepting their tradition and authority as the only truth without question. Once a group of learned and well-known brāhmins went to see the Buddha and had a long discussion with him. One of the group, a brāhmin youth of sixteen years of age, named Kāpaṭhika, considered by them all to be an exceptionally brilliant mind, put a question to the Buddha: "Venerable Gōtama, there are the ancient holy scriptures of the brāhmins handed down along the line by unbroken oral tradition of texts. With regard to them, brāhmins come to the absolute conclusion: 'This alone is Truth, and everything else is false'". Now, what does the Buddha say about this? The Buddha inquired: "Among brāhmins is there any one single brāhmin who claims that he personally knows and sees that 'This alone is truth, and everything else is false.'?"

The young man was frank, and said, "No."

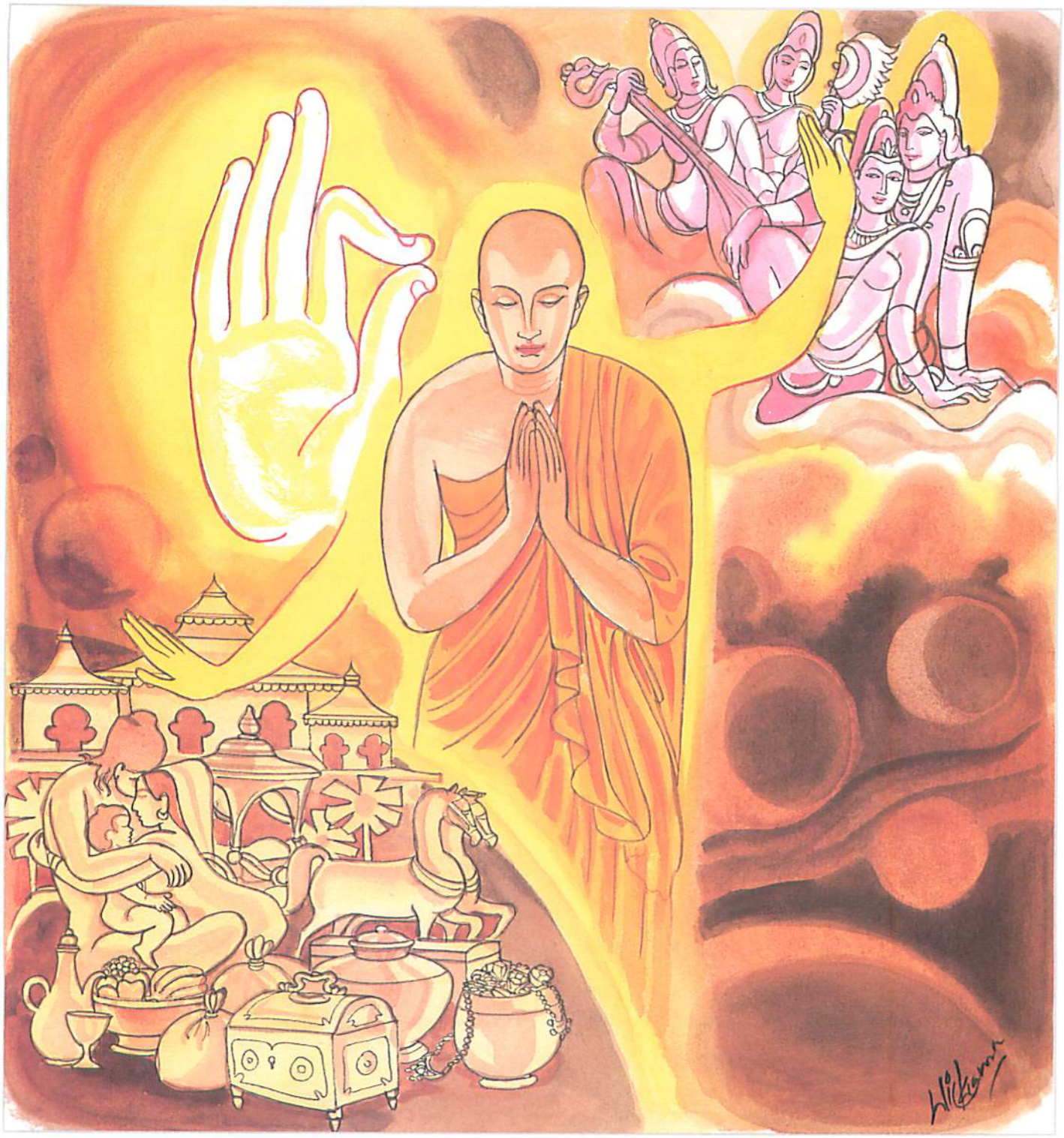
"Then, is there any one single teacher, or a teacher of teachers of brāhmins back to the seventh generation, or even any one of those original authors of those scriptures, who claims that he knows and he sees: 'This alone is truth, and everything else is false'?" "No."

"Then, it is like a line of blind men, each holding on to the preceding one; the first one does not see, the middle one also does not see, the last one also does not see. Thus, it seems to me that the state of the brāhmins is like that of a line of blind men."

Then the Buddha gave advice of extreme importance to the group of brāhmins: "It is not proper for a wise man who maintains (lit. protects) truth to come to the conclusion: 'This alone is truth, and everything else is false.'"

Asked by the young brāhmin to explain the idea of maintaining or protecting truth, the Buddha said: "A man has a faith. If he says 'This is my faith,' so far he maintains truth. But by that he cannot proceed to the absolute conclusion: 'This alone is truth, and everything else is false.'" In other words, a man may believe what he likes, and he may say 'I believe this'. So far he respects truth. But because of his belief or faith, he should not say that what he believes is alone the truth, and everything else is false.

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Not yearn for this world or the next, and liberated and longingless. Him I call a brahmin true.

410. *Āsā yassa na vijjanti*
asmiṁ lōkē paramhi ca
nirāsayaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:28)

In whom there are no longings found
in this world or the next,
longingless and free from bonds,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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A BRĀHMAṆA IS HE WHO IS DESIRELESS

26 (27) The Story of Sāriputta being misunderstood (Verse 410)

The story goes that once upon a time Venerable Sāriputta, accompanied by his retinue of five hundred monks, went to a certain monastery and entered upon residence for the season of the rains. When the people saw the Venerable, they promised to provide him with all of the requisites for residence. But even after the Venerable had celebrated the terminal festival, not all of the requisites had as yet arrived. So when he set out to go to the Buddha he said to the monks, "When the people bring the requisites for the young monks and novices, pray take them and send them on; should they not bring them, be good enough to send me word." So saying, he went to the Buddha.

The monks immediately began to discuss the matter, saying, "Judging by what Venerable Sāriputta said to-day, Craving still persists within him. For when he went back, he said to the monks with reference to the requisites for residence given to his own fellow residents, 'Pray send them on; otherwise be good enough to send me word.'" Just then the Buddha drew near. "Monks," said he, "what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together?" "Such and such," was the reply. The Buddha said, "No, monks, my son has no craving. But the following thought was present to his mind, 'May there be no loss of merit to the people, and no loss of holy gain to the young monks and novices.' This is the reason why he spoke as he did."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 410)

yassa asmiṁ lōkē paraṁhi ca āsā na vijjanti
nirāsayaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yassa: if someone; *asmiṁ lōkē:* in this world; *paraṁhica:* or in the next; *āsā:* cravings; *na vijjanti:* does not possess; *nirāsayaṁ:* that craving-less; *visaṁ yuttaṁ:* disengaged fom defilements; *taṁ:* person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

He has no yearnings either for this world or for the next. He is free from earning and greed. He is disengaged from defilements. Such a person I declare a fine brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

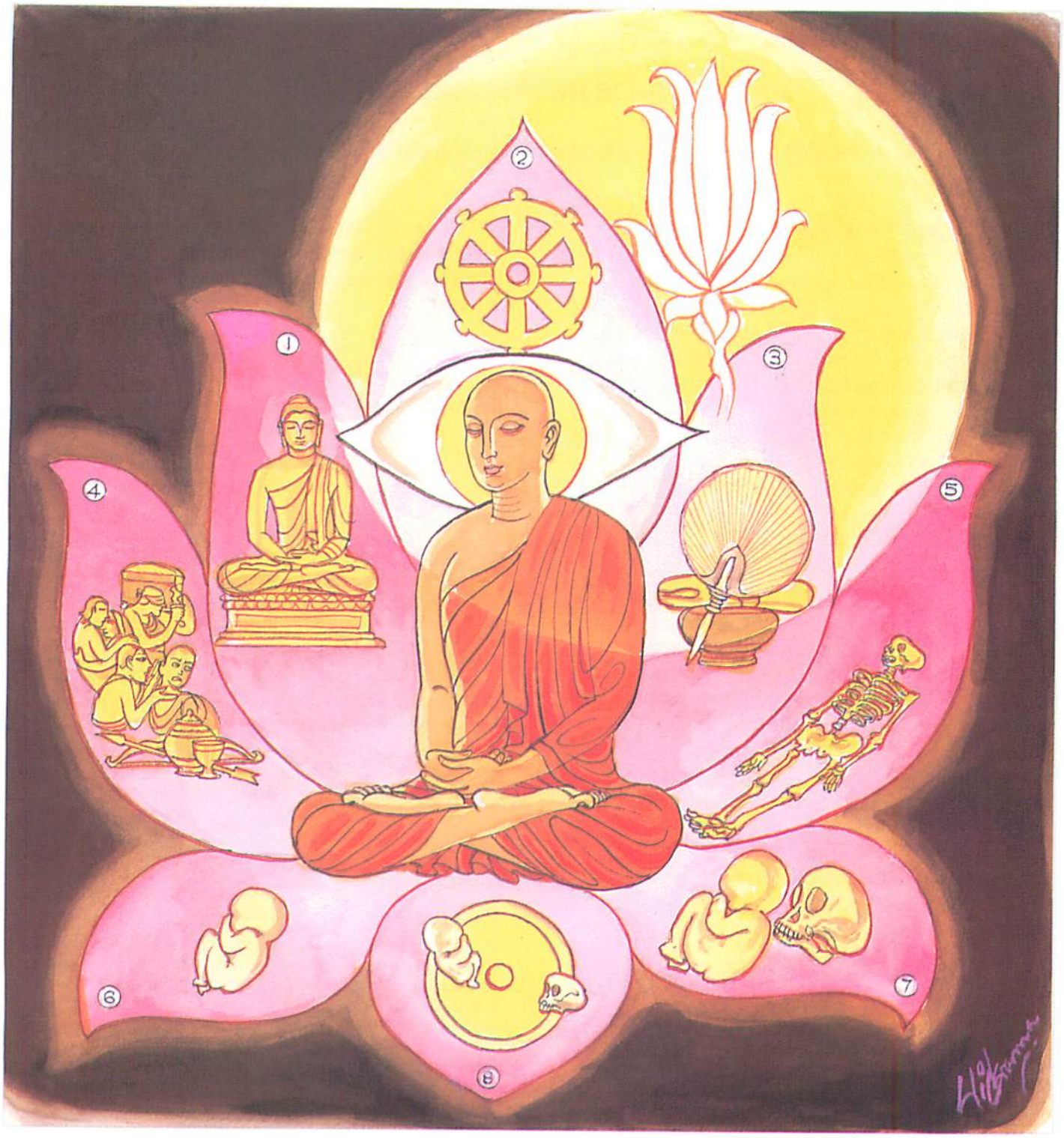
āsā: It is this thirst (craving, *taṇhā*) which produces re-existence and re-becoming *(pōnōbhavikā)*, and which is bound up with passionate greed *(nandīrāgasahagatā)*, and which finds fresh delight now here and now there *(tatratatrābhinandinī)*, such as (i) thirst for sense-pleasures *(kāma-taṇhā)*, (ii) thirst for existence and becoming *(bhava-taṇhā)* and)iii) thirst for non-existence (self-annihilation, *vibhava-taṇhā)*.

It is this thirst, desire, greed, craving, manifesting itself in various ways, that gives rise to all forms of suffering and the continuity of beings. But it should not be taken as the first cause, for there is no first cause possible as, according to Buddhism, everything is relative and inter-dependent. Even this thirst, *taṇhā*, which is considered as the cause or origin of *dukkha*, depends for its arising *(samudaya)* on something else, which is sensation *(vēdanā)*, and sensation arises depending on contact *(phassa)*, and so on and so forth goes on the circle which is known as conditioned genesis *(paṭicca-samuppāda)*, which we will discuss later.

So *taṇhā*, thirst, is not the first or the only cause of the arising of *dukkha*. But it is the most palpable and immediate cause, the principal thing and the all-pervading thing. Hence, in certain places of the original Pāli texts the definition of *samudaya* or the origin of *dukkha* includes other defilements and impurities *(kilēsā, sāsavā dhammā)*, in addition to *taṇhā* thirst which is always given the first place. Within the necessarily limited space of our discussion, it will be sufficient if we remember that this thirst has, as its centre, the false idea of self arising out of ignorance.

Here the term thirst includes not only desire for, and attachment to, sense-pleasures, wealth and power, but also desire for, and attachment to, ideas and ideals, views, opinions, theories, conceptions and beliefs *(dhamma-taṇhā)*. According to the Buddha's analysis, all the troubles and strife in the world, from little personal quarrels in families to great wars between nations and countries, arise out of this selfish thirst. From this point of view, all economic, political and social problems are rooted in this selfish thirst. Great statesmen who try to settle international disputes and talk of war and peace only in economic and political terms touch the superficialities, and never go deep into the real root of the problem. As the Buddha told Raṭṭhapāla: The world lacks and hankers, and is enslaved to thirst *(taṇhādāsō)*.

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No clingings or doubts trouble him, deathless reached. Him I call a brahmin true.

411. *Yassā'layā na vijjanti*
aññāya akathaṅkathī,
amatōgadhaṁ anuppattaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:29)

In whom is no dependence found,
with Final Knowledge freed from doubt,
who's plunged into the Deathless depths,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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IN WHOM THERE IS NO CLINGING

26 (28) The Story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna (Verse 411)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while he was in residence at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Venerable Mahā Moggallāna.

This story is similar to the preceding, except that on this occasion the Buddha, perceiving that Venerable Mahā Moggallāna was free from craving, gave this verse.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 411)

yassa ālayā na vijjanti aññāya akathaṁkathī
amatōgadhaṁ anuppattaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāh-
maṇaṁ brūmi

yassa: if in someone; *ālayā:* attachments; *na vijjanti:* are not seen; *aññāya:* due to right awareness; *akathaṁkathī:* if he has no doubts; *amatōgadhaṁ:* the flood of the Deathless — Nibbāna; *anuppattaṁ:* who has reached; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* describe a brāhmana

He has no attachments - no attachments can be discovered in him. He has no spiritual doubts due to his right awareness. He has entered the deathless — Nibbāna. I describe him, as a true brāhmana.

Commentary

The story of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna: If Sāriputta could be regarded as the Chief Disciple on the right of Buddha, Moggallāna was the Chief Disciple on His left. They were born on the same day and were associated with each other during many previous lives; so were they during the last life.

Venerable Mahā Moggallāna was foremost in the noble Sangha for the performance of psychic feats.

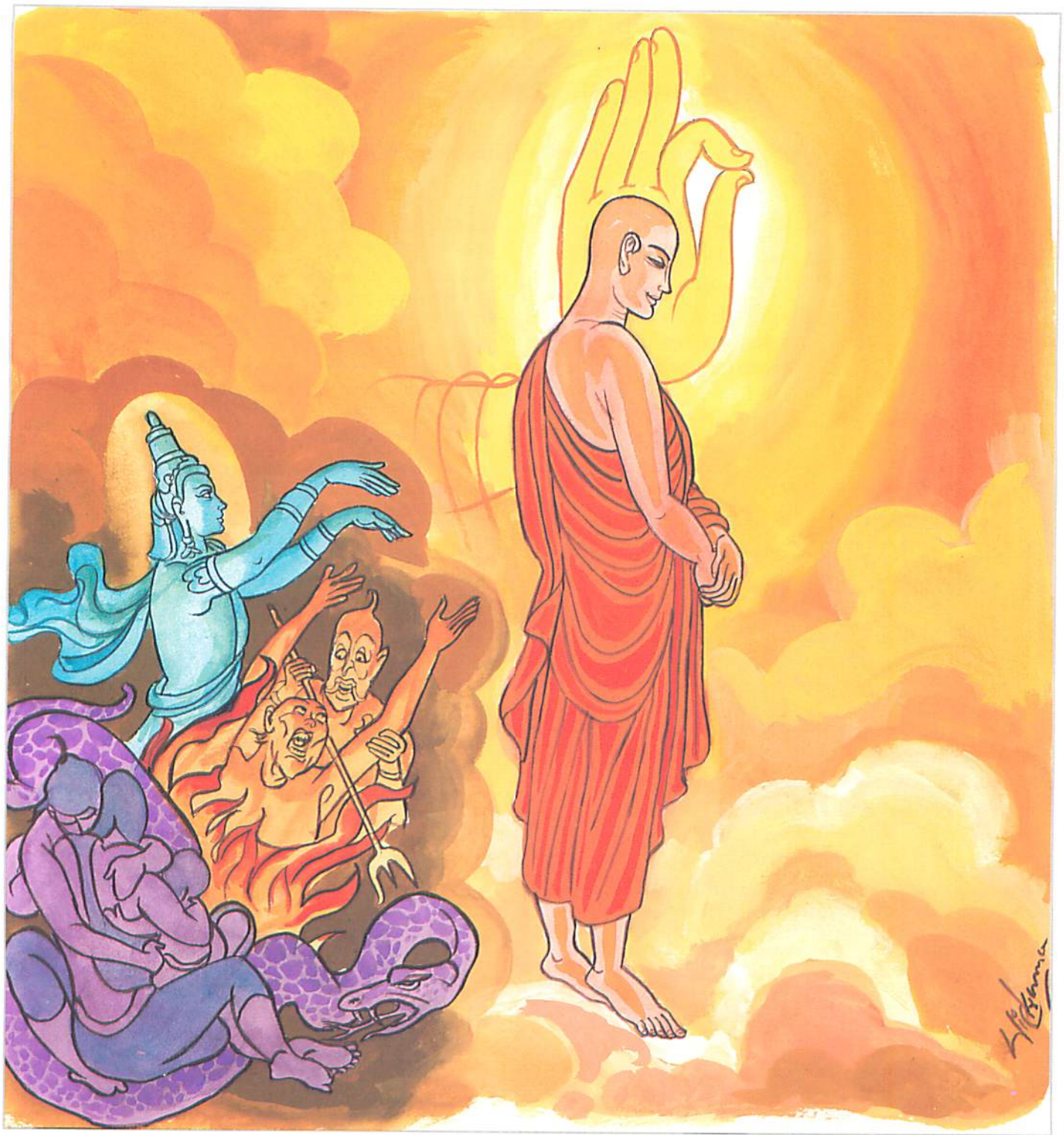
Once, a king of cobras called Nandōpananda, also noted for psychic feats, was threatening all beings of the Himālayas that should happen to pass that way.

The Buddha was besieged with offers from various members of the noble Sangha to subdue the snake king. At last, Venerable Mahā Moggallāna's turn came and the Buddha readily assented. He knew the monk was equal to the task. The result was a Himālayan encounter when the nāga king, having worsted in the combat, sued for peace. The Buddha was present throughout and cautioned Moggallāna. The epic feat was succinctly commemorated in the seventh verse of the *Jayamangala Gātha* which is recited at almost every Buddhist occasion.

Whether in shaking the marble palace of Sakka the heavenly ruler, by his great toe or visiting hell, he was equally at ease. These visits enabled him to collect all sorts of information. He could graphically narrate to dwellers of this Earth the fate of their erstwhile friends or relatives, how, by evil kamma, some get an ignominious rebirth in hell and others, by good kamma, an auspicious re-birth in one of the six heavens. These ministrations brought great kudos to the Dispensation much to the chagrin of other sects. His life is an example and a grim warning. Even a chief disciple, capable of such heroic feats, was not immune from the residue of evil kamma though sown in the very remote past.

In the last life of Moggallāna, he could not escape the relentless force of kamma. For, with an arahat's *parinirvāna*, good or bad effects of kamma come to an end. He was trapped twice by robbers but he made good his escape. But, on the third occasion, he saw with his divine eye, the futility of escape. He was mercilessly beaten so much so that his body could be put even in a sack. But death must await his destiny. It is written that a chief disciple must not only predecease the Buddha but must also repair to the Buddha before his death *(parinibbāna)* and perform miraculous feats and utter verses in farewell and the Buddha had to enumerate his virtues in return. He was no exception.

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Gone beyond grip of good and evil, sorrowless and pure. Him I call a brahmin true.

412. *Yō'dha puññañ ca pāpañ ca*
ubhō saṅgaṁ upaccagā
asōkaṁ virajaṁ suddhaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:30)

Here who's gone beyond both bonds
to goodness and to evil too,
is sorrowless, unsullied, pure,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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ABOVE BOTH GOOD AND EVIL

26 (29) Renounce both Good and Evil (Verse 412)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Pubbārāma with reference to Venerable Rēvata.

Again one day the monks began a discussion, saying, "Oh, how great was the novice's gain! Oh, how great was the novice's merit! To think that one man should build many habitations for many monks!" Just then the Buddha came near. "Monks," said He, "what is the subject that engages your attention now as you sit here all gathered together? " "Such and such," was the reply. Then said the Buddha, "Monks, my son has neither merit nor demerit: he has renounced both."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 412)

idha yō puññañ pāpañ ca ubhō saṅgaṁ upaccagā asōkaṁ virajaṁ suddhaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

idha: in this world; *yō:* if someone; *puññaṁ:* merit; *pāpaṁ ca:* and the evil; *ubhō:* the two; *saṅgaṁ:* the clingings; *upaccagā:* has gone beyond; *asōkaṁ:* he who is without sorrow; *virajaṁ:* bereft of blemishes; *suddhaṁ:* pure; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmānō brūmi:* describe as a brāhmana

If any person in this world has travelled beyond both the good and the bad, and the attachments, and if he is without sorrow, and is bereft of blemishes, and is pure, him I describe as a true brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

Story of Venerable Rēvata: He was so called because he took nothing for granted. He saw everything under a question mark. Everywhere he would see reason for doubt. He was also fond of going into trance *(jhāna)* and enjoy the bliss of emancipation *(nirōdhasamāpatti)* again and again. This was a gift of transcending the mundane world for seven days at a stretch possessed by certain arahants. He had a yearning for this special privilege. He became an adept.

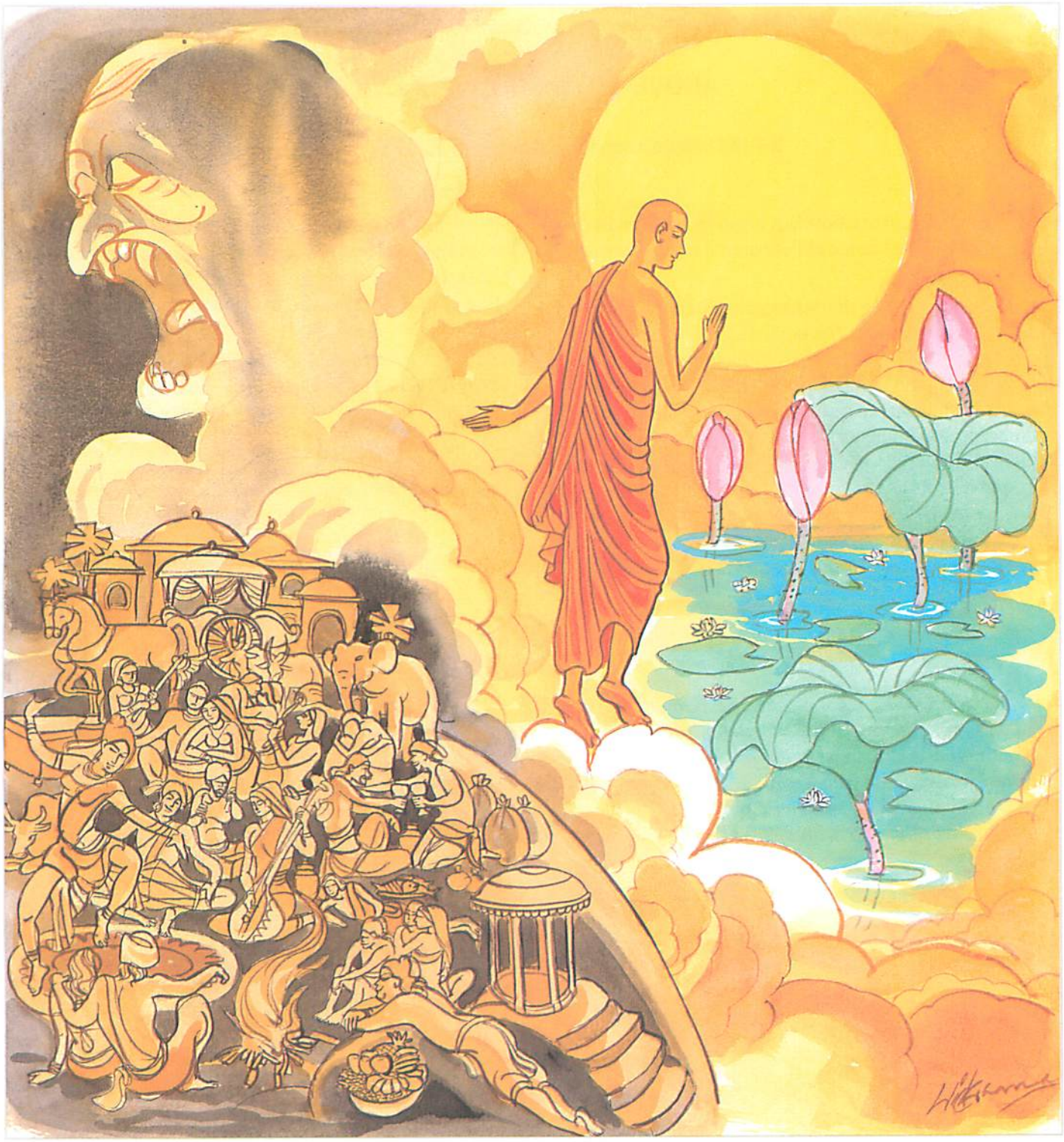
Before he became an arahant, his mind was greatly perturbed as to what was permissible to use or not to use. He was ranked among the most eminent disciples. In a discussion with some of them, he has extolled habitation in the abodes of solitude and the delights of meditation.

He was born to a wealthy family in this dispensation at Srāvasti. Not long afterwards the Buddha addressing the monks and the laity declared that Kankha Rēvata was the foremost for his quick transition to trance *(jhāna)* in the noble Sangha.

To him are the why and wherefore,
His food. Subjects all to question.
He seeks solitude before
Seeking the bliss by meditation.



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Like the moon without spots, tranquil and clear. His delight in life ended, a brahmin true.

413. *Candaṁ'va vimalaṁ suddhaṁ*
vippasannaṁ anāvilaṁ
nandībhavaparikkhīṇaṁ
taṁ ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:31)

Who, like the moon, unblemished, pure,
is clear and limpid, and in whom
delight in being is consumed,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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LEARNING THE CHARM

26 (30) The story of Venerable Moonlight (Verse 413)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha in reference to Venerable Chandābha. A son was born in the household of a wealthy householder in Rājagaha.

From the circle of his navel proceeded forth a light like that of the moon's disk, and therefore they gave him the name Moonlight, Candābha.

The brāhmans thought to themselves, "If we take him with us, we can make the whole world our prey." Accordingly they seated him in a carriage and took him about with them. And to everyone they met they said, "Whosoever shall stroke the body of this Brāhman with his hand, such-and-such power and glory shall he receive." People would give a hundred pieces of money, or a thousand pieces of money, and thus receive the privilege of stroking the body of the Brāhman with their hand. Travelling thus from place to place, they finally came to Sāvatthi and took lodgings between the city and the monastery.

Now at Sāvatthi five billion of noble disciples gave alms before breakfast; and after breakfast, bearing in their hands perfumes, garlands, garments, and medicaments, went to hear the Dhamma. When the Brāhmans saw them, they asked them, "Where are you going?" "To the Buddha to hear the Dhamma." "Come! What will you gain by going there? There is no supernatural power like the supernatural power possessed by our Brāhman Moonlight: they that but stroke his body, receive such and such power and glory; come have a look at him." "What does the supernatural power of your Brāhman amount to? It is our Teacher alone who possesses great supernatural power." And straightaway they fell to arguing, but each of the two parties was unsuccessful in its efforts to convince the other. Finally, the Brāhmans said, "Let us go to the monastery and find out whether it is our Moonlight or your Teacher that possesses the greater supernatural power." And taking him with them, they set out for the monastery.

The Buddha, even as Moonlight approached Him, caused the special radiance to disappear. The result was that when Moonlight stood in the presence of the Buddha, he resembled nothing so much as a crow in a basket of charcoal. The brāhmans took him to one side, and immediately the brightness reappeared, bright as ever. Again they brought him into the presence of the Buddha, and straightaway the brightness disappeared, just as it had the first time. When Moonlight went for the third time into the presence of the Buddha and observed that the brightness disappeared, he thought to himself, "Without a doubt this man knows a charm by which he can make this brightness disappear." So he asked the Buddha, "Is it not a fact that you know a charm by which you can make this brightness of mine disappear?" "Yes, I know such a charm." "Well then, impart it to me." "It cannot be imparted to one who has not retired from the world."

Thereupon Moonlight said to his fellow brāhmans, "As soon as I learn this charm, I shall be the foremost man in all the Land of the Rose-apple. You remain right here and I will retire from the world and in but a few days learn this charm." So he asked the Buddha to admit him to the Sangha, retired from the world, and subsequently was admitted to full membership in the Sangha. The Buddha taught him a formula of meditation which consists of the thirty-two constituent parts of the body. "What is this?" asked Candābha. "This is something which you must repeat as a preliminary to acquiring this charm," replied the Buddha.

From time to time the brāhmans came to him and asked, "Have you learned the charm yet?" "Not yet, but I am learning it." In but a few days he attained arahatship. When the brāhmans came and asked him again, he made answer, "Depart ye! Now have I reached the state of one who will never return." The monks reported the matter to the Buddha, saying, "Venerable, this brāhman says what is not true, utters falsehood." Said the Buddha, "Monks, worldly joy has been extinguished for my son; he speaks the truth."

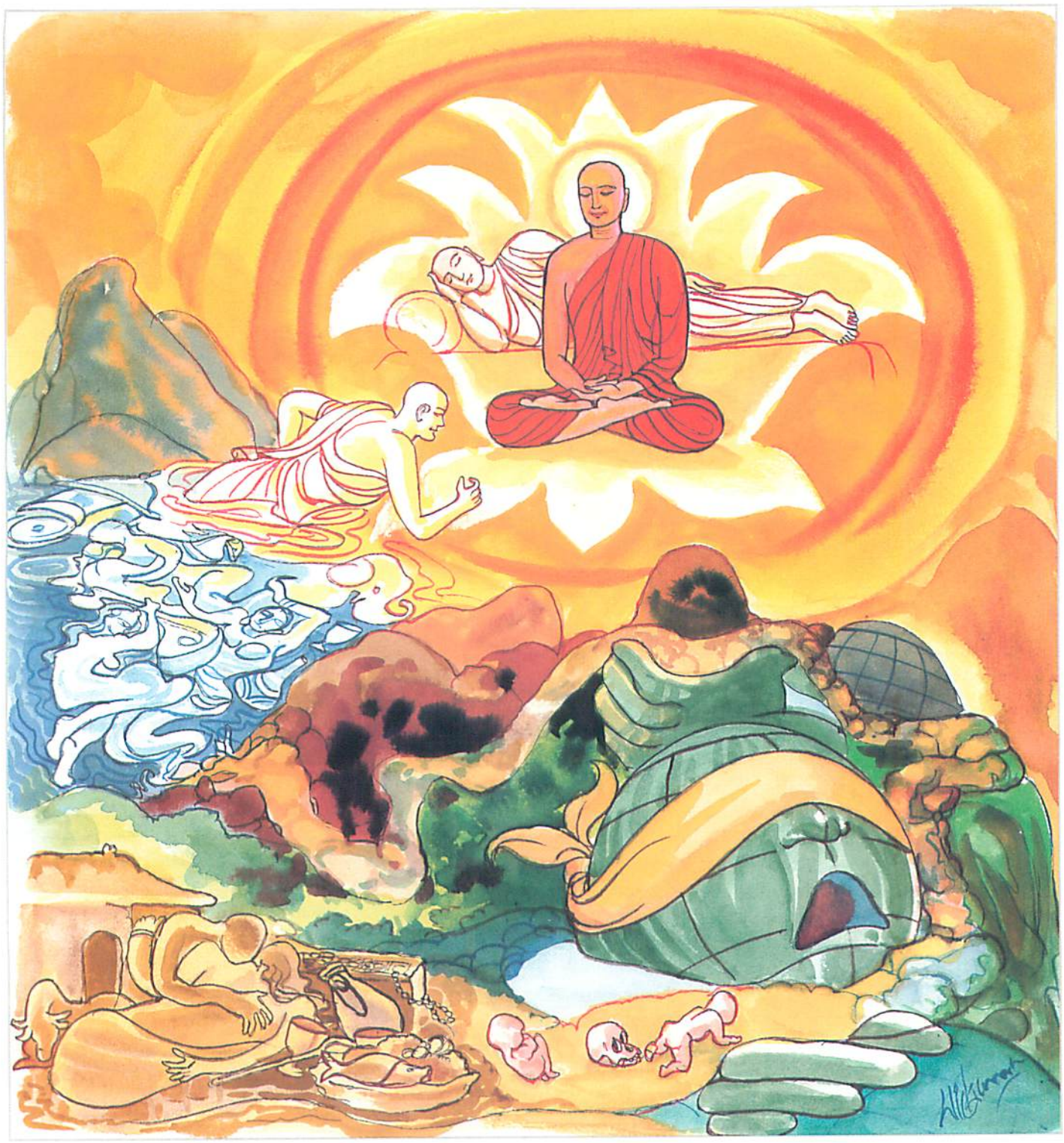
Explanatory Translation (Verse 413)

candaṁ iva vimalaṁ suddhaṁ vippasannaṁ
anāvilaṁ nandībhavaparikkhīnaṁ tam ahaṁ
brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

chandaṁ iva: like the moon; *vimalaṁ:* free of blemishes; *suddhaṁ:* pure; *vippassannaṁ:* exceptionally tranquil; *anāvilaṁ:* unagitated; *nandībhavaparikkhinaṁ:* who has given up the craving that takes delight in the cycle of existence; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* describe as the brāhmana

He is like moon at the full — spotless and free of blemishes. He is pure, calm, severe and exceptionally tranquil. He is unagitated. He has got rid of the craving that takes delight in the cycle of existence. That person, I declare a true brāhmaṇa.

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Of grasping and doubting totally freed, from Saṁsāra to safety gone him I call a brahmin true.

414. *Yō imaṁ palipathaṁ duggaṁ*
saṁsāraṁ mōhamaccagā
tiṇṇō pāragatō jhāyī
anējō akathaṁkathī
anupādāya nibbutō
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:32)

Who's overpassed this difficult path,
delusion's bond, the wandering-on,
who's crossed beyond, contemplative,
uncraving with no questioning doubt,
no clinging's fuel so cool become,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE TRANQUIL PERSON

26 (31) Seven Years in the Womb (Verse 414)

For once upon a time Suppāvāsā, a daughter of the Kōliya clan, carried a child in her womb for seven years. And for seven days, since the child lay awry, she was stricken with distressing, acute, and bitter pains, and said to herself, "Supremely enlightened, truly, is the Buddha who preaches a Religion to the putting away of suffering such as this. Walking in Righteousness, truly, is the order of disciples of that Buddha, which walks in righteousness to the putting away of suffering such as this. Blessed, truly, is Nibbāna, where suffering such as this exists no more." With these three reflections did she endure that pain. And she sent her husband to the Buddha to greet him in her name. When her husband greeted the Buddha and conveyed her message, the Buddha said, "May Suppāvāsā, the young woman of the Kōliya clan, be healthy; in health and happiness may she bring forth a healthy son."

The moment the Buddha spoke these words, Suppāvāsā brought forth a healthy son in health and happiness. Forthwith she invited the monks of the Sangha presided over by the Buddha to be her guests and for seven days gave bountiful offerings. From the day of his birth her son took a water-pot provided with a strainer and strained water for the congregation of monks. After a time he retired from the world, became a monk, and attained arahatship. One day the monks began a discussion in the hall of truth: "Only think, brethren! So illustrious a monk as this, possessing the faculties requisite for the attainment of arahatship, endured suffering all that time in the womb of his mother! How great indeed was the suffering this monk passed through!" The Buddha drew near and asked, "Monks, what is the subject that engages your conversation now, as you sit here all gathered together?" When they told him, he said, "Monks, it is even so. My son has obtained release from all this suffering, and now, having realized Nibbāna, abides in the bliss thereof."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 414)

yō imaṁ palipathaṁ duggaṁ saṁsāraṁ mōham accagā tiṇṇō pāragatō jhāyī anējō akathaṁkathi anupādāya nibbutō taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō: if someone; *imaṁ:* this; *palipathaṁ:* the path of quagmire; *duggaṁ:* the difficult crossing; *saṁsāraṁ:* the cycle of existence; *mōhaṁ:* ignorance; *accagā:* has crossed over; *tiṇṇō:* has reached the other shore; *pāragatō:* gone fully over to the other side; *jhāyī:* meditates; *anējō:* is bereft of craving; *akathaṁkathī:* has resolved doubts; *anupādāya:* not given to grasping; *nibbutō:* is cooled; calmed; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

He has crossed over the quagmire of passion. He has gone beyond the difficult terrain of blemishes, that is hard to traverse and has crossed the cycle of existence. He has fully and totally reached the other shore. He is a meditator and is bereft of craving. His spiritual doubts are all resolved. He is no longer given to grasping. He is cooled. Such a person I describe as a true brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

The story of arahat Sīvali: This mahā arahat gave most in the past. He practiced the art of giving or dāna pāramī to the utmost limit. He became in due course the prince of receivers. Something notable in his career happened when he was born long ago in the dispensation of Vipassi Buddha. It was at this time the king and his people were vying with each other in the art of giving. There was a festival of giving alms to the Buddha and the Sangha. It was a matter of healthy and pleasant rivalry. When the turn of the people came, they ran short of milk and honey. This food would pave the way for success in the alms giving. They kept a man to watch at the city gates with sufficient money. He came across a young man carrying what they needed. Buyer was anxious to buy. But the seller was not so enthusiastic. The result was bargaining with a vengeance. In the East bargaining is compared to barge-poling on the river. Bidding rose from a gold coin. The seller on learning of the almsgiving wanted to partake of the merit. On hearing that there was no impediment he further inquired whether there was any one among them who could offer one thousand gold coins. On hearing there wasn't any, he said that the pot of curd and honey were even worth two thousand coins and that if permitted he was willing to give it free. The offer was accepted. We are told that by the power of the Buddha, the curd and honey were found sufficient. On this occasion it was his aspiration that one day he would be the head of the recipients. Thereafter, he took his conception in the womb of Suppāvāsa a daughter of the king of Kōliya. Many were the windfalls that came to the lot of the family. The land became productive and the fields returned a record harvest. Whatever was given the receiver was amply satisfied. But both mother and son were not immune from demeritorious action *(akusala kamma)* in the past. If it was a lesser child the result would have been tragic. Faith *(saddhā)* worked marvels. In the Buddha, people had a sure guide and *Kalyāna Mitta*. Suppāvāsā naturally thought that she was at deaths's door. For, at the end of the seventh year, she suffered terrible agony. She then implored her husband to invite The Buddha and the noble Sangha for an alms-giving. Upon being invited the Blessed One saw that both mother and son would be saved. He accordingly gave His blessing and at that moment the child was born. Great was the rejoicing. The husband who left his gloomy home returned amidst scenes of mirth and joy. Hence the name of Sīvali was given to the son. Seven days almsgiving to the Buddha and the noble Sangha followed. Sīvali was thus a precocious lad. After seven days — He was nearly seven years old, at the parting of the first lock of hair, he entered the first stream of saintship and parting of the last lock, he had become a full-fledged arahat. It was well known in the noble Sangha that Venerable Sīvali was foremost among recipients.

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Rejecting pleasures, homeless he goes to life journey's end. Him, I call a brahmin true.

415. *Yō'dha kāmē pahatvāna*
anāgārō paribbajē
kāmabhavaparikkhīṇaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:33)

Who has abandoned lusting here
as homeless one renouncing all,
with lust and being quite consumed,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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FREED FROM TEMPTATION

26 (32) A Courtesan tempts a Monk (Sundara Samudda) (Verse 415)

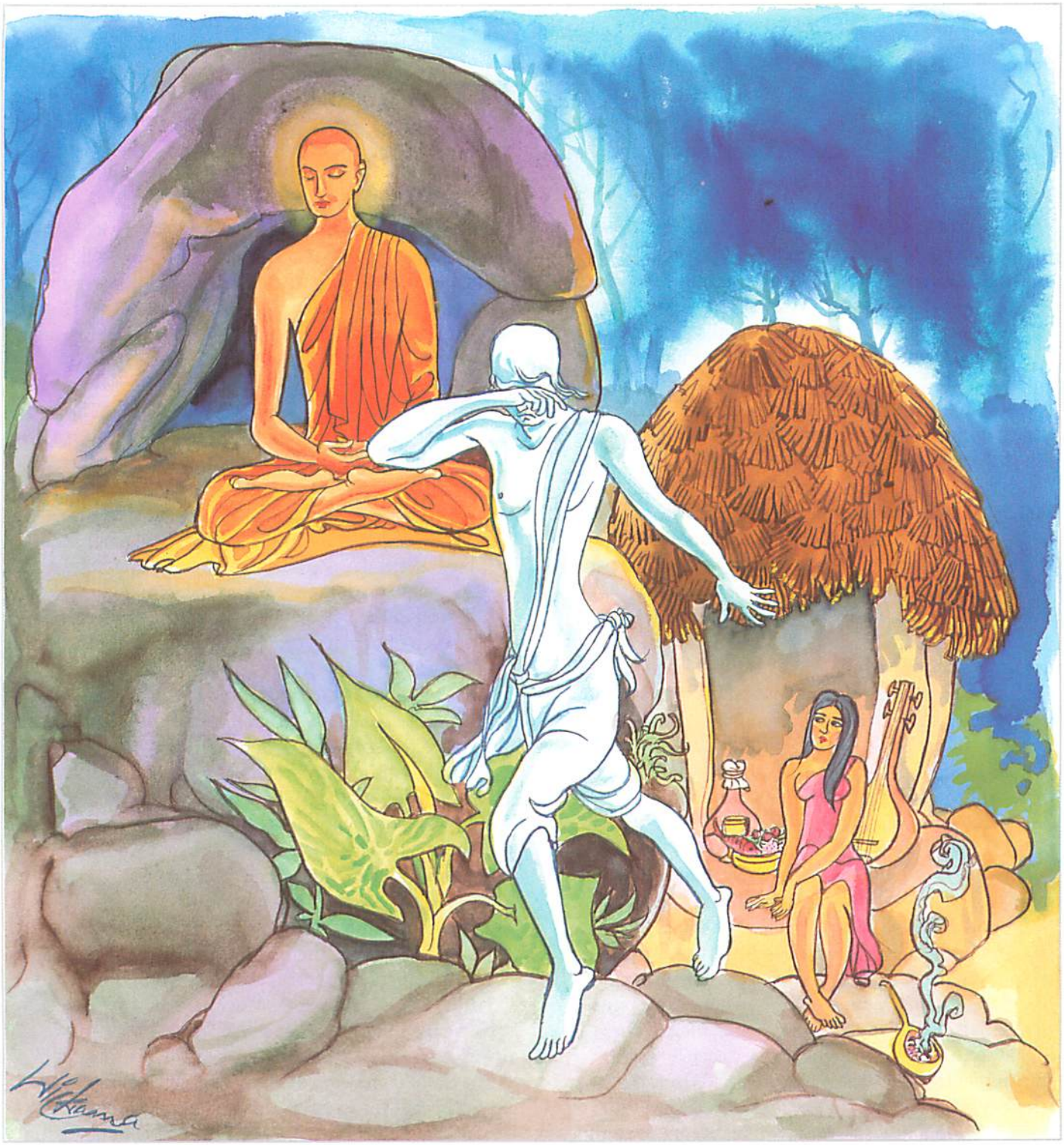
This verse was recited by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Venerable Ocean-of-Beauty, Sundarasamudda. At Sāvatthi, we are told, in a great household possessing forty billion of treasure, was reborn a certain youth of station named Ocean-of-Beauty, Sundarasamudda Kumāra. One day after breakfast, seeing a great company of people with perfumes and garlands in their hands, going to Jētavana to hear the Dhamma, he asked, "Where are you going?" "To listen to the Buddha preach the Dhamma," they replied. "I will go too," said he, and accompanying them, sat down in the outer circle of the congregation. The Buddha's discourse made him eager to retire from the world. Therefore, as the congregation departed, he asked the Buddha to admit him to the Sangha. The Buddha said, "The Buddhas admit no one to the Sangha who has not first obtained permission of his mother and father." Having obtained their permission, he retired from the world and was admitted to the Sangha by the Buddha. Subsequently, he made his full profession as a member of the Sangha. Then he thought to himself. "What is the use of my living here?" So departing from Jētavana, he went to Rājagaha and spent his time going his alms-rounds.

Now one day there was a festival at Sāvatthi, and on that day Ocean-of-Beauty's mother and father saw their son's friends diverting themselves amid great splendor and magnificence. Thereupon they began to weep and lament, saying, "This is past our son's getting now," At that moment a certain courtezan came to the house, and seeing his mother as she sat weeping, asked her, "Mother, why do you weep?" "I keep thinking of my son; that is why I weep." "But, mother, where is he?" "Among the monks, retired from the world." "Would it not be proper to make him return to the world?" "Yes, indeed; but he doesn't wish to do that. He has left Sāvatthi and gone to Rājagaha." "Suppose I were to succeed in making him return to the world; what would you do for me?" "We would make you the mistress of all the wealth of this household." "Very well, give me my expenses." And taking the amount of her expenses, she surrounded herself with a large retinue and went to Rājagaha. Taking note of the street in which the Venerable was accustomed to make his alms-round, she obtained a house in this street and took up her abode therein. And early in the morning she prepared choice food, and when the Venerable entered the street for alms, she gave him alms. After a few days had passed, she said to him, "Venerable, sit down here and eat your meal." So saying, she offered to take his bowl, and the Venerable yielded his bowl willingly. Then she served him with choice food, and having so done, said to him, "Venerable, right here is the most delightful spot to which you could come on your round for alms." For a few days she enticed him to sit on the veranda, and there provided him with choice food. That woman employed the devices of a woman, all the graces of a woman. The monk thought, "Alas, I have committed a grievous sin! I did not consider what I was doing." And he was deeply moved. At that moment the Buddha, although seated within the Jētavana, fourty-five leagues distant, saw the whole affair and smiled. Venerable Ānanda asked him. "Venerable, what is the cause, what is the occasion of your smiling?" "Ānanda, in the city of Rājagaha, on the topmost floor of a seven-storied palace, there is a battle on between the monk Ocean-of-Beauty and a harlot." "Who is going to win, Venerable, and who is going to lose?" The Buddha replied, "Ānanda, Ocean-of-Beauty is going to win, and the harlot is going to lose." Having thus proclaimed that the monk would win the victory, the Buddha, remaining seated where he was, sent forth a luminous image of himself and said, "Monk, renounce both lusts and free yourself from desire." At the end of the lesson the monk attained arahatship, rose into the air by magical power, passing through the circular peak of the house; and returning once more to Sāvatthi, praised the body of the Buddha and saluted the Buddha. The monks discussed the incident in the Hall of Truth, saying, "Brethren, all because of tastes perceptible by the tongue the Venerable Ocean-of-Beauty was well nigh lost, but the Buddha became his salvation." The Buddha, bearing their words, said, "Monks, this is not the first time I have become the salvation of this monk, bound by the bonds of the craving of taste; the same thing happened in a previous state of existence also."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 415)

idha yō kāmē pahatvāna anāgārō paribbajē
kāmabhava parikkhīṇaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇam brūmi
idha: in this world; yō: if some person; kāmē: sensual indulgenes; pahatvāna: has given up; anāgārē: (takes to) homeless; paribbajē: the ascetic life; (the life of the wondering ascetic); kāmabhava parikkhiṇaṁ: has got rid of the desire to continue the cycle of existence, taṁ: him; ahaṁ: I; brūmi brāhmanō: declare a brāhmaṇa

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Rejecting craving, homeless he goes to life journey's end. Him, a true brahmin I call.

416. *Yō'dha taṇhaṁ pahatvāna*
anāgārō paribbajē
taṇhābhavaparikkhīṇaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:34)

Who has abandoned lusting here
as homeless one renouncing all,
with lust and being quite consumed,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE MIRACLE RINGS

26 (34) Ajātasattu attacks Jōtika's Palace (Verse 416)

This verse was recited by the Buddha while He was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to the Venerable Jōtika.

For after Ajātasattu Kumāra had conspired with Dēvādatta and killed his father, Bimbisāra, and become established in the kingdom, he said to himself, "I will now take Jōtika, the great palace of treasurer," and arming himself for battle, he sallied forth. But seeing his own reflection and that of his retinue in the jeweled walls, he concluded, "The householder has armed himself for battle and has come forth with his host." Therefore he did not dare approach the palace.

Now it happened that on that day the treasurer had taken upon himself the obligations of Fast-day, and early in the morning, immediately after breakfast, had gone to the monastery and sat listening as the Buddha preached the Dhamma. When, therefore, the Yakkha Yamakōli, who stood guard over the first gate, saw Ajatāsattu Kumāra, he called out, "Where are you going?" And straightaway, putting Ajātasattu Kumāra and his retinue to rout, he pursued them in all directions. The king sought refuge in the very same monastery as that to which the treasurer had gone. When the treasurer saw the king, he rose from his seat and said, "Your majesty, what is the matter?" Said the king, "Householder, how comes it that after giving orders to your men to fight with me, you are sitting here pretending to be listening to the Dhamma?"

The treasurer said, "But, your majesty, did you set out with the idea of taking my house?" "Yes, for that very purpose did I set out." "Your majesty, a thousand kings could not take my house from me against my will." Upon this Ajātasattu became angry and said, "But, do you intend to become king?" "No," replied the treasurer, "I do not intend to become king. But neither kings nor robbers could take from me against my will the tiniest thread." "Then may I take the house with your consent?" "Well, your majesty, I have here on my ten fingers twenty rings. I will not give them to you. Take them if you can."

The king crouched on the ground and leaped into the air, rising to a height of eighteen cubits; then, standing, he leaped into the air again, rising to a height of eighty cubits. But in spite of the great strength he possessed, twist this way and that as he might, he was unable to pull a single ring from the treasurer's fingers. Then said the treasurer to the king, "Spread out your mantle, your majesty." As soon as the king had spread out his mantle, the treasurer straightened his fingers, and immediately all twenty rings slipped off.

Then the treasurer said to him, "Thus, your majesty, it is impossible for you to take my belongings against my will." But agitated by the king's action, he said to him, "Your majesty, permit me to retire from the world and become a monk." The king thought to himself, "If this treasurer retires from the world and becomes a monk, it will be an easy matter for me to get possession of his palace." So he said in a word, "Become a monk." Thereupon the treasurer Jōtika retired from the world, became a monk under the Buddha, and in no long time attained arahatship. Thereafter he was known as Venerable Jōtika. The moment he attained arahatship, all of his wealth and earthly glory vanished, and the divinities took back once more to Uttarakuru his wife Satulakāyī.

One day the monks said to Jōtika, "Brother Jōtika, have you any longing for your palace or your wife?" "No, brethren," replied Jōtika. Thereupon the monks said to the Buddha, "Venerable, this monk utters what is not true, and is guilty of falsehood." Said the Buddha, "Monks, it is quite true that my son has no longing for any of these things." And expounding the Dhamma, He pronounced this Stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 416)

idha yō taṇhaṁ pahatvāna anāgārō paribbaje
taṇhābhava parikkhīṇaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmanaṁ
brūmi

idha: in this world; *yō:* if someone; *taṇhaṁ:* craving; *pahatvāna:* has given up; *anāgārō:* (taken to) homeless; *paribbajē:* life of a wondering ascetic; *taṇhābhava parikkhīnaṁ:* has got rid of the craving to continue the cycle of existence; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ:* declare a brāhmaṇa

In this world, he has taken to the life of a wondering ascetic. He has got rid of the craving to continue the cycle of existence. I describe that person as a true brāhmaṇa.

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Rejects human ties, surpasses the heavenly too. Totally unbound, him I call a brahmin true.

417. *Hitvā mānusakaṁ yōgaṁ*
dibbaṁ yōgaṁ upaccagā,
sabbayōgavisaṁyuttaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:35)

Abandoned all the human bonds
and gone beyond the bonds of gods,
unbound one is from every bond,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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BEYOND ALL BONDS

26 (35) The Story of the Monk who was once a Mime (Verse 417)

It is said that a certain mime, giving performances from place to place, heard the Buddha preach the Dhamma, whereupon he retired from the world, became a monk, and attained arahatship. One day, as he was entering the village for alms, in company with the congregation of monks presided over by the Buddha, the monks saw a certain mime going through his performance. Thereupon they asked the monk who was once a mime, "Brother, yonder mime is going through the same kind of performance you used to go through; have you no longing for this sort of life?" "No, brethren," replied the monk. The monks said to the Buddha, "Venerable, this monk utters what is not true, is guilty of falsehood." When the Buddha heard them say this, He replied, "Monks, my son has passed beyond all bonds."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 417)

mānusakaṁ yōgaṁ hitvā dibbaṁ yōgaṁ upaccagā sabbhayōga visaṁ yuttaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmanam brūmi

mānusakaṁ yōgaṁ: human bonds; *hitvā:* having given up; *dibbaṁ yōgaṁ:* divine; heavenly-bonds; *upaccagā:* has crossed over; *sabba yōga visaṁyuttaṁ:* disengaged from all bonds; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmanaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

He has given up the bonds that bind him to humanity. He has gone beyond the bonds of attachment to life in heaven as well. This way, he is disengaged from all bonds. I declare such a person to be a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

The present verse arises out of the story of a Mime. This person achieved the highest fruits of spiritual pursuit, through unfailing effort. This spiritual effort is referred to on *padhāna*: effort. The four right efforts *(saṁma-ppadhāna)*, forming the sixth stage of the eight fold path *(saṁmā-vāyāma)* are: (1) the effort to Avoid *(saṁvara-padhāna)*, (2) to overcome *(pahāna)*, (3) to develop *(bhāvanā)*, (4) to maintain *(anurakkhaṇa)*: (i) the effort to avoid unwholesome *(akusala)* states, such as evil thoughts etc., (ii) to overcome unwholesome states, (iii) to develop wholesome *(kusala)* states, such as the seven elements of enlightenment *(bojjhaṇga)* (iv) to maintain the wholesome states.

The monk rouses his will to *avoid* the arising of evil, unwholesome things not yet arisen...to *overcome* them...to *develop* wholesome things not yet arisen...to *maintain* them, and not to let them disappear, but to bring them to growth, to maturity and to the full perfection of development. And he makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strive.

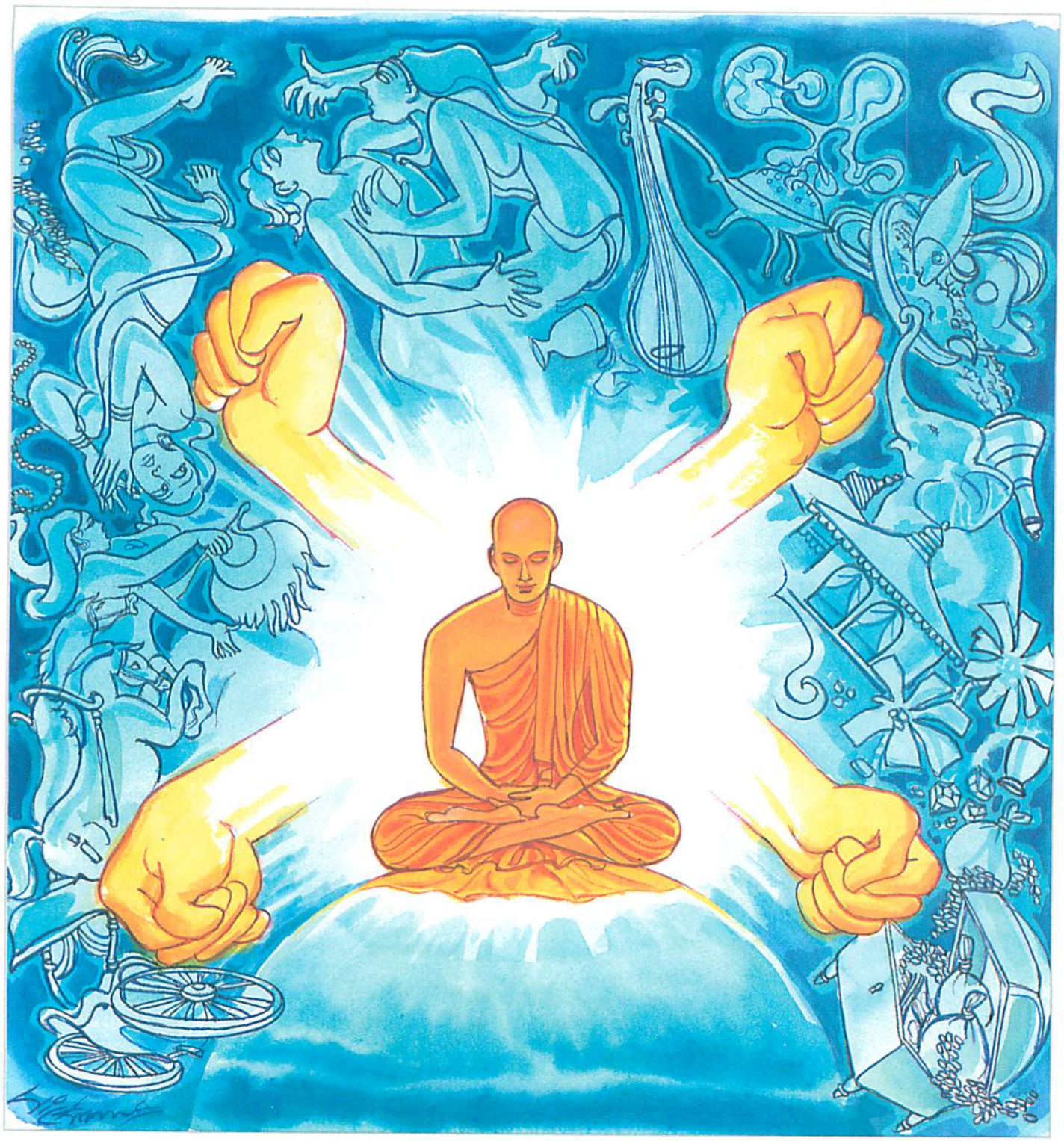
(1) What now, O' monks, is the effort is avoid? Perceiving a form, or a sound, or an odour, or a taste, or a bodily or mental impression, the monk neither adheres to the whole, nor to its parts. And he strives to ward off that through which evil and unwholesome things might arise, such as greed and sorrow, if he remained with unguarded sense; and he watches over his senses, restrains his senses. This is called the effort to avoid.

(2) What now is the effort to overcome? The monk does not retain any thought of sensual lust, or any other evil, unwholesome stages that may have arisen; he abandons them, dispels them, destroys them, causes them to disappear. This is called the effort to overcome.

(3) What now is the effort to develop? The monk develops the factors to enlightenment, bent on solitude, on detachment, on extinction, and ending in deliverance, namely, mindfulness *(sati)* investigation of the Dhamma *(Dhammavicaya)*, concentration *(samādhi)* effort (viriya), joy (pīti), repose (passaddhi), equanimity *(upekkhā)*. This is called the effort to develop.

(4) What now is the effort to maintain? The monk keeps firmly in his mind a favourable object of concentration, such as the mental image of a skeleton, a corpse infested by worms, a corpse blue-black in colour, a festering corpse, a riddled corpse, a corpse swollen up. This is called the effort to maintain."

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With likes and dislikes cast away, baseless he conquers this world. Him I call a brahmin true.

418. *Hitvā ratiṁ ca aratiṁ ca*
sītibhūtaṁ nirūpadhiṁ
sabbalōkābhibhuṁ vīraṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:36)

Abandoned boredom and delight,
become quite cool and assetless,
a hero, All-worlds-Conqueror,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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PERSON WHOSE MIND IS COOL

26 (36) The Story of the Monk who was once a Mime (Verse 418)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Vēluvana with reference to a certain monk who was once a mime.

The story is the same as the foregoing, except that on this occasion the Buddha said, "Monks, my son has put aside both pleasure and pain."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 418)

ratiṁ ca aratiṁ ca hitvā sītibhūtaṁ nirūpadhiṁ
sabbalōkābbibhuṁ vīraṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ
brūmi

ratiṁca: both lust; *aratiṁca:* and lustlessness; *hitvā:* given up; *sītibhūtaṁ:* he has become tranquil, calm and cool; *nirūpadhiṁ:* totally free of defilements; *sabbalōkābhibhuṁ:* who has conquered the whole world; *vīraṁ:* full of effort; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

He has given up lust. He has also given up his disgust for the practice of meditation. This way, he is both lustful and lustless. He has achieved total tranquility. He is devoid of the blemishes that soil the hand. He has conquered the whole world and is full of effort. I call that person a brāhmaṇa.

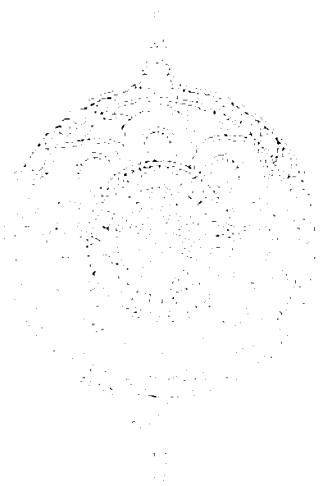
Commentary

nirūpadhi: free of *upadhi*. *Upadhi* means: substratum of existence. In the commentaries there are enumerated four kinds: The five groups *(khandha)*, sensuous desire *(kāma)*, mental defilements *(kilēsa)*, kamma. In the Sutta, it occurs frequently and with reference to Nibbāna, in the phrase "the abandoning of all substrata" *(sabb'ūpadhi-paṭinissaggō)*. The detachment from *upadhi* substraction of existence brings about *vivēkavā* which means detachment, seclusion, is according to Niddēsa, of three kinds: (1) bodily detachment *(kāya-vivēka)*, i.e. abiding in solitude free from alluring sensuous objects; (2) mental detachment *(citta-vivēka)*, such as the inner detachment from sensuous things; (3) detachment from the substrata of existence *(upadhi-vivēka)*.

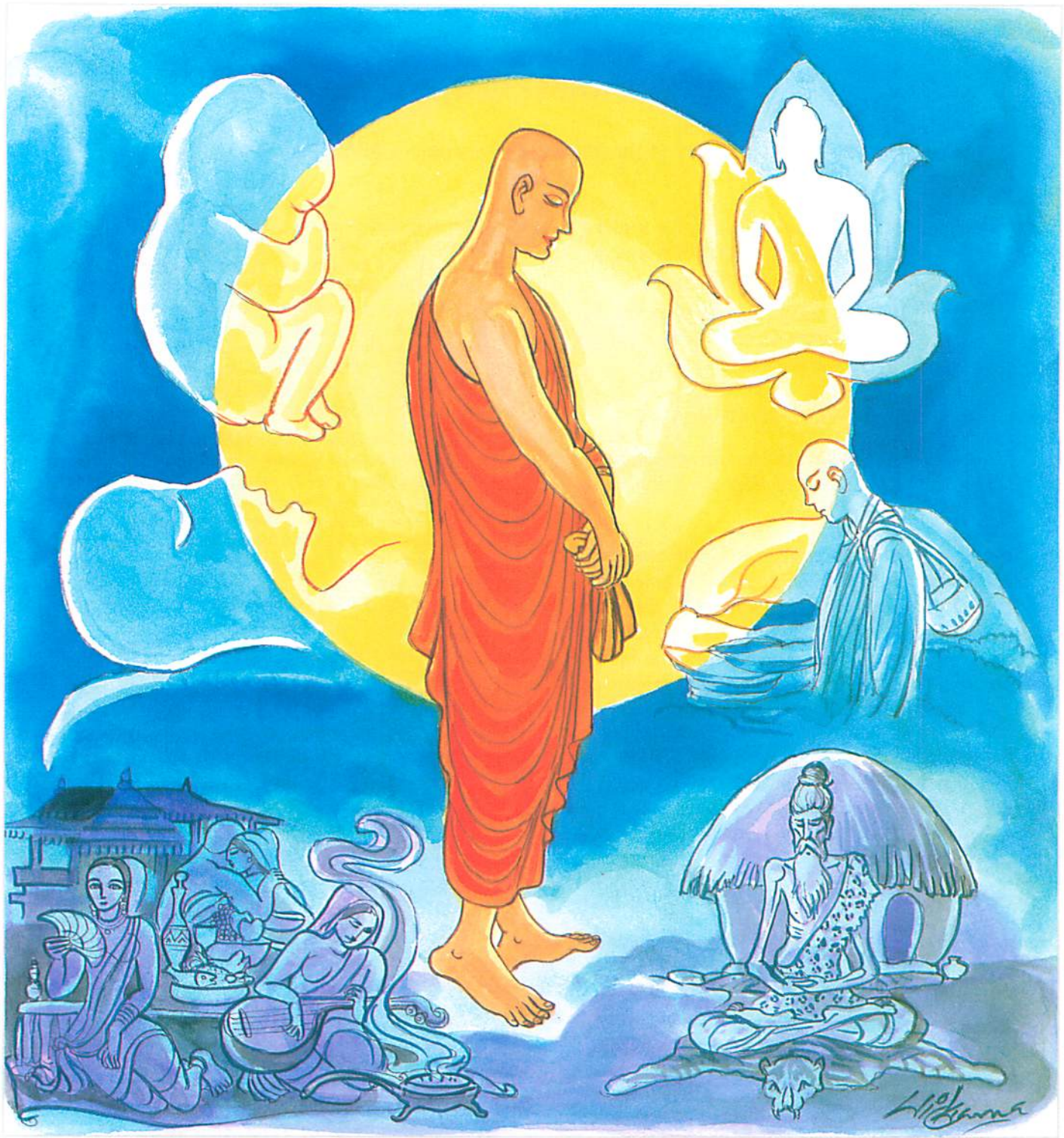
vīraṁ: hero. Here, this word is used in the spiritual sense to denote a person who possesses spiritual virility. This virility is referred in as *viriya*: energy, literally virility, manliness or heroism (from *vīra* man, hero; is one of the five spiritual faculties and powers *(bala)*, one of the seven factors of enlightenment *(bojjhaṇgō)* and identical with right effort of the eight-fold path *(magga)*. *Viriya* is also one of the bala. *Bala* is power. Among various groups of powers the following five are most frequently met with, in the texts (1) faith *(saddhā)*, (2) energy *(viriya)*, (3) mindfulness *(sati)*, (4) concentration *(samādhi)*, (5) wisdom *(paññā)*.

Their particular aspect, distinguishing them from the corresponding five spiritual faculties *(indriya)* is that they are unshakable by their opposites: (1) the power of faith is unshakable by faithlessness (unbelief), (2) energy, by laziness, (3) mindfulness, by forgetfulness, (4) concentration, by distractedness, (5) wisdom, by ignorance. They represent, therefore, the aspect of firmness of the spiritual faculties.

The Power (1) becomes manifest in the four qualities of the stream-winner *(sōtāpannassa angāni)*, (2) in the four right efforts *(padhāna)*, (3) in the four foundations of mindfulness *(satipaṭṭāna)*, (4) in the four absorptions *(jhāna)*, and (5) in the full comprehension of the four noble truths *(sacca)*.



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Knowing the rise and fall of beings, perfection he has reached. Him, I call a brahmin true.

419. *Cutiṁ yō vēdi sattānaṁ*
upapattiṁ ca sabbasō,
asattaṁ sugataṁ Buddhaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:37)

Who knows how clutching creatures die
to reappear in many a mode,
unclutching then, sublime, Awake,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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DIVINER OF REBIRTH

26 (37) The Story of the Skull-Tapper (Verses 419 & 420)

It seems that there lived at Rājagaha a brāhman named Vangīsa who could tell in which of the states of existence men were reborn at death. He would rap on their skulls and say, "This is the skull of a man who has been reborn in hell; this man has been reborn as an animal; this man has been reborn as a ghost; this is the skull of a man who has been reborn in the world of men."

The brāhmans thought to themselves, "We can use this man to prey upon the world." So clothing him in two red robes, they took him about the country with them, saying to everyone they met, "This brāhman Vangīsa can tell by rapping on the skulls of dead men in which of the states of existence they have been reborn; ask him to tell you in which of the states of existence your own kinsmen have been reborn." People would give him ten pieces of money or twenty or a hundred according to their several means, and would ask him in which of the states of existence their kinsmen had been reborn.

After travelling from place to place, they finally reached Sāvatthi and took up their abode near the Jētavana. After breakfast they saw throngs of people going with perfumes, garlands, and the like in their hands to hear the Dhamma. "Where are you going?" they asked. "To the monastery to hear the Dhamma," was the reply. "What will you gain by going there?" asked the brāhmans; "there is nobody like our fellow brāhman Vangīsa. He can tell by rapping on the skulls of dead men in which of the states of existence they have been reborn. Just ask him in which of the states of existence your own kinsmen have been reborn." "What does Vangīsa know!" replied the disciples, "there is no one like our Teacher who is the Buddha." But the brāhmans retorted, "There is no one like Vangīsa," and the dispute waxed hot. Finally the disciples said, "Come now, let us go find out which of the two knows the more, your Vangīsa or our Teacher." So taking the brāhmans with them, they went to the Monastery.

The Buddha, knowing that they were on their way, procured and placed in a row five skulls, one each of men who had been reborn in the four states of existence: hell, the animal world, the world of men, and the world of the deities; and one skull belonging to a man who had attained arahatship. When they arrived, He asked Vangīsa, "Are you the man of whom it is said that by rapping on the skulls of dead men you can tell in which of the states of existence they have been reborn?" "Yes," said Vangīsa. "Then whose is this skull?" Vangīsa rapped on the skull and said, "This is the skull of a man who has been reborn in Hell." "Good! good!" exclaimed the Buddha, applauding him. Then the Buddha asked him about the next three skulls, and Vangīsa answered without making a mistake. The Buddha applauded him for each answer he gave and finally showed him the fifth skull. "Whose skull is this?" he asked. Vangīsa rapped on the fifth skull as he had on the others, but confessed that he did not know in which of the states of existence the man had been reborn.

Then said the Buddha, "Vangīsa, don't you know?" "No," replied Vangīsa, "I don't know." "I know," the Buddha said. Thereupon, Vangīsa asked him, "Teach me this charm." "I cannot teach it to one who is not a monk." Thought the brāhman to himself, "If I only knew this charm, I should be the foremost man in all Jambudīpa." Accordingly, he dismissed his fellow brāhmans, saying, "Remain right here for a few days; I intend to become a monk." And he became a monk in the name of the Buddha, was admitted a full member of the Sangha, and was thereafter known as Venerable Vangīsa.

They gave him as his meditation topic the thirty-two constituent parts of the body and said to him, "Repeat the preliminary words of the formula." He followed their instructions and repeated the preliminary words of the formula. From time to time, the brāhmans would ask him, "Have you learned the formula?" and the Venerable would answer, "Just wait a little! I am learning it." In but a few days he attained arahatship. When the brāhmans asked him again, he replied, "Brethren, I am now unable to learn it." When the monks heard his reply, they said to the Buddha, "Venerable, this monk utters what is not true and is guilty of falsehood." The Buddha replied, "Monks, say not so. Monks, my son now knows all about the passing away and rebirth of beings."

(cont'd on page 891)

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Whose journeying none do ever know. That worthy and pure one, a true brahmin I call.

420. *Yassa gatiṁ na jānanti*
devā gandhabbamānusā
khīṇāsavaṁ arahantaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:38)

Whose destination is unknown
to humans, spirits or to gods,
pollutions stayed, an Arahant,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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DESTROY UNKNOWN

26 (37) The Skull-Tapper (Verses 419 & 420) (cont'd)

Commentary

Explanatory Translation (Verse 419)

yō sattānaṁ cutiṁ ca upapattiṁ ca sabbasō vēdi asattaṁ sugataṁ buddhaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō: if someone; *sattānaṁ:* of beings; *cutiṁ:* the decay; *uppattiṁca:* the birth too; *sabbasō:* in every way; *vēdi:* knows; *asattaṁ:* non attached to any form of birth or death; *sugataṁ:* of disciplined ways; *buddhaṁ:* possessing knowledge; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a true brāhmaṇa

He knows the death and birth of beings in every way. He is not attached either to birth or death. He has arrived at the proper destination. He possesses the knowledge of the essences. This person I describe as a brāhmaṇa.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 420)

yassa gatiṁ devā gandhabbamānusā na jānanti khīṇāsavaṁ arahantaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yassa: of some; *gatiṁ:* the state of rebirth; the path; *dēvā:* neither gods; *gandhabbā mānusā:* nor spirits nor humans; *na jānanti:* do not know; *khīnāsavā:* totally blemishless; *arahantaṁ:* have attained the higher spiritual state; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

Their path, neither gods, nor spirits, nor humans can fathom. Their taints are totally eradicated. They have attained the higher spiritual state. This person I declare a brāhmaṇa.

Commentary

This story is concerned with *Cutūpapāta-ñāna* which is the knowledge of the vanishing and reappearing of beings. This knowledge is identical with the divine eye - *abhiññā*. The expression *abhiññā* is applied to the six higher powers, or supernormal knowledge, which consist of five mundane *(lōkiya)* powers attainable through the utmost perfection in mental concentration *(samādhi)*, and one supermundane *(lōkuttara)* power attainable through penetrating insight *(vipassanā)*, like the extinction of all cankers *(āsavakkhaya)*, in other words, realization of arahatship. They are: (1) magical powers *(iddhi-vidhā)*, (2) divine ear *(dibba-sōta)*, (3) penetration of the mind of others *(cētō-pariya-ñāṇa)*, (4) divine eye *(dibba-cakkhu)*, (5) remembrance of former existences *(pubbē-nivāsānussati)*, and (6) extinction of cankers *(āsavakkhaya)*.

Now, O' monks, the monk enjoys the various magical powers *(iddhi-vidha)*, such as being one he becomes manifold, and having become manifold he again becomes one. Without being obstructed he passes through walls and mountains, just as if through the air. In the earth he dives and rises up again, just as if in the water. He walks on water without sinking, just as if on the earth. Crosslegged he floats through the air, just as a winged bird. With his hand he touches the sun and moon, these so mighty ones, so powerful ones. Even up to the brahma world has he mastery over his body.

With the divine ear *(dibba-sōta)* he hears sounds both heavenly and human, far and near.

He knows the minds of other beings *(parassa cētō-pariya-ñāṇa)*, of other persons, by penetrating them with his own mind. He knows the greedy mind as greedy and the not-greedy one as not greedy; knows the hating mind as hating and the not-hating one as not hating; knows the deluded mind as deluded and the not-deluded one as not deluded; knows the shrunken mind and the distracted one, the developed mind and the undeveloped one...the surpassable mind and the unsurpassable one...the concentrated mind and the unconcentrated one...the freed mind and the unfreed one."

With the divine eye *(dibba-cakku-yathā-kammūpaga-ñāṇa* or *cutūpapāta-ñāṇa)*, the pure one, sees beings vanishing and reappearing, low and noble ones, beautiful and ugly ones, sees how beings are reappearing according to their deeds (Sanskrit kama): 'There beings followed evil ways in bodily actions, words and thoughts, insulted the sages, held evil views, and according to their evil views they acted. At the dissolution of their body, after death, they have appeared in lower worlds, in painful states of existence, in the world of suffering, in hell. Those other beings, however, are endowed with good actions...have appeared in a happy state of existence, in a heavenly world..."

He remembers manifold former existence *(pubbē-nivāsānussati)*, such as one birth, or a hundred-thousand births; remembers many formations and dissolutions of worlds. 'There I was, such name I had'...and vanishing from there I entered somewhere else into existence...and vanishing from there I again reappeared here.' Thus he remembers, always together with the marks and peculiarities, many a former existence."

Through the extinction of all cankers *(āsavakkhaya)* even in this very life he enters into the possession of deliverance of mind, deliverance through wisdom, after having himself understood and realized it."

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Possessing none in time or place, grasping at none anywhere, him I call a brahmin true.

421. *Yassa purē ca pacchā ca*
majjhē ca natthi kiñcanaṁ
akiñcanaṁ anādānaṁ
tamahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:39)

That one who's free of everything
that's past, that's present, yet to be,
who nothing owns, who's unattached,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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HE YEARNS FOR NOTHING

26 (38) The Story of a Husband and Wife (Verse 421)

For once on a day, while she was living in the world, her husband Visākha, a lay disciple, heard the Buddha preach the Dhamma and attained the fruit of the third path. Thereupon he thought to himself, "I must now turn over all of my property to Dhammadinnā." Now it had previously been his custom on returning home, in case he saw Dhammadinnā looking out of the window, to smile pleasantly at her. But on this particular day, although she was standing at the window, he passed by without so much as looking at her. "What can this mean?" thought she. "Never mind, when it is meal-time, I shall find out." So when meal-time came, she offered him the usual portion of boiled rice. Now on previous days it had been his custom to say, "Come, let us eat together." But on this particular day he ate in silence, uttering not a word. "He must be angry about something," thought Dhammadinnā. After the meal Visākha settled himself in a comfortable place, and summoning Dhammadinnā to his side, said to her, "Dhammadinnā, all the wealth that is in this house is yours. Take it!" Thought Dhammadinnā, "Persons who are angry do not offer their property and say, 'Take it!' What can this mean?" After a time, however, she said to her husband, "But, husband, what about you?" "From this day forth, I shall engage no more in worldly affairs." "Who will accept the saliva you have rejected? In that case permit me also to become a nun." "Very well, dear wife," replied Visākha, giving her the desired permission. And with rich offerings he escorted her to the nuns' convent and had her admitted to the Sangha. After she had made her full profession she was known as the nun Dhammadinnā. Dhammadinnā yearned for the life of solitude and so accompanied the nuns to the country. Residing there, in no long time she attained arahatship together with the supernatural faculties. Thereupon she thought to herself, "Now, by reason of me, my kinsfolk will perform works of merit." Accordingly she returned once more to Rājagaha. When the lay disciple Visākha heard that she had returned, he thought to himself, "What can be her reason for returning?" And going to the nuns' convent and seeing the nun his former wife, he saluted her and seated himself respectfully on one side. Thought he, "It would be highly improper for me to say to her, 'noble sister, pray are you discontented?' I will therefore ask her this question." So he asked her a question about the path of conversion, and she immediately answered it correctly. Continuing this line of questioning, the lay disciple asked about the remaining paths also. He did not stop, however, at this point, but continuing his questions, asked her about arahatship. "Wonderful, brother Visākha!" exclaimed Dhammadinnā. "But if you desire to know about arahatship, you should approach the Buddha and ask him this question." Visākha saluted the nun his former wife, and rising from his seat and going to the Buddha, told the Buddha about their talk and conversation. Said the Buddha, "What my daughter Dhammadinnā said was well said. In answering this question I also should answer it as follows." Then he gave the stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 421)

Yassa purē ca pacchā ca majjhē ca kiñcanaṁ natthi akiñcanaṁ anādānaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

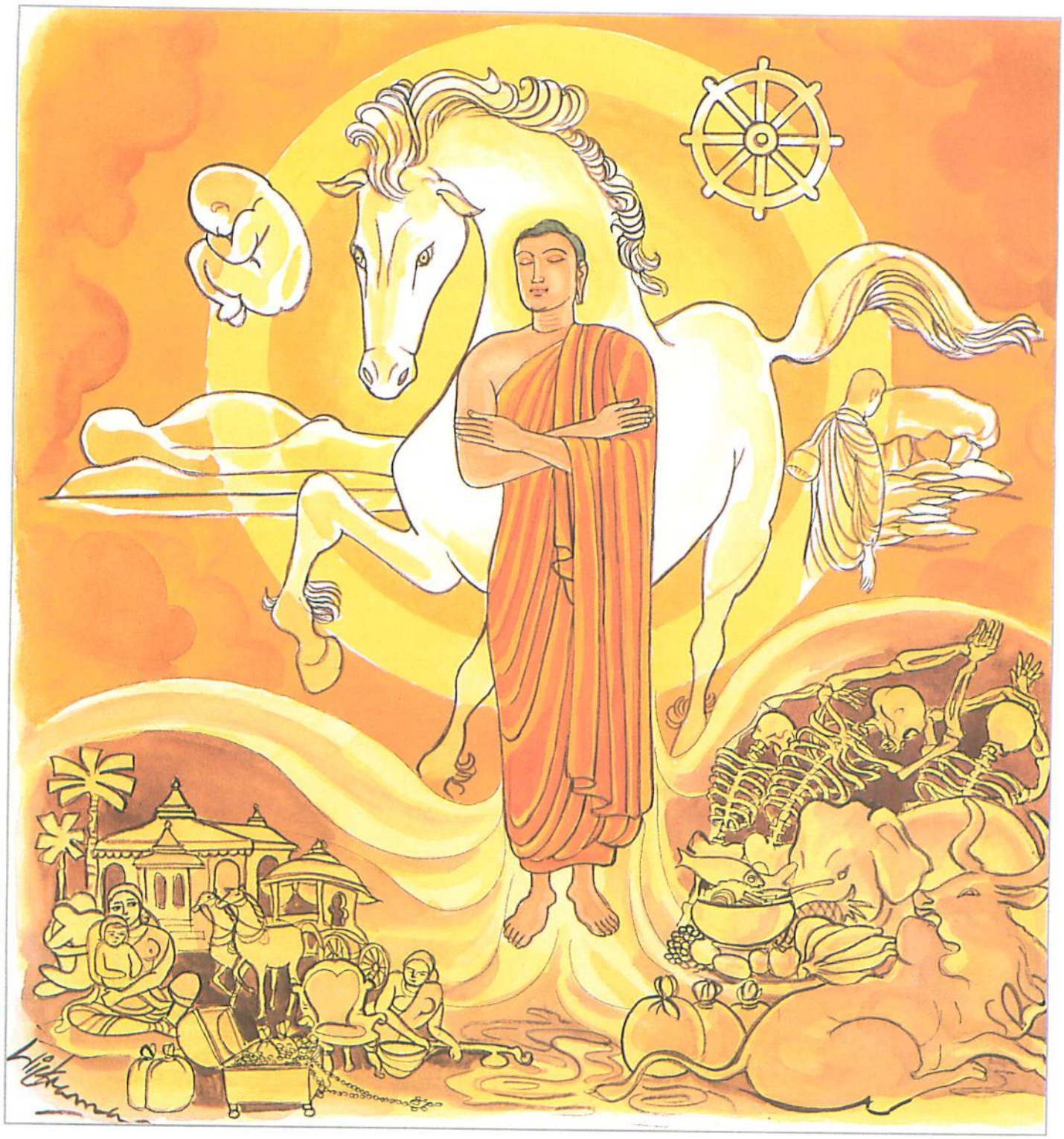
yassa: for whom; *purē ca*: of the past; *pacchāca:* of the future; *majjhēca:* of the present; *kiñcanaṁ natthi:* there are no blemishes; *akiñcanaṁ:* free of all defilements; *anādānam:* with no tendency to grasp; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmaṇa

For him, nothing no blemish remains from the past, present or the future. He has no defilements. He has no clinging or grasping. That person, I describe as a brāhmana.

Commentary

The story of Nun Dhammadinnā: During this dispensation, she figured herself as the wife of Visāka the treasurer at Rājagaha. Visākā was a friend of Bimbisāra, the king devoted to the Buddha. One day Visāka visited the Buddha in the company of king Bimbisāra. He listened to a sermon and became a budding saint *(sōtāpanna)*. On his return, he was a different individual. Strange did he appear to his wife. She inquired for the reasons. Then he confessed that his mind has undergone a transformation to something "rich and strange" Dhammadinnā promptly asked for permission to go to Buddha. Visāka could not but consent. She was sent in a golden palanquin. She was ordained as a nun. She felt that if she were to be unsuccessful in the life of Bikkhunī then her purpose of joining the noble Sangha was in vain. She repaired to a solitary place and strove with might and main to obtain the fruit of arahatship. Her past resolution with good kamma had the desired effect. She became an arahat. As such she visited the home town of Rājagaha so that she could be of service to her fellow creatures who knew her. The erstwhile husband did not understand. He thought that her mission was a failure and that she was returning empty handed. The husband plied her with questions and she deftly answered them. Finally he asked her about Nibbāna. Here he was out of his depth. He was not so advanced. He was at sea with her answers. So she referred him to the Buddha who not only concurred but also extolled Dhammadinnā for her learning the lesser Vēdalla Suta in the Majjhima Nikāya. Not long afterwards the Buddha addressing the monks and laity declared that Venerable Dhammadinnā was undoubtedly the foremost in expounding the Dhamma among the female disciples of the noble Sangha.

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Noble and excellent, with all battles won, clean and calm. Him, I call a brahmin true.

422. *Usabhaṁ pavaraṁ vīraṁ*
mahēsiṁ vijitāvinaṁ
anējaṁ nahātakaṁ Buddhaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:40)

One noble, most excellent, heroic too,
great sage and one who conquers all,
who's faultless, washed, one Awake,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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HE WHO IS RID OF DEFILEMENTS

26 (39) The Story of Angulimāla the Fearless (Verse 422)

This religious instruction was given by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to Venerable Angulimāla. This story is related in the commentary on the stanza beginning "The niggardly go not to the world of the deities." For it is there said: The monks asked Angulimāla, "Brother Angulimāla, were you not afraid when you saw the rogue elephant standing before you holding a parasol?" "No, brethren, I was not afraid." The monks said to the Buddha, "Venerable, Angulimāla utters falsehood." The Buddha replied, "Monks, my son Angulimāla has no fear. For monks like my son are of all the noble ones who have rid themselves of the depravities the noblest, and have no fear."

Explanatory Translation (Verse 422)

usabhaṁ pavaraṁ vīraṁ mahēsiṁ vijitāvinaṁ
anējaṁ nahātakaṁ buddhaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

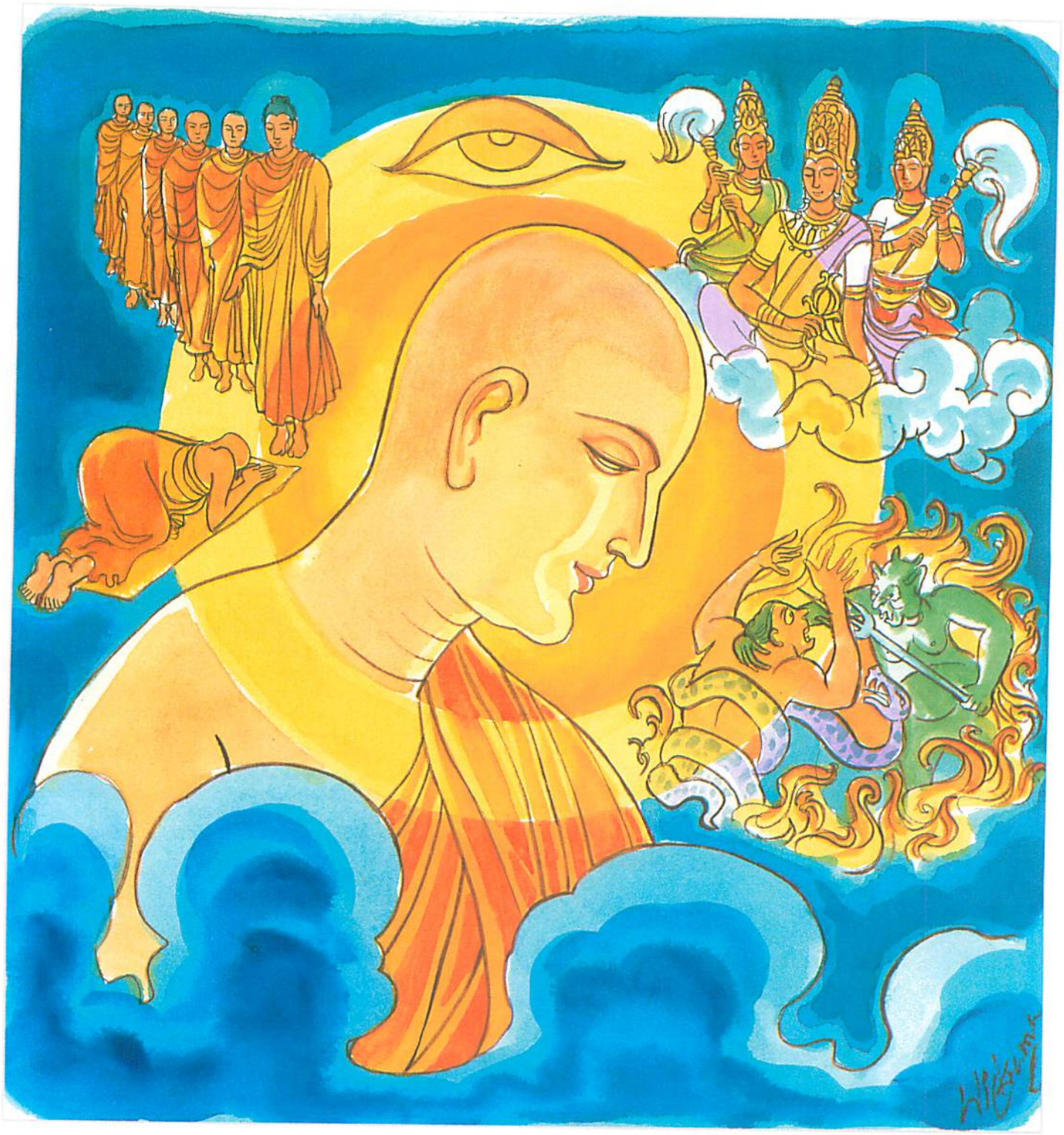
usabhaṁ: a bull — a leader; *pavaraṁ:* noble; *vīraṁ:* full of effort; *mahēsiṁ:* a great sage; *vijitāvinaṁ:* who has fully conquered; *anējaṁ:* devoid of craving; *nahātakaṁ:* who has washed away evil; *buddhaṁ:* knowing the essentials; *taṁ:* him; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmana

He is a bull in his power to forge ahead. He is a great sage as he has realized the essentials. He has conquered death. He is devoid of all blemishes. He has washed away all evil. He has awakened to the essentials. That person, I describe as a brāhmana.

Commentary

The story of Aṅgulimāla: This was a man of extremes. He is of a unique record. A bandit who has made good. His career offers a contrast. He was born to a counsellor, called Bhaggawa, to the king of Kōsala. According to custom the child was sent to the university of Taxila where he had a distinguished career. His name was converted to Ahiṁsaka harming none partly because he hailed from a family whose shield was untarnished by crime, and partly because of the child's character. He excelled in study and in spors. Soon, he incurred the jealousy and hostility of his colleagues who plotted against him. But he was very strong due to his ministrations in a former birth to a Paccēka Buddha. His enemies could not prevail against him. He was a favourite of the vice chancellor of the university. Soon, he incurred his hostility due to the whispering campaign of his enemies. They spoke of his illicit love to his wife. But he, too, being a clever and learned man, bided his time to compass his death. When the leave taking took place, he asked for the usual tribute due from a student to a teacher in the shape of an extra-ordinary request. He asked for one thousand right thumbs of human-beings. Ahiṁsaka was taken a back and promptly refused so sanguinary a request. But the end was adamant. In the event of refusal a curse would be on him. Again and again he pleaded in vain for another tribute. There was no escape from the rigid ancient custom as the tribute was in lieu of past tuition fees. So Ahiṁsaka demurred — consented in order to preserve the learning, for a refusal would act as a blight. Having armed himself, he repaired to the forest called Jālita in the Kōsala kingdom. He killed all and sundry who ventured into his domain.But the thumbs could not be preserved. Either the wild animals ate them, or they became rotten. He therefore got a garland made and was wearing it. Hence he was called 'Anguli Māla' He had 999 thumbs and was anxious to secure one more to close this bloody chapter. His teacher thought Anguli Māla would never survive the campaign. He would assuredly be slain in the process, or taken captive by the king. It was a fateful morning. The king, on receiving complaints from the people was setting out to capture the bandit, dead or alive. His mother Mantāni was anxious about the fate of her son. She implored her husband to warn the son of the impending danger. But he would have none of it. So the mother's love urged her to plunge into the forest, alone crying out that the son must pay heed to the family tradition by giving up killing and that the king's army was on the march to capture him. It was very likely that the bandit might nor spare his own mother, for he was desperate. The all compassionate Buddha saw his impending doom. He knew that he was destined to be an arahat in this very life. He saw the possibilities of redemption. So He planted Himself despite warning by the passers by between the robber and his mother. Here the robber saw that the perfect thumb of the Buddha would be a fitting finale to the series of bloody thumbs. So Anguli Māla hurried towards the Buddha as was his custom with his sword up lifted. The Buddha was going at a measured pace, but with all his speed Anguli Māla was not able to catch up the Buddha. This was willed by the Buddha. It was a psychic feat of the Buddha. Anguli Māla has come to the end of the tether by running so fast and so long. In utter desperation with beads of perspiration courging from his body he shouted out to the Buddha to stop — *Tiṭṭha Samana.* But the Buddha said that he had stopped. He, too, must also stop. The word stop galvanised him. To a potential arahat it has a wealth of meaning. It was closely related to *saṁsāra* — this ceaseless round of births and deaths. He asked the meaning of the word which he had temporarily lost sight of. When he was running Buddha must have moved, so thought Anguli Māla. Could it be that the Buddha was guilty of a falsehood. So Anguli Māla requested the Buddha to unfold the meaning of stopping. This was the opening the Buddha sought and the Buddha preached with precision and unerring skill. Anguli Māla flung the garland and weapons aside. He begged for ordination. At the end of the sermon he became an arahat by the application of *'ēhi bhikku'* formula of the Buddha. With Anguli Māla the arahat the Buddha went back to the temple. It was the custom of the king to visit the Buddha on the eve of a hazardous campaign. The Buddha inquired the cause of the armed expedition. The king explained. The Buddha told the king that Anguli Māla was in the temple. Hearing the very name mentioned the king was trembling. So fearsome was the report of Angulimāla. The Buddha hastened to explain that Anguli Māla in the temple was a far different being from the bloody bandit he was; Anguli Māla would not now even harm an ant. Though an arahat, the name stuck. One day on his rounds, Venerable Anguli Māla heard the birth pangs of an expectant mother in labour. Other Māha arahats must have heard the cries. But none of them was moved to the extent of Venerable Anguli Māla. He approached the Buddha and confessed his concern at such suffering and begged the Buddha to allay the anguish. The Buddha asked him to meditate upon the power of truth — in-asmuch as Anguli Māla was entirely devoid, since birth of cruelty, so by virtue of that truth, the suffering may be assuaged. Such was the blessing he was asked to give.

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Who knows past lives, bliss and woe, and ended thus his life's run. Him, I call a brahmin true.

423. *Pubbēnivāsaṁ yō vēdī*
saggāpāyañca passati
athō jātikkhayaṁ pattō
abhiññā vōsitō muni
sabbavōsitavōsānaṁ
tam ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ. (26:41)

Who so does know of former lives
and sees the states of bliss and woe
and then who's reached the end of births,
a sage supreme with wisdom keen,
complete in all accomplishments,
that one I call a Brahmin True.

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THE GIVER AND RECEIVER OF ALMS

26 (40) It is the Giver that makes the Gift (Verse 423)

This verse was spoken by the Buddha while He was in residence at Jētavana with reference to a question asked by brāhman Dēvāhita.

For once upon a time the Buddha suffered from disorder of the humors and sent Venerable Upavāna to brāhman Dēvaṇgika for hot water. The Venerable went to the brāhman, told him the Buddha was suffering from disorder of the humors, and asked him for hot water. When the brāhman heard the Buddha's request, his heart was filled with joy. "How fortunate for me," he exclaimed, "that the Buddha should send to me for hot water!" The brāhman gave the Venerable hot water and a jar of molasses, ordering one of his men to carry the hot water on a pingo. The Venerable caused the Buddha to bathe himself in hot water, and then mixing the molasses with hot water, gave it to the Buddha to drink. The Buddha's ailment immediately abated.

The brāhman thought to himself, "To whom should one give alms to obtain a great reward? I will ask the Buddha." So he went to the Buddha and asked him about the matter, giving this stanza.

To whom shall one give alms?
To whom must alms be given to get a great reward?
How, for the giver, does the reward become a great one?

Said the Buddha to the brāhman, "The alms of such a brāhman as this yield abundant fruit." And proclaiming his conception of the true brāhman, He gave the stanza.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 423)

yō pubbēnivāsaṁ vēdī saggāpāyaṁ ca passati
athō jātikkhayaṁ pattō abhiññā vōsitō munī
sabbavōsitavōsānaṁ taṁ ahaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ brūmi

yō munī: if some sage; *pubbēnivāsaṁ:* former births; *vēdi:* knows; *saggāpāyaṁ ca:* heaven and hell; *passati:* perceives; *athō:* besides; *jātikkhayaṁ:* to the ends of existence; *pattō:* has reached; *abiññā:* seeing with supreme wisdom; *vōsitō:* accomplished all; *munī:* a sage; *sabbavōsitavōsānaṁ:* who has completed the life of the truth seeker, by attaining the highest; *taṁ:* that perfect person; *ahaṁ:* I; *brāhmanaṁ brūmi:* declare a brāhmana

He knows his former existences. He has the capacity to see heaven and hell - states of ecstasy and states of woe. He has ended the cycle of existences. He has his higher awareness. He has reached the state of a sage. He has achieved the final perfection. Him, I describe as a brāhmana.

Commentary

The story of Venerable Upavāna: According to the story that gives rise to this stanza, the Buddha sent Venerable Upavāna to brāhmin Dēvaṇgika. This is the story of Venerable Upavāna:

The story of his past life occurred after the passing away of Padumuttarā Buddha. The occasion was the enshrining of the relics. A mighty dāgoba was being built by beings human and devine. He was a poor man who had a shawl as a part of his dress. He got this shawl thoroughly cleaned. He honoured the relics by planting the same as a banner on a long bamboo by the side of dāgoba.

An evil spirit chief called Abhisaṁmathaka got the shawl planted secretly on the top of the dāgoba. When he saw what has happened, his joy knew no bounds. By reason of this merit, he never failed to have a following, wherever, he was born. He was always a leader. He was born many times as Sakka king of deities or as a powerful king *(chakravarthirāja)*. Thereafter he was born in this dispensation in a brāhmin's family. He was named Upavāna.

He too became well versed in Vedic lore. He was an attendant of the Buddha before Venerable Ānanda took upon the task. On the Buddha falling ill. Upavāna went to a lay supporter or dāyaka and extolled the virtue of the Buddha. He procured from him warm water and suitable medicine and rendered medical aid to cure the Buddha. Thereafter, he plied the monk's life so incessantly that in no long time he became an arahat.

There was a notable incident in connection with the passing away of the Blessed One. While he was standing by the couch fanning, the Buddha requested him to leave. All present were struck by the remark. The elder Ānanda who was as usual the spokesman inquired for the reason. The Buddha told Ānanda how hundreds and thousands of the invisible world, powerful dēvās and evil spirits are hunting for every inch and often pin points of available space to have a last look at the Buddha. It is no secret that unlike in the case of wordings who were transparent to the gaze of dēvās and all, arahats were not. Therefore, Venerable Upavāna had to allow way.

He was one of the eighty arahats of the noble Sangha.

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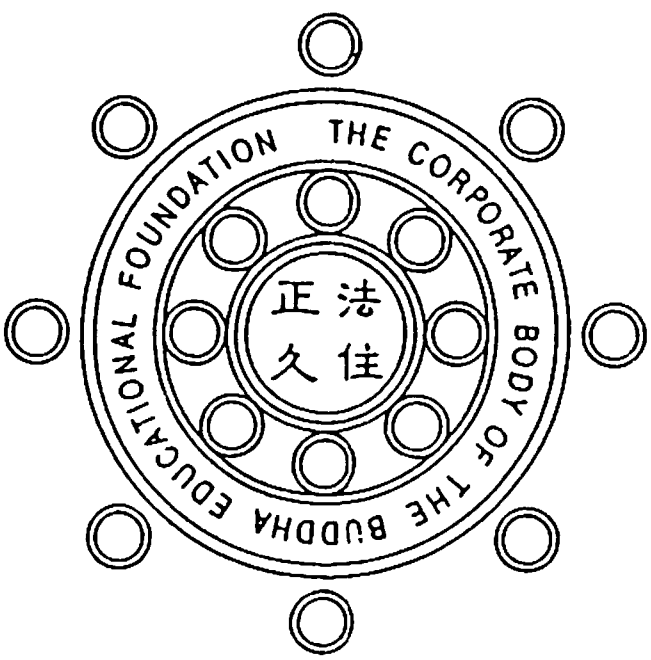
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Life by principle

Buddhism taught a life not by rule, but by principle, a life of beauty; and as a consequence, it was a religion of tolerance. It was the most charitable system under the sun.

Rev. Joseph Wain

Buddha is the way

I feel more and more that Sakyamuni is the nearest in character and effect to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Bishop Milman

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Philosophic Genius

The Buddha was a pioneer as a lover of man, and a philosophic genius rolled into a single vigorous and radiant personality. He had things to say that no man or woman, after 2500 years of bustling and hustling and chattering round the fountain of knowledge, can afford to ignore. Greater perhaps than his wisdom was the example he set.

Moni Bagghee, "Our Buddha"

He does not speak of sin

Serenity of spirit and love for all sentient creation are enjoined by the Buddha. He does not speak of sin, but only of ignorance and foolishness which could be cured by enlightenment and sympathy.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "Gautama The Buddha"

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Buddhism does not lead us to a Fool's Paradise

Buddhism is realistic, for it takes a realistic view of life and of the world. It does not falsely pull us into living in a fool's paradise, nor does it frighten and agonize us with all kinds of imaginary fears and guilt-feelings. It calls us exactly and objectively what we are and the world teaching of Gotama, revived and purified, may yet play a large part in the direction of human destiny.

H.G. Wells

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