Gotamaka Cetiya Sutta
The Discourse at the Gotama Shrine | A 3.123
[Conclusion to the Mūla,pariyāya Sutta, M 1 @ SD 11.8]
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1 Introduction
The Áṅguttara Commentary says that this discourse is given to the same monks to whom the Buddha has earlier taught the Mūla,pariyāya Sutta (M 1) to point out their pride and conceit. When the Buddha notices that these monks have overcome their pride and conceit, he makes this statement at the Gotamaka Shrine. [2]
This time the monks give their approval and, while seated, attain to arhathood together with the 4 analytical knowledges (paṭisambhidā).¹

2 The Gotamaka Cetiya
The Gotamaka Shrine (gotamaka cetiya), said to be the abode of the yaksha (tutelary spirit) Gotamaka (AA 2:272), was located to the south of Vesālī, the capital of the Licchāvī tribe (D 3:9). It was one of the beautiful sights of that town (D 2:102, 118) and the Buddha stayed there several times, esp during the first 20 years of the ministry (AA 2:373). During one such occasion, the Buddha laid down the rule that allows monks the use of the three robes (upper robe, outer robe, under-robe). He himself felt the cold there and had to wear extra clothing (V 1:288, 3:195). A vihara (monastic residence) was later built there for the Buddha and his monks.² The Divyāvadāna (a Sanskrit life of the Buddha), in a list of well-known places, mentions a Gautama,nyagrodha (Gotamaka Banyan)—implying that the shrine had a large banyan tree or banyan trees. (Divy 201)

3 The causes of earth-quakes
Due to the importance of the Mūla,pariyāya Sutta (M 1), it is placed first in the Majjhima Nikāya. That the monks overcome their pride and arrogances and became arhats here is understandably an “earth-shaking” event. In the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16), the Buddha explains the eight causes of earth-quakes to Ānanda as follows:
(1) Tectonic movement: “The great earth rests on water; the water on wind; the wind on space. And when the mighty wind moves, it disturbs the water, and through the disturbance of the water, the earth quakes.”
(2) A supernatural event. An ascetic or brahmin who has developed psychic powers, or a powerful deva “whose earth-consciousness is weakly developed but his water-consciousness is immeasurable, and he makes the earth shudder and shake violently.”
(3) The conception of the Bodhisattva, when he descends from Tusita heaven and enters his mother’s womb.
(4) The nativity, that is, when the Bodhisattva is born.
(5) The Great Awakening.
(6) When the Dharma Wheel is first set in motion, that is, the First Discourse.
(7) When the Buddha renounces his will-to-live.
(8) When the Buddha finally passes away without any remainder of the Aggregates (of form, feeling, perception, dispositions, consciousness). (D 2:107-109)

¹ The 4 Analytical Knowledges (paṭisambhidā) are 4 types of discriminative insight, namely: (1) Discrimination of true meanings or analytic insight of consequences (attha,paṭisambhidā); (2) Discrimination of ideas (incl the Teaching) or analytic insight of universal principles (dhamma,paṭisambhidā); (3) Discrimination of language or skill in communication (in connection with the previous two things); (4) Discrimination of sagacity or skill in ready wit (in connection with the previous three things). (A 2:160; Pm 1:119; Vbh 294). See BDict: Paṭisambhidā.
² UA 322; DhA 3:246; SnA 1:344.

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1 At one time the Blessed One was dwelling at the Gotama Shrine near Vesālī. There the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus!”

“Bhante!” replied the monks.

The Blessed One said this:

2 HOW THE BUDDHA TEACHES THE DHARMA. 3

(1) “Bhikshus, I teach the Dharma based on direct knowledge, 4 not without direct knowledge.

(2) Bhikshus, I teach the Dharma with proper cause, 5 not without proper cause.

(3) Bhikshus, I teach the Dharma with wonders, 6 not without wonders.

3 BENEFITS OF THE BUDDHA’S TEACHING. As such, bhikshus, because I teach the Dharma based on direct knowledge, not without direct knowledge;

because I teach the Dharma with proper cause, not without proper cause;

because I teach the Dharma with wonders, not without wonders,

my advice should be followed, my teaching should be practised.

4 And this, bhikshus, is enough for you to be content, enough for you to be gratified, enough for you to be joyful—

Fully self-awakened is the Blessed One.

Well-taught is the Dharma [the true teaching].

Well-conducted is the Sangha [the holy community of saints].

The Blessed One said this.

5 The monks rejoiced and approved of the Blessed One’s word. While this explanation was being given, the thousandfold world system trembled. 7

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3 The 3 teachings also listed in Mahā Sakul’udāyi S (M 77,12/2:9 f), SD 49.5.

4 “Direct knowledge” (abhiññā), also called “higher knowledge”, of which there are six (cha-lābhiññā) are given in detail in Sāmañña.phala S (D 2.87-98/2:77-86), SD 8.10. The Canon has a list of fivefold direct knowledge or supernatural knowledge (pañcābhiññā), or what we might today call psychic powers or extrasensory perception (ESP) which are given in the Sāmañña.phala S (D 1:77 f) as: (1) various psychic powers (iddhi,vidhā), (2) The divine ear (dibba,sota), ie clairaudience, the ability to hear speech and sounds from a great distance by paranormal mean. (3) Mind-reading or thought-reading (para,citta,vijānanā), ie telepathy, the perception of thought and mental states of another person by paranormal means. (4) Recollection of one's past lives (pūba,nīvāsānussati), ie retrocognition. (5) The divine eye (dibba,cakkhu), ie clairvoyance, the perception of objects and events by paranormal means.

5 Knowledge of the destruction of the cankers (āsava-κ, khaya,na), ie of the sense-desires (kāmāsava), of existence (bhavāsava), of views (diṭṭhāsava), and ignorance (avijjāsava) (Vbh 334, cf S 2:121) which accompanies the attainment of awakening. See Miracles, SD 27.5a (5).

6 “With proper cause” (sa,nidāna), ie showing cause and effect, or causality (paccaya) (AA 1:374). See SD 46.-19 (3.3.3), where it is given as an example of a teaching with a connection (sānusandhi,kaṭhā).

7 “With wonders” (sa-pāṭhāriya), alt tr “convincingly”. Comys give 2 meanings: (1) defeating the adversaries [such as winning debates with non-Buddhists]; (2) bringing out qualities that counter such defilements as lust etc. (AA 1:374; UA 10; ItA 1:21; cf BA 20). In other context, pāṭhāriya usually means “extraordinary, wonderful, marvellous, miraculous” (D 1:212, 3:3 f; S 4:290; A 1:170, 5:327; Pm 2:227).

7 For the causes of earth-quakes, see Intro (3).

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