The Discourse on
The Great Parinirvana
D 16

Chapter 1
(First Recital, paṭhamā bhānāvāra)

1 [72] Thus have I heard:
1.1 At one time the Blessed One was staying on Mount Vulture Peak at Rājagaha.\(^{423}\)

MAGADHA

Ajāta,sattu

1.1.1 Now at that time,\(^{424}\) the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta\(^{425}\) of Magadha,\(^{426}\) wished to wage war against the Vajjis.\(^{427}\) He said thus:

“These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!”\(^{428}\)

1.2 Then, the rajah Ajātassatu Vedehi,putta of Magadha addressed the brahmin Vassa,kāra, chief minister of Magadha,\(^{429}\) thus:

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\(^{423}\) Mahā,parinibbāna S opens with the Buddha staying on Mt Vulture’s Peak (Gijjha,kūṭa/Grdhra,kūṭa) at Rāja,grha, the capital of Magadha and one of the six main cities of India (D 2:147). It has been identified as modern Raigir in the Nalanda district of Bihar about 21 km (13 miles) southwest of Bihar-Sarif. Its southern flank is protected by five hills: Vebhāra (Vaihārā), Vepullā (Vaipulā), Isigili (Rsi,giri), Paṇḍava (Paṇḍava) and Gijjhā,kūṭa (Grdhra,kūṭa). As evident from Go-paka Moggallāna S (M 108), it is probable that king Ajātassatu was fortiﬁng Rājagaha around this time (or earlier) because he is worried that king Canda Pajjota of Avanti might attack him (M 108.2/3:7). The sutta Comy says Ajātassatu, knew that Pajjota was Bimbisāra’s good friend and was worried that Pajjota might avenge Bimbisāra’s death at his hands by attacking him (MA 4:71). On the middle country and the 16 great states, see Intro (16.1). On this following episode, see M Pye, The Buddha, 1979:63-71 (ch 7).

\(^{424}\) This would probably be about a year before the Buddha’s parinirvana.

\(^{425}\) Vedehi,putta (Skt Vaidehi,putra, Avdā 1.57.2 ff). Ajāta,sattu (Skt Ajāta,śatrū) (r 494-461) was called Vaidehi,putra because his mother was from Videha, whose capital was Mithilā. But Buddhaghosa explains that Vedehi here refers to a “wise woman” and not the “Videha lady,” since his mother is the daughter, not of a Videha king, but a Kosala king (J 3:121, 4:342). The Jātakas know her as Kosala,devī, the daughter of Mahā Kosāla and sister of Pasenadi (Skt Prasenajit) (J 2:273, 403, 3:121 f). For details, see Sāmaṇḍī,phala S (D 2), SD 8.10 (4).

\(^{426}\) Magadha was separated from Anā by the Campā river, and its territory extended westward to the Son river, corresponding approximately to the present Patāñ and Gayā districts of South Bihar. See Finegan 1989:85-90.

\(^{427}\) Ajātassatu, having come into power, decides to conquer the Licchavis of Vesālī/Vaiśālī and the Vajjī/Vṛjī confederacy (especially the Licchavis of Vaiśālī and the Mallas of Kusinārā/Kuśinagarā and Pāvā/Pāpā). Before embarking on his venture, Ajāta,sattu wishes to know what outcome the Buddha would foresee. Consequently, he despatches his chief minister, the brahmin Vassakāra/Varsaṅkāra, to consult the Buddha. On the political condition of India at that time, see Intro (16.2).

\(^{428}\) Vassakāra S (A 7.20/4:17-21) relates how Ajāta,sattu applies his cunning through his chief minister, Vassa,kāra, who pretends that he has barely escaped with his life from Ajāta,sattu. Having been given refuge and hospitality at Vesālī, Vassakāra lived there for 3 years, secretly sowing dissension amongst the Vajjis. However, it was only after 16 years that the Vajjis fell under his sway. Since then, the most important Vajjī tribe, the Licchavis, remained subdued for many centuries until the 4th century CE, when they would regain their power under the Imperial Guptas, with Candragupta I marrying Kumāra,devī, a daughter of the Licchavis and becoming the mother of Samudragupta (DA 99; JASB 17 1921:269-271). For details, see Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples (2004) ch 8 “The Thundering Silence” §9b.

\(^{429}\) Vassa,kāra, often paired with Sunīḍha: see §1.26. “Chief minister,” mahāmattā (cf Skt mahā,mātra) = mahā āmaccā? PED: “A king’s chief minister [evidently more than one of them]: he is the prime minister ‘who was the highest Ofﬁcer-of-State and real Head of the Executive’ (Banerjea, Public Administration in Ancient India, 1916). His position is of such importance, that he even ranges as a rājā or king: V 3:47 (rājā...akkhadasā mahāmattā ye vā pana chejjabhejjaṁ anusāsanti ete rājāno nāma). — Note. An acc sg mahā-mattānāṁ we ﬁnd at A 1:154 (formed after the prec rājānam). See V 1:74 (where 2 ranks of mahāmaccā are given: senā-nāyaka ~a the minister of defence, and vohārika ~a those of law); also D 1.7, 3.88, 3.64 (here with ep khattiya): A 1:154, 252, 279, 3:128; V 4:224; Vism 1:21; VbhA 312 (in simile of 2 ~ā), 340; 84

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“Brahmin, go to the Blessed One and bow your head at the Blessed One’s feet on my behalf, and ask after his health, that he has good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort;\(^{430}\) saying thus:

‘Bhante, the rajah Ajātassattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort.’ Then say: ‘The rajah Ajātassattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjis. He says thus: ‘These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss\(^{[73]}\) and misfortune!’’

And whatever the Blessed One should answer you, bear it well in mind and report to me—for the Tathāgata [Thus Come] does not speak falsely.”

1.3 “Yes, sir,” the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, replied to the rajah Ajātassattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha.

Then, having ordered a number of magnificent state carriages, he mounted one of them, and leaving Rājagaha, headed for Mount Vulture Peak.

He went in his carriage as far as the ground would permit, dismounted and went up to the Blessed One, and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama,\(^{431}\) the rajah Ajātassattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha, bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort, and the rajah Ajātassattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjis. He says thus: ‘These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!’”

The 7 conditions for a nation’s welfare\(^{432}\)

1.4 At that time, the venerable Ānanda was standing behind the Blessed One, fanning him.\(^{433}\) Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda thus:

(1) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjis gather regularly and that their gatherings [assemblies] are well attended?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjis gather regularly and that their gatherings are well attended.”

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\(^{430}\) App.’ābādhaṁ app’ātānkan lāhu-t, thānāṁ balan phāsų, viṁḥāram...puccha, lit “ask (if) he is free from sickness, free from illness, in a state of lightness, having strength, dwelling in comfort.” This is stock: D 1 204, 2:72; M 2:91, 108, 125, 141.

\(^{431}\) Note that Vassakāra addresses the Buddha as bho Gotama, in a manner different from Ajātassattu’s instruction (where bhanie is used). Evidently, Vassakāra shows only nominal respect to the Buddha. See §1.29n. The Majjhima Comy (to the Gopaka Moggallāna S, M 108) has a curious story about Vassakāra: once, seeing Mahā Kaccāna descending Mt Vulture Peak, he remarks that Mahā Kaccāna looked just like a monkey. Hearing this, the Buddha remarks that unless Vassakāra asks for the elder’s forgiveness, he would be born as a monkey in Veḷu, vana. Vassakāra, fearing the Buddha’s prophecy coming true, had various fruit trees and other trees planted in Veḷu, vana, to be of use to him as a monkey. After his death, he was actually reborn as a monkey who answered to the name Vassakāra! (MA 4:73)

\(^{432}\) The traditional texts (such as the CSCD) call this section rāja aparahāṇiya, dhāmman, “the king’s conditions for non-decline.” See Intro (10.1) above.

\(^{433}\) The Pali Canon records are at least six instances of a monk fanning the Buddha: (1) Nāg, saṃā (Mahā Sihanāda S, M 12.64/1:83); (2) Sāriputta (Dīgha, nakhā S, M 74.14/ 1:501 f); (3) Ānanda (2 instances): Mahāparinibbāna S (D 16,-1.4/2:73) & Vassakāra S (A 7.20.2/4:18); (4) Upavāṇa (2 instances): Pāsādika S (D 29) mentions Upavāṇa fanning the Buddha, ie, just after the Buddha has given Cunda Saman’uddesa an instruction on the 4 satipathana (D 29, 41/3:141), which is probably on a different occasion from the instance reported in Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16,5.4/2:138), when again he fans the dying Buddha. Comy says that although the Buddha is fanned, he feels neither warm nor cold (AA 4:14).

Analayo notes that while the Majjhima rarely mention a monk fanning the Buddha, the Madhyama Āgama (in Chinese tr) regularly depicts the Buddha being fanned, eg MĀ 33 = T1.474a19 || M 106; MĀ 204 = T1.775c17 || M 26; MĀ 205 = T1.779a10 || M 64; MĀ 212 = T1.793a1 || M 90; MĀ 213 = T.1.797b19 || M 89 (2005:54 n83). Cf Thich Minh Chau, The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya, 1991:30.

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“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather regularly and that their gatherings are well attended, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(2) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs assemble in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and conduct the Vajjī duties in fellowship?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and do the Vajjī duties in fellowship.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and do the Vajjī duties in fellowship.”

(3) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the ancient Vajjī Dharma?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the ancient Vajjī Dharma.”

(4) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them.”

(5) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.”

(6) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs hono range, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī shrines, both those within the city and outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.”

(7) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) would come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

Teaching at Sārandada shrine

1.5 Then the Blessed One addressed the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha:

“One, brahmin, when I was staying at the Sārandada shrine, I taught the Vajjīs these seven conditions for non-decline. Brahmin, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the Vajjīs, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

434 “Vajjī duties,” *Vajjī,karaṇīyā*, lit “that which should be done by the Vajjīs,” ie their affairs of state and their civil and common duties.

435 “Vajjī Dharma,” *Vajjī,dhamma,* or “the Vajjī code,” eg a criminal (such as a thief) is not summarily judged, but goes through stages of adjudication, until he is found guilty beyond reasonable doubt (DA 2:519).

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When the Blessed One has said that, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, if the Vajjī were accomplished in even just one of these conditions for non-decline, their growth is to be expected, not [76] their decline, what to say of 7 conditions of non-decline! Master Gotama, there is no way that the Vajjī can be overcome by any war of the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, other than by loss and misfortune, other than by internal discord.”

Well, then, master Gotama, I now take leave. Many are my duties, many my responsibilities.”

“Please, brahmin, do as you deem fit here.”

Then the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, joyfully approving of the Blessed One’s words, rose from his seat, and left.

**CONDITIONS FOR NON-DECLINE OF THE ORDER**

**Sāngha aparāhāṇiya, dhammā**

Rājagaha monks assembled

1.6 Then, not long after the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, had left, the Blessed One addressed Ānāna:

Bhikshus, now the Licchavīs dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in exercise (upāsana). The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the Licchavīs will become delicate, with soft and tender hands and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. Then Ajātasattu will find their weakness and have a hold on them.

Bhikshus, now the monks dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in striving. Māra the Bad One cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the monks will become delicate, with soft and tender hand and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. Then Māra will find their weakness and have a hold on them.

Therefore, bhikshus, you should train yourselves thus: “Using blocks of wood as cushions, we will dwell diligent and ardent in striving.” Thus you should train yourselves. (S 20.8/2:267 f)

“Internal discord,” *mithu, bheda,* Vassakāra is thinking of sowing disunity amongst the Vajjīs through sabotage. The Dīgha Conny relates how Vassakāra later conspires with Ajātasattu, who feigns to expel him from his kingdom on the charge that he favours the Vajjīs in the assembly. Welcomed by the unsuspecting Licchavīs, Vassakāra is appointed teacher to their children. Through his cunning, he caused the children to quarrel amongst themselves, and the conflict later spread amongst the elders. In three years, the Licchavīs were completely disunited so that Ajātasattu overran their land without resistance (DA 522 f). See prev n.

Vassa dāni tvam brāhmaṇa kālam maññasi ti, lit “Please do what you think it is the now time to do.” This is stock: Sāmaṇīya, phala S (D 2.103/1:85 @ SA 8.10); Mahā Parinibbāna S (A 16.3/6:2/104 @ SD 13), Sekha S (M 53.3/1:354 @ SD 21.14), Kaṇḍaka-t-thala S (M 90.17/2:132 f @ SD 10.8); Puṇṇovāda S (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31 @ SD 20.15), Avassuta S (S 35.243/4:183,15, 30), Khemā Therī S (S 44.1/4:379,29), Vesāli S (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17) & Thapatāyā S (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” Buddhist Studies Review 10, 1993:27-43.

Here again we see Vassakāra’s aloofness towards the Buddha as contrasted against how Ajātasattu himself takes leave of the Buddha in Sāmaṇīya, phala S (D 2): “The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha, joyfully approving of the Blessed One’s words, rose from his seat, bowed down to him, and, keeping the Buddha to his right, departed.” (D 1:85/2.101).
“Ānanda, go to all the monks living in dependence of Rājagaha and have all of them to gather in the assembly hall.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda answered the Blessed One. Then he went to all the monks living in dependence of Rājagaha, and having gathered them all in the assembly hall, went to the Blessed One and said this:

“Bhante, the order of monks is assembled. Now is the time for the Blessed One to do as he thinks fit.”

The 7 conditions for non-decline (1)

1.6.2 Then the Blessed One rose from his seat and went to the assembly hall and sat down on the prepared seat. Thus seated down, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, I will teach you the 7 conditions for non-decline. Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as the monks gather regularly and often, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) Bhikshus, so long as the monks gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and do the Sangha duties in fellowship, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as the monks do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the promulgated training-rules, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as the monks honour, respect, esteem and venerate the elder monks, those long-standing, long gone forth, sangha elders, sangha leaders, and consider it worthwhile to listen to them, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(5) Bhikshus, so long as the monks do not fall under the power of craving that arises in them, that leads to continued births, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) Bhikshus, so long as the monks love to dwell in the forest, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(7) Bhikshus, so long as the monks keep themselves up in mindfulness, so companions in the holy life of virtuous conduct who have not yet come will come (to meet them), and that they who have come will dwell in comfort, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, monks, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (2)

1.7 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) 7 conditions for non-decline. Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in works [things to do], [78] do not find pleasure in works, are not caught up with delight in works, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

It is interesting to note that here only the “monks” are addressed but not the nuns who by this time number considerably; see §3.8 f below where all the 4 assemblies are mentioned. Either “monks” here is used inclusively for “monks and nuns” or no nuns followed the Buddha on his final journey. It is possible that the texts were edited later (after the Buddha’s passing) to tone down the references to nuns due to external social pressure (where the position of women were lower). A study of the social conditions of India after the Buddha and how they affected the monastics would yield interesting results.

This teaching is also found in (Aparahāniya) Bhikkhu S (A 7.21/4:21 f). On the conditions of non-decline for the Sangha, see Intro (10.1) above.

This teaching is also found in (Aparahāniya) Kamma S (A 7.22/4:22). Cf (Parihāniya) Sekha S (A 4.26/ 4:24 f).

Na kammārāmā bhavissanti na kamma, ratā na kammārāmānaṁ amuyuttā. Comy glosses kamma here as katabba, kamma, “work that should be done,” “work duties” (DA 2:528). The meaning here is that a monk should not be caught up in worldly business and busyness so that they can devote themselves to spiritual development to the teaching

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(2) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in talk, do not find pleasure in talk, are not caught up with delight in talk, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in sleep, do not find pleasure in sleep, are not caught up with delight in sleep, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in company, do not find pleasure in company, are not caught up with delight in company, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(5) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in bad desires, do not fall under the power of bad desires, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not become bad friends, bad companions, bad comrades,\(^{447}\) then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(7) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not stop short of any lesser attainments,\(^{448}\) then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (3)

1.8 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) 7 conditions for non-decline.\(^{449}\) Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks have faith [are faithful]…\(^{450}\)

(2) …have moral shame…

(3) …have moral fear…

(4) …are learned [have heard much]… [79]

(5) …are those who exert themselves [are those who put forth effort in spiritual development]…

(6) …are established in mindfulness…

(7) …are wise, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

\(^{446}\) In Mahā Suññatā S (M 122), the Buddha says that a monk who delights in company does not “shine” (sobhatī) in his teaching (M 122,3:3:110), SD 11.

\(^{447}\) Na pāpa, mittā bhavissanti na pāpa, sahāya na pāpa, sampavaṅkā. Of the modern English trs, apparently only Rhys Davids (D:RD 2:82) renders it correctly.

\(^{448}\) Yāvakivaṅ ca bhikkhave bhikkhū na oramattakeṇa vissesādhihamena antarār vosānāṁ āpajjiṣsanti, lit “Monks, so long as monks do not, on their quest for excellence, come to a stop with an insignificant measure…” In other words, a practitioner should not relent until awakening is attained. This statement relates directly to Ānanda’s spiritual status [§5.13]. Rhys Davids thinks this is an interesting analogue to Philippians 3:13 of the Bible.

\(^{449}\) This teaching is also found in (Aparahāniya) Saddhiya S (A 7,23/4,22 f).

\(^{450}\) Comy here (DA 2:529) mentions 4 kinds of faith:

(1) faith through attainment (āgamanīya, saddhā, other Comys: āgama, sādhā), that is, the faith of the “omniscient” Bodhisattva [one bound to become a fully self-awakened one] by mastering it since his firm resolve (to become Buddha) (sābbhāññā, bodhisattānaṁ saddhā abhinīhatā paṭṭhāya āgatatā);

(2) faith through realization [understanding] (adhigama, sādhā), that is, the attainment of the noble saints through realization [understanding] (ariya, sāvākānaṁ pativedhena adhigatatā);

(3) faith by conviction (okappana, sādhā), that is, conviction by way of unshakability [unshakable faith] when it is said [when he hears the words], “Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha” (Buddho dhammo saṅgho ti vutte acala, bhāvena okappannā);

(4) faith of calm joy [“confidence of trust” (Gethin 2001:115 n51)] (pasāda, sādhā), that is, the arising of calm and joyful faith (pasādā ubpati). (DA 2:529; MA 3:325 f = AA 3:257)

See Pubba, koṭṭhaka S (S 48,44/5:220-222), SD 10.7 (1).

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The 7 conditions for non-decline (4): the 7 limbs of awakening

1.9 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) 7 conditions for non-decline. Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of mindfulness, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of dhamma-investigation, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of effort, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of zest, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(5) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of tranquility, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of concentration, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(7) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of equanimity, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (5): the 7 perceptions

1.10 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) 7 conditions for non-decline. Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will cultivate the perception of impermanence, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of not-self, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of the foul, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of danger, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(5) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of letting go (of defilements), bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of fading away (of lust), bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

451 “Limbs of awakening,” bojihanga or sambojihanga.
452 This teaching is also found in (Aparahāniya) Bodhi S (A 7.24/4:23).
453 This teaching is also found in (Aparahāniya) Saññā S (A 7.25/4:24).
454 Another set of 7 perceptions are given in (Vitthāra) Saññā S 2 (A 7.46), where each of these meditations are explained in some detail: perception of impurity (asubha,saññā), perception of death (marana,saññā), perception of repulsiveness of food (āhāre paṭikkāla,saññā), perception of disenchantment with the world (sabbha,loke anabhira,saññā), perception of impermanence (anicca,saññā), perception of unsatisfactoriness in impermanence (anicce dukkha,saññā), perception of impermanence (anatta,saññā) (A 46/4:46-53).
455 In the Suttas, asubha,saññā (perception of foulness) refers to the 31 parts of the body (32 according to Comy): head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin; flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs; mesentery, bowels, stomach, excrement [brain (in the head)];” bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat; tears, tailow, saliva, snot, synovial fluid, urine. [32nd part: Kh 3, Pm 1:6 f; Vism 8.42-144/239-266.] The term asubha,nimitta (the sign of foulness) in Comys, refers to one or other of the 10 foul objects, i.e a corpse in one of the 10 stages of decomposition (Vism 6.1-11/178 f).
456 MA says that there are 2 kinds of letting go or relinquishment (of suffering) (vossagga): “giving up” (pariccāga), i.e the abandonment of defilements, and “entering into” (pakkhandana), ie culminating in nirvana.
457 Virāga also “fading away [of lust]” or “dispassion” (see §21).
(7) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of ending (of suffering).\footnote{That is, “cessation of suffering” (nirodha) (see §21).}

Bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline. \footnote{Cha apariṇāniyā dhamma. These 6 conditions are also called “conditions of conciliation” (sāraniya, dhammā, D 3:245; A 6.11/3:288 f). These 6 qualities endanger one to others and causes others to constantly recall (sāraniya) one with respect, joy and love. As such, they also canduce to social and communal harmony, solidarity and progress. See Sama, jiva S (A 4.55), where those living the spiritual life are said to be compatible (sama) in faith (saddhā), moral virtue (śila), charity (cāga), and wisdom (pāññā) (A 4.55/2:61 f), SD 5.1 Intro. On sāraniya, see DPL 463.}

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 6 conditions for non-decline (6): the 6 conditions of conciliation

1.11 Bhikshus, I will teach you 6 conditions for non-decline.\footnote{Cf Thāna S (A 4.192), SD 14.12.} Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of deed [bodily action] both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of speech openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of thought both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as monks will mutually share\footnote{Mutually share,” sādhāraṇa, bhogī, lit “those who share commonly.”} with virtuous companions in the holy life whatever they receive rightfully, even\footnote{“Even,” antamaso.} the contents of their alms-bowl, enjoying those gains without thinking of apportioning them [not thinking of dividing them in a biased manner],\footnote{Enjoying those gains without thinking of apportioning them,” tathā, rūpehi lābhehi appaṭṭivibhatta, bhogī bhavissanti. The word appaṭṭivibhatta tr as (1) not divided in a biased manner; (2) = sādhāraṇa, common, ie to be enjoyed in common. It is the opp of paṭṭivibhatta, “divided in a biased manner.”} then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.\footnote{Yāvākivaṁ ca bhikkhave bhikkhā ye te lābhā dhammadhā dhamma, laddhā antamaso patta, pariyāpanna, mattam pi tathā, rūpehi lābhehi appaṭṭivibhatta, bhogī bhavissanti sīlavantehi sa, brahma ca ‘rīhi sādhāraṇa, bhogī, vuddhi yeva bhikkhave bhikkhunañi pāṭikankhā no parihāṇī.}

(5) Bhikshus, so long as monks will dwell compatibly accomplished in the moral virtue with the moral precepts untattered, not rented [without any hole], unmixed [not twisting the rules], spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, giving rise to concentration,\footnote{“Moral virtues unbroken,…giving rise to concentration,” sīlāni akhaṇḍāni acchiddāni asabalāni akammāsāni bhajissāni viṇṇaṁ saṁsattāḥ bhijjantaṁ aparāmaṭṭhām samādhi, samivattanaṁ. These are said to be “virtues dear to the noble ones,” ariya, kaṇṭhāni, (S 3:264, 382, 386, 396, 408; A 3:36). The virtues of the noble one are explained at Vis 221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts; hence, these virtues are dear to them (SA 2:74). See UA 268. On the phrase, akhaṇḍāni acchiddāni asabalāni akammāsāni (“unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless”), DA (speaking of the seven groups of monastic offences, V 5:91) explains that when one commits the first or the last of them, one is said to be “tattered” (khanda), like one whose robe is torn all around at the edges; if he commits one of the middle offences, he “rent” [holed] (chidda) like one whose robe that is rent [with a hole] in its middle; if one commits two or three successive offences, one’s conduct is “mottled” (sabala), like a cow with red or black pigments, with a different colour rising upon its back or belly; or, if one transgresses now and then, one’s conduct is said to be “blotchy” (kammāsa), like a cow with coloured spots here and there. (DA 2:536) Cf Thāna S (A 4.192), SD 14.12. http://dharmafarer.org} and so too they dwell with their companions in the holy life, both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
(6) Bhikshus, so long as monks will dwell harmoniously with right view  that leads to the noble liberation, conducing to the utter destruction of suffering, dwelling in such manner with their companions in the holy life both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline. 

Bhikshus, so long as these six conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.”

The 3 trainings

1.12 Then the Blessed One, while staying on Mount Vulture Peak at Rājagaha, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying.

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

Amba,Laṭṭhikā

The rajah’s lodging, Ambalatthikā

1.13 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Rājagaha for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go” to Amba,Laṭṭhikā.

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Amba,Laṭṭhikā.

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465 “Harmoniously with right view,” diṭṭhi, sămañña, gatā: on sămañña as abstract n of samāna, “same, similar, equal, even” (Sn 18, 309; J 2:108). See (Aṭṭhaka) Paññā S (A 8.2,10.3), SD 44.13.

466 This stock summary repeats 8 times [1.12, 1.14, 1.18, 2.4, 2.10, 2.20, 4.4, 4.12], attesting to the importance of the 3 trainings. In Cūla Veddalla S (M 44), the nun Dhammadinna explains to the layman Visākha that “the three aggregates [3 trainings] are not included in the noble eightfold path, friend Visākha, but the noble eightfold path is included in the three aggregates. Right speech, right action, and right livelihood states are included in the aggregate of moral virtue. Right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration states are included in the aggregate of concentration. Right view and right thought are included in the aggregate of wisdom” (M 44.11/1:301). Unlike in the term pañca-k, khandha, “aggregates” (khandha) here merely refers to a grouping without clinging. Mrs C A F Rhys Davids (What was the original gospel of Buddhism? 1938b: 60), noticing the “omission” of the noble eightfold path in the Aṭṭhaka Nipāta (Book of Eights) of the Anguttara Nikāya, conjectures that the noble eightfold path is a later (post-Buddha) teaching. Her conjecture has led other scholars like GC Pande (Studies in the Origins of Buddhism, 1974:518) to hold a similar opinion. What we have here is an “academic problem” where truth is judged by the text rather than by insight, as in the case of the practitioner benefiting from the oral tradition of living Dharma teachers. The academic tradition, dry and professional as it is, helps to test the truth and worth of what is purported as Dharma—and yet the test of the dish is in one’s eating it! On the tension between the cold academic and the spiritual practitioner, see Suntaek Cho, “The rationalist tendency in modern Buddhist scholars: A revaluation,” Philosophy East and West 52,4 Oct 2002:426-440. See Intro (10.4).

467 Ṣiti samādhi īti paññā, sīla, paribhāvito samādhi maha-p, phalo hoti mahānisanto, saṁādhi, paribhāvita paññā maha-p, phalā hoti mahānissanta, paññā, paribhāvita cittan sammad eva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathādaṃ kām āsava bhav āsava diṭṭh āsava āvijjāsavā ti.

468 “Come,...let us go,” āyama, imp 1 pl of āyāti, meaning (1) “he comes, arrives, approach, reach, attain, return” (V 1:30; D 3:19; S 1:43); sometimes contextually = gacchati, “he goes” (SnA 2:480,16 ad Sn 669; gacchāma, Sna 2:463,7 ad Sn 116). The imp often means “he goes” rather than “he comes,” eg imp 1 pl āyama, “come, let us go!” (V 3:10; D 16 §1.13/-2.81, §1.15/2.81, §1.19/2.84, §2.12/2.90, §2.5/2.91, §4.5/2.123 (x4), §4.13/2.126, §4.38/2.134, §5.1/2.137). (2) “he gets into, passes into, falls into, meets with, becomes” (yogam āyantamucceto, S 46/1.20 /1.11:23; kodho vo vasam ātu, S 1:140,1*; ākāsas indriyānān samakammato, S 3:207,4). See Khandha S (S 22:48), SD 17.1 (5).

469 Amba,Laṭṭhikā, Skt Āmra, yaṣṭikā (or Venu, yaṣṭika), Lamotte 1988a:22, was located halfway between Rājagṛha and Nālandā, on the Buddha’s first lap of the northbound final journey. It was a royal park, surrounded by a rampart and the royal rest-house is adorned with paintings (DA 1:14). See foll n. 

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The 3 trainings

1.14 There the Blessed One stayed in the rajah’s lodging (in the royal park) in Amba, lāṭṭhikā.

Then the Blessed One, while staying in the rajah’s lodging (in the royal park) in Amba, lāṭṭhikā, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

NĀLANDĀ

Pāvārikā mango grove, Nālandā

1.15 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Amba, lāṭṭhikā for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Nālandā.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Nālandā.

There the Blessed One stayed in the Pāvārikā mango grove at Nālandā.

Sāriputta’s lion-roar

1.16 Then the venerable Sāriputta went up to the Blessed Ānanda and went through the Pāvārikā mango grove. He entered an old grove, wherein stood a large company of monks, and went up to the Blessed One who was seated in a well-crafted building for his sport (DA 1:14). See prev n.

Nālandā, located on the outskirts of Rājagṛha, has been identified by Cunningham on the basis of distances and directions given by the Chinese pilgrims and some image inscriptions discovered at the ruins of the village of Bargaon near the Nālandā railway station of the Bakhtiarpur-Bihar branch line of the Eastern railway. There is a high road that starts from Rājagṛha passing through Nālandā and goes up to Pātaligrāmaka (D 2:48). According to the Mahāvastu, Nālandā is the birthplace of Sāriputra (Mvst 2:56), who visits the Buddha there.

The events of this section [§1.16] are greatly expanded in Sāmpasādanīya S (D 28) = (Nālandā S, S 47.12/ 5:159-161, but without the last para). This is Sāriputta’s last meeting with the Buddha. Knowing that he will die in 7 days, he takes leave of the Buddha and visits his mother at Nāla, gāmaka (S 47.12/5:161), and passes away on the full moon day of Kattikā (Oct-Nov) (Tha 1158-1161; DA 2:549 f; SA 3:214-221; J 1:391). Moggallāna, his closest friend and the Buddha’s left hand monk, passes away a fortnight later on the new moon day of Māgasira (Nov-Dec), 5 months before the Buddha. On assassins’ attempts on Moggallāna’s life, see J 522/5:125-127; DhA 10.7/3:65-71. Both Sāriputta and Moggallāna are older than the Buddha (DhA 1:73). The Buddha reminisces about the two chief disciples in Ukkacāla S (S 47.14/5:163-165); see §3. In below.

Chronological problem: “The event related in this [Cunda S, S 47.13/5:161-163] poses a problem for the traditional chronology of the Buddha’s life. In the Mahāparinibbāna S, Sāriputta’s lion roar [Nālandā S, S 47.12] takes place during what appears to be the Buddha’s final journey along the route from Rājagṛha to Vesālī. From Vesālī the Buddha heads for Kusinārā without returning to Sāvatthī, some 200 km to the west. Yet the present sutta shows the Buddha residing at Sāvatthī when he receives the news of Sāriputta’s death. To preserve the traditional chronology, the Comys (SA here & DA 2:550) have the Buddha make an additional side trip to Savatthī following his rains retreat at Beluva, gāmaka [D 16,2:21-26/2:98 f], an excursion not mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S. Sāriputta accompanies him on this trip to Sāvatthī, later

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One, and having saluted him [82] sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Sāriputta said this to the Blessed One:

“It is thus clear to me [Such is my faith], bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awareness!”

“Lofty indeed, are the words you utter, Sāriputta, and lordly as a bull, too! You are absolutely caught up in a lion-roar,” saying, “It is clear to me [Such is my faith], bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awarement!”

Well now, Sāriputta, were you with the arhats [worthy ones] fully self-awakened ones of past times, so that with your mind you have grasped the minds of all the Blessed Ones thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed Ones, such is their nature, such is their wisdom, such is how they live, such is their liberation’?

“No, bhante.”

“Well then, Sāriputta, will you be with the arhats [worthy ones] fully self-awakened ones of future times, so that with your mind you will grasp the minds of all the Blessed Ones thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed Ones, such is their nature,’ such is their wisdom, such is how they live, such is their liberation’?”

“No, bhante.”

“Well then, Sāriputta, do you know me as the arhat [worthy one], fully self-awakened one, so that with your mind you have grasped my mind thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed One, such is his nature, such is his wisdom, such is how he lives, such is his liberation’?”

“No, bhante.”

“So then, Sāriputta, you do not have the knowledge of the minds of the arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones of the past, the future and the present! But then, Sāriputta, why do you utter lofty [83] and lordly words; why are you absolutely caught up in a lion-roar, saying, ‘It is clear to me [Such is my faith], bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awarement!’

1.17 “No, bhante, I have no knowledge of the minds of the worthy fully self-awakened ones of the past, of the future or of the present. But it is known through the drift of the Dharma.”

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takes his leave and returns to his native village Nālaka, gāma, where he falls ill and dies.” (S:B 1923 n157). All the Chin versions omit this conveyrsation. This fact and that the Buddha had died earlier, shows that this episode must have been added later. On Sāriputta’s parinirvāna, see Nyanaponika & Hecker, Great Disciples of the Buddha, 1997:47-59; also Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004:5.26. On Moggallāna’s parinirvāna, see Nyanaponika & Hecker 1997:100-5; also Piya Tan 2004:5.35.

473 Evam, passanno.
475 Ekaṁsa gahito siha, nādo nadito.
476 “It is clear to me,” evam passano.
477 Kīna Sāriputta ye te ahesaṁ attaṁ addhānam arahanto sammā, sambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto cetassā ceto paricca viditā, evam, sitā te Bhagavanto ahesaṁ iti pi, evam, dharmā evam, paṁñā evam, vihāri evam, vimutte te Bhagavanto ahesaṁ iti pi ti.
478 “Such is their nature,” evam, dharmā. D.W renders this as “such was their teaching,” which is problematic as obviously all the Buddhas teach the same Dharma, and as such Sāriputta would clearly then know this. Moreover, it is evident from the flow of ideas and context, that the Buddha is referring to the future Buddha’s spiritual qualities.
479 Nina van Gorkom makes a sobering note here: “How can we find out who is an ariyan [saint]? There is no way to know who is an ariyan, unless we have become enlightened ourselves. It cannot be known from someone’s outward appearance whether he is an ariyan or not. People who are very amiable and peaceful are not necessarily ariyans. However, we can take our refuge in the ariyan Sangha even if we do not personally know any ariyans. We can think of their virtues, no matter whether they are in this plane of existence or in other planes. The ariyans prove that there is a way to the end of defilements. We should know what the condition is for the end of defilements: the cultivation of wisdom. The monks, nuns, men and women layfollowers who were ariyans in the Buddha’s time proved that what the Buddha taught can be realize in daily life. The Buddha did not teach abstract ideas, he taught reality. Should those who want to realize the truth not walk the same Path they walked, even if they still have a long way to go?” (Buddhism in Daily Life, 1977:76)
http://www.dhammasstudy.com/outlook.html
480 The drift of the Dharma,” dharmā anvaya (D 2:83 = 3:100), ie by inference through the Dharma. CPD gives these meanings of anvaya: (1) series, lineage, succession; (2) successor, next, following; (3) ifc: following, descended from, dependent on; (4) (logical) connection, reasoning, inference, conclusion, consequence; (5) “positive concomitance.” I here
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Parable of the frontier city.

1.17.2 Bhante, it is just as if there were a royal frontier city with strong bastions and a strong encircling wall with an archway that has a single gateway, and a moat around it.

The gate-keeper there, clever, experienced and wise, keeps out strangers and lets in only those whom he knows. He patrols along the pathway all around the city so that he will see no cracks or cavities in the wall, even large enough for a cat to pass through.

Even so, bhante, is the drift of the Dharma known to me.

Bhante, whatever arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones, having overcome the 5 mental hindrances that are mental impurities that weaken wisdom, then placing their minds firmly in the four focuses of mindfulness, then cultivating the seven awakening-factors according to reality, attain to the peerless full self-awareness.

The 3 trainings

1.18 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Pāvārikā mango grove at Nālandā gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental

follow the tr of PED 338b & Walshe, and guided by Comys which gloss annaya as annāna (inference) (DA 3:880, MA 3:352, SA 3:210). Sāriputta means that his lion-roar is based on his understanding and realization of the Dharma. This episode is expanded in Sāṃpasādaniya Sutta (D 28).

481 Recurs in Nālandā S (S 47.12,8), SD 12.18.
482 Here, this parable at (Dasaka) Utiya S (A 10.95), adds “Now, he might not have such a knowledge, ‘So many people has entered or left the city. But here knows this much, ‘Whichever large creatures that enter this city or leave it, all of them have to enter or leave by this gateway’” (SD 44.13). This is a beautiful parable for mental cultivation. Cf another “frontier city” parable for mental cultivation in Kiṁsukha S (S 35.245/4:194 f), SD 2.17 (8.4), where the Buddha explains the images he uses. See also the very important Nagara S (S 12.65,19-21/2:105 f), SD 14.2.
483 The 5 mental hindrances (pañca nivaraṇa) are: (1) sensual desire (kāma-c, chanda); (2) ill will (vyāpāda); (3) sloth and torpor (thīna, muddha); (4) restlessness and worry (uddbacca,kukkucca); (5) persistent doubt (vicicchā). See (Nivaraṇa) Saṅgārava S (S 46.55/5:121-126).
484 The focuses of mindfulness (satippātha) are: (1) Contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā), comprising 14 exercises: the 4 postures, full awareness, reflection on foulness, the 4 elements [§§12-13], and the 9 “corpse” meditations; (2) Contemplations of feelings (vedanā-nupassanā), 1 exercise, considering feeling in terms of the affective quality—as either pleasant, painful or neutral—with each being examined again as being either carnal or spiritual; (3) Contemplation of the mind or mind-consciousness ( cittānupassanā), 1 exercise, examining 16 states of mind coloured by their concomitants—Pubba S (S 51.11/5:263-266); (4) Contemplation of mind-objects (or “the nature of things”) (dhammānupassanā) [§§36-45] is the most diversified exercise involving these 5 schemes: the 5 hindrances, the 5 aggregates, the 6 sense-bases, the 7 awakening-factors, and the 4 noble truths. See Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S (D 22), Satipaṭṭhāna S (M 10), Ānāpānasati S (M 118) and Mahā Rāhuḷ’ovāda S (M 62).
485 The 7 awakening-factors (satta sambojhangā) are: (1) awakening-factor of mindfulness (sati sambojhangā); (2) awakening-factor of mental investigation (dhamma, vicaya sambojhangā); (3) awakening-factor of effort (viriya sambojhangā); (4) awakening-factor of zest (piti sambojhangā); (5) awakening-factor of tranquillity (passaddhi sambojhangā); (6) awakening-factor of concentration (samādhi sambojhangā); (7) awakening-factor of equanimity (upekkhā sambojhangā) (D 3:251, 282; Vbh 277).
486 After a long intervening passage, Sāṃpasādaniya S (D 28.21/3:116) and Nālandā S (S 47.12,10/5:161) close with the Buddha saying: “Therefore, Sāriputta, you should repeat this Dharma exposition frequently to the monks and the nuns, to the layman followers and the laywoman followers. Even though some foolish people may have doubt or uncertainty regarding the Tathagata, when they hear this Dharma exposition their doubt or uncertainty regarding the Tathagata will be abandoned.” The underscored passage refers to the comprehensive meditation practice leading to awakening: see The Satipaṭṭhāna Ss, SD 13.1(6b).
influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

**PāṭALI,GĀMA**

The lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma

1.19 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Nālandā for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāṭali,gāma.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Pāṭali,gāma.

1.20 Now at Pāṭali,gāma, the lay followers said, “It is said that the Blessed One has arrived in Pāṭali,gāma!” Then the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma went to the Blessed One, and having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma said this to the Blessed One:

“May the Blessed One consent to stay at our rest-house!”

And the Blessed One consented by his silence.

1.21 Then, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma, knowing that the Blessed One had consented (to their invitation), rose from their seats, saluted the Blessed One and keeping their right side to him, departed. They went to the rest-house, fully prepared it for occupation, preparing the seats, setting up the water-pot, and filled the oil-lamp.

Then they went to the Blessed One, and having saluted him, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the rest-house is fully prepared for occupation: the seats are prepared, the water-pot set up, and the oil-lamp filled. Now is the time for the Blessed to do as he thinks fit.” [85]

1.22 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself, taking robe and bowl, went with the monks to the rest-house. After arriving, he washed his feet, and then sat down facing the east resting against the middle pillar.

The order of monks, too, having washed their feet, went in and sat down with their backs to the west wall, with the Blessed One before them.

The lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma, too, having washed their feet, sat down with their backs to the east wall facing the west, with the Blessed One before them.

**Advantages of moral virtue**

1.23 Then the Blessed One addressed the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma:

Houselords, there are these 5 disadvantages of being immoral, of moral failing. What five?

1. (Here, house, lords, the immoral, one of moral failing, suffers great loss of wealth through being heedless in managing his affairs. This is the first disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

2. (Furthermore, house, lords, for the immoral, one of moral failing, a bad report of his reputation will spread about. This is the second disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

3. (Furthermore, house, lords, for the immoral, one of moral failing, whatever assembly he goes to, whether of nobles [kshatriya], of priests [brahmins], of house, lords or of recluse, he approaches without confidence, troubled. This is the third disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

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487 Pāṭali,gāma (Skt Pāṭali,grāmaka), 100 km (62 miles) from Rājagṛha. This fortress would later become the capital of the Magadhan empire. Later on, it was called Puṣpa,pura or Kusuma,pura, and during Asoka’s time, Pāṭali,putra. It was located in the villages of Kumrahar, Bulandibagh, in the outskirts of modern Patna in Bihar, near the confluence of the Ganges and the Son (though the Son has now somewhat changed its course). Due to high water level and because the modern city is located over much of the ancient one, excavation of Pāṭaliputra has been limited. See Finegan 1989:90. See also Intro (7.3) above.

488 The foll §§ [1.20-34] are found in V 1:227 (elaborated), D 3:209, S 4:183, U 8.6.

489 “He washed his feet,” pāde pakkhaletvā (V 1:227, 3:35; D 2:85, 204, 3:204; M 1:354; S 1:107, 4:183; A 3:320; U 59, 86). Although pakkhaletvā (ए pakkhalet; c khāleti) is active, it is likely here that the Buddha’s feet “were washed,” upon his arrival, by a lay follower. Even today it is customary amongst traditional Sinhalese Buddhists to wash the feet of monks who have come for offerings (dāna, Sīnh dāne).

490 “Resting against,” nissāya, fig “leaning against.” It is likely that the Buddha, in his advanced age, would be resting his back against the wall. However, due to the large number of monks and lay followers (in the next two paragraphs), it is unlikely that all of them could be resting their backs against the wall.

491 This whole section also found at V 1:226-228; cf D 1:126; DA 2:473; UA 242, 361, 384. [http://dharmafarer.org](http://dharmafarer.org)
(4) Furthermore, houselords, the immoral, one of moral failing, dies confused. This is the fourth disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

(5) Furthermore, houselords, the immoral, one of moral failing, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appears in a plane of misery, an bad destination, a lower realm, in hell. This is the fifth disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

These are the 5 advantages in being virtuous, of success in moral virtue. [86]

1.24 Houselords, there are these 5 advantages of being virtuous, of moral success. What five?

(1) Here, houselords, the virtuous, one of moral success, gains a great store of wealth through being heedful in managing his affairs. This is the first advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(2) Furthermore, houselords, for the virtuous, one of moral success, a good report of his reputation is spread about. This is the second advantage is for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(3) Furthermore, houselords, for the virtuous, one of moral success, whatever assembly he goes to, whether of nobles, of priests, of house lords or of recluse, he approaches with confidence, untroubled. This is the third advantage is for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(4) Furthermore, houselords, the virtuous, one of moral success, dies unconfused. This is the fourth advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(5) Furthermore, house lords, the virtuous, one of moral success, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appears in a state of joy, in a happy destination, in heaven. This is the fifth advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

These are the 5 advantages in being virtuous, of success in moral virtue.

1.25 The Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened the lay followers of Pāṭali, gāma with Dharma talk for most of the night.

Then he dismissed them, saying,

“House lords, the night is far spent. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

“Yes, bhante,” the followers of Pāṭali, gāma replied in assent to the Blessed One. Having risen from their seats, they saluted the Blessed One, and keeping their right side to the Blessed One, departed.

Then not long after the lay followers of Pāṭali, gāma had left, the Blessed One went into solitude [meditated and entered ðhyana].

The Pāṭali,putra prophecy

1.26 Now at that time, Sunīḍha and Vassa, kāra, chief ministers of Magadh, were fortifying the town of Pāṭali, gāma as a defence against the Vajjī. At that time, too, many [87] thousands of devatas [deities] were

492 This action sequence— instructed (saddāsétvā), inspired (saṃmādāpetvā), roused (samuttejetvā) and gladdened (sampahāsaśetvā) . . . with Dharma talk— reflects the basic structure of the Buddha’s teaching method: (1) the Dharma is shown; (2) the listener/s are filled with enthusiasm; (3) they are fired with commitment; and (4) filled with joy. Comys (eg DA 1:293; UA 242; cf VA 1:65; MA 2:35) explain that by instructing, the Buddha dispels the listener’s delusion; by inspiring him, heedlessness is dispelled; by rousing him, indolence is dispelled; and by gladdening, brings the practice to a conclusion. In short, when we teach Dharma to benefit others, we should do our best to bring instruction, inspiration, motivation and joy to the listener. These 4 qualities are, in fact, the sixth or last of the ideal skills of a Dharma speaker. See SD 11.4 (4) & also L S Cousins, in his review of The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (tr Nānāmolī) in JBE 4 1997: 272, where gives a slightly different listing of the above. See also Kalupahana, A History of Buddhist Philosophy, 1992:65-67. See §2.14 below.

493 “Entered into solitude,” suññā āgāre pāvīsi (lit “entered an empty building”). See D:RD 2:92 (“entered into his private chamber”). The expression suññā āgāre abhirati, “he delights in solitude” occurs 6 times in the Old Commentary on the Pārājika 4 (V 3:91-93) and 5 times in the Old Commentary on the Pācittiya 8 (V 4:25 f). See V:1H 1:125 n5. D:W has “spent the remainder of the night in the rest-house left empty by their departure” is an unmarked amplified tr Vajirā & Story has “retired into privacy.” It is remarkable here to note that the early Western translators were right on the mark in their tr Apparently here, the Buddha rests for the night (around 2.00-4.00 am) by dwelling in the 4th ḍhyana (SA 2:230).

494 The chief ministers Sunīḍha and Vassakāra are in charge of Pāṭali,gāma’s fortifications. See prec n. On their rank, see §1.2n.

495 Pāṭali, gāma (Skt Pāṭali,grāmaka) thus becomes a fortified town standing on the south bank of the Ganges between Rājagaha and Vesālī, that is, on the borders between Magadha and Vājji country. Ajāta,sattu has commanded the construction of this fortress to repel any Vājji attack. Evidently, he is on the defensive, convinced of the Vājji strength. He puts the

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making their abode in Pātaligāma. And in those parts where devatas of great power made their abode, they bent the minds of the chief ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of middling power made their abode, they bent the minds of the middle ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of little power made their abode, they bent the minds of the lesser ministers to build their houses there.

1.27 With his divine eye, purified and surpassing that of the human, the Blessed One saw many thousands of devatas making their abode in Pātaligāma. Then the Blessed One, having risen early, when it was still night [just before daybreak], addressed the venerable Ananda:

“Ananda, who is fortifying Pātaligāma?”

“Bhante, Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, are fortifying Pātaligāma as a defence against the Vajjīs.”

1.28 “Ananda, it is just as if Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having taken counsel from the Thirty-three Gods, are fortifying Pātaligāma as a defence against the Vajjīs! Here, Ananda, with my divine eye, purified and surpassing that of the human, I see many thousands of devatas making their abode in Pātaligāma. And in those parts where devatas of great power made their abode, they bent the minds of the chief ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of middling power made their abode, they bent the minds of the middle ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of little power made their abode, they bent the minds of the lesser ministers to build their houses there.

Ananda, as far as the realm of the Aryas extend, as far as its trade-route goes, this will be the capital [foremost city]. Pāṭaliṇīputta, a city [bursting forth like the seeds from the seed-boxes of the Pāṭali tree]. However, Ananda, Pāṭaliṇīputta will face three dangers—from fire, from water, from internal dissension.

Sunīḍha and Vassakāra

1.29 Then Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having approached the Blessed One and exchanged greetings, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“May master Gotama together with the order of monks accept a meal from us tomorrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

1.30 Then, Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having understood that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from their seats, returned to their own houses. When the excellent meal of hard and soft foods were ready, they announced to the Blessed One that it was time.

“Master Gotama, it is time for the meal.”

1.30.2 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to the dwelling [rest-house?] of Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, and sat down on the prepared seat. Then Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, with their own hands served the order of monks with the Blessed One at its head with excellent foods, hard and soft, and waited on them.

Then when the Blessed One had finished his meal, and washed his bowl and hands, Sunīḍha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, each took a low seat and sat down.
1.31 And when Sunītha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, were seated thus, the Blessed One gave thanks in these verses: 503

In whatever place a wise man sets up his home,  
He should there feed the virtuous and restrained who live the holy life.  
To the deities there he should make offerings. 504  
Thus revered they will revere him, thus honoured they will honour him. [89]  
They will show him compassion as a mother will her own child.  
A man for whom the deities show compassion always sees good fortune.

Then when the Blessed One had given thanks with these verses, Sunītha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, rose from their seats and left.

The Ganges

1.32 At that time, Sunītha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, following closely step for step behind the Blessed One, said:

“The gate by which the recluse Gotama leaves today shall be called the Gotama Gate (Gotama, dvāra), and the spot where he crosses the Ganges river shall be called the Gotama Crossing (Gotama, tittha).” 507

1.33 Then the Blessed One reached the Ganges river. At that time the Ganges river was full and overflowing its banks so that a crow could drink from it. Wishing to cross over to the other side, some people were looking for a boat, some people were looking for a wooden raft, some people were binding together a log raft.

Then the Blessed One, just as a strong man would stretch out his bent arm, or bend back his outstretched arm, vanished with the order of monks from the near bank of the Ganges river and landed on the farther bank.

1.34 When the people saw the Blessed One (on the other side), some, wishing to cross over to the other side, some were looking for a boat, some were looking for a wooden raft, some were binding together a log raft. And the Blessed One, knowing their intention, uttered this verse of uplift: 510

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503 It is interesting to note here that the Buddha does not give a Dharma discourse. According to the Sarvāstivāda version, the chief minister expresses his wish that through his alms offering to the order, the deities of the city may long prosper a

504 Yā tattha devatā assu tāsām dakkhinām ādase. Here dakkhina (giving) refers to the religious offerings made to the devas, but this could also refer to dedication of merit to the devas. In later times, this is reinterpreted in popular Buddhism (esp amongst Sinhalese Buddhists) as “transference of merit.” See Jānussorī S (A 10.177/5:269-273) and Tirokuḍḍa S (Kh 7), SD 26-7. On the age of this stanzas and others here, see prev n [§1.31].

505 “Following closely step for step behind, piṭṭhi piṭṭhatu amabbaddhā, lit “followed right behind…” Vassakāra as we know is a very calculatively political person, and what we have here is an example of close physical proximity but great spiritual distance. Cf §3.1 (D 2:102). See Brahma, jāla S (D 1.1/1:1), SD 25.3(1.8).

506 According to the Sarvāstivāda version, the Buddha leaves by the west gate.

507 “Crossing,” tittha, usu rendered “ford” but here the river is too wide and deep, as evident from the next para.

508 A wooden raft (ulumpa) here has its beams bound together by ropes of cloth (V 3:63); VA 1096 however says that it is nailed together. A log raft (kulla) is a roughly made float whose parts are tied together with creepers, etc (V 1:230; M 1:135; U 90).

509 The various texts differ regarding the details of the Buddha’s crossing the Ganges. They, however, agree that he uses his psychic power to teleport himself and the order across the river. The redactors added this episode despite the Vinaya rule against the public display of psychic powers (Pāc 8 = V 4:25): see Kevaḍḍha S (D 11), SD 1.7 (3.3). The Pali texts apparently regard the episode as “symbolic of the Buddha’s attainment of the ‘other side’ of transmigration, ie extinction (nīrūṇa), by the power of meditation” (Warder 1970:71).

510 According to the Sarvāstivāda account, only the Buddha crosses the Ganges by his own power. The monks swim across while other disciples build a raft (Waldschmidt 1950-51:158). The imagery here is obvious: the Buddha has crossed http://dharmafarer.org
When they want to cross a sea, a lake or a pond, 
People make a bridge or raft—the wise have already crossed. [Cf Dh 85]

Chapter 2
(Second Recital, dutiya bhāṇavāra)

Vājī (Vṛjī)

Koti,gāma 511

[90] 2.1 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Kotijgāma.” 512

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Kotijgāma. The Blessed One stayed (among the Vajīs) 513 in Kotijgāma.

2.2.1 There, the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: 515

“Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the 4 noble truths that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara [birth and death], both you and I.

And what, bhikshus, are the four?

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the arising of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the ending of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

2.2.2 Bhikshus, it is through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the arising of suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the ending of suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering that craving for existence has been rooted out, that which leads to existence has been destroyed, that there is no more rebirth here.”

2.3 Thus said the Blessed One. Having spoken this, the Sugata [well-farer], 516 the Teacher further said this:

[91]

Not seeing the four noble truths as they really are,
Long is the weary path of samsara [birth and death], life after life.
Having seen them, one pulls out that which leads to existence,
Having uprooted sorrow’s root, there is no more rebirth.

The ocean of suffering; his immediate disciples, the monks, crosses the river of suffering using their own effort; and the lay disciples are working at their own means of the salvation, the raft. On this verse, cf Dh 85.

511 On this section, see §2.14 n by Rhys Davids on possible interpolation.

512 Kotijgāma (Skt Koti,grāmaka or Kuti,grāmaka), a village of the Vṛjīs (Kotijgāma S 1, S 5.431), located in the vicinity of Bhaddiya,nagara, about 1 gāvuta from the Ganges (MahV 560). A gāvuta is a quarter yojana. A yojana is about 11.25 km (7 mi). As such, a gāvuta would be about 2.8 km. Buddhaghosa says that the village was so called because it was built near the dome (koṭi or ṭhūpikā) of Mahā Paṇāḍa’s palace, said to have been located and submerged in the middle of the river (J 2:332 f, ThA 1:287; MahV 31.5 f).

513 Kotijgāma S 1 (S 56.21/5.431).

514 The foll §§ [2.2-3] are found in V 1:230 f, S 5:432 & Nett 166.


516 KR Norman regards sugata “as having the same relationship to sugati as duggata has to duggati, ie the implied -gati is not being used in its technical sense of ‘(category of) rebirth.’ So duggata is used in a general sense ‘(one who is) in a bad way’ = ‘poor,’ whereas Sugata is used in a very specialized sense ‘(one who is) in (a particularly) good way’ = ‘Buddha’” (1990:154 = 1993:162 f).
The 3 trainings

2.4 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Koṭīgāma, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

NĀDIKA

Lay saints

2.5 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Koṭīgāma for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Nādika [Nātika].”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large company of monks, arrived in Nādika, where the Blessed One stayed in the brick house.

2.6 Then the venerable Ānanda went to the Blessed One and having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the monk named Sāḷṭha has died in Nādika: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the nun named Nandā has died in Nādika: what is her destiny, what is her future state?

Bhante, the layman [92] named Sudatta has died in Nādika: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the laywoman named Sujātā has died in Nādika: what is her destiny, what is her future state?

Bhante, the layman named Kakudha [Kakkaṭa] has died in Nādika: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Kāliṅga: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Nikaṭa: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Katissabhā [Kaṭissaha]: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Tūṭṭha: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Santuṭṭha: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Bhadda: what is his destiny, what is his future state?

Bhante, the layman named Subhadda has died in Nādika: what is his destiny, what is his future state?”

2.7 “Ānanda, the monk Sāḷṭha, having right here and now realized for himself through direct knowledge, upon attaining the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom...

517 The events of the following 3 sections [§2.5-7] are expanded in Jana,vasabha S (D 18).

518 Nādikā or Nātikā (according to Buddhaghosa, two villages of the same name on the same river bank) was on the highroad between Koti,gāma and Vesāli (V 1:230 ff; D 2:90 f, 200; M 1:205). The Buddha’s instructions to Ānanda given here are also recorded in the Sānīyutta, which has Nātika as the place-name (S 5:356 ff.). Comys to both the Dīgha and the Sānīyutta confirm it as “Nātika,” explaining that “There were two villages close by the same pond, inhabited by the sons of two brothers. Thus, both of them were called Nātika (‘of the relatives’)” (DA 2:543; SA 2:74).

519 The brick house (giṇjak’āvastha) is mentioned in Mahā,parinibbāna S (D 16,2.5/2:91 + 2.10/2:96), SD 9; Cūla Go,śīṅga S (M 31,1/1:205), SD 41.11; V 1:232. It is specially mentioned because generally other buildings are made of wood (MA 2:235).

520 The foll §§ [2.6-9] are found in S 55.8/5:356.

521 This section and the foll [§§2.6-7]—on the mirror of the Dharma—are also recorded in two Sānīyutta discourses: Giṇjak’āvastha S 1 (S 55.8/5:356 f) and Giṇjak’āvastha S 3 (S 55.10/5:359 f). In Giṇjak’āvastha S 2 (S 55.9/5:359), Ānanda asks the Buddha regarding the destiny of the monk Asoka, the nun Asokā, the layman Asoka, and the laywoman Asokā.

522 Giṇjak’āvastha S 3 (S 55.10/5:359 f).

523 From here on [§§2.6-9] as at S 55.10/5:358-60.

524 Giṇjak’āvastha S 3 (S 55.10/5:359 f).

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that are influx-free with the destruction of the influxes, dwelt therein.\textsuperscript{526} Ānanda, the nun Nandā, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,\textsuperscript{527} has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],\textsuperscript{528} and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ānanda, the layman Sudatta, having destroyed the 3 fetters\textsuperscript{529} and diminished lust, hate and delusion, is a once-returner, returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.

Ānanda, the laywoman Sujātā, having totally destroyed the 3 fetters, is a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world,\textsuperscript{530} destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

Ānanda, the layman Kakudha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ānanda, the layman Kāliṅga, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ānanda, the layman Nikaṭa, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ānanda, the layman Katissambha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],

\textsuperscript{526}“Freedom of mind and freedom through wisdom,” respectively, cetovimutti (or, freedom by concentration, ie through destruction of the mental hindrances) and paññāvīmūtī (freedom through insight) (A 1:60). One who is freed by wisdom “may not have reached the 8 liberations or deliverances (vimokka = jhāna) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70,16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly freed in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain the 8 liberations (ajīṭha,vimokkha), which include the 4 formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called freed both ways, that is, freed from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood [§3.33]. Sāla, like the arhats Sāriputta and Moggallāna, is “freed both ways” (“abhato,bhāga,vimutta). The differences between the two types of freedom are given in Mahā,niḍāṇa S (D 2:70 f) and Kīṭagiri S (M 1:477 f). For full list of the 8 liberations, see Mahā,Niḍāna S (D 15,35/2:70 f), SD 5.17,35. See also D 3:262, 228; Vimokkha S, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103, SD 3.4.37. See also Ajīṭha Vimokkha, SD 62.5 & Analayo 2009:141-148.

\textsuperscript{527}“With the destruction of the mental influxes destroyed,” khīnā,āsavā. The term āsavā (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from ā-savāti “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, (bad influences), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 āsavā: the influx of (1) sense-desire (kāmā,āsavā), (2) desire for eternal existence (bhav’āsavā), (3) wrong views (diṭṭh,āsavā), (4) ignorance (avijjā,āsavā) (D 16,2,4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (ogha) and “yokes” (yogā). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 2:316, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3:59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these āsavas is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under āsavā.

\textsuperscript{528}There are 10 fetters (saṁyojanā): (1) personality view (sakkāya,diṭṭhī), (2) spiritual doubt (vicikicchā), (3) attachment to rules and rites (si-la,bata,parāmāsa), (4) sensual lust (kāma, rāga), (5) repulsion (patīgha), (6) greed for form existence (rūpa, rāga), (7) greed for formless existence (arūpa,rāga), (8) conceit (māna), (9) restlessness (uddhacca), and (10) ignorance (avijjā) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). In some places, no 5 (kāma,rāga) is replaced by illwill (vyāpāda). The first 5 are the lower fetters (orambhāgiya), and the rest, the higher fetters (uddhambhāgiya). The abandonment of these 5 constitutes the state of the non-returner (opapātika or anāgāmi) (see Anāpānasati S, M 118.9/12-3:80, SD 7.13). This verse evidently refers to the non-returner and seems to out of place in this section on the arhat.

\textsuperscript{529}The Pure Abodes (suddh āvāsa) form the five highest heavens of the form world (rūpa,loka) inhabited only by non-returners who assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āvīha (“Non-declining”), Ātappa (“Unworried”), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaṇṭhi (or “Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

\textsuperscript{530}The first three fetters: see n18.

\textsuperscript{531}Avinīpāta, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of vinīpāta, “the world of suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (duggati) or the 4 lower worlds (apāya) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (pañcā, gati) (D 3:234–33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (niraya), the animal kingdom (tiracchāna,yoni), the ghost realm (patti, visaya), the human world (manussa) and the heavenly world (deva). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (asura,kāya) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (sugati). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 1999:14-19.

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and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, the layman Tuṭṭha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, the layman Sāntuṭṭha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, the layman Bhadda, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, the layman Subhadda, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, [93] will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, there are more than 50 laymen from Nādika who have died, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, have gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.

Ananda, there are more than 90 laymen from Nādika who have died, having destroyed the 3 fetters and diminished lust, hate and delusion, are once-returners, and returning only once to this world, they will make an end of suffering.

Ananda, there are more than 500 laymen from Nādika who have died, having totally destroyed the 5 mental fetters, are streamwinners, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

The Dharma mirror

2.8 It is not remarkable, Ananda, that human beings should die. But, Ananda, if each time a person were to die and you were to question the Tathāgata in this manner, it would be wearisome for the Tathāgata!

Therefore, Ananda, I will teach you a Dharma teaching called the Dharma Mirror, by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth! Destroyed is the realm of the departed! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, destined for liberation, bound for awakening!’

2.9 And what, Ananda, is this Dharma Mirror, by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth for me! Destroyed is the realm of the departed for me! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening!’

The Dharma Mirror (dhamm ’ādāsa) is elsewhere called “the limbs of a streamwinner,” sotāpānassa āṅgāni (D 33.1.11(14)/3:227), ie the qualities of one who has attained streamwinning. For a shorter statement on the limbs of a streamwinner, see Ogadha S (S 55.2/5:343 On the faith of the streamwinner, see Gethin 2001:116. The preliminary practices that lead to the attainment of streamwinning are called “the limbs for streamwinning” (sotāpatti-y-āṅgāni: cf above) (D 33.1.11(13)/3:227; Pm 2:189 f). The (Sotāpatti) Phala S (S 55.55) lists the following as conducing towards gaining streamwinning: association with true persons (sappurisa), ie true practitioners; hearing the true teaching; skillful attention; and practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma (S 55.55/5:410 f). The qualities of a sappurisa are given at D 33.2.3(6)/3:252, 34.1.8(7)/3:283; M 113; A 7.64/4:113, 8.38/4:144 f & at M 110.14-24/3:23 f.

In Paññā, vuddhi S (A 5.246) these same 4 qualities are called vuddhi, dhamma, “virtues conducive to growth” (A 5.246/2:245); cf the 5 factors of noble growth (ariya, vuddhi), A 3:80.


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103
(1) THE LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER. Here, Ānanda, the noble disciple is accomplished in wise faith in the Buddha thus:

‘So too, is he the Blessed One: for, he is arhat, the fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable persons, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’

(2) He is accomplished in wise faith in the Dharma thus:

‘Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, to be self-realized, timeless, for one to “come and see,” leading onward, to be personally known by the wise.

(3) He is accomplished in wise faith in the sangha thus:

‘Of good conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; of upright conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; of right conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; of proper conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples. These four pairs of persons, the eight Individuals are this Blessed One’s holy community of disciples: worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, an incomparable field of merit for the world.’

(4) He is accomplished with moral virtues dear to the noble ones, unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, unadorned, giving rise to concentration.

This, Ānanda, is the Dharma Mirror, by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth for me! Destroyed is the realm of the departed for me! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening!’

The 3 trainings

2.10 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Nādika, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

VESĀLĪ

Amba, pāli’s grove, Vesālī

2.11 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Nādika for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Vesālī.”

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533 “Wise faith,” avecca-papasā. There are 2 kinds of faith (saddhā): (1) “rootless faith” (amālaka, saddhā), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (ākāravati, saddhā), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320, 8, 401, 23). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). Amālaka = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). The streamwinner’s faith is defined in Vimanāsaka S (M 47) as “his faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (ākāra, vati saddhā dassana, mālikā dalhā, M 47:16/ 1:320). On kinds of faith, see §5.8c n.

534 Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]…” On the meaning of iti pi so, see Buddhanūsati, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

535 “Virtues dear to the noble ones,” ariya, kantāni sīlāni. The virtues of the noble one are explained at Vism 221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts; hence, these virtues are dear to them (SA 2:74).

536 “Unbroken…giving rise to concentration,” akhandehi acaḥcchidehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viṁśūpasaṭṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi, samavattanakehi. See UA 268. For details, see Vism 1.143-161/51-58.

537 These 2 sections (§§2.10-11)—the brick house & Ambapāli’s grove—are unique to this Sutta.

538 Vesālī (Skt Vaiśāli), the metropolis of the Licchavis, was the capital of the Vṛjī confederacy. It was already famous as the seat of a Solar dynasty and an important city in the Rāmāyaṇa. Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, was born in Kundagrama (or Kundapura), a suburb of Vaiśāli (Sūtra Kṛtaṅga 1.2.3) and the residence of the Nātṛ or Nāṭa clan to which he belonged. This suburb was divided into a northern sector that was ksatriya and a southern sector that was brāhmaṇa. Vaiśāli has been identified with modern Besarh, 35 km (20 mi) north of Hajipur, in the Muzzafarpur district of Bihar. The site of the ancient city is called Rāja Viśāl ka garh. Excavations have revealed pottery, terracottas, clay seals, and other objects, confirming the location of Vaiśāli, and attesting occupation during four periods between 500 BCE and 500 CE. (J Finegan, An Archaeological History of Religions of Indian Asia, 1989:83).

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“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Vesālī, where the Blessed One stayed in Amba,āḷī’s grove.

2.12 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware: this is our instruction to you.

And how, bhikshus, is a monk mindful?

Here, bhikshus, a monk,

1. having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,
2. dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing body in the body.

(2) Having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,

1. the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful observing feeling in the feelings.
2. having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,

1. the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing mind in the mind.
2. Having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,

1. the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing mind-object in the mind-objects.

This, bhikshus, is how a monk is mindful.

2.13 And how, bhikshus, is a monk fully aware?

Here, bhikshus, a monk

1. while going forward or back, he is fully aware of what he is doing;
2. while looking forward or back, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
3. while bending or stretching, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
4. while carrying his upper robe, outer robe and bowl, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
5. while eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
6. while voiding or peeing, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
7. while walking, while standing, while sitting, while asleep, while awake, while talking, or while remaining silent, he is fully aware of what he is doing.

This, bhikshus, is how a monk is fully aware.

Bhikshus, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware: this is our instruction to you.

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539 As at 2.26. The following sections [§§2.12-13] as at Sato S (S 47.2/5:142), whose teaching is also found in Gelaṇṇa S 1 (S 36.7/4:211). The Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra (with a touch of humour?) inserts this episode as the Buddha’s admonition to the monks as Ānāpānā approaches (MPS: Waldschmidt 10.7-15).

540 See §2.26 where this same passage explains the meaning of “taking yourself as refuge.”

541 Vineyya, this means that the 5 hindrances have to be abandoned prior to practising satipaṭṭhāna. This is because the hindrances, in the form of mental impurities (cetaso upakkilesa), weaken wisdom (paññāya dubbali,karane) (D 2:83, 3:49, 101, A 2:211, 3:93, 100, 386 f, Vbh 245, 256).

542 “Covetousness and displeasure,” abhiññā, domanassān. MA says that covetousness and displeasure signify the first two hindrances—sensual desire and ill will—principal hindrances to be overcome for the practice to succeed. They thus represent the observation of mind-objects, which begins with the 5 hindrances.

543 “World” (loka). The Vībhanga says: “This very body is the world, and the 5 aggregates of clinging (ie form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness) are the world—this is called the world.” (Vbh 195).

544 “Exertive, fully aware, mindful,” ātāpi sampajānā satimā (D 3:58, 77, 141, 211, 276 = M 1:56 ff (MA 1:243), 2:11 = S 5:141-143 (SA 3:180) = A 4:300), 457 = Pm 41 (PmA 175) = Vbh 193 f (VbhA 219 f). These stock terms are def at Vbh 194, 196 = 202; Vism 3; DA 363; MA 1:244; SA 1:204; AA 2:42; ItA 1:105; SnA 157; ApA 310. Ātāpi refers to right effort: (1) preventing negative states (samvarā, padhāna); (2) overcoming them (pahāna, padhāna); (3) cultivating wholesome states (bhāvanā, padhāna); (4) maintaining them (anukrakhana, padhāna) (A 2:74, 16, 15).

545 “When asleep, when awake,” sutte jāgarite = Satipaṭṭhāna S (M 10.8/1:57), SD 13.3. Comy glosses sutte as sayane, “lying down, sleeping.” Sutte is often erroneously rendered as “falling asleep,” which is niddam okkamati. Similarly, jāgarite refers to the state of being awake, not to “waking or rising from sleep” (pabujjhati). “The practice of mindfulness focused on sleeping means one uses the old experience, now past, of having been asleep as the focus of superpower mindfulness now. It is mindfulness taking an old experience as it object. This may sound pedantic to you now, but it becomes crucially important, as you will see when I explain the focus of mindfulness on the citta (mind-consciousness).” (Brahmavamso 2002:26, 32-34). See header §C n.

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Ambāpālī

2.14 Then the courtesan Ambāpālī hearkened to the words of the Blessed One as he rose from his seat and left his magnificent carriages. He then instructed, inspired, and gladdened her with the intimation of the Dharma talk. Then the courtesan Ambāpālī, having had magnificent carriages prepared, mounted a carriage, left Vesālī with the magnificent carriages and headed for her park. Having gone in her carriage as far as the ground would permit, she alighted from her carriage and went on foot to where the Blessed One was. Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, she sat down on one side. When the courtesan Ambāpālī was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened her with a Dharma talk.

Then the courtesan Ambāpālī, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from me to the morrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

Then, the courtesan Ambāpālī, understanding that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from her seat and left.

Ambāpālī’s lion-roar

2.15 Now the Licchāvīs of Vesālī heard that the Blessed One had arrived in Vesālī and was staying in Ambāpālī’s grove.

Then the Licchāvīs of Vesālī, having had magnificent carriages prepared, mounted their carriages, left Vesālī in the magnificent carriages. Now, some of the Licchāvīs were blue, blue in colour, dressed in blue, with blue ornaments; some of the Licchāvīs were yellow, yellow in colour, dressed in yellow, with yellow ornaments; some of the Licchāvīs were red, red in colour, dressed in red, with red ornaments; some of the Licchāvīs were white, white in colour, dressed in white, with white ornaments.

2.16 Then the Licchāvī youths rode [racing and knocking each others’ carriages] axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke against the courtesan Ambāpālī. Then the Licchāvīs said this to the courtesan Ambāpālī:

546 The foll §§ [2.14-19] as at V 1:231-33 but differs as to location. Rhys Davids notes: “From this point down to the words ‘he rose from his seat,’ in §2.19, RD errrs, giving it as ‘II, 24’] is, with a few unimportant variations, word for word the same as Vinaya, vol i, pp 231-3. But the passage there follows immediately after the verses translated above I, 34, so that the events here (in §§14-18) localized at Vesālī, are there localized at Kotigāma. Our §II,5 is then inserted between our sections II,18 and II,19; and our section II,11 does not occur at all, the Exalted One only reaching Ambāpālī’s grove when he goes there (as in our section II,19) to partake of the meal to which he had been invited. Buddhaghosa passes over this apparent discrepancy in silence.” (D:RD 2:102 n1; emphasis added.) In other words, the V account here puts the Ambāpālī episode at Kotigāma (after which the Buddha heads for Nātikā or Nādikā). It could be conjectured here that §§2.13 has been interpolated, probably after Buddhaghosa’s time. Even so, it does not mean that these passages are unhistorical. Alternatively, it is possible that the Vinaya reciters have the wrong location.

547 Ambāpālī is Vesālī’s celebrated courtesan or geisha (ganikā or ganakī). She has a son Vimala Kondānā who becomes a monk and arhat, after listening to whom she joins, too, joins the order (Thī 252-270; ThīA 206 f). See Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004:9.14-15.

548 See §1.25 n above.

549 This episode of Ambāpālī’s encounter with the Licchāvīs [§2.16] is absent from the Tibetan Dulva version, where the Buddha, on seeing Amrapalī approaching in the distance, warns, “Bhikshus, Amrapalī is coming! Be mindful, wise, and thoughtful.” The Licchāvīs separately visit the Buddha. (Rockhill 1884:128 f).

550 The Licchāvī was one of the main tribes, the most important and powerful, forming the Vṛjī confederacy. They were the founders of Vaśālī. On their qualities that kept them strong and successful as a people, see §1.4 & also Kaliṅgara S (S 20.8/2:267 f). See DPPN: Licchāvī.

551 These colours are also those of the devas of Susima’s host: see Susima S (S 2.29/1:64 f) as mentioned it is Samyutta Comy (SA 1:125); cf SD 12.12 Intro. These colours probably represented the various Licchāvī clans. Dīgha Comy notes that the whole Licchāvī tribe would join in any ceremony held in the Licchāvī house, and that they would all unite in honouring any distinguished visitors to their city (DA 2:521); see “condition for non-decline” ( aparītāniya,dhamma) no 7 [§1.4]. This is probably the reason for the enthusiasm of the Licchāvī youth in honouring the Buddha and the order with a meal offering.
“Hey, Ambapāli, why are you riding axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke against Licchavī youths?”

“Because, young sirs, I have invited the Blessed One together with the order for a meal tomorrow!”

“Hey, Ambapāli, give up this meal (to us) for a hundred thousand (pieces of money)!""

“Young sirs, even if you were to give me Vesālī with all its territories,” I would not give you such a great meal!”

Then the Licchavī youths snapped their fingers, saying:

“Alas! We have been beaten by this Ambakā! Alas! We are defeated by this mango woman!”

Then the Licchavī youths headed for Ambapāli’s grove.

2.17 Now the Blessed One saw the Licchavīs coming from afar, and he said this to the monks:

“Bhihshus, those who have never seen the Thirty-three gods, just look at the troop of Licchavīs. Look, at them, and you will have a good idea of the host of the Thirty-three gods!”

2.18 Then the Licchavīs, having gone in their carriages as far as the ground would permit, alighted from their carriages and went on foot to where the Blessed One was.

Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, they sat down at one side. When the Licchavīs were thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with a Dharma talk.

Then the Licchavīs, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One:

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552 “Hey,” je, exclamation: Oh! Ah! Now then! (V 1:232, 292 gacchā je; M 1:126; DhA 4:105; VvA 187, 207. It is possible that je is cognate with jaya (Success! Victory!) or modern Hindi jai. As such, it is a cordial greeting. Here I follow Mīṇa 220 (M 21.9/1:126).

553 Note a tone of pride in the speech of the Licchavī youths.

554 It is interesting why the Licchavīs do not opt for another day, say the following, to invite the Buddha for alms. Perhaps they are vying for the first alms offering to the Buddha in Vesālī on this occasion. It is also likely that the Buddha would leave Vesālī the day after Ambapāli’s alms offering.

555 “With all its territories,” sāhāra = sa ahāra (D 2:96), possibly, “with all its tributary states.” Comy glosses it as sa,janapada,ī “with its states/regions” (DA 2:545). At Bija S (S 22.54/3:54) viññāna-, “consciousness with its food/nutriments”: see “The Radiant Mind,” SD 8.3.9. PED here: “with its subject territory.” BHSD gives “(3) district, province: Māgadhā”[556] [559] [557] [561]

556 “(They) snapped their fingers,” anguli pothesuṃ, which Buddhaghosa glosses as anguli cālesuṃ, “they shook their fingers” (VA 1097 = DA 2:545). DPL (Childers), under potheti, defines angulīyo potheti as “to snap the fingers as a token of pleasure” (qu James D’Alwis, An Introduction to Kaccayana’s Grammar of the Pali Language, Colombo, 1863, 1:75). Anguli is clearly “fingers,” so CPD def of anguli,potkha as “clapping the hands” (J 5:67) is problematic; but under anguli pothesum (D 2:96) gives “snapped their fingers.” BHSD defines the Buddhist Skt cognate sphaṭā as “snap of the fingers” (Saddharma,pundarīka, ed Kern & Nanjio, 1912:388.9 prose). It might be surmised here that the Licchavī youths (being youthful) are responding to their “failure” by good-natured snapping their fingers rather than reacting dismally. After all, considering their youthful and tribal pride, it is very likely they regard making an offering to the Buddha as a matter of prestige than an act of merit. But cf §2.15n above on the Licchavīs.

557 Ambakā, “mango woman” (D 2:96; V 1:232; A 3:349) and is related to ambā (= ammā), “mother” (Abhp 244; Kaccv 115, Sadd 652, Mogg 2:63). This word is mentioned twice here and is clearly a word play. As such, I have used the Pali in the first instance, and tr it in the second. The word is also found in satt’ambakā cetiya, the Shrine of the Seven Women (§3.2).

558 Oloketha, “Look!”

559 Avaloketha, “Look! Regard!” Avaloketi also tr “he looks back (at).” This verb is more common than oloketha. Cf apa loket, “he looks back (at)” [§4.1 & n].

560 “Have a good idea,” upasamharattha fr upasamharatthi; here meaning “compare.” See its range of meanings in CPD.

561 This comparison also at DhA 3:280.

562 At this point, the Tibetan Dulva version adds that “When he had finished speaking, a Brahman youth called Kapila (Ser-skya) rose up (f 559) and said, ‘Blessed One, may I venture; Tathāgata, may I give vent (to my feelings)?’ When the Buddha permits him, Kapila sings 3 stanzas praising the Buddha. The Licchavīs are so pleased with him that each of them gives him the cloak they are wearing. Again the Buddha instructed them the Dharma. Gladdened at the Buddha’s word, the Licchavīs invite the Buddha for the meal on the morrow, but the Buddha tells them of his prior acceptance of Amrapali’s invitation. Having saluted the Buddha, the Licchavīs then leave.

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“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from us tomorrow.”
“Licchavī, we have consented to a meal from the courtesan Ambapālī tomorrow.”

Then the Licchavī youths snapped their fingers, saying:
“Alas! We have been beaten by this Ambakā! Alas! We are defeated by this mango woman!”

Then the Licchavī, having rejoiced in the Blessed One’s word and approved of it, rose from their seats, and keeping their right side to him, left.

2.19 Then the courtesan Ambapālī, by the end of the night, having prepared excellent foods, hard and soft, announced to the Blessed One that it was time:
“Bhante, it is time for the meal.”

Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to Ambapālī’s house, and sat down on the prepared seat. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, with her own hands, served the order of monks with the Buddha at its head, with excellent foods, hard and soft, and waited on them.

Then when the Blessed One had finished his meal, and washed his bowl and hands, the courtesan Ambapālī took a low seat and sat down [98] at one side.

2.19.2 And when the courtesan Ambapālī was seated thus, she said this to the Blessed One:
“Bhante, I give this grove to the order of monks with the Buddha at its head.”

The Blessed One accepted the grove.

Then after the Blessed One had instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened the courtesan Ambapālī with a Dharma talk, she rose from her seat and left.

The 3 trainings

2.20 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Vesālī, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,
“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

BELUVA

The Buddha’s last rains retreat

2.21 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Ambapālī’s grove for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:
“Come, Ānanda, let us go to the hamlet of Beluva.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in the hamlet of Beluva. The Blessed One stayed at the hamlet of Beluva.

[Ten months before the Mahāparinibbāna.] 566

2.22 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

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563 Cf §1.30a n above.
564 The Sarvāstivāda version & Tibetan Dulva do not mention this, only saying that the Buddha praises the meal.
565 That is, the hamlet of Beluva, Beluva, gāma (Skt Bilvagamina) or Veļuva (Skt Veṅu, grāmakama), near Vesālī (Skt Vaiśālī).
566 Buddhaghosa, probably aware of the discrepancy of dates, assigns this episode to the 10th month before the Buddha’s parinibbāna (DA 2:547 = SA 3:202). The SA Porana Ṭikā says that the Buddha went into “fruition attainment (phala, samāpatti)” (Vism 23), by which life is vitalized, sustained, prolonged… He entered the attainment with the determination, ‘Let the pain not arise for another ten months,’ and the pain, suppressed by the attainment, did not arise for another ten months’ (qu at S:B 1920 n138). BDict: Phala, as “path-result” or “fruition,” it denotes those moments of supremundane consciousness which flash forth immediately after the moment of path-consciousness and which, till the attainment of the next higher path, may during the practice of Insight (vipassanā) still recur innumerable times. If thus repeated, they are called the “attainment of fruition” (phala, samāpatti). Cf §2.23 n. On the discrepancy of the dates of the Buddha’s parinibbāna, see Intro (9.4) above.
567 The foll §§2.22-26, with a slightly modified narrative Intro, is found in (Bhagavā) Gilāna S (S 47.9/5: 152-54).
“Bhikshus, stay for the rains retreat around Vesālī where you have friends or acquaintances or supporters. I will spend the rains retreat here in the hamlet of Beluva.”

“Yes, bhante,” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One, and they spent the rains retreat around Vesālī where they had friends or acquaintances or [99] supporters, and the Blessed One spent the rains retreat there in the hamlet of Beluva.

The Buddha’s first dysentery attack

2.23 Now when the Blessed One had entered the rains retreat, a serious illness arose in him, with severe pains, as if he were about to die. But he endured all this mindfully and fully aware, and without complaining.

Then it occurred to the Blessed One,

“It is not fitting that I should attain to the point of dying, and so by sheer will power it appears that Nīghaṇṭu is amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” (Snellgrove, BSOAS 36, 1973:401)

This whole section [§§2.23-25] has the following in the Tibetan version: “Ānanda, I do not have the idea that the order of monks is mine, that I must cleave to the order and lead it, so how should I have a last exhortation, even a slight one, with which to instruct the order? Whatever teachings I have had which were relevant to the order of monks, I have already taught them as the principles which must be practised, namely, [the 4 focuses of mindfulness, the 4 right efforts, the 4 bases of success, the 5 faculties, the 5 powers, the 7 awakening-factors, the noble eightfold path]. As Buddha I do not have the closed-fistedness of a teacher who thinks he must conceal things as unsuitable to others.” (Snellgrove, BSOAS 36, 1973:401)

The “severe illness” here [as at §4.20] shows symptoms of dysentery. Winternitz (1939:9) says that this section [§2.23] is amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” At §3.10 the Buddha however relinquishes his lifespan. See also §§2.25 & 5.13 f.

Atha kho Bhagavato etad ahosi: Na kho me taṁ paṭirūpaṁ yo ‘haṁ anāmantetvā upaṭṭhāke anapaloketvā bhikkhu, saṅghaṁ parinibbāyeyyaṁ. Yan munā ‘haṁ imaṁ ābhāṣaṁ viriyena paṭippanāmetvā jīvitaṁ, saṁkhāraṁ adhiṭṭhāya vihareyyaṁ ti. It appears that Nāgasena (Mīn 141) and the Sarvāstivādins take this episode to mean that the Buddha is actually at the point of dying, and so by sheer will power extended his life for at least 3 more months (to the end of the rains retreat). Note, however, that no duration is mentioned here, but see See §2.22 n where this episode is said to be 10 months before the parinirvana; cf §3.9. The Skt texts says that the Buddha extends his life here so that Supriya and Subhadra could meet him: see Intro (9.5) above.

Comys, however, say that the Buddha did not let go of his life-extension like a ball of clay from his hand, but for exactly 3 months he entered upon the attainment of the fruits (phala, samāpattī), thinking, “I will not enter upon them for any longer than that” (DA 556; SA 3:253; UA 327). For a different opinion, see Jaini 1958 (2001:193). It should be noted, however, that this life-extension is different from the one mentioned at the Cāpāla Shrine [§3.3]. See also Intro (9).

This whole episode missing in the Tibetan Dulva version.

“In the shade of the dwelling,” vihāra, pacchāyāvan. D:W renders it as “in front of his dwelling,” probably from mis-reading pacchā (behind, back, after, afterwards, westward). Actually the word here is pacchāyā (shade, a shaded place) (V 1:180, 2:193; D 1:152 = chāyā, DA 1:310, 2:205; A 3:320).
Then the venerable Ānanda went up to the Blessed One and having saluted him, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, I have seen the Blessed One enjoying comfort, and I have seen the Blessed One patiently enduring. And, bhante, my body has become weak [unwieldy] as if drugged [drunk]. I’m disoriented and things are unclear to me as a result of the Blessed One’s illness.

Only this much comfort have I, thinking: ‘The Blessed One will not pass into parinirvana until he has made some statement [pronouncement] concerning the order of monks.’”

2.25 575

“Ānanda, what does the order of monks expect of me? I have taught the Dharma, Ānanda, making no distinction between inner and outer.576 the Tathāgata has no ‘teacher’s fist’577 in respect of teachings.

2.25.2 Surely, Ānanda, if there were anyone who thinks: ‘I shall take care of [look after] the order,’580 that ‘The order should refer to me,’581 then let him make some statement about the order. But, Ānanda, it does not occur to the Tathāgata to think, ‘I shall take care of the order,’ that ‘The order should refer to me.’ So why should the Tathāgata make a statement about the order?582

2.25.3 Ānanda, I am now old, aged, in years, my journey done, I have reached the sum of my days, I am turning 80.583 Ānanda, just as an old cart is kept going by being held together with straps, even so the Tathāgata’s body is kept going by being strapped up.


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574 Dīthā me bhante bhagavato phāsū, dīthāmaṁ bhante bhagavato khamānīyaṁ.
575 “My body... is as if drugged,” me... madhuraka, jāto viya kāyo. Ānanda expresses the same sentiments at the parinirvana of Sāriputta (Cunda (Samañṇauddesa) S, S 47.13/5:162), reflected in his Thera, gāthā: “All the quarters have become dim; the teachings are unclear to me. | My spiritual friend has gone, and everything is cast in darkness” (Tha 1034). “The old ones have passed away. I do not get on with the new ones. | Today I meditate all alone, like a bird gone to its nest” (Tha:N 94 = Tha 1036). DPL says that madhuraka is “the Jīvaka plant,” quoting Abhidhānappadipikā (ed W Subhūti), 1865: 594. This probably led Rhys Davids to render it here as “my body has become weak as a creeper,” but PED (W Stede?) rejects as erroneous (sv Madhuraka), saying that the usual tr has been “become languid or weak.” Comys paraphrase madhuraka as: “it has become heavy” (sahīṭā, garu, bhāvo, AA 3:259); “it has become unwieldy, as if heavy” (sahīṭā, garu, bhāvo sahīṭā, ṭhaddha, bhāvo sāle utāṭāsa, purisa viya, DA 2:547, SA 3:203; Madhuraka also means “sweet, pleasant, charming,” but PED gives it as “full of sweet drink, intoxicated.” For madhuraka viya kāya, see D 16.2,24/2:99; S 22.84/3:106 f., 47.9/5:153, 47.13/5:162, A 5.56/3:70 f (madhuraka c’eva kāya); also UA 246. See also S:W 3:90 n2 & S:B 1078 n149.
576 Dīsā pi me na pakkhāyantī, dhammā pi main na paṭībhanī bhagavato gelaṁhirīna: D 16.2,24/2:99; S 22.84/3:106 f., 47.9/5:153, 47.13/5:162; A 5.56/3:70 f (madhuraka c’eva kāya); also UA 246. See also S:W 3:90 n2 & S:B 1078 n149. On “things are unclear to me,” dhammā pi main na paṭībhanī, cf A 5.56/3:69. For a psychological expl on Ānanda’s reaction, see Udākāyama S (A 7.15), SD 28.6 (1.2.5).
577 Wittternitz (1939:9) says that this section [§2.25] is amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest anti-queuity.” See also §2.23 & 5.13 f.
578 Comys: “Making no distinction between inner and outer,” anantaraṁ abāhīram karivā. Comys explain it as making no distinction of either inner or outer by way of the Dharma or by way of persons. Making an ‘inner’ of the Dharma means to teach, thinking, ‘This much Dharma I will not teach others.’ Making an ‘outer’ of the Dharma means to teach, thinking, ‘I will teach this much to others.’ Making an ‘inner’ of the person means to teach, thinking, ‘I will teach this person.’ Making an ‘outer’ of the person means to teach, thinking, ‘I will not teach this person.’ Thus he teaches without making a distinction. This is the meaning.” (DA 2:547 = SA 3:203). On these twofold distinction, see Miln 1145 f, 159 f. See foll n.
579 N’atthi icaliyā, muthti. Comys: “The teacher’s fist is found amongst outsiders who do not tell certain things to their pupils when they are still boys (dahara,kāle), who keep certain teachings for their beloved and favourite pupils, telling it to them only at the last moment from their deathbed. The Tathāgata does not hold back anything, keeping a closed fist, thinking, ‘I will teach this in my old age, at the last moment.’” (DA 2:548 = SA 3:203 f)
580 Ahaṁ bhikkhu, saṅghaṁ pariharissāmi ti: Walshe tr pariharissāmi as “take charge of” (D-W 245). On apparent contradiction regarding pariharissāmi (wrongly tr as “I will lead”), cf Catūma S (M 67,13/4:459), SD 34.7, where it has a different sense. On how the Buddha addresses them, using tathāgata and ahaṁ, see Cūḷa Māluṅkya,putta S (M 63), SD 5.8 (3).
581 582 On tr of “shall take care of” (pariharissāmi), see Catūma S (M 67), SD 34.7 (2).
583 Ahaṁ kho paṁ añānda, etarahi jīnaḥ vuddho mahallako addha ’gato vayo ‘anuppatto, āsītiko me vayo vattati. If we take this as meaning that the Buddha has reached or passed his 80th birthday, and that, as traditionally accepted, he passes away on Vesak day, he would be 81 then. However, the verb vattati, “turns,” here clearly means that the Buddha is going to be 80, but not yet. Note that the Buddha says to Subhadda, “I was 29 years, Subhadda, | when I went forth... | Now over 50 years have passed” ($5.27.3). So, it is more likely that the Buddha is 79 at that time, and passes away on his 80th birthday.
584 “By being strapped,” vetthā,missakena, following Norman and Bodhi. This seems to be like some kind of what we today call a “body-brace.” See Tha:N 143 n & S:B 1920 n141.
Ânanda, it is only when the Tathāgata pays no attention to all the signs and by the ending of certain feelings, enters and dwells in the signless concentration of mind,⁵⁸⁵ that the Tathāgata’s body knows comfort.⁵⁸⁶

Self as refuge

2.26 Therefore, Ânanda, dwell with yourself as an island, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.⁵⁸⁷

And how does a monk dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge. And how, Ânanda, does a monk dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge? ⁵⁸⁸

2.27 Here, Ânanda,

(1) a monk⁵⁹⁰ dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating body in the body,⁵⁹¹ removing covetousness and displeasure [discontent]⁵⁹² in regard to the world,⁵⁹³

(2) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating feelings in the feelings,

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;

(3) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating mind [thoughts] in the mind,

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;

(4) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

As at 2.12 this passage defines “how a monk is mindful.” See nn there.

⁵⁸⁵ “The signless concentration of mind,” animittam ceto, samādhin. Bodhi notes that this samadhi “must be different from the one with the same name mentioned at [Animitta S, S 40.9/4:268 f]” (S:B 1921 n141). The Sanjuutta Comy (SA 3:90) on Animitta S explains it as deep insight concentration, the present one as fruition attainment (phala, samāpatti), which would then identify it with the animittam ceto, samādhin here. Comy of Mahā Parinibbāna S simply says it is “fruition-attainment” (DA 2:548). On the Buddha’s first serious illness, see §2.23 n.

⁵⁸⁶ Bodhi notes that if Comys (SA 2:425; ApA 58, 358; J 1:63) were right in saying that Ânanda was born on the same day as the Bodhisattva, this passage would hardly make sense, “for the Buddha would not need to insist on the frailties of old age if Ânanda too was an old man” (S:B id). Bodhi thinks that Ânanda “must have been considerably younger that the Buddha, perhaps by as much as thirty years” (S:B 804 n296). It is interesting that the Tibetan sources (eg the Dulva or Vinaya) says that Ânanda is the same age as Rāhula (Rockhill 57), which should be a good age for one to be the Buddha’s life-long personal attendant. On the differences of opinion regarding Ânanda’s age amongst the early Buddhist schools, see C Witanachchi, “Ânanda,” Encyclopaedia of Buddhism 1:529. See also Thomas 1949:123; Rhys Davids’ article on “Devadatta” in ERE; DPPN 1:268.

⁵⁸⁷ Tasmā-tiḥ Ânanda atta,dīpā viharathā atta,sarāṇa anāṇa,sarāṇa, dhamma,dīpā dhamma,sarāṇa anāṇa,sarāṇa (D 16,2.26/2:100 = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 47.14/5:164): many of them at different venues and to different interlocutors. On the tr of dīpā here as “island” or as “lamp” & discussion, see Intro (6.1) above.

⁵⁸⁸ As at §2.12. This well known passage is from Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S (D 22.1/2:290) and Satipaṭṭhāna S (M 10,3/-1:55). At §2.12 this passage defines “how a monk is mindful.” See nn there.

Here “a monk” (bhikkhu) may refer to either an ordained monastic or anyone who is meditating (here, doing satipatthana) (DA 3:756; MA 1:241; VbhA 216 f; cf SnA 251); see SD 13.1 (3.1.1.5). On meditation as renunciation, see Hālīd-dakāṇi S I (S 22.3/3:9-12), SD 10.12; Bhāvanā, SD 15.1 (14.7), Sexuality, SD 31.7 (1.6.2). See Dh 142; also Dh 362, 260-270. Cf Bhikkhu Vagga (ch 25) and Brāhmaṇa Vagga (ch 26) of Dh.

⁵⁹⁰ Atīpā sampajānā satīmā, vineyya loke abhijjhā,domanassa. Here we find 4 of the 5 spiritual faculties (pañc’ indriya) in action: see SD 13.1 (4.2).

⁵⁹¹ “Contemplating body in the body” (kāye kāyānupassī). See SD 13.1 (3.4).

⁵⁹² Vineyya can mean “should remove” (as pot, like vineyya, Sn 590) or as “having removed” (as ger, like vinayītā, Pm 1:244), and both senses apply in Satipaṭṭhāna S. U Silananda similarly ends the sentence with “removing covetousness and grief in the world” (1990:177); also 1990:22-25. See SD 13.1 (4.2c) above.


⁵⁹⁴ “World” (loka). The Vibhanga says: “This very body is the world, and the 5 aggregates of clinging (ie, form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness) are the world—this is called the world.” (Vbh 195). However, in his amplified tr at Vbh 105, U Thitila has “world (ie, in ideational objects)” (dhammā, mental objects) (Vbh:T 139).

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contemplating dharmas in the dharmas,
removing covetousness and displeasure in the order to the world.

That, Ānanda, is how a monk dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge—
dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge. [101]

2.28 Ānanda, those who, now in my time or after me, live thus, with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge; dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge—they become the highest,” 595 but, Ānanda, they must be those who desire to learn [who have desire for training]. 596

Chapter 3
(Third Recital, tattiya bhāṇavāra)
CĀPĀLA SHRINE

The Buddha’s love of tree shrines
[102] 3.1 597 Then, when it was morning, the Blessed One dressed and, taking bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for alms. 598 Having walked in Vesālī for alms, he had his meal, after which he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Bring along a mat, Ānanda. We will go to the Cāpāla Shrine 599 for the midday rest.” 600

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Holding the mat, the venerable Ānanda followed the Blessed One as he walked. 601

595 “The highest,” tama-aga (the highest”): Comy gives a long expl, the essence of which is “cutting off all yokes to
darkness (ignorance)” (sabbāna tama,yogāni chinditvā, DA 548); also at S 47.9/5:154, where Comy takes it as tama-agge, with the infix -i- as euphonic junction (pada,sandhi): see S:B 1921 n143. Bodhi notes that this word is not found in the
fragments of the Turfan Skt version, but the Tib and Chin parallels, probably based on Skt texts, point to a meaning as “the
highest” (S:B 1921 n143). See also Vajira & Story n20.

596 Ye keci sikkhā,kāmā, D 2:101, 3:58; S 3:42, 5:154, 163, 164.

597 This epilogue of the Buddha’s relinquishment of the rest of his lifespan at the Cāpāla shrine [§§3.1-10] is found in
Cetiya S (S 51.10/5:258-263)—SA 3:251-255 parallel DA 2:554-558—and Ayu,sama S (U 6.1/62-64), commented on at
UA 322-330; also at Nett 60. This episode and the subsequent earth-tremors (bhūmi,cāla) [§§3.1-20] are found in Bhūmi-
cāla S (A 8.70/4:308-313).

598 Comy says that the Buddha has just left Ukkacelā and here enters Vesālī. Ukkacelā is not mentioned anywhere in
this sutta. Comy also implicitly says that the teachings given here are recorded in Ukkacelā S (S 47.14/5:163-165; SA 3:225; J 1:391). (DA 2:554)

599 “Cāpāla Shrine,” Cāpāla,cetiya. The Ānguttara Comy says that during the first 20 years of the Buddha’s ministry, he
used to stay among the shrines—the Cāpāla shrine, the Udena shrine, the shrine of Seven Mangoes, the shrine of Many
Sons, the Sārandanda shrine [3.2]—mentioned here (AA 2:373. All these shrines were said to be beautiful spots (D 2:102 f,
118, 3:9; S 5:159, 260; A 4:309; U 62). They were tree shrines (rakkha,cetiya) where people sought refuge when they were
in fear or where they prayed to have their wishes fulfilled (DhA 3:246). The Buddha has lived much of his live in the open
and encourages his disciples to live the solitary forest life to expedite their spiritual practice. The Cāpāla Shrine
was once the haunt of the yaksha Cāpāla, but later a residence (vihāra) was built there for the Buddha’s use (UA 323). Faxian found a
pagoda there and relates a story in connection with it (Travels of Fa Hsien [Foguoji,G], tr HA Giles, Cambridge, 1923:43).
The Udena Shrine, on the east of Vesālī, was dedicated to the yaksha Udena (DA 2:554; UA 323). The Gotamaka Shrine,
on the south of Vesālī (D 3:9), was dedicated to the yaksha Gotamaka (AA 2:373). It is here that the Buddha lays down the
rule allowing the use of three robes (V 3:195): the three robes are used to keep the monks warm of cold days (V 1:288).
The Shrine of Seven Women (satt’ambaka cetiya), to the west of Vesālī, was so called after seven princesses, the daugh-
ters of Kīki, king of Benares, experience religious urgency (saṁvega), left the palace and carried out spiritual practice here (UA 323). The Vessantarā J (J 522) says king Kīki lived during the time of Kassapa Buddha (the just Buddha before ours) and that the women were reborn in our Buddha’s time as Khemā, Uppalavanā, Patācārā, Gotamī, Dhamma,dinnā, Mahā-
māya and Visākā (J 6:481). The word ambakā here means “woman” (V 1:232; D 2:96 in ref to Ambapālī [§2.16]; A 3:349)
and is related to ambā (= ammā), “mother” (Abhp 244; Kaecv 115, Sadd 652, Mogvy 2:63). The Shrine of Many Sons
(bahu,putta cetiya), to the north of Vesālī, had a banyan tree with numerous branches, to which people who wanted to have
children would come to pray for it (U 6.1/62 f, DA 2:102, 3:10; SA 5:259 f; UA 323). On the shrine (cetiya), see Intro (7.3).

600 “For the midday rest,” diva,vihārāya. The term diva,vihāra, lit “day residence” has sometimes been tr as “siesta”
(D:W 246),but the word suggests that it is a time for a nap. The Buddha often speaks against monastics sleeping in the day
time (D 3:185*; cf V 1:295). There are many references to monks and nuns resting in meditation during such a midday rest
(S 1:128 f, 130, 131 f).
3.2 Then the Blessed One, having arrived at the Cāpāla Shrine, sat down on the prepared seat. Then the venerable Ānanda, having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. When the venerable Ānanda was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One said this to him:

“Ānanda, delightful [606] is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena Shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine, delightful is the Satt’ambaśaka Shrine [of the Seven Women], delightful is the Bahu,puttaka Shrine [of Many Sons], delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine. [603] [103]

The Buddha’s lifespan

3.3 Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the 4 bases of spiritual power, [604] made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, [605] could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan. [606]

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or the rest of a lifespan. [607]

3.4 But even though the venerable Ānanda was given such a clear sign by the Blessed One, though he was given such a broad hint, he was unable to understand it. He did not beseech the Blessed One, “Bhante, let the Blessed One stay on through the lifespan, let the Sugata [Welfarer] stay on through the lifespan for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of gods and humans”—to that extent his mind was seized by Māra. [608]

3.5 For the second time, the Blessed One said this to him dropping the same hint but Ānanda’s mind was seized by Māra.

For the third time, the Blessed One said this to him:

“Ānanda, delightful is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena Shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine, delightful is the Satt’ambaśaka Shrine [of the Seven Women], delightful is the Bahu,puttaka Shrine [of Many Sons], delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine.

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601 “Followed...as he walked,” pīṭṭhito pīṭṭhito anubandhi. See §1.32 (D 2:89).
602 “Delightful,” ramaṇīyā, alt tr “beautiful, charming.” This shows that the Buddha appreciates natural beauty, here def as any quality that conduces to mental peace, stability and clarity uninfluenced by greed, hate or delusion. See Vedanā, SD 3.2.
603 On each of these shrines, see §3.1n.
604 The 4 bases of spiritual power (iddhi,pāda;Skrt ṛddhi,pāda): will or intention (chanda), energy or effort (viriya), consciousness or mind (citta) and mental investigation (vīmaṃsā) (D 3:77, D 3:213 = M1:103 = 2:11; D 3:221; Vbh 216). See Intro (9.2.3) & also Gethin 2001:94-97.
605 Cultivated and developed...made very well even,” bhāvītā bahuli,katā yāni,katā vatthu,katā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susam-āraddhā (D 2:104 5 refs, 115-118 9 refs, 3:248 f 5 refs; S 1:116, 2:264 f 4 refs, 4:200, 5:170, 259 f 4 refs; A 3:290-292 5 refs, 4:300 2 refs, 309 3 refs; U 62 f 4 refs). All the terms are defined at Pm 1:172, here paraphrased: cultivated (bhāvītā): perfected by way of embracing dhyāna, insight and path; developed (bahuli,katā): thoughts (dhamma) do not arise in excess; made them a vehicle (yānī, katā): his calm and insight is ever ready; made them the ground (vatthu,katā): mindfulness is well-established; attended to them (anuṭṭhita): able to guide his mind; reinforced them (pari,citta), lit well-accumulated: able to conquer bad mental states; made them well even (susam-āraddhā), lit “making beauty arise”: overcoming defilements and attaining the goal. (Pm 3:173 f/1:172)
606 “For a lifespan...or for the rest of a lifespan,” kappan vā...kappāvasesam vā (D 2:103; S 5:259; U 62; cf Kvu 45). On the Buddha’s lifespan, see Intro (9.1+2) & on the kappa, see Intro (9.3) above.
607 This lifespan extension is clearly different from the earlier one [§2.23], but see Intro (9).
608 Yathā tam Mārena pariyuṭṭhita,citto. Comys say that Māra is able to seize any mind that has not totally given up all mental perversions (vipālāsa), and Ānanda has not done so. Being a streamwinner, he is still subject to the perversion of perception (saññā,vipālāsa) and of mind (citta,vipālāsa), though not of views (diṭṭhi,vipālāsa). Māra seized his mind by displaying a terrifying form, and when the elder sees it he is unable to catch the hint dropped by the Buddha (DA 2:555 = SA 3:252). On the perversions, see Satipaṭṭhāna Ss, SD 13.1 (4.1a) & Vipālāsa S (A 4.49/2:52; Vism 22.68), SD 16.11. http://dharmafarer.org
Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.”

But even though the venerable Ānanda was given such a clear sign by the Blessed One, though he was given such a broad hint, he was unable to understand it. He did not beseech the Blessed One, “Bhante, let the Blessed One stay on through the life-span, let the Sugata [Well-farer] stay on through the life-span for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of gods and humans”—to that extent his mind was seized by Māra.

3.6 Then Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:
“You may go, Ānanda! Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda answered the Blessed One. Having risen from his seat and saluted the Blessed One, keeping his right side to him, he sat down under one of the trees nearby.

Māra’s invitation

3.7 Then, not long after the venerable Ānanda had left, Māra the bad one went up to the Blessed One and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, Māra the bad one said this to the Blessed One:

3.7.2 (1) “Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.7.3 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:
‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have monk disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.7.4 who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;

609 “Cultivated and developed…made very well even,” bhāvitā bahuli,katā yāni,katā vatthu,katā anuṭhitā paricitā su-samāraddhā (D 2:104 5 refs, 115-118 9 refs, 3:248 f 5 refs; S 1:116, 2:264 f 4 refs, 4:200, 5:170, 259 f 4 refs; A 3:290-292 5 refs, 4:300 2 refs, 309 9 refs; U 62 f 4 refs). All the terms are defined at Pm 1:172, here paraphrased: cultivated (bhāvita): perfected by way of embracing dhyana, insight and path; developed (bahuli,katā): thoughts (dhammā) do not arise in excess; made them a vehicle (yāni, katā): his calm and insight is ever ready; made them the ground (vatthu,katā): mindfulness is well-established; attended to them (anuṭhitā): able to guide his mind; reinforced them (pari,citā), lit well-accumulated: able to conquer bad mental states; made them well even (susamā-raddhā), lit “making beauty arise”: overcoming defilements and attaining the goal. (Pm 3:173 f 1:172)

610 Yassa dāni tvam kālaṁ maññasti ti. This is stock: Sāmañña,phala S (D 2.101/1:85 @ SD 8.10), Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16.3/2:104 @ SD 13), Sekha S (M 53.3/1:354 @ SD 21.2=14), Kaṇṭaka-t,thala S (M 90.17/2:132 f @ SD 10.8), Puṇṇovāda S (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31 @ SD 20.15), Avassuta S (S 35.243/4:183,15, 30), Khemā Therī S (S 44.1/4:379.29), Vesālī S (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17) & Thapatayā S (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” Buddhist Studies Review 10, 1993:27-43.

611 Māra is here reminding of this declaration the Buddha has made during the 5th week after the Great Awakening while he was enjoying the bliss of awakening under the Goat tree. It is interesting that this early conversation between the Buddha and Māra is not recorded elsewhere in the Nikāyas. See §3.34 below, where the Buddha relates this incident to Ānanda. On Māra’s attempts to prevent the Buddha from teaching, see Bhrama,nimantanika S (M 49), 11.7(2a).

612 Bhikkhū…sāvakā: D:W renders this as “monks and disciples,” but it seems out of context. I take it as a tappurusa (P tappurisa cpd; see Warder, Introduction to Pali, 1974:77 f), or more exactly a “split tappurusa,” ie as bhikkhu,sāvakā, and also bhikkhuṇi,sāvikā, upāsakā,sāvakā and upāsikā,sāvikā. Following this, EM Hare’s alt tr is “till my monks (nuns, laymen, laywomen) shall be disciples…” (A:H 4:207 f ad A:4:310 f). If we accept Walshe’s tr, then “monks” (bhikkhū) here would refer to the “worldlings,” that is, those still outside the path to awakening, while “disciples” (sāvaka) refers to those monks on the path, that is, one of the eight types of Saints. This categorization similarly applies to the other three pairs of “followers and disciples.” However, I think the context here refer only to the 4 types of noble saints (ariya,sāvaka)—ie the sainthood of the monastic and the lay—and not to the worldly Sangha or unawakened lay assembly. It is important to note here that the Buddha is clearly not referring to a statistical population, but a spiritual community of those who have gained the path.

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3.7.5 until they shall be able, by reasonable means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder. 613

3.8 But now, bhante, the monk disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes. 614] learned, bearers of the Dharma, [105] trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.8.2 who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expend it, analyse it, make it clear;

3.8.3 until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

3.8.4 (2) Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-ferer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.8.5 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have nun disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes.] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.8.6 who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expend it, analyse it, make it clear;

3.8.7 until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

3.8.8-10 But now, bhante, the nun disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, ....

3.8.11 (3) Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-ferer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.8.12 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have layman disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes.] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.8.13 who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expend it, analyse it, make it clear;

3.8.14 until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

3.8.15-17 But now, bhante, the layman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, ....

3.8.18 (4) Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-ferer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.8.19 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have laywoman disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yoke.] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.8.20 who will pass on what they have gained from their own [106] teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expend it, analyse it, make it clear;

3.8.21 until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.’

3.8.22-24 But now, bhante, the laywoman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, ....

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-ferer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.8.25 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

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613 Na tāvāhāṃ päpīma parinibbāyissāmi yāva me bhikkhū na sāvakā bhavissanti viyattā vinnātā viśāradā [patta,yoga-k-khemā] 613 bahu-s,sutā dhamma,dharā dhammānudhamma,patipannā sāmici,patipannā anudhamma,cārino, sakānācariyā-ākkhegathvā ācikkhissanti desessantī paññābānā sattam na paññābānā sattam.nupannā para-p,pāvīdānuh sāha dhammaṃ suniggahītan nigghatvā sappāṭhihāriyaṁ dhamaṃ desessantī tī. *This phrase is omitted here but found in A 4:311.


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Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana as long as this holy life has not flourished, prospered, spread wide, well known to the many, spread amongst the masses, as long as it has not been well proclaimed amongst human beings.'

3.8.26 But now, bhante, the Blessed One’s holy life has flourished, prospered, spread wide, well known to the many, spread amongst the masses, and well proclaimed amongst human beings.  

3.8.27 Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

The Buddha relinquishes his lifespan

3.9 Then the Blessed One said this to Māra the bad one:
“Be at ease, bad one! It will not be long before the Tathāgata’s parinirvana. With the passing of 3 months from now, the Tathāgata shall enter parinirvana.”  

3.10 Then the Blessed One, at the Cāpāla Shrine, mindfully and fully aware, relinquished his life-formation. And when the Blessed One had relinquished his life, there was a great earth-tremor, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth].

Then the Blessed One [107] One, understanding the meaning of this, uttered this verse of uplift on that occasion:

The sage lets go of the formation of existence, of life [the remaining lifespan], low and high, Delighting within and mentally concentrated, he broke the armour-like self-existence.

The 8 causes of earth-tremors

3.11 Then this occurred to the venerable Ānanda: “It is wonderful indeed! It is marvellous indeed! What a great earth-tremor that was, terrifying and hair-raising [the sky-drums bursting forth]. What now is the reason, what is the cause for such a great earth-tremor to occur?”

615 Etarahi kho panā bhante bhagavato brahma, cariyam iddham c'eva phītaṁ ca vitthārikāh bahu, jñānaṁ putthu, bhūtaṁ yāva-d-eva manussæhi suppakāsitan ti = U 64,16-19, commented at UA 332-330. This passage is also at Cāpāla Cetiya S (S 51.10/5:262,9-14) & Nagara S (S 12.65/2:107,2-5 @ SD 14,2), where (in both cases) etarahi kho panā bhante is replaced by tayidham bhikkhave, and where SA parallels DA 2:554-558. The underscored phrase reads thus at D 16.3, S 12.65, S 51.10, & U 64; but vL & SA has yāva deva, manussæhi, & Divy deva, manusye bhavah. Bodhi: “I follow SA in its explanation of yāva deva, manussæhi suppakāsitaṁ. The point is that, despite the use of the instrumental form –ehi, the Dhamma is not proclaimed by devas and humans, but ‘throughout the region (inhabited) by devas and humans in the ten-thousandfold galaxy, within this extent it is well proclaimed, well taught, by the Tathāgata’ (yāva daśa, sathassa, cukkavālā deva, manussæhi paricchedo athi, etasmin antare suppakāsitaṁ sudesitaṁ tathāgatena). It is possible –ehi here is a vestigial Eastern locative plural: see Geiger, Pāli Grammar §80.3.” (S:B 779 n182). Be that as it may, the Dharma is truly spread only when it is well proclaimed and well realized, and well proclaimed by such sources. This is clear from this passage’s context in Mahāparinibbānā S here.

616 “With the passing of,” accayena: see (9.4.3) n ad loc.

617 Appossuakkā tvan pāpima hohi, na ciranā tathāgatassa parinibbānaṁ bhavissati, ito tiṇṇam māśānām accayena tathāgato parinibbāyissati ti. On the question whether the Buddha passes away on Vesak Day, see (9.4) above. On appossuka, see SD 49.8a (2.3.6.4).

618 “Life-formation” (āyu, sankhāra; elsewhere jīvita, sankhāra) (M 1:295, 296; S 2:266; J 4:215). Cf §2.23 where the Buddha willfully extends his life. See S:B 819 n366. See (9.2) on the Buddha’s lifespan, (9.3) on kappa, & (9.6). Did the Buddha commit suicide?

619 A similar phenomenon (dhamma, niyāma) follows immediately after the Buddha passes into parinirvana [§6.10].

620 Tūlam attulam ca sambhavam bhava, sankhāraṁ avasajjai muni | Ajjhatta, rato samāhiṁ abhida kavacam i'v atta, sambhavan. This difficult stanza has the same comy—SA 3:254 f = DA 2:557 f = AA 4:153 f = UA 329 f—that offer two alternative explanations: one taking tūlam and attulam as contrasted opposites, the other taking tūlam as a present participle and attulam and sambhavan as the contrasted opposed. Cf Sn 85b where atulyo describes a teacher of the path (magg 'akkhāy), probably the Buddha; Sn 683a, where it is used to qualify the Bodhisattva; Thī 201 atulyi describes the akampitaṁ dhammam, “the unshakable state,” presumably nirvana. Cf U 6.1; S 5:263; Divy 203. Nettippakaraṇa takes tūlam as the sankhāra, dhātu (the totality of conditioned things), and attulam as the nibbāna, dhātu (Nett 61): on the 2 elements (dhātu) of nirvana, see It 2.2.7/38. See Bhikkhu important and detailed n, S:B 1941 n255.

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3.12 Then the venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful indeed! It is marvellous indeed! What a great earth-tremor that was, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth]. What now is the reason, what is the cause [condition], for such a great earth-tremor?”

3.13 “Ānanda, there are these 8 reasons and conditions for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

What are the eight?

(1) Here, Ānanda, 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 trembles.622

This, [108] Ānanda, is the first reason, the first condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.14 (2) Furthermore, Ānanda, a recluse or brahmin of great power, accomplished in mental powers, or a devata of great power and great glory, but whose earth-consciousness is weakly developed, but his water-consciousness is immeasurable, and he makes the earth shudder and shake violently.

This, Ānanda, is the second reason, the second condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.15 (3) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Bodhisattva, having left Tusita heaven and, mindfully and fully aware, descends into the mother’s womb, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.623

This, Ānanda, is the third reason, the third condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.16 (4) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Bodhisattva, mindfully and fully aware, leaves the mother’s womb, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.624

This, Ānanda, is the fourth reason, the fourth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.17 (5) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata awakens to the supreme full self-awareness, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.625

This, Ānanda, is the fifth reason, the fifth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.18 (6) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata turns the peerless Wheel of Truth, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.625

This, Ānanda, is the sixth reason, the sixth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.19 (7) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata, mindfully and fully aware, relinquishes the life-formation, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.

This, Ānanda, is the seventh reason, the seventh condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.20 (8) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata enters into parinirvana, [109] the nirvana-element without residue,626 this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.627

answer is that he could have lived on if he had so wished; but he did not wish because he had certain kinds of power and insight and self-mastery which prevented him from doing so. For the purpose of this answer these paragraphs, already in existence among the Suttas current in the community, and dealing with these powers, are here repeated without any such connecting argument as we should find under similar circumstances, in a modern (written) book of apologetics. The argument suggested by them follows exactly the same lines as that in the Mahāli S…” (D:RD 2:113 n3; emphasis added).

The Madhyām’āgama (MĀ 36 = T26.477b21-478b12), the Mūlasarvāstivādī version (22, 1-23, 8) and the Tibetan Dulva (f 573²-577⁷ = Rockhill 1884:132 f) mention only 3 natural causes of an earth-tremor. It is here, according to the Dulva, that the Buddha teaches “the three great references” (f 573²-577⁷) “but it is more developed than the Pāli version, and gives many more rules” (Rockhill 1884:132 n1). The 4 great references are at §4.7 below. The 8 causes of an earth-tremor is found in all versions, and as such most likely forms an original part of the sutta, but is a borrowing from Bhūmi-cālā S (A 8.70). However, the set of 3 causes (due to its number) is probably much older. Whether these earth-tremors actually occurred or not, it is more important to understand their significance: they are “a literary device of showing that the Buddha’s abandoning of his will to live on affects the entire cosmos, not only the human world” (Ray 1994:51). In fact, “all the events of Buddha accompanying an earth-tremor have a religious meaning which is more important than mere historical or biographical part to which they are related” (Pye 1979:106). See An Yang-Gyu 2001:59-64. On Bhūmi-cālā S (D 16, 3.-11-20), see Curtin 2012.

622 This clearly refers to what we today call the tectonic movements of the earth, causing earth-tremors or earth-quakes.
623 This refers to the Nativity, that is, when the Bodhisattva is born at Lumbini (J 1:52).
624 This refers to the great awakening at Buddha,gayā (J 1:76). See Ariya Pariyesanā S (M 26,18/1:167), SD 1.11.
625 This refers to teaching of the First Discourse at the Deer Park, Isi,patana (V 1:10-12; S 56.11/5:420-424; DA 1:2; J 1:92). See Dhamma,cakka-p.pavattana S, SD 1.1.
626 Anupādi.sesa,nibbhāna.dhātu: see (15).
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This, Ānanda, is the eighth reason, the eighth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor. These, Ānanda, are the eight reasons and conditions for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.628

The 8 assemblies

3.21 626 Now, Ānanda, there are these 8 assemblies? What are the eight?630

(1) The kshatriya [noble class] assembly,
(2) the brahmin [priestly] assembly,
(3) the householder assembly,
(4) the recluse assembly,
(5) the assembly of the 4 great kings,
(6) the assembly of the 32 gods,
(7) Māra’s assembly, and
(8) the host of brahmās.

3.22 Ānanda, I recall having approached a kshatriya assembly of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

But even as I was speaking, they knew me not, wondering, “Who could this be who speaks? A deva or a human?”

And having instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk, I disappeared. And when I have disappeared, they wondered, “Who is this who has disappeared? A deva or a human?”

3.23 Ānanda, I recall having approached a brahmin assembly of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

Ānanda, I recall having approached a recluse assembly, of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

Ānanda, I recall having approached an assembly of the 4 great kings, of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

Ānanda, I recall having approached an assembly of the 32 gods, of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

Ānanda, I recall having approached Māra’s assembly, of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so

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627 According to Tibetan beliefs (based on the early Buddhist teachings on the primary elements), in a dying person, the “earth element” dissolves first (the body loses strength), then the “water element” dissolves (loss of control of bodily fluids), then the fire element dissolves (mouth and nose dry up; body loses warmth), and then the air element dissolves (difficulty in breathing). See for example Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, 1994:251-253.

628 Milinda,pañha (Mln 113-119) discusses the ninth cause of a great earth-tremor, ie, when Vessantara made his great offering and the earth shook seven times (I 1:74, 547). Nāgasena actually evades the answer by recounting Vessantara’s virtues. This question, I think, can be resolved by the fact that the 8 causes of a great earth-tremor form a canonical list while the Vessantara J is commentarial.

629 Foll §§3.21-23 also in Parīsā S (A 8.69/4:307 f) and nearly identical to a passage in Maha Śīhanāda S (M 12,29/-1:72). A Skt counterpart is at S 360 folio 179R3 in Waldschmidt, Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra, Berlin, 1950:22). Apparently, the passage on the “8 causes of earth-tremors” attracted 3 more “eights” [§§3.21-33], directly connected with the teaching. These passages have been interpolated here apparently because such vital teachings reflect the urgency of the moment.

630 For an evidently older listing, see Dhammaññū S (A 7.64,9/4:116), SD 30.10. Also at Mahā Śīha,ṇāda S (M 12,29), SD 49.1.

631 “Then,” tattha, lit “in that place.”

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was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladden them with Dharma talk

Ananda, I recall having approached an assembly of brahmans of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladden them with Dharma talk.

But even as I was speaking, they knew me not, wondering, ‘Who could this be who speaks? A deva or a human?’ [110]

And having instructed, inspired, roused and gladden them with Dharma talk, I disappeared. And when I have disappeared, they wondered, ‘Who is this who has disappeared? A deva or a human?’

These, Ananda, are the 8 assemblies. 632

The 8 bases for mastery

3.24 Ananda, there are these 8 bases for mastery. 633

What are the eight?

3.25 (1) Perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], limited, beautiful or ugly. 634 By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the first base for mastery.

3.26 (2) Perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the second base for mastery.

3.27 (3) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], limited, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the third base for mastery.

3.28 (4) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the fourth base for mastery.

3.29 (5) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are blue [indigo], of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow. 635

Just as a flax flower 636 that is blue, of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothened on both sides, that is blue, blue in appearance, with a blue glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, blue, of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow.

632 This teaching here concerns Buddhist missiology, the discipline and art of teaching and spreading the Buddha word. From the Buddha’s statement here, it is clear that he is capable of blending with the crowd and effectively communicating with his listeners at their level. Cf the 6 qualities of an ideal Dharma speaker given in Alañī S (A 4:296-299), Udayī S (A 3:184) and Piya Tan, The Teaching Methods of the Buddha, 2001 (unpublished MS): http://pali.house.googlepages.com/TeachingMethodsoftheBuddha.pdf. Also to be seen here are the roots of an omnipresent and protean Buddha or Mahāyāna Bodhisattva ideal.

633 “Bases of mastery” or “spheres of transcendence” (abhībhāyātanā, Skt abhībhā-āyatanā = abhībhā + āyatanā; ie, powers gained through kasina (Skt kṛṣṇa) meditation as means of transcending the sense-sphere. Listed in Mahā-parinibbāna S (D 16.3.24), SD 9; Saṅgīti S (D 33.3.1(10)); Mahā Saṅkulūdāyi S (M 77.72, SD 49.5; Parihāna Dhamma S (S 35.96), SD 91.12; Abhībhāyātanā S (A 8.65/4:305 f); Sammāvattana S (A 8.90/349); Nm 143; Dhs §§235-247; DhsA 191). In S 35.96, the term is applied to 6 “mastered bases” (cāh abhībhā ‘āyatanānā) and refers to the mastery of the senses: when a sense-object impinges on the sense-base, “there do not arise in him bad unwholesome states, nor any memories and intentions connected with the mental fetters” (S 35.96/4.76 f). See Buddhist Dictionary: abhībhāyatanā & Ency Bsm, sv; also Shaw, Buddhist Meditation, 2006: 93.

634 Ajjhattām rūpa,saññī ēko bahiddhā, rūpāni passati parittāni suvaṇṇa, dubbhaṇṇā.

635 On blue (nīla) kasina, and yellow (piṭa), copper-red (lohiṭa) and white (odaṭa), see Bhāvanā, SD 15.1(9.2).

636 Ummā,puppha, Linum usitatissimum, a plant of the family Linaceae. It is a herbaceous annual, when densely planted for fibre, averages 3-4 ft (0.9-1.2 m) in height, with slender stalks, and with branches concentrated at the top. The flowers, born on stems growing from branch tips, have five petals, usu blue in colour but sometimes white or pink. The Pali nīla refers to colours ranging from blue, dark-blue, green, dark green, blue-green, grey, blue-black, and sometimes black (as in the case of huma hair, DhsA 190); in meditation, however, it refers to the indigo or dark-blue of the linseed or flax flower (umā puppha) (V 4:120; D 16.3.29/2:110; M 2:13 = A 5:61; Ap 258; Tha 1068): see PED: ummā & CPD: ummā-puppha. http://dharmafarer.org

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By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the fifth base for mastery. [111]

3.30 (6) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are yellow, of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow.

Just as a cassia\(^{637}\) flower that is yellow, of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothened on both sides, that is yellow, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, yellow of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the sixth base for mastery.

3.31 (7) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are red [copper-red], of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow.

Just as a hibiscus\(^{638}\) flower that is red, of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothened on both sides, that is red, red in appearance, with a red glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, red, of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the seventh base for mastery.

3.32 (8) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow.

Just as the morning star\(^{639}\) that is white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothened on both sides, that is white, white in appearance, with a white glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the eighth base for mastery.

These, Ānanda, are the 8 bases for mastery.

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\(^{637}\) “Cassia,” \(\text{Karikāra or Kanikāra (Skt karikāra)}\) (PED: Pterospermum acerifolium, but this is not the cassia tree), the tree (J 5:295, 420, 422, 6:269; Ap 167, 183; B 17.19; Mahv 73.123), or \(~puppha\), its flower (D 3:111 = M 2:14 = A 5:61; J 2:25; Vism 173). The karikāra, also called cassia, pudding-pipe, golden shower tree, or kinihirimal in Sinhalese, has long drooping pods and large racemes or clusters of star-shaped yellow flowers. It is often featured in ancient Indian literature, such as the \(\text{Buddha,carita}\). Almost every part of the cassia tree is useful. The leafy shoots are cut and steamed as a fresh vegetable. The leaves steeped in water provide a laxative tea, or ground into a paste soothe skin irritations, and 4 grams of the sticky black seeds boiled in salted water drunk before bedtime is said to relieve “heart congestion.” Its bark when macerated becomes a good leather cleaner. This beautiful tall hardwood is also used in construction, and is so durable that it can be made into the spokes of wheels and handles for plows. Indians often plant a karikāra for each child born to the family as an investment for their future, but also as a kind of sympathetic magic, that the child would grow tall and strong like the tree.

\(^{638}\) \(\text{Bandhu,jivika (PED: Pentapetes phencibia, but prob Hibiscus rosa-sinensis)}\) (D 2:111; M 2:14; J 4:179; Vism 174; VvA 43, 161; DhsA 14). The hibiscus or red hibiscus, belongs to the Malvaceae family (a large group of dicotyledonous flowering plants), and is also called Chinese hibiscus or “shoe flower.” The Sinhalese call it bandhu. It is a shrub common in tropical Asia, now widely planted, frequently as a hedge. When crushed, the red flowers turn black, yielding a dark purplish dye that is used in India for blackening shoes. In China, the dye is used for the hair and eyebrows. It is also used to color liquor and to dye paper a bluish purple tint that reacts with litmus. Hawaiians eat raw flowers to aid digestion; the Chinese pickle and eat them.

\(^{639}\) \(\text{Osadhita,araka, lit “the medicine star” (D 2:111; M 2:14; S 1:65; J 1:23). Also tr as “the star of healing.” Osadhīsa is the moon (Abhp 52; Sadd 380), which Indian mythology regards as the lord of healing. DPL says this is Venus (but without evidence).}\)

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The 8 liberations

3.33 Ānanda, there are these 8 liberations.\(^{640}\)

What are the eight?

(1) One with physical form sees physical forms.\(^{641}\)
   This is the first liberation. [112]

(2) One does not see physical forms internally, but sees physical forms externally.\(^{642}\)
   This is the second liberation.

(3) One is liberated after contemplating the idea of the beautiful.\(^{643}\)

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\(^{640}\) "The 8 liberations" (atṭha,vimokha, Skt asa,vimokṣā, D 2:70 f, 111 f, 3:262, 288; A 4:306, 349). The first 3 liberations are kasina meditations, expl in some detail in Mahā Sakuludāyi S (M 77,23/2:13), but in greater detail in Paṭisambhidā, magga (Pm 2:38-40). Comy on Mahā Sakuludāyi S (M 77,22/2:13) says that these liberations (vimokkhā) are the mind’s full (but temporary) release from the opposing states and its full (but temporary) release by delighting in the object (MA 3:255, cf 255-259).

Liberations 1-3 have to do with the “bases for mastery” (abhīhī,āyatanā) [§§3.24-32]; liberations 4-7 are the dhyanas; and the last is the cessation of perception and feeling (nirūdhha,samāpatti). The 8 liberations are as follows:

(1) The 1st liberation is that of one with physical form sees physical forms (rūpī rūpāni passati). This liberation is the attainment of the 4 dhyanas using a kāsina (meditation device) derived from a coloured object on one’s own body. Perceiving form in one’s own body, one sees forms externally. This is said in connection with kāsina meditation and is one of the “bases for mastery” (abhīhī,āyatanā), ie, powers gained through kāsina meditation as means of transcending the sense-sphere; see D 2:110; M 77/2,13. A 8.675/4.305, 10.29/6:61. MA explains that the meditator does the preliminary exercise (parikamma) on an internal form (in one’s own body), for example, the blue of the eyes for a blue kāsina, the skin for a yellow kāsina, the blood for a red kāsina, the teeth for a white kāsina, but the concentration sign (nimitta) arises externally (MA 3:258 f). The “transcending” (abhīhī,āyatanā) of the forms is the attainment of absorption together with the arising of the sign. On emerging from the absorption, he considers, “I know, I see.”

(2) The 2nd liberation is of one who does not see physical form internally, but sees physical forms externally (ajjhattam arūpa, saññī bahīdha rūpāni passati). This second liberation is the attainment of dhyana using a kāsina derived from an external object and the arising of the concentration sign externally. The formulation of the second vimokkha “suggests that it is a shorthand for all the eight abhīhī,āyatanās which consist of variations on the theme ajjhattam arūpa-saññī eko bahīdha rūpāni passati” (Gethin 2002:267 n7).

(3) The 3rd liberation is of one liberated after contemplating the idea of the beautiful (‘subhan’ t’eva adhimutto hoti). Subha ("beautiful") here refers to the perception of either a very pure and beautiful coloured kāsina or the 4 brahma, vihāra. This is said in reference to the attainment of form absorption (rūpa jhāna) by means of concentrating the mind on very pure, bright and beautiful colours as the kāsina-object. Paṭisambhidā, magga says that this mental state is also produced through the cultivation of the divine abodes (brahma, vihāra), as a result of which all beings appear perfectly pure and glorious, and thus the mind turns to the beautiful (Pm 5.20/2:39).

These first three are said in connection with kāsina meditation by way of the “bases of mastery” or “bases for transcendence” (abhīhī,āyatanā), ie, one of the 8 stages of mastery over the senses through absorption. See Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16,3.24/2:110), Mahā Sakuludāyi S (M 77,22/2:13); Abhīhī,āyatanā S (A 8.65/4.305), Kosala S (A 10.29/5:61). Dhamma,sāngapī apparently regards the abhīhī,āyatanā as being “concerned with the mastery and facility in certain aspects of jhāna practice” (Gethin, 2001:267). See Dhs 45-52 where the 8 abhīhī,āyatanā (with slight variations from the Nikāya formulation) are treated as an aspect of jhāna that is of the form realm (rūpāvacara); cf DhsA 187-190.

The next four (4-7) are the formless attainments (arūpa samāpatti):

(4) The base of the infinity of space.
(5) The base of the infinity of consciousness.
(6) The base of nothingness.
(8) The cessation of perception and feeling. This last stage requires both concentration and insight, and can be attained only by non-returners and arhats who have mastered the formless attainments. See Bodhi, The Great Discourse on Causation [Mahā, nidāna Sutta tr & exegeses]. Kandy: BPS, 1984:47-51.

See discussion in Mahā, nidāna S (D 15,35/2:70 f), SD 5.17 (10). See also Analayo 2009: 141-148.

Rūpī rūpāni passati. This first liberation refers to the attainment of the 4 dhyanas using a kāsina (meditation device) derived from a coloured object on one’s own body. See §3.33 n on “the 8 liberations.”

Ajjhattam arūpa, saññī bahīdha rūpāni passati. This second liberation is the attainment of dhyana using a kāsina derived from an external object and the arising of the concentration sign externally. See §3.33 n on “the 8 liberations.”

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This is the third liberation.

(4) Through the utter transcending of the perception of physical forms, the passing away of the perception of impingement [sense-contact], and non-attention to the perception of diversity, (contemplating,) ‘Space is infinite,’ one enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of space.

This is the fourth liberation.

(5) Through the utter transcending of the infinity of space, (contemplating,) ‘Consciousness is infinite,’ one enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of consciousness.

This is the fifth liberation.

(6) Through the utter transcending of the base of the infinity of consciousness, (contemplating,) ‘There is nothing,’ one enters and dwells in the base of nothingness.

This is the sixth liberation.

(7) Through the utter transcending of the base of nothingness, one enters and dwells in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

This is the seventh liberation.

(8) Through the utter transcending of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one enters and dwells in the cessation of perception and feeling.  

This is the eighth liberation.

These, Ānanda, are the eight liberations.

Ānanda is told of Māra’s visits

3.34  Ānanda, once, when I had just attained the supreme self-awakening, I stayed under the Goatherd’s Banyan Tree on the bank of the river Nerañjara at Uruvela. Then Māra the Bad One came to me, stood at one side and said:

‘May the Blessed One now attain parinirvana, may the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana. Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana.’

3.35  Then I said to Māra:

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have monk disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, [113] establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have nun disciples who are accomplished trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have layman disciples who are accomplished trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have laywoman disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it,
establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.’

3.36 And today itself, Ānanda, just now, Māra the bad one approached me at the Cāpāla Shrine. Having approached me, Māra the bad one stood one said. Standing thus at one side, Māra the bad one said this:

3.36.2 ‘Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana! For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“The Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until [114] I have monk disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

But now, bhante, the monk disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes.]647 learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.3 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“The Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have nun disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

But now, bhante, the nun disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.4 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“The Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have layman disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

But now, bhante, the layman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

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647 Patta,yoga-k,khemā, found in D 3:125, A 4:311 & S 5:259 (1 MS, see S:W 5:232 n3) but omitted in D 2:104-106, S 5:261 f, U 63 f and Comy; cf A 2:8. Yogā = oghā (floods) = āsavā (mental influxes). The term āsavā (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from ā-savaṭ “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as influxes, taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, bad (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists four āsavas: the influx of (1) sense-desire (kām’āsavā), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (bhav’āsavā), (3) wrong views (diṭṭh’āsavā), (4) ignorance (avijjāsavā) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These four are also known as “floods” (oghā) and “yokes” (yoga). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [§43] is probably older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these āsavas is equivalent to arhatship. See BDict under āsava...

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Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana!

Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.5 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have laywoman disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yoke,] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

But now, bhante, the laywoman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana!

Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.6 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana as long as this holy life has not flourished, prospered, widespread, well known to the masses, widely spread, as long as it has not been well proclaimed amongst human beings.”

But now, bhante, the Blessed One’s holy life has flourished, prospered, widespread, well known to the masses, widely spread, as long as it has been well proclaimed amongst human beings.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana!

Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!”

3.37 Ānanda, when this was spoken, I said thus to Māra the bad one:

‘Be at ease, bad one! It will not be long before the Tathāgata’s parinirvana. With the passing of 3 months from now, the Tathāgata shall enter parinirvana.’ [§3.9]

Then, Ānanda, the Blessed One, right here at the Cāpāḷa Shrine, mindfully and fully aware, relinquished his life-formation.” [115]

Ānanda beseeches the Buddha

3.38 When this was spoken the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Well-farer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!”

“Enough, Ānanda, do not beseech the Tathāgata. This is not the time for beseeching the Tathāgata.”

3.39 For the second time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One, beseeching the Blessed One…. For the third time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Well-farer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!”

“Ānanda, do you have faith in the Blessed One’s awakening?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Then, Ānanda, why do you press [trouble] the Tathāgata up to three times?”

3.40 “But, bhante, I have heard from the mouth of Blessed One himself, I have understood from the mouth of the Blessed One himself, that whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.”

“Ānanda, do you have faith in the Blessed One’s awakening?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Then, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault, that when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One.”

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648 See §3.3n.
649 One might ask here: why does the Buddha need to throw a broad hint to Ānanda regarding the Buddha’s ability to extend his lifespan? Why not the Buddha himself simply live out his full life-span for the benefit of all beings? There are two possible answers. The first is that the Buddha does not really need to live out his full life-span as the fourfold community has been established: his work is done. The “broad hint” is a bonus that Ānanda fails to accept. But the second
‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have refused you twice, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

Ānanda’s “failures” at Rājagaha

3.41 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling on Mount Vulture Peak near Rājagaha. There too, Ānanda, I addressed you,650 [116] ‘Delightful is Rājagaha, Ānanda, delightful is Mount Vulture Peak.651 Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

3.42 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling in the (Gotama) Banyan Park near that very same Rājagaha….

… I was dwelling at Cora Papāta [Robbers’ Cliff] near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling in Satta.paññī Guha [the Cave of the Seven Leaves] in Vēbhāra Passa [Vēbhāra Rock] near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling at Kāla Sila [the Black Rock] on the Isigili slope near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling in the hill cave at Sappa.sondika [the Snake Pool] in Sīta,vana [the Cool Forest] near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling at the Tapodā Park near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling at the Kalandaka Nivāpa [the squirrels’ feeding-ground] in Veḷu,vana [the Bamboo Grove] near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling at Jivaka Amba,vana [Jivaka’s mango grove] near that very same Rājagaha.…

… I was dwelling at the Deer Park in Madda,kucchi [Belly Crunch]652 near that very same Rājagaha.…

3.43 653 Now there, too, Ānanda, I addressed you, ‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Rājagaha.…

Delightful is Mount Vulture Peak.…

Delightful is the Gotama Banyan (Park)…

Delightful is Robbers’ Cliff…

Delightful is the Cave of the Seven Leaves in Vēbhāra Rock…

reason is more likely: this curious episode was interpolated some time before the Canon was closed and does not form a vital part of the sutta. Whether the Buddha lives on or not, he would eventually have to pass into parinirvana.

650 This is the first of 16 such occasions [§§3.41-47! The rest follow hereon. See Intro (9.2) above.

651 Cf §3.2 on the delightful Cāpāla Shrine and others.

652 At the foot of Mount Vulture Peak (V 2:193 f; DhA 2:164 ff; J 4:430; Miln 179). It was here, Comys say, the queen of Bimbisāra, and mother of Ajātasattu, tried to abort the latter on learning that he would in due course kill his own father. She went to the park and violently massaged (madda, “crushed”) her belly (kucchi) hoping of bringing about a miscarriage but failed (SA 1:77; cf J 3:121 f).

653 This [§3.43] is qu at Kvu 559.

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125
Delightful is the Black Rock on the slope of Isigili…
Delightful is the Snake Pool in Cool Forest… [117]
Delightful is Tapodā Park…
Delightful is the squirrels’ feeding-ground in the Bamboo Grove…
Delightful is Jivaka’s mango grove…
Delightful is the Deer Park in Madda, kucchi…

3.44 654 Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

Ānanda’s “failures” at Vesālī

3.45 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here in the Udena Shrine near Vesālī.

Now there, too, Ānanda, I addressed you,

‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī. Delightful is the Udena Shrine.

Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault. [118]

3.46 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here at the Gotamaka Cetiya near Vesālī …

… I was dwelling right here at the Satt’ambā Cetiya [the Shrine of the Seven Women] near Vesālī …

… I was dwelling right here at the Bahu, puttā Cetiya [the Shrine of Many Children] near Vesālī …

… I was dwelling right here at the Sāradanda Cetiya near Vesālī …

3.47 And today, Ānanda, right here at the Cāpāla Shrine, I addressed you,

‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī …

Delightful is the Cāpala Shrine …

Delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine …

Delightful is the Shrine of the Seven Women …

Delightful is the Shrine of Many Children …

Delightful is the Sāradanda Shrine …

Delightful is the Cāpala Shrine …

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654 The following sections §§3.44-51—the rebuke of Ānanda (continued); the hall of the gabled house; the parinirvana in 3 months’ time announced—are all unique to this Sutta.

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Ananda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ananda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ananda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ananda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the life-span, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ananda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ananda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

3.48 Ananda, have I not told you before: All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.

Ananda, it has been given up, rejected, thrown away, abandoned, forsaken by the Tathāgata, that is, the life-formation has been relinquished. This is spoken by the Tathāgata with absolute certainty:

‘In no long time, the Tathāgata will attain [119] parinirvana. The Tathāgata will attain parinirvana in three months’ time.’

That the Tathāgata should go back on his word for the sake of life [living on]—that is impossible.

Come now, Ananda, let us go to Kūṭṭāgāra Sāḷā [the hall of the gabled house] in Mahāvāna [the Great Wood].’

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ananda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

That the teachings may endure

3.49 Then the Blessed One, along with the venerable Ananda, went to the hall of the gabled house in Mahāvāna [the Great Wood]. Having reached there, he addressed the venerable Ananda:

“Ananda, go to all the monks living in dependence on Rājagaha. Have them all gather in the assembly hall.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ananda replied in assent to the Blessed One and then he had all the monks living in dependence of Rājagaha to gather in the assembly hall. Then he approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, he said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the order of monks is assembled. Bhante, now is the time for the Blessed One to do as he thinks fit.”

3.50 Then the Blessed One, along with the venerable Ananda, went to the hall of the gabled house in the Great Wood. Having reached there, he sat down on the prepared seat. Thus seated down, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

The 7 sets of teachings

655 This famous sentence is stock: D 2:118=114=158=163; Mahā Sudassana S (D 2:192=194); Cunda S (S 5:163); Nm 1:123 qu D 16,5:14=2:14. Cf Abhinipa, paccekkhattaba S (A 3:74).

656 Na nu evam ānanda mayā paṭigacc’eva akkhātān, sabbeh’eva piyehi manāpehi nānā, bhāvo vinā, bhāvo aṇihathā, bhāvo? Tam kut’ etha ānanda labbha? Yām tam jātaṃ bhātaṁ sankhārā palokā, dhammaṃ tam vata mā paluṣṣi ti n’etam tān’āna vijnāti. This quote is stock: D 16 §3.48/2:118 = §5.14/144 = §6.11.1/158 = §6.20/163. The sentence, Tam kut’ etha ānanda labbha? lit tr “What can you get here, Ānanda?” As at §§5.6, 6.11 below.

657 The events of this section [§3.49] are expanded in Kalinga S (S 20.8/2:267 f).

658 “The hall of the gabled house,” or simply, “the gabled hall,” kūṭṭāgāra, sāḷā, built and donated by the Licchāvī general Sila. See SD 45.1 (2.1.1); A 5.34,1 @ SD 45.1 n & DPPN: kūṭṭāgārasāḷā. See below §3.51n on the Invitation.

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3.50.2 “For this reason, bhikshus, whatever teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge, you should learn them well, associate with them, cultivate them, develop them, so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!

What are the teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge, that you should learn well, associate with, cultivate, and develop, [120] so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans?

They are as follows:  

- the 4 focuses of mindfulness, \( \text{catu satipaṭṭhāna} \)  
- the 4 right efforts, \( \text{samma-p, padhāna} \)  
- the 4 paths to spiritual power, \( \text{iddhī, pāda} \)  
- the 5 spiritual faculties, \( \text{paṇic'indriyāni} \)  
- the 5 spiritual powers, \( \text{paṇca, balāni} \)  
- the 7 limbs of awakening, \( \text{satta būjhangā} \)  
- the noble eightfold path. \( \text{ariya atth'āngika magga} \)

These, bhikshus, are the teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge: you should learn them well, associate with them, cultivate them, develop them, so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans.”  

3.51 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:  

“Come now, bhikshus, this I say to you:  

**Formations [creations] by nature pass away! Strive on diligently!**

In no long time, the Tathāgata will attain parinirvana. The Tathāgata will attain parinirvana in three months’ time.  

Ripe am I in years. Little of my life remains.  

Now I go leaving, having made myself my refuge.  

Be not heedless, bhikshus, be mindful, be virtuous, Guard well your mind with well-focussed thought. [121]

He who is not heedless, keeping to the Dharma and Vinaya,

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659 On this mātikā (matrix) of the 7 sets, see Intro (10.2+3) above.  
661 See V 1:22; D 2:120; M 3:296, 2:96; A 2:74, 15 f.  
663 See M 1:295; S 3:46, 225, 4:168; A 2:151. See foll n.  
664 See D 2:120, 239; M 2:12, 3:296; S 3:96, 153, 4:366; A 3:10, 12; Vbh 342.  
666 See D 1:256 f, 165, 312; M 1:61, 118, 3:251; lt 18; Sn 1130; Vbh 235.  
667 On the central importance of these 7 sets, see Intro (10.3) above.  
668 The future of the Licchavis. The Buddha then makes a prophecy, not recorded in Mahā Parinibbāna S, but in Kālinga-ra S (S 20.8), where he declares the strengths and weaknesses of the Licchavis, hinting at their eventual conquest by Ajāta-sattu, and warns the monks of their own future (S 20.8/2:267 f), SD 100.5.  
669 Vaya,dhammad sānkhusā, appamādena sampādetathā.  
670 Invitation Day (pavāraṇā/pra-vāraṇā). It is curious that Mahā Parinibbāna S, with all its detailed treatments, fails to mention an important annual ceremony of the Sangha, that is, the Invitation, held on the last day of the rains retreat. It is highly unlikely that the gathering in the hall of the gabled house in the Great Wood was the Invitation assembly [§§3.50 f] because it was “three months” before the parinirvana [§3.51] (which would be in Vesākha/Vaisākha or May-June of the same year) [cf §5.7]. That would put the Great Wood assembly in Māgha (Feb-Mar).

In modern times, Māgha is highlighted by Sangha Day, commemorating the spontaneous assembly of 1250 arhats in the Buddha’s presence. The first 1000 monks were enlightened upon listening to the Buddha, and the remaining 250 were Sāriputta (Sāriputra) and Moggallāna (Maudgalyāyana) and their following (from Sañjaya’s ashram). To mark the occasion the Buddha delivered the Ovāda Pātimokkha (Avāvāya Prātimoksa), “The Admonition Code” (the first proclamation of a monastic conduct, comprising Dh 183-185) (VA 186 f, Kkhv 9 f; MA 2:209; UA 298), and delivered during the 1st year of the Ministry in the Bamboo Grove soon after Sāriputta’s gaining of arhathood and Dīgha,nakha’s attaining of the Dharma Eye (M 1:501). See Piyasilo, Buddhist Law, 1988b:40 f.  
671 Parittam mama jīvitaṁ, lit “my life is little.”
Leaving birth and samsara behind, will make an end of suffering.

Chapter 4
(Fourth Recital, catuttha bhāṇavāra: the Āḷāra cycle)

ĀNGA

The elephant look

[122] 4.1 Then the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, entered Vesālī for alms. Having gone into Vesālī for alms, he walked to collect almsfood and then finished his meal. While returning from his almsround, he turned around and, looking at Vesālī with the elephant gaze, addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, this is the last time the Tathāgata will be looking at Vesālī. Come, Ānanda, let us go to Bhaṇḍa-gāma.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large order of monks arrived in Bhaṇḍa-gāma. The Blessed One stayed there in Bhaṇḍa-gāma.

4.2 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating four teachings, that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

What are the four?

(1) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble moral virtue [the moral virtue of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(2) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble concentration [the mental concentration of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(3) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble wisdom [the wisdom of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(4) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble liberation [the liberation of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

Bhikshus, it is through penetrating, through understanding this noble moral virtue, [123] through penetrating, through understanding this noble concentration, through penetrating, through understanding this noble wisdom, through penetrating, through understanding this noble liberation, that craving for existence is uprooted, the rope of existence is broken, that there is no more rebirth here.”

4.3 The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the Sugata [Wellfarer], the teacher, further said this:

Moral virtue, concentration, wisdom and peerless liberation—
These truths have been understood by the famed Gotama.

Through direct knowledge of the Dharma thus, the Buddha showed the monks, The Teacher, the one with eyes, the end-maker of death, is utterly cooled.

The 3 trainings

672 This whole episode is not found in the Tibetan Dulva, which only says that the Buddha “[p]roceeding then from Bhoga-nagara, and journeying in the Mallas country (Mālya in the text), he came to ‘the village of the Earth,’ and stopped in the Jalūkā mahāvāna (Dza-lu-kai ti ’al-mang-pa) (f 579),” where Cunda the smith visits him (Rockhill 1884:132 f).

673 That is, the Buddha had his meal (eating from his almsbowl) in Vesālī itself.

674 “Looking at Vesālī with the elephant gaze,” nāgāpalokitam Vesālīm apaloketvā. The Buddha turns his whole body around—the “elephant gaze” (nāgāpalokita)—to look at Vesālī as a final farewell gesture. The verb apaloketi is sometimes wr as ava-loketi through o-loketi (see §2.17 & n on avaloketha).

675 As at A 4.1/2:1 f, 7.62/4:105 (qu at Kuṭu 1.5.15/114 in a different context).

676 “By the famed Gotama,” Gotamena yasassinā. The whole stanza containing this phrase occurs at A 2:2, 4:105 & Kuṭu 116. The phrase occurs in Sarabhaṅga’s Theragāthā (Tha 488). This stanza, in the 3rd person, is clearly added by the Reciters or later elders.

677 “Utterly cooled,” parinibbuto. On the meaning and usage of this word, see (15) above.

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4.4 Then the Blessed One, while staying at Bhaṇḍa, gāma, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

Sojourns

4.5 Then the Blessed One, having stayed at Bhaṇḍa, gāma for as long as he saw fit, addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Ḥatthi, gāma.”

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Amba, gāma.”

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Jambu, gāma.”

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Bhoga, nagara.”

4.6 “Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, arrived at Bhoga, nagara.

The 4 great references

4.7 At Bhoga, nagara, the Blessed One stayed at the Ānanda Cetiya [Ānanda Shrine]. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, thus:

“Bhikkhus, I will teach you these 4 great references. Listen to it, pay close attention, I will speak: [124]

“Yes, bhante,” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

4.8 (1) “Here, bhikkhus, a monk might say this: ‘Avusos, I heard and received this teaching from the Blessed One’s own mouth: ‘This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.’ Then, bhikkhus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the Sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) against the Vinaya [discipline]. If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this monk.

Bhikkhus, remember this as the first great reference.

4.9 (2) Here, bhikkhus, a monk might say this: ‘Avusos, in such and such a place, there is a community [sangha] with elders, with distinguished teachers. I heard and received this teaching directly from [from the mouth of] that community: ‘This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.’

Then, bhikkhus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the sutta [teaching] and should be examined (for conformity) against the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

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678 Jambu, gāma (Skt Jambu, grāma), a village near Campā, the Aṅga capital. There is another Jambu, gāma on the high road between Vesālī and Kusinārā.

679 Bhoga, nagara, the city of the Bhogas, a constituent tribe of the Vajjī confederacy, lying midway between Vesālī and Pāvā.


681 The 4 great references (mahā-padesa) serve as the criteria for the true teaching. See Intro (11).

682 This statement is clearly in reference to Purāṇa, who visits Rājagaha after First Council but when asked to accept its resolutions gives this reply (Cv 11.1.11 @ V 2:288 f); see §3.11 n. It is possible that the 4 great references were formulated on account of Purāṇa here and inserted into the sutta. Mahā Kamma, vibhanga S (M 136) relates how the wanderer Potali-putta falsely claims to have heard teaching directly from the Buddha himself, and presents wrong views which the novice monk (navaka, bhikkhu) Samiddhi is unable to put right (M 136,2/3:207). See S Dutt, Early Buddhist Monachism, 1984:18 f.

683 Sangho...sa-thero sa, pāmokkho.

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But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, [125] ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this community.’

Bhikshus, remember this as the second great reference.

4.10 (3) Here, bhikshus, a monk might say this: ‘In such and such a place, there are many elder monks who are well learned, masters of scripture, Dharma-experts, Vinaya-experts, experts in the Summary Lists [Matrices].”684 “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”

Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) against to the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by these elders.’

Bhikshus, remember this as the third great reference.

4.11 (4) Here, bhikshus, a monk might say this: ‘In such and such a place, there is an elder monk who is well learned, master of scripture, Dharma-expert, Vinaya-expert, expert in the Summaries [Matrices].”685 “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”

Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the Sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) with the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, [126] ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this elder.’

Bhikshus, remember this is the fourth great reference.

Bhikshus, remember these 4 great references.”

The 3 trainings

4.12 Then the Blessed One, while staying at Ananda Shrine near Bhoga.nagara, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

684 Sambahulā therā bhikkhū...bahussutā āgat’ āgamā dhamma,dharā vinaya,dharā mātikā,dharā. Mātikā started off as a Vinaya term, where it refers to the Pātimokkhā, eg in the stock phrase: dhamma,dhara, vinaya,dhara, mātikā,dhara (see Hinüber 1994). The Sutta materials are not arranged in a very systematic order, in spite of some early attempts (such as the last 2 suttas of D, ie D 33-34), esp Das’uttara S (D 34), containing lists on different concepts of the Dharma. The Comys call this text a mātikā (DA 1054.29). The above usage [§4.10] of mātikā prob refers to either such Vinay texts or such Sutta texts, or both. In post-Buddha times, the term mātikā refers to lists or summaries of Abhidhamma teachings, serving as lemmata (headwords) which are then explained in the text: see Mohv:W xix-xxvii. These mātikās arose once the early Buddhists “tried to go beyond the simple collection of discourses of the Buddha and began to arrange the main points if his teaching in a systematic form which at the same time could be easily memorized [see Frawullner 1964:59 f].” The lists thus created needed, just as the late Vedic Sūtra texts are hardly understandable without a commentary. Thus the mātikās may be the Buddhist answer to the Vedic Sūtras [Frawullner 1971b:104].” (Hinüber 1996:65).

685 Eko therō bhikkhū...bahussuto āgat’ āgamā dhamma,dhara vinaya,dhara mātikā,dhara. http://dharmafarer.org
MALLA COUNTRY: PĀVĀ

**Cunda the Smith**

4.13 Then the Blessed One, having stayed at the Ānanda Shrine near Bhoga,nagara for as long as he thought fit, addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāvā.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in asent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, reached Pāvā. At Pāvā, the Blessed One stayed in the mango grove of Cunda the Smith.

4.14 Then Cunda the Smith heard that the Blessed One had arrived in Pāvā and was staying there at his mango grove.

Then Cunda the Smith, approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, he sat down at one side. When Cunda the Smith was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened him with a Dharma talk.

4.15 Then Cunda the Smith, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from me tomorrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

4.16 Then, Cunda the Smith, understanding that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from her seat and left.

4.17 Cunda the Smith, by the end of the night, having prepared excellent foods, hard and soft, announced to the Blessed One that it was time:

“Bhante, it is time for the meal.”

**Sūkara, maddava**

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686 From here [§4.13] until §4.25 = U 8.5/81-85. The Sarvastivadin version has this prose introduction based on E Waldschmidt’s version (Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Mahaparinirванасутра, Gottingen, 1939):

“Then the Blessed One, having early robed himself, took his bowl and went with the Great Order to the meal (given by Cunda). The Blessed One and the order sat on the appointed seats. When Cunda saw that all had taken their places, he took foods with his own hands and set them before the Blessed One and the noble order. At that time there was an bad monk, who then stole a copper bowl [SnA 159 says “golden vessel”] by hiding it under his armpit. The Blessed One by his psychic power caused it not to be seen by the people. Only the Buddha and Cunda saw the wrong deed. When Cunda perceived the Blessed One and the order were fully satisfied, he caused pure water, powder, and tooth-sticks to be passed around, and after they had laid their bowls aside and had washed and rinsed their mouths, then Cunda took a low seat, sat down before the Blessed One, and reverently questioned the Blessed One with a verse.” (Cunda S, Sn 1.5 = vv 83-90 then follows.) This account parallels that of U 8.5/82 & SnA 159. The Sarvastivadin tradition further has the following verses and prose to close the Cunda S:

Whereby that stupid person commits an bad deed | Such a one causes doubt all round among the good;
Trust not on outer signs when one stands before you. | Depend not such a one after short acquaintance.
Common people often make fallacious show, | And ever through the world they go deceiving. ||
Even as an earring overlaid with gold, | But underneath is copper, base and worthless,
One who is false within, but seeming real, | Draws to one pupils and misleads the good. ||
At this time, the Lord seeing the bounty (of the meal offered by Cunda) set forth his merit in a verse:
One who gives, the merit grows. | Of one restrained, no anger arises.
The good person puts aside base actions. | With lust and hate and delusion gone such a one has nirvana won.

(Cf Dh 224 f). [From The Mula-sarvastivadin Vinaya, E Waldschmidt, p66; qu by E J Thomas, The Quest for Enlightenment, 1950;72 f. The above translation has been revised by the author.]

687 According to Comy, Pāvā (Pāvā) is 3 gavutas (about 8 km or 5 miles) from Kusinārā (Kusinagara), ie modern Kasia [5.1n]. Modern fieldwork has variously located Pāvā at Padraona or Padraona, 19 km (12 mi) north of Kasia, or at Sathiyamya Fazilangara, 14 km (9 mi) southeast of Kasia in the Mevers district of North Bihar. Walking that distance with great effort and sitting down at 25 places on the way, the Buddha reaches the sal grove when the sun has already set (DA 2:573). See §§4.21+39+5.1, where the Buddha complains of his weariness.

688 On Cunda, see Intro (13). It is stated at the opening of Sāngiti S (D 33) that it is taught by Sāriputta here: see Intro (11.3).

689 See §1.25 n above.

690 See §1.30a n above.

691 There is no mention of sūkara, maddava in the Tibetan Dulva account.

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4.18 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to Cunda the smith’s house, and sat down on the prepared seat. Seated thus, the Blessed One addressed Cunda the smith:

“Cunda, serve me the sūkara,maddava⁶⁹² that has been prepared, but serve the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared.”⁶⁹³

“Yes, bhante,” Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he served the Blessed One the sūkara,maddava that has been prepared, but served the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared.

“Yes, bhante,” Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he served the Blessed One the sūkara,maddava that has been prepared, but served the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared.

4.19 Then the Blessed One addressed Cunda the smith:

“Cunda, as for the rest of the sūkara,maddava, bury it in a pit. Cunda, I can see no one in the world with its devas, Māras and Brahmās, in this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its princes and people who, if they were to eat it, could thoroughly digest it except the Tathāgata.”⁶⁹⁴

“Yes, bhante,” Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and then buried the rest of the sūkara,maddava in a pit.

Then he approached the Blessed One and having saluted him, sat down at one side. And as Cunda the smith sat at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened him with a Dharma talk.⁶⁹⁵ Then rising from his seat, he left.

The Buddha’s second dysentery attack

4.20 Then the Blessed One, on account of having eaten the food prepared by Cunda the smith, a serious illness arose in him, severe pains with bloody diarrhoea, with sharp pains as if he were about to die.⁶⁹⁶ But he [128] endured all this mindfully and fully aware, and without complaint.

Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, let us go to Kusināra.”⁶⁹⁷

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

After eating Cunda the smith’s food, I heard, A serious illness fell upon the wise one, with sharp pains as if bringing death.

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⁶⁹² On sūkara,maddava, see Intro (13.2).
⁶⁹³ John Strong, in his notes to The Buddha: A short biography (2001) account of an episode that is found in all the other versions of the Buddha’s last meal, that is, the mysterious and confused account of the “bad monk” who steals the bowl of food intended for the Buddha, thus forcing Cunda to prepare a second special meal, or who steals a bowl containing the leftovers of the meal (Bareau 1970-71:258-264).
⁶⁹⁴ Cf Lamotte 1976:313 f.
⁶⁹⁵ Evidently, the Buddha’s teachings to Cunda at this point, though nothing is mentioned here, is recorded in the Sutta Nipāta as Cunda S (Sn Sn 1.5 = vv 83-90) [4.13n]. The Anguttara has the relatively long Cunda Kammāra,putta S (A 10.176/5:263-268), where Cunda takes refuge. See §1.25 n above.
⁶⁹⁶ This is the second attack of dysentery. The first attack mentioned at §2.23. On whether the Buddha was poisoned, see Intro (13.1).
⁶⁹⁷ Kusināra (Skt Kuṣi,nagar) is about 80 km southeast of Pāvā.

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And the sīkara,maddava that was eaten
By the Teacher brought him a serious illness,
Having purged, the Blessed One then said,
“I am going to Kusinārā town.”

4.21 Then the Blessed One came down from the road and went to the foot of a certain tree, and then addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, spread the upper robe [sanghīti], folded in four, for me. I am tired, Ānanda, and would like to sit down.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he spread the upper robe, folded in four, for him.

**KAKUṬṬHĀ RIVER**

**The clearing of the water**

4.22 The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat. Seated thus, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”

When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Just now, bhante, at least 500 carts have crossed over it. The shallow water, disturbed by the wheels, flows murky and dirty. Bhante, this Kakutthā river, not far off, has clear, sweet, cool and clean water, easy to ford and delightful.”

4.23 For the second time, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”

For the second time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Just now, bhante, at least 500 carts have crossed over it. The shallow water, disturbed by the wheels, flows murky and dirty. Bhante, this Kakutthā river, not far off, has clear, sweet, cool and clean water, easy to ford and delightful.

4.24 For the third time, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and taking a bowl he went to the stream.

Then the shallow stream over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed by the wheels, flowed clear, bright and clean, even as the venerable Ānanda approached it.

4.25 Then this occurred to the venerable Ānanda:

“How wonderful! How marvellous! Great is the Tathāgata’s power, great is his glory! This shallow stream over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed by the wheels, now flows clear, bright and clean, even as I approach it!”

Carrying the bowl of water, he approached the Blessed One, and said this to him:

“How wonderful, bhante! How marvellous, bhante! Great is the Tathāgata’s power, great is his glory! This shallow stream, bhante, over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed

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698 Comy says that these verses (like those at §§38 & 41) are probably those of the Council elders (cf DA 615).
699 ḍhāga, alt tr, “come now!”
700 On “folded in four” (catu-guṇaṇī), see §4.39 n.
701 According to Comy, Pāvā (Pāpā) is three gavutas (approximately 8 km or 5 miles) from Kusinārā (Kuṣinagara). Walking that distance with great effort and sitting down at 25 places on the way, the Buddha reaches the sal grove when the sun has already set (DA 2:573). Thus illness comes to a man, crushing all his health. As if he wants to point to this fact, the Buddha speaks these deeply moving words: “I am weary, Ānanda, and wish to sit down” (kilanto’smi Ānanda niṣṭūsāmi) here (§4.21). On reaching the Upavattana sal grove near Kusinārā, the Buddha says, “I am weary, Ānanda, I wish lie down (npiṭṭissāmi)” [§5.1]: see §4.39, where he says the same to Cundaṅka.
703 The Tibetan Dulva version says that at Ānanda’s request, the Buddha does not drink the water of the Kakusṭhana [Kakutthā] river, but only washes his body with it (f 582”) (Rockhill 1884:134).
by the wheels, now flows clear, bright and clean even as I approach it! Let the Blessed One drink this water, let the Sugata [Wellfarer] drink this water.”

Then the Blessed One drank the water.\(^{704}\) [130]

Pukkusa Malla,putta

\(4.26\)\(^{706}\) “Now at that time, Pukkusa Malla,putta\(^{706}\) a disciple of Āḷāra Kāḷāma,\(^{707}\) was going along the highway from Kusinārā to Pāvā. Then Pukkusa Malla,putta saw the Blessed One sitting under a certain tree. Having approached the Blessed One, he saluted him and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, Pukkusa Malla,putta said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace!

\(4.27\) PUKKUSA’S STORY OF ĀḷĀRA. Once, bhante, Āḷāra Kāḷāma, going along the highway, came down from it and sat down under a certain tree for the midday rest. Then, bhante, at least 500 carts passed very close by him. Then, bhante, a certain man following close behind the caravan of carts approached Āḷāra Kāḷāma, and then said this to him:

‘But, bhante, did you not see that at least 500 carts had passed by?’

‘No, avuso, I did not see them.’

‘Then, bhante, did you not hear any sound?’

‘No avuso, I did not hear any sound.’

‘But, bhante, were you not asleep?’

‘No, avuso, I was not asleep.’

‘Then, bhante, were you conscious?’

‘Yes, avuso.’

‘So, bhante, you were both conscious and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by you, and yet you did not see them, nor hear a sound—but, bhante, your upper robe is covered with dust!’

‘Yes, avuso.’

Then, bhante, this occurred to that person:

‘It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace! And he is both conscious [131] and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by you, and yet you did not see them, nor hear a sound!’

After expressing his deep faith in Āḷāra Kāḷāma, he left.”

The threshing-house near Ātumā

\(^{704}\) For a similar miraculous story—this time, a well in the brahmin village of Thūṇa that has been filled up with grass and chaff to prevent the monks from drawing water therefrom—but on the Buddha’s instructions, Ānanda goes to the well which opens itself up and Ānanda is able to draw water, The Buddha the utterers this udāna: “What is there to do with a well | if there is always water? | Having cut craving at its root, | what is there to one wander about seeking?” (U 7.9/78 f).

\(^{706}\) Pukkusa Malla,putta (Skt Putkasa Malla,putra/Mālya,putra) (M 2:152; A 2:85; J 4:205, 306; Lalv 21.17. Comy says that Pukkusa is probably a name (not a tribe or caste), as the Mallas were kshatriyas. Pukkusa was the owner of the 500 carts that had just passed by (DA 569). If Pukkusa has met Āḷāra himself, he (the former) must be more than 45 years old, perhaps 65 (if he meets Āḷāra when he is 20), in which case Malla,putta cannot be tr as “the young Malla.” Perhaps “the Malla noble” would be more appropriate. Āḷāra is said to have died “seven days ago” (M 26.22/1:170 @ SD 1.11), ie counting from the time the Buddha decides to teach the Dharma (V 1:7; M 1:170; S 1:138; D 2:39 Vipassī Buddha; Mvst 3:318; cf. S:B 1:233 n372; also Sn 1146c): see Why the Buddha “hesitated”, SD 12.1(2-3).

\(^{707}\) Āḷāra, one of the Bodhisattva’s early teachers, taught him meditation up to the base of nothingness (ākīna-\(\text{c}\)ān\(\text{c}\) āyatana). Buddhaghosa says that Āḷāra was also called Digha,piṅgala; Kāḷāma was his family name (DA 2:569 = MA 2:171). The story of the Bodhisattva’s first two teachers is found in Ariya,pariyesanā S (M 26.15/1:163-168), Mahā Saccaka S (M 36/1:240; Saṅgarāva S (M 100/2:212); Mahāyam’\(\text{ā}\)gama of the Sarvāstivāda (T26.776b5-777a4; Vinaya of the Dharmaguptakas (T1428.780bt-c19); cf J 1:66; DhA 1:85; ApA 71; BA 6; DhsA 34; MahvsT 66. See SD 1.11(15) (Ariyapariyesanā S).

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4.28 “What do you think, Pukkusa? Which do you think is more difficult to do or to attain to—being both conscious and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by one, but one were neither to see nor to hear them, or being both conscious and awake while it is raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and one were neither to see them nor to hear them?”

4.29 “Indeed, bhante, how can one compare 500 carts or six hundred carts or seven hundred carts or eight hundred carts or nine hundred carts or a thousand carts, or hundreds of thousands of carts? It will be more difficult to be both conscious and awake while it is raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and one were neither to see them nor to hear them.”

4.30 It then began raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and two farmers who were brothers, and four oxen, have been killed. Then, bhante, a great crowd of people has come out of Ātumā and come to the place where the two brothers who were farmers and the four oxen were killed.

4.31 Then, Pukkusa, I came out of the threshing-house to walk back and forth in the open. Then, Pukkusa, a certain person from the great crowd approached me. Having saluted, he stood at one side, and standing thus at one side, Pukkusa, I said this to that person:

4.32 ‘Avuso, why has such a great crowd of people gathered together?’ [132]

‘Bhante, it was raining now, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and two farmers who were brothers, and four oxen, have been killed. Then, bhante, a great crowd of people has come out of Ātumā and come to the place where the two brothers who were farmers and the four oxen were killed. So the great crowd of people has gathered here, but, bhante, where were you?’

‘I was right here, avuso.’

‘But, bhante, did you not see anything?’
‘No, avuso, I did not see anything.’

‘Then, bhante, did you not hear any sound?’
‘No avuso, I did not hear any sound.’

‘But, bhante, were you not asleep?’
‘No, avuso, I was not asleep.’

‘Then, bhante, were you conscious?’
‘Yes, avuso.’

‘So, bhante, you were both conscious and awake while it was raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, but you neither saw anything nor heard a sound!’[710]

‘Yes, avuso.’[711]

Pukkusa the last layman

4.33 Then, Pukkusa, this occurred to that person:

‘It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante!

4.33.2 How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace!

While it was raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, but you, being both conscious and awake, neither saw anything nor heard a sound!’

4.34 After expressing his deep faith in me, he saluted, and going rightwise, left.”

4.34 Hearing this, Pukkusa Malla,putta said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, this faith I have in Ājāra Kālāma is blown away [winnowed away] by a great wind, and washed away by the swift currents of a great river! It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous , bhante!

Just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned, or to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed One.

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[708] §4.30 here as at V 1:249 f (story of Subhadda, “one gone forth in old age” [§5.23]).
[709] The threshing house near Ātumā. It was here, says the Vinaya, on account of Subhadda, “one gone forth in old age” (who had expressed relief at the Buddha’s passing [§6.20]) that the Buddha laid down two rules entailing wrong-doing (dukkata). See §6.20n below; also C 1:239 f.
[710] So tvām bhante saññī samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve haḷa,galāyante vijjutassu niccharantissu asaniyā phalantiyā n’eva addasa na pana saddaṁ assosīti. See SD 49.5b (2.3.1.4).
[711] On this nature of dhyāna, see SD 33.1b (6.2.1.1).
I go to this very Blessed One for refuge, [133] to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a layman who has gone for refuge from this day forth for life.”

The gold-coloured robes

4.35 Then Pukkusa Malla,putta addressed a certain man [worker]:
“'I say there, please bring me a pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.’”
“Yes, bhante,” the man replied in assent to Pukkusa Malla,putta, and then brought the pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.

Then Pukkusa Malla,putta offered the pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing to the Blessed One:
“Bhante, may the Blessed One, out of compassion, accept this pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.”
“In that case, Pukkusa, dress me in one, and (give) the other to Ānanda.”
“Yes, bhante,” Pukkusa replied in assent to the Blessed One, and then dressed the Blessed One in one (of the robes), and (gave) the other to Ānanda.

4.36 Then the Blessed One instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened Pukkusa Malla,putta with Dharma talk. Having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk by the Blessed One, Pukkusa Malla,putta then rose from his seat, and having saluted the Blessed One, left.

The transfiguration

4.37 Then not long after Pukkusa Malla,putta had left, the venerable Ānanda arranged the pair of gold-coloured ready-to-wear robes on the Blessed One, and as he did so, it appeared to have lost its radiance.

Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:
“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How exceedingly pure and clear, bhante, is the Tathāgata’s complexion! Bhante, when this pair of gold-coloured ready-to-wear robes [134] is placed on the Blessed One’s body, it appears to have lost its radiance!”
“Such it is, Ānanda. There are two occasions, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata’s complexion appears exceedingly pure and clear. What are the two?
On the night when the Tathāgata awakens to the supreme self-awareness, Ānanda, and on the night when he attains to the nirvana-element without residue at his final passing.

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712 This makes Pukkusa the last layman to take refuge before the Buddha himself.
713 “A pair of gold-coloured robes, ready for wearing.” śīrī,vaṇaṁ yugāṁ maṭṭāṁ dhāraṇīyaṁ. These two robes are probably the outer robe (uttarāsāṅga), covering the whole body and the upper robe (saṅghāṭi), worn folded over the left shoulder: cf V 1:94. The upper robe is doubled up with the outer robe for keeping oneself warm, or folded up as a seat [$4.21] or for lying on [$4.29], or used as an outer robe when the soiled robe is washed and dried. The two robes are identical in form. However, the text here does not mention what kind of robe “the pair” are.
714 Or, “reverend sir.” Here the man is addressing Pukkusa, who was obviously a man of means. See Dhānañjāni S (M 97.27a/2:192): SD 4.9 §27a n.
715 Upānāmesi, fi upānāmeti, “he offers; he arranges or places.” See §4.37.
716 Tenā hi pukkusa ekena maṁ acchādehi ekena ānandaṁ. That is, Ānanda is simply keeping the robe on the Buddha’s behalf.
717 Ekena bhagavantaṁ acchādeśi, ekena āyasmantanā ānandaṁ. If we take it that Ānanda is the recipient one of the two robes, it is clearly problematic in that Ānanda is receiving a share of choice robes, when the very first condition that Ānanda sets for becoming the Buddha’s personal attendant is is “the Buddha should never pass on to him any choice robes he has received” (J 4:96; ThA 3:112): see Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004:6.3. See D:W 573 n421: “This ridiculous story is probably a late insertion.” However, it should be noted that after Pukkusa had left, Ānanda arranged the second robe on the Buddha.
718 Upānāmesi, see §4.35n.
719 Comy: It seems as if the radiance was gone, like coals whose bright flames have departed (yathā haṁ taciko aṅgāro ant ‘anten’ eva jotati, bahi pan’assa pabhāṁ n’attri, evaṁ bahi paṭichchanna-p-pabhāṁ hūtvā khāyati ti attho, DA 570).
720 Anupādi,sesa,nibbāna,dhātu §§3.20+5.8×2: see (15). On the term parinibbāna, see Intro (15) above.

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4.38 Ānanda, in the last watch tonight, the Tathāgata’s parinirvāna will occur between the twin sal trees in the sal grove of the Mallas in Upavattana [Upavattana Wood] near Kusinārā.

Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Kakuttā river.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Pākkusa brings a pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wear,
When the Teacher dons it, his gold-hued complexion shines forth bright.

The elder Cundaka

4.39 Then the Blessed One together with the great order of monks went to the Kakuttā river. There, they bathed, drank and came out of the river, and headed for the mango grove. There, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Cundaka.

“Please, Cundaka, spread the upper robe [sanghāti], folded in four, for me. I am tired, Cundaka, and would like to lie down.”

Traditionally, the Buddha’s day is divided into 5 periods: the forenoon, the afternoon, the first watch, the middle watch, and the last watch. Rising early (ie about 4-5 am), the Buddha rouses in himself the attainment of great compassion (mahā- karunā,xamāpatti) and surveys the world with his divine eye to see whom he can help. Forenoon: During the early hours of dawn, the Buddha attends to his bodily needs and toilet. Then he sits down in solitary meditation or retreat (patissallāṇa), after which he (DA 1:45). Afternoon: After his noon meal, he surveys the mental dispositions of his audience and delivers a discourse, advising them on the Dharma and its practice, and establishes them in the Refuges and the Precepts. During the third part of the afternoon, towards evening, the people dwelling nearby, who have given alms in the morning, having dressed and groomed themselves, and bringing perfumes, garlands and other offerings, assemble in the monastery. The Buddha sits on his special seat in the assembly hall and teaches the Dharma in a way fitting to the occasion and audience.

After his afternoon activities, the Buddha returns to his cell to spend a period of solitary retreat. The first watch of the night (pathama- or purima,yāma), extending from 6 to 10 pm, is exclusively reserved for the instruction of the order members who have arrived from various directions to attend upon the Buddha. Some ask questions, some inquire about points of Dharma, some request meditation subjects. After the order members have dispersed, during the middle watch (majjhima,yāma), extending from 10 pm to 2 am, heavenly beings approach the Buddha to consult him. The last watch (pacchima,yāma), lasting from 2 to 6 am, is divided into two sessions (DA 147). Because his body aches from sitting for long periods since early morning, the Buddha spends the first portion of the last watch mindfully pacing up and down (caṇ kamaṇa) to dispel the discomfort. During the second part of the last watch (ie around 3 to 5 am), the Buddha enters the Fragrant Cell and mindfully sleeps, experiencing nirvanic or dhyanic bliss. In other words, the Buddha sleeps only about two hours daily. Finally, during the third part of the last watch, just before dawn, he rises, takes a seat and rouses in himself the attainment of great compassion. Cultivating thoughts of loving-kindness towards all beings, he surveys the world with his Buddha-eye and seeks out those who have observed their duties (eg giving alms and keeping to the Precepts in the presence of past Buddhas) and to whom he can assist spiritually.

721 Sāla (Skt sāla), the sal tree, Shorea robusta (D 2:134; M 1:448; A 1:209, 3:49, 214; Dh 162). This is said to be the tree under which the Bodhisattva is born in Lumbini park, lying between Kapila,vatthu and Deva,daha (J 1:52, 328; ApA 57).

722 Kakuttā river divides Kusinārā (Kusināgari) and Pāvā (Pāpā) (D 2:129, 134 ff; U 7.5). It is called Cocouthes by the ancient Greek writers. Today the river is called the Kuku. Some scholars, however, identify it with the modern Ghāgī, a small stream flowing into the Little Gandak, about 3 km (2 miles) to the west of Chitiyaon in the Gorakhpur district.

723 T W Rhys Davids notes in his tr: “We have here the commencement of the legend which afterwards grew into an account of an actual ‘transfiguration’ of the Buddha. It is very curious that it should have taken place soon after the Buddha had announced to Ānanda his approaching death, and that in the Buddhist Sutta it should be connected so closely with that event; for a similar remark applies to the Transfiguration mentioned in the Gospels.” (DRD 2:146 n1). It is said of Jesus Christ that “his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them” (Mark 9:2-8; Matt 17:1-13; Luke 9:28-36; RSV). In the case of the Buddha, it is his whole body that radiates greatly, some 500 years (or at least 200 years in terms of the recorded tradition) before the biblical story. See Miracles, SD SD 27.5 (2.1.3+4)


725 It is possible that this Cundaka or Cunda (see next sentence) is the same as Mahā Cunda and Cunda Saman‘uddesa, the younger brother of Sāriputta. Cunda Saman‘uddesa appears in both Pāśādīka S (D 29) and Sāmaγāma S (M 104). It is significant that in Pāśādīka S, the Buddha, at the height of his instruction, tells him, “But now I am an elder teacher of long standing, Cunda, one long gone forth, whose journey is done, my life is coming to a close” (aham kho pana Cunda etarahi saṭṭha therā rattaṃhā cira,pabbajito addhā,gato vayo anuppatto) (D 29:14/3:125). It is possible that these two Suttas record events occurring at this point in our Sutta here in connection with Cunda. There is an anachronism, however: Mahāvīra predeceases the Buddha, dying in 527 BCE; the Buddha dies in c405 BCE (traditional date: 543 BCE). A L Basham, in his History and Doctrine of the Ājīvikas, London, 1951, thinks that Makkhali Gosāla may be meant here. See DPPN: 2. Cunda. See also Pāśādīka S (D 29), SD 401.6 (3).
“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Cundaka replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he prepared the upper robe, folded in four.

4.40 Then the Blessed One laid himself down on his right lion-like, resting foot on foot, mindful and fully aware, [135] mentally noting the time for rising. The venerable Cundaka sat down right there before the Blessed One.

4.41 The Buddha, going to the Kakutthā river,

Clear, clean and bright,
The Teacher immersed his weary frame,
The Buddha unequalled in the world.
Having bathed and drunk, the Teacher then emerged,
Leading on, in the midst of the group of monks.
The Teacher, the Blessed One, who points out the Dharma here.
The great sage to the mango grove came.
He addressed the monk called Cundaka,
“Spread me a place to lie on.”
The joyful Cundaka[k], one of mind well cultured,
At once spread out a robe folded in four.
The Teacher laid down his weary frame,
And right there before him sat Cundaka[k].

Exoneration of Cunda

4.42 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“It might be, Ānanda, one might cause remorse in Cunda the smith, saying, ‘It is your loss, avuso Cunda, it is by your failure [defeat] that the Tathāgata attained parinirvana after taking his alms-meal from you!’”

But Cunda’s remorse should be dispelled in this way:

‘This is your gain, Cunda, it is your great gain [victory], that the Tathāgata attained parinirvana after taking his last alms-meal from you! For, avuso Cunda, I have heard and understood from the Blessed One’s own mouth that these two alms-meals [136] are of the very same fruit, of very same result, and more fruitful and more profitable than any other. Which two?

The one is the alms-meal after eating which the Tathāgata awakens to supreme awakening and the other, after which the Tathāgata attains the nirvana-element without residue at his final passing. These two almsgiving are of the very same fruit, of very same result, and more fruitful and more profitable than any other.

By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to long life.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to beauty.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to happiness.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to fame.

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727 Īngha me tvaṁ cundaka catu-guṇaṁ saṅghātiṁ paṅñāpehi, kilanto’smi cundaka nipajjissāmi ti. Here, “folded in four” (catu-guṇaṁ) means that the robe is folded twice over, ie, it is stretched lengthwise along the “fold” (vivaitta), comprising the “neck half-circle” (addha,maṇḍala, gīvēyyaka) and the “knee folding circle” (maṇḍala vivaitta, jaṅghēyyaka) (V 1:287), ie, folded halfway by, say, two persons, holding it lengthwise by its top corners, and then one more similar fold. This length however would reach just above the ankles, or one could use some sort of pillow for the head and let the robe-length reach under the feet. See CS Upasak 1975:89.

728 “Mentally noting the time for rising” when one is going to sleep is an example of “sleeping mindfully,” mentioned in Satippātāna S (M 10.8(7)/1:57). In Pacalā S (A 7.58), the Buddha exhorts, “Moggallāna, mindful and fully aware, you should lie down lion-like on your right side, placing foot on foot, keeping in mind the thought that on awakening, you would get up quickly, thinking, ‘I will dwell without indulging in the pleasure of sleep, or in the pleasure of reclining, or in the pleasure of drowsiness’” (na seyya,dukkhaṁ na passa,sukhaṁ na middha,sukhaṁ anuyutto) (A 7.58/4:87), SD 4.11. On this mental noting of rising up again, see also n at §5.1.

729 See §§4.18-20.

730 That is, the gift made just before the great awakening at Buddha,gayā, but no mention is made of its giver—according to the Theravada tradition, it is the lady Sujātā: see Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004 §2.18.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to a heavenly life.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to greatness [lordship].’
In this way, is Cunda the smith’s remorse to be expelled.” (D 2:138)

4.43 Then the Blessed One, knowing the purpose of the moment, uttered this verse of uplift:

To one who gives, merit grows; to the restrained, no anger heeps.
The skillful one casts off bad; destroying lust, hate and delusion, he is cooled.

Chapter 5
(Fifth Recital, pañcama bhānavāra: the Hiraññavatī)

KUSINĀRĀ: THE FINAL HOURS

The Upavattana Sal Grove

[137] 5.1 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

331 The following sections [§§5.1-11]—the sal grove; Upavāna; the devas’ lamentations; the 4 holy places; monks’ attitude to women; treatment of the Buddha’s remains—are all unique to this Sutta.

332 Ayām ānanda hirāṇnā, vatiyā nadiyā pārīma, tīrama yena kusinārā, upavattanaṁ mallūnaṁ sāla, vanam ten upasaiṅka-missāmā ti. As at Mahā Sudassana S (D 17,1.2.1/2:169), SD 36.12; Divy 208.25, 209.3; see Dipv 6.19.

333 Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas on the banks across the Hirañna, vati river, near Kusinārā.

334 Then he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

335 Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas on the banks across the Hirañna, vati river, near Kusinārā.

336 SD 9

”Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas on the banks across the Hirañna, vati river, near Kusinārā.

Then he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

”Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he prepared a couch for the Blessed One, with its head to the north, between the twin sal trees. I am tired, Ānanda, I wish to lie down.”

”Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he prepared a couch for the Blessed One, with its head to the north, between the twin sal trees. Then the Blessed One laid himself down on his right, lion-like, resting foot on foot, mindful and fully aware.

The site of Kusinārā is certainly to be in the extensive ruins near the present village of Kasia at the junction of the Rapti river and the Little Gandak river (the ancient Hiranyavati, a tributary of the Šarayu or Ghaghara), 60 km (37 mi) east of Gorakhpur and on the border of North Bihar. The Mallas of Kusinārā and the Mallas of Pāvā were located to the east and south of the Koliyas. See J Finegan, An Archaeological History of Religions of Indian Asia. 1989:81 f.

In other words, the Buddha is lying down in a north-south alignment in harmony with the geomagnetic flow of the earth, as it were. It is probable that the Buddha lies on his right lion-like, and so faces the west (the setting sun), unlike when he awakens to the supreme self-awakening when he faces the east (the rising sun) (J 1:71). Lying in this manner, too, would be proper as the setting sun would shine in his face. Anyway, Comys did not attach any special meaning to uttara-sisak (with the head to the north), only noting that it is traditionally said that there was a row of sal trees at the head (sisa) of the couch, and another close to it foot. The twin sal trees were so called because the two trees were equally grown as regards roots, trunks and branches and foliage. There was a couch (or bench) in the park for special use of the Malla chief, and it was this couch that the Blessed One instructed Ānanda to prepare. (DA 2:573). The 7th cent sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, in fact, rejects the view of some that the Buddha wanted to lie down facing the east, and attached no special significance to the couch arrangement (DAT 2:224). Rhys Davids notes that the uttara, sisak “may have been the name for a slab of wood or stone reserved on great occasion for the use of the leaders of the neighbouring republic, but available at other times to passers-by” (D:RD 2:149 n1).

337 Atha kho Bhagava dakkhinena passena siha, seyyam kappesi pāde pādaṁ accādhaya sato sampajāno. Note that the phrase, uttāra, saṁhas anusārikatvā, “mentally noting the time for rising,” is omitted here. Elsewhere, the stock phrase for the Buddha’s act of lying down to rest reads, “Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side, lion-like, with one foot

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Then at that time, the twin sal trees burst forth in full blossom and fruit, albeit untimely, the blossoms falling on the Blessed One’s body, showering down upon it, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly mandārava [coral tree] flowers fell from the sky, heavenly sandalwood powder fell from the sky, showering down upon the Blessed One’s body. [138] covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly music resounded through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly songs wafted through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata.

The supreme worship

Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, the twin sal trees are bursting forth with full blossom and fruit, albeit untimely, the blossoms are falling on the Tathāgata’s body, showering down upon it, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata.

Heavenly mandārava [coral tree] flowers are falling from the sky, heavenly sandalwood powder is falling from the sky, showering down upon the Tathāgata’s body, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata.

Heavenly music is resounding through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly songs are wafting through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata.™

But, Ānanda, this is not the way to honour, respect, revere, worship, or esteem the Tathāgata.™

Ānanda, whatever monk, nun, layman or laywoman™ practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, properly practising, living in accordance with the Dharma, he honours the Tathāgata, respects him, reveres him, worships him with the supreme worship.™ Therefore, Ānanda, consider thus:

“We will practise the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, properly practising, dwelling in accordance with the Dharma!”—this is how you should train yourself.”™

Upavāṇa and seeing the Buddha

Now at the time, the venerable Upavāṇa™ was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning him.™ Then the Blessed One dismissed™ him, saying:

on top of the other, mindfully and fully aware, mentally noting the time for rising”™ [§4.40]. Here, however, the Buddha is lying down for the last time and will pass away in this posture. As such, he makes no mental note to get up in due course.™

This miraculous episode not mentioned in the Tibetan Dulva (Rockhill 1884:135).™

Sabbha, phālipullā kho Ānanda yamaka, sālā akālā, pupphhehi Tathāgatassa sāriraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāṇi pi mandārava, pupphāni antalikkhā papanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sāriraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya, dibbāṇi pi candana, cuṇṇāni antalikkhā papanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sāriraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāṇi pi tuṇṇāni antalikkhe vajjenti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāṇi pi saṅgītāni antalikkhe vajjenti Tathāgatassa pūjāya.

This identical passage [§5.3a] appears in the previous para [§5.2], but I have rendered it here differently according to English idiom. The versatility of Pali syntax in terms of tense (both us

See Cūḷa Saccaka S (M 35), where the arhat is said to do all this by declaring that the Buddha is “awakened …; mentally tamed…; still…; crossed over…; quenched…” and “teaches the Dharma” for the same of these (M 35.26b/1:235), SD 26.5.™

Note here that this important exhortation on the “supreme worship” is addressed to all the 4 companies (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen). However, there is evidence of a monastic-lay distinction here in Buddhaghosa’s commentary: see Intro (7.2).™

“Supreme worship,” paramā puja, alt tr “highest homage,“ ie the highest puja: see Intro (7.2) above. On the story of Dhammadāna, see Intro (14). Cf Cūḷa Saccaka S (M 35), where in a similar connection, the arhat is said to accomplished in the 3 supremeances (anuttariya) (M 35.26.2/1:235), SD 26.5.™

Tasmātiḥ ānanda dhāmmanuññhamma, patipanna viharissāma samīci, patipannā anuddhamma, cārīn nī, evam hi vo ānanda sikkhitabban ti. Comy’s explanations of the key words here, see Intro (7.2).™

In the Tibetan Dulva account, this Upavāṇa episode is inserted after the Mahā Sudassana story [§5.18].™

Upavāṇa or Upavana is an elder of Sāvatthī and one of the Buddha’s attendants (ThA 2:56 f.: Tha:RD 350). See Tha 185 f. for his verses (also S 7.13; cf Miln 134, Miln:H 1:187 n8). On his origs: Ap 22/70,22-74,7 (ApA 343,27 f). Deva,hiita S (S 7.13) records how Upavāṇa, as the Buddha’s attendant, mindfully attends to him when he was suffering from wind illness (S 7.13/1:174 f = DhA 4:232,18). In Upavāṇa S (S 35.70), he asks the Buddha on the meaning of sandhiikā (directly visible; see for oneself) which the Buddha explains as that of direct awareness of lust as it arises through sense-experience (S 35.70/4:41-44). In Pāśādika S (D 29), he fans the Buddha as he teaches, and the Sutta title is to his

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Dīgha Nikāya 2, Mahā Vagga 3
“Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!”

Then the venerable Ānanda thought, “This venerable Upāvāna has been the Blessed One’s personal attendant for a long time, always near at hand and available. What is the reason, what is the cause [condition], that the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, ‘Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!’?”

5.5 Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, this venerable Upāvāna has been the Blessed One’s personal attendant for a long time, always near at hand and available. What is the reason, what is the cause [condition], that the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, ‘Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!’?”

“Ānanda, the devatas [gods] of the 10 world-bases have gathered in great numbers to see the Tathāgata. Ānanda, for 12 yojanas [league] around the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas near Kusinārā, there is not a spot even the size of the pricking tip of a hair that is not filled by a mighty devata. Ānanda, the devatas are upset [murmuring in protest], saying:

‘We have come from afar just for the sight of the Tathāgata. Very rarely do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world, and tonight in the last watch, the Tathāgata will attain parinirvāna.

But this mighty monk stands right in front of the Blessed One, obstructing the view. We will not be able to have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time [in his last hour]!” Thus, Ānanda, the devatas are upset [murmuring in protest].”

The devas lament

5.6 “But, bhante, what kinds of devatas is the Blessed One considering?”

“There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in the sky [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the air]; lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, rolling to and fro, crying:

credit (D 29.41/3.141), SD 40a.6. Here, Upāvāna is again seen fanning the Buddha in his last days. See SD 47.15 (2.4.2); also CPD sv.

See above §1.4n where Ānanda fans the Buddha.

“Dismissed,” reading apasāreti (Be), which Comy glosses as apanesi (DA 2:579); vl apasādeti, “he rebukes” [PTS apasādesi, 2nd sg.

“Personal attendant…available,” upatthāko santikāvacaro samāpa, cārī, lit “a personal attendant who moves in the vicinity, who wanders nearby.”

“10 world-spheres,” dāsā loka, dhātu, here Comys gloss as dāsā, sahassa, cakkavāla (the ten-thousandfold universe) (DA 2:678; SA 1:74). Cosmology: “The world (loka) in its broadest sense includes the whole cosmos, but within this there are smaller units known as ‘world-systems’ (loka, dhātu), which corresponds roughly to solar systems. Such a unit consists of the sun and moon, Mt Meru, four continents, four oceans, the 4 great kings (loka, pāla, catur. mahārāja), and the seven-fold heavenly spheres. One thousand of these units together forms a ‘small world system,’ and the ‘medium’ and ‘large’ systems are each one thousand times greater than the one below. These larger world systems correspond to the modern concept of a galaxy. The cosmos is believed to be infinite in space and also in time, although it passes through immense cycles of revolution and decline. In the post-canonical period of Pāli literature, the term loka, dhātu is replaced by cakkavāla (Skt cakra, vāla) (Skt cakra, vāla, and more elaborate details are added to the traditional accounts.” (Dictionary of Buddhism, 2003).

“Leagues” (vajana). A vajana is the yoke of an Indian plough (J 6:38, 42). As distance, it is as far as can be covered by a yoke of oxen, i.e., about 11.25 km or 7 mi (DhA 1:108, 2:13). Thus, “twelve yojanas” is about 130 km = 84 mi.

In Sama, citta Vagga of the Anguttara, the Buddha tells Sāriputta that “ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty devas” could comfortably stand on the end of a hair (A 2:65, qu at DA 2:579). Cf A 3:402; SA 1:74. “It is most curious to find this exact analogy to the notorious discussion as to how many angels could stand on the point of a needle in a commentary written at just that period of Buddhist history that corresponds to the Middle Ages of Christendom.” (D:RD 2:151n). The actual quote is “how many angels can dance on the point of a very fine needle, without jostling one another.” Amongst the earliest to quote this were Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation (1638, repr 1972, 12th unnumbered p of pref) & Isaac D’Israeli (“Curiosities of Literature,” 1791).

“Very rarely,” kadacī karahaci, lit “perhaps sometimes.”

Comy says that the devatas are unable to see through Upāvāna because the elder’s “greatness and abundance of teja (‘heat, radiance, glory’),” that were a result of the fact that in a former life he was a guardian devata of the caitya of the relics of Kassapa Buddha (DA 579 f). On darshan, see Intro (7.5) above.

This whole section repeats in §6.11, in Anuruddha’s mouth.

“Devatas who perceive earth in the sky,” devatā ākāse paṭhavi, saññīnīyo. Comy: Having perceived earth, they project earth right there in the air (ākāse paṭhavinī mapetvā tattha paṭhavi, saññīnīyo, DA 2:579). See n in §5.6b below. This is a difficult passage to translate: see eg Ray 1994:362, where Reginald Ray tr paṭhavi, saññīnīyo as “of worldly mind.”

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‘Too soon will the Blessed One enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Sugata [Wellfarer] enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Eye in the world disappear!’

5.6.2 There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in earth [who assume a gross form so that they can stand on the ground], lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon will the Blessed One enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Sugata [Wellfarer] enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Eye in the world disappear!’

But those devatas that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware, ‘Impermanent are formations! Ānanda, how else could it be?’

The 4 Holy Places

Lumbinī → Bodhgayā → Sarnath ↓ Kusinārā

No pavāranā ceremony

5.7 [Ānanda:] “Before, bhante, the monks who have spent their rains residence in various districts will come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata, and we will receive them, we will receive those esteemed monks who have come for a darshan [seeing the Tathāgata] and wait upon them.”

5.6.2 ‘As if their feet have been cut off,’ reading chinnaṁ pādam viya papatanti throughout following Se. PTS has chinna-,-papātam papatanti throughout (D 16,5,6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf chinna.pādā (J 6:301, 303).

5.6.2 “The Eye in the world,” cakkhu loke. See Intro (7.6) on “the 5 eyes.”

5.6.2 They are devas like the Brahmās who are unable prop themselves up when appearing on earth. Comy (DA 2:581) mentions the (Brahmā) Hatthaka (A 3.125) that relates an incident when the devaputra Hatthaka is unable to stand in the presence of the Buddha. The Buddha instructs him to project a gross (olārika) body form so that the earth could hold him up. Similarly, Jana,vasabha S (D 18.17) relates the case of the Brahmā Sanaṅ,kumāra, whose form was too subtle to be perceived by the devas of the Heaven of the Thirty-three. So he had to assume a gross form so that they could see him (D 18,17/2:210).

5.7 “Tam kut’ etha labbhā? Lit, “What can you get here?” As at §§3.48, 6.11 below.

5.7 “Worthy of esteemed” and “esteemed,” mano,bhāvanāya or -bhāvanāyā, often used in apposition with bhikkhu (D 2:140; M 2:23, 3:6, 2:61; S 3:1, 5:369, 371; A 3:317-322 (22□), 5:185, 189; Vv 34.13/49; Miln 129); used of the Buddha, mano,bhāvanāya buddhan, at Soavana,kattarika Ap (Ap 427.1/2:389). SA comments that “those great elders such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna are called ‘worthy of esteem because the mind grows in wholesome qualities whenever they are seen” (SA 2:249 f). See DA 3:832; MA 3:17, 266. Bodhi notes that “the expression is a gerundive meaning literally ‘who should be brought to mind,’ ie who are worthy of esteem” (S:B 1043 n2). Sadda,nīti (Dhātu,mālā), however, gives both

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The 4 holy places

5.8 Ṵānanda, there are these four places that should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency]. What are the four?  
(1) Thinking, “Here the Tathāgata was born,” Ṵānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].  
(2) Thinking, “Here the Tathāgata attained supreme awakening,” Ṵānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].  
(3) Thinking, “Here the Tathāgata turned the Wheel of the Dharma,” Ṵānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].  
(4) Thinking, “Here the Tathāgata attained the nirvana-element without residue,” Ṵānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].  

Ananda, these are the 4 places that should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].

5.8.2 Ṵānanda, the faithful monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen, too, may visit those places, thinking, “Here the Tathāgata was born.”

thinking, “Here the Tathāgata attained supreme awakening.”

thinking, “Here the Tathāgata turned the Wheel of the Dharma.”

thinking, “Here the Tathāgata attained the nirvana-element without residue.”

5.8.3 Anyone who dies with a calm and bright heart of faith while making a pilgrimage of these shrines, at the breaking up of the body after death, is reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world.

Women

5.9 “Bhante, how are we to conduct ourselves towards women?”

“But if we see them, bhante, how should we behave?”

“But if we speak to us, bhante, how should we behave towards them?”

“Then, ᴴānanda, be mindful [maintain mindfulness]!”

meanings of mano, bhāvanīya: (1) one who is worthy of being greeted and asked after his health; (2) one who develops his mind (Sadd:Be 330).

Here ᴴānanda is referring to the most common event after Invitation, that ends the rains residence on the following dawn, when the monks would leave their rains residence and if the Buddha was nearby, visit him. Interestingly, no Invitation ceremony is mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S. See §3.51n on the Invitation.

This § [5.8] as at Samvega S (A 4.118/2:120), addressed to “monks.”

Cattār’ imāni ᴴānanda saddhassa kula, puttassa dassanāni samvejānti ānā. On samvega, see (7.6).

The following are the 4 holy places “that arouse samvega [spiritual urgency]” (samvejānti-tānā/samvejānti-sīha) that are worthy of pilgrimage are: Lumbinī (modern Rummindei, Nepal), Uruvela/Uruvilvā (Buddha Gayā), Isi,pata-tanā/Rsi,pata-tanā (modern Sarnath) and Kusinārā/Kuśinagarī. In the account of the 8 causes of earth-tremors (D 2:107-109) §§3.11-20, causes 4, 5, 6, and 8 are respectively those in connection with the events of the four holy places §§3.16, 17, 18, 20, that is, (4) Lumbinī (J 1:52), (5) Buddha, gayā (J 1:76), (7) Isi,pata-tanā (V 1:10), and (8) Kusinārā (D 2:137). Faxian records that there was a great pagoda at each of these four sites, that is, about the 5th century CE (Giles tr, 1923:56). On pilgrimage, see (7.7).

The nirvana-element without residue” (anupādīsesa nibbhāna,dhāta), is the final passing away of an arhat without any remnants of the 5 aggregates, where all physical and mental processes truly do not further arise. Note esp the usage of upadi here: see Intro (15.2) above.

With a calm and bright heart of faith,” pasanna,citta, alt tr “with a clear mind of faith.” On pasanna,citta, see Intro (7.8).

While making a pilgrimage of these shrines,” cetiya,carikaṁ aṁhindantā, lit “while wandering on a walking-tour of these shrines.” “Shrines,” cetiyā. We have here what some would regard as the basis for stupa worship: see Intro (7.3) for the nature of stupa worship & (7.8) for its benefits. Cf Vatthūpama S (M 7.20/1:39), SD 28.12 (7.8).

This episode is apparently an arbitrary and incongruous interpolation in the otherwise smooth narrative flow of the sutta. The Skt & Tibetan versions do not have this episode, attesting to its lateness. On a more positive note regarding women, see (Pīṇḍola) Bhāradvāja S (S 35.127 = 4:110 f), SD 27.6a.

Satī ᴴānanda upāṭṭhāpetaṁ tī, lit “Mindfulness, ᴴānanda, should be set up.” On mental training to deal with sexuality, see Saṅgiota S (A 7.48/4:57-59): sense-desire is not in the attractions out there but within ourselves; Koṭhiṇa S (S 35.232/4:162-165): lustful desire is not in any of the six senses, but in how we engage them. The Central Asian version (Waldschmidt) omits this episode, but it is found in DĀ (T1.1), EĀ, and T1.7 versions. See Bareau 1971:34 f; Matsumura 1988
Treatment of the Buddha’s remains

5.10 “Bhante, how are we to treat the Tathāgata’s bodily remains?”

“Do not worry yourselves about the funeral rites [relic worship], Ānanda. Come now, Ānanda, you should strive for your own good, devote yourselves to your own good, and dwell with your minds tirelessly, zealously devoted to your own good. There are wise kshatriyas, wise brahmins and wise houselords who are devoted to the Tathāgata: they will take care of the funeral rites.”

5.11 “But how, bhante, should the Tathāgata’s bodily remains be treated?”

“Ānanda, treat the Tathāgata’s bodily remains like those of a wheel-turning king’s.”

5.11.2 “But how, bhante, are the bodily remains of a world-turning king to be treated?”

“Ānanda, the body should be wrapped alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then with a layer of teased cotton. [142] It should be done in this manner to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths], and then the body is placed in an oil-vat of iron. This should be covered with an iron lid. The pyre should comprise totally of fragrant material, and then cremate the body. Then a stupa [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the wheel-turning king at the crossroads [where four highways meet].


Kathām mavaṃ bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre patipajjāmā ti. “Bodily remains,” sarīre, neut acc pl: see §5.11a n. “The ‘we’ here would appear to refer to some, if not all, of the Buddha’s fellow renunciants” (Trainor 1997:52 f). Cf Ānanda’s next question which is more impersonal [§5.11 & n]. On defs of sarīra, see Intro (7.4) above.

Funeral rites,” sarīra,piṭa, lit “worship of the bodily remains.” The Buddha here is indirectly reminding Ānanda of the need of his own spiritual cultivation (ie to gain arhathood since he is still a streamwinner). However, the general tone of the Buddha’s reply, as is clear from the next sentence, is that all monastics should not be concerned with such rituals. See Intro (7.1).

5.11.3 “Your own good,” sad-atthe. Be sār’atthe, “the essence of good; the essential goal” Ānanda is still only a streamwinner, and the Buddha is here urging him to work for the “highest good,” viz arhathood (uttam’atthe arahatte ghaṭetha) (DA 2:583).

This § [11] as at §6.17 (D 2:161) below where the Mallas as for instructions from Ānanda regarding how to treat the Buddha’s remains.

Kathām pana bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre patipajjātthanā ti. “Bodily remains,” sarīre, neut acc pl: see §5.10 n. Note that mavaṃ (we) has been omitted here and the question is impersonal (“an unspecified agent,” Trainor 1997: 53). Comy says that Ānanda asks this question because he knew that the kshatriyas, brahmins and householders would ask him what to do (DA 583): and in fact they did [§6.17].

On the wheel-turning king, see §5.18 below.

“Body,” sarīram, here neut nom sg. See §6.23.

Ahatena vatthena vethetvā vihatena kappāsenā vethenti (D 16.5.11/2:141). See Intro (7.1).

Etana upāyena pañcahi yuga,satehi (D 16.5.11/2:142). A yuga is about 1.8 m (5.9 ft), and 500 yugas would be 900 m (984 yd). See §6.13.2 above & (7.1). Apparently, all the better known English trs (Rhys Davids, Walshe, Vajir & Story, and Thanissaro) overlooked or mistranslated yuga. See §6.13 below.

“Iron,” ayasa, vl āyasa. In Skt, it means “gold,” so glossed by Comy (DA 2:583). However, it is only here that ayasa is rendered as “gold.” This could be because, due to the popularity of Sanskrit in his times (5th cent), Buddhaghosa was influenced by it. As regards the dimension of the iron vat, understandably, the final size of the remains wrapped in alternate layers of cotton cloth and teased cotton should fit this iron vat and then closed with its lid. See J S Strong 2004:109 f.

Cūṭum,mahā,pathe raiñho cakkavattissa thūpam karonti. Note that neither sarīram nor sarīre is mentioned: see foll n. The ref to crossroads (“where four highroads meet”) (cūṭum,mahā,pathe) has at least two levels of meaning. The first meaning has been discussed by RA Gunatilaka in “Ancient Stūpa Architecture: The significance of cardinal points and the cūṭumahāpathe concept” (1975:34-48), where the allusion is to the universal hegemony of the cakkavatī or wheel-turning king. Here “where four highroads meet” refers to the city centre where the highways converge; as such, this is the city’s most prominent spot. In the Dharma sense, the Buddha is a “wheel-turner” but the wheel is the dhārma,cakra (dharmma,-cakka), the wheel of truth, and not the ājñā,cakra (āñā,cakka), the wheel of power. The second meaning is more common in the suttas. In Dhamma,cetiya S (M 89), for example, the rajah Pasanāi praises the Buddha regarding how the Sangha members are so well disciplined “with neither rod nor sword” (M 89.13/2:122). In Āṅgulimālā S (M 86), the rajah again makes the same praise in reference to how the Buddha has tamed the bloodthirsty bandit, Āṅgulimālā, “with neither rod http://dharmafarer.org
5.11.3 Ānanda, just as one treats the remains of a wheel-turning king, even so, one should treat the remains of the Tathāgata. Then a stupa [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the Tathāgata at the crossroads [where four highways meet]. And they who offer a garland, scent, or perfume powder, or bow down there, or brighten their minds with faith there, it will be for their profit and welfare for a long time to come.

Those worthy of a stupa

5.12 Ānanda, there are these four who are worthy of a stupa. Who are the four? The Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one is worthy of a stupa.

A pratyeka Buddha is worthy of a stupa.

A disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata is worthy of a stupa.

A wheel-turning king is worthy of a stupa.

(1) And because of what reason, Ānanda, is the Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought, ‘This is the stupa of the Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, the Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, is worthy of a stupa.

(2) And for what reason, Ānanda, is a pratyeka buddha worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought, ‘This is the stupa of a pratyeka buddha,’ the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a pratyeka buddha is worthy of a stupa.

(3) And for what reason, Ānanda, is a disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought, ‘This is the stupa of a disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata,’ the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata is worthy of a stupa.

(4) And for what reason, Ānanda, is a wheel-turning monarch [a just world ruler] worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought, ‘This is the stupa of a wheel-turning king,’ the hearts of the many brighten with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, they are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a stupa.

These, Ānanda, are the four who are worthy of a stupa.

ANANDA
Ānanda’s grief

5.13 Then the venerable Ānanda went into the monks’ lodging [vihara] and stood lamenting, leaning against the door-bolt, weeping.

“Alas! I am still a learner with much more to do! And the Teacher is attaining parinirvāna—he who is so kind to me!”

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks,

“Where, bhikshus, is Ānanda?”

“Bhante, the venerable Ānanda is in the monks’ lodging [vihara], standing lamenting, leaning against the door-post, weeping.”

Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk:

“Go, monk, and call Ānanda in my name, saying: ‘Avuso, the Teacher calls you.’”

“Yes, bhante,” the monk replied in assent to the Blessed One. He approached the venerable Ānanda and then said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Avuso, the Teacher calls you.”

“Yes, avuso,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the monk.

The venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, sat down at one side.

The Buddha consoles Ānanda

5.14 Seated thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Enough, Ānanda, do not grieve! Do not weep! Have I not told you before: ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]’? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.

For a long time, Ānanda, you have been in the Tathāgata’s presence ever ready to serve, showing loving-kindness through bodily deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly, through verbal deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly, and through mental deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly.

You have gained much merit, Ānanda. Keep up your effort and you will swiftly be free from the mental influxes.”

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788 Winternitz (1939:9) says that these 2 sections ([§5.13 f] are amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” See also §§2.23 & 2.25.

789 Although vihāra may be an abstract n referring to a way of dwelling, here it refers to a physical residence, eg, a hut or cottage. As the scene here is in the Upavattana sal grove, it “would seem to point to the fact that this episode originally stood in some other connexion” (D:RD 2:157 n2). Buddhaghosa explains that vihāra here refers to a mandala, māla (DA 2:584), ie, “a circular house or hall with a peaked roof, a pavilion” (DPL), where the clan performs its communal ceremonies. See fol n, where it is said to be a “garden shed” (uyyāna, ovāraka, J 307/3:23).

790 The Buddha, it is said, tells Palāsa J (J 307), in this connection with Ānanda’s grieving at “the door-bolt of the garden shed” (uyyāna, ovārake kapi, sīsan). The story is about how a poor brahman faithfully worships a tree-deity, who reward him by presenting him with hidden treasure. The moral of the story is clearly alludes to Ānanda’s devotion to the Buddha.

791 “Learner” (sekhā), ie a saint who has not attained the arhat-path (ie one is a streamwinner, a once-returner, or a non-returner). Ānanda is still a streamwinner. See the conditions of non-decline at §1.7(7).

792 "Ehi tvam bhikkhu mama vacanena Ānandam amantehi, lit “Go you, monk, address Ānanda with my word.”

793 Āvuso: see §6.2 n.

794 This famous sentence is stock: D 2:118=114=158=163; Mahā Sudassana S (D 2:192=194); Cunda S (S 5:163); Nm 1:123 qu D 16,5,14/2:144. Cf Abhinna.paccavekkhitabba S (A 3:74).

795 This nested quote is stock: D 16,3,48/2:118=16,5,14/144=16,6,11a/158=16,6,20/163.

796 “In the Tathāgata’s presence ever ready to serve,” Tathāgato paccupaṭṭhito. Ānanda has served the Buddha for 25 years at this point. See Tha 1041-1043.

797 “Helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly,” hitena sukhena appamānena.

798 It is interesting to note that in Upanissa S (S 21.2), Sāriputta actually hints to Ānanda regarding the passing away of the Buddha: “Āvuso, even if the Teacher himself were to undergo change and become other, still sorrow, lamentation, pain, http://dharmafarer.org
Valediction to Ānanda 799

5.15 800 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, all those who were arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones in the past have had no better attendants, that is to say, just like Ānanda. So too will those arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones to come will have no better attendants, that is to say, just like Ānanda.” 801

Bhikshus, Ānanda is wise. 802 He knows,

‘This is the right time for the monks to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;
‘This is the right time for the nuns to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;
‘This is the right time for the men lay-followers to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’; 803
‘This is the right time for the women lay-followers to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;
‘This is the right time for the kings, the ministers, the outside teachers, the disciples of outside teachers, to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata.’

Ānanda’s charisma

5.16 803 Ānanda, bhikshus, has these 4 wonderful and marvellous qualities. What are the four? 804

1. If an assembly of monks comes to see Ānanda, and if Ānanda talks on the Dharma to an assembly of monks, but when Ānanda is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.
2. If an assembly of nuns comes to see Ānanda, and if Ānanda talks on the Dharma to an assembly of nuns, but when Ānanda is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.
3. If an assembly of men lay-followers comes to see Ānanda, and if Ānanda talks on the Dharma to an assembly of men lay-followers, but when Ānanda is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.
4. If an assembly of women lay-followers comes to see Ānanda, and if Ānanda talks on the Dharma to an assembly of women lay-followers, but when Ānanda is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.

These 4 wonderful and marvellous qualities, bhikshus, are those of a wheel-turning king [a just world ruler]:

1. If a company of kshatriyas visits a wheel-turning king, and if the wheel-turning king talks, but when the wheel-turning king is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.
2. If a company of brahmmins visits a wheel-turning king, and if the wheel-turning king talks, but when the wheel-turning king is silent, they are pleased at the sight of him; they are pleased with the talk; they are disappointed.

displeasure and despair would not arise in me. However, it would occur to me: “The Teacher, so influential, so powerful, so mighty, has passed away. But if the Blessed One had lived for a long time, that would have been for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of devas and humans!” (S 21.2/2:274)

799 The next 3 sections [§§5.15-17] are not found in the Tibetan Dulva version.
800 The 2 parts of this section (D 16.5.15-16/2:144 f) are found separately in (Ānanda) Achariya S 3 (A 4.129/ 2:132) on Ānanda’s charisma & (Ānanda) Acchariya S 4 (A 4.130/2:133) on the charisma of the wheel-turning king. Cf teachings on spiritual friendship at S 5:16.
801 In other words, Ānanda is the ideal Buddha attendant. The Buddha’s loving but ironic humour is evident here. There is only one Gotama Buddha and only one Ānanda, and as such, we are not going to see another one with the likes of him.
802 Although Ānanda is here stated as being wise in public relations and protocol, he is also the foremost amongst monks who are learned (bahussutta) (A 1:24). See eg (Ānanda) Adhamma S (A 10.115/5:225-229). On Ānanda’s wisdóm, see also SA 2:94 f.
803 This [§5.16] is found in Abbhuta Dhamma S 3 (A 4.129/2:132); but not found in the Tibetan Dulva.
804 It is highly probable that Ānanda is declared the foremost amongst monks who are gatimantānāh in this connection (A 1:25). As such, we can tr gatimanta or gatimā is “one who knows the course of things,” ie perspicacious in protocol: cf AA 1:287. Comys, however, generally gloss gatima as “possessed of understanding”; “Accomplished in peerless understanding,” gatimanto ‘i asadisāya nāṇa.gatiyā samannāgato (ThA 3:121,9); “wise, meaning with wisdom, accomplished in understanding,” pāṇḍitā ‘i pāṇḍiccanā samannāgata gatimantā (VA 552,24). See DP sv 148 http://dharmafarer.org
Pass into parinirvana there, bhante; there are many wealthy kshatriyas there, many wealthy brahmmins there, many wealthy houselords there who are great in faith in the Tathāgata. They will perform the funeral rites of the Tathāgata.”

“Say not so, Ānanda! Say not so, Ānanda, that Kusinārā is a little township, a barren little township, a jungle outpost.

5.18 MAHĀ SUDASSANA & KUSĀ,VATI Once upon a time, Ānanda, there was a rajah named Mahā Sudassana, a wheel-turning king, a just rightful king, conqueror of the four quarters, who brought stability to the country, who was endowed with the 7 jewels [treasures]. This Kusinārā, Ānanda, was the rajah Mahā Sudassana’s royal city named Kusā,vati: it was 12 yojanas long from the east to the west and 7 yojanas wide from the north to the south.

KUSINĀRĀ AND THE MALLAS

5.17-Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One: “Bhante, please do not pass into parinirvana in this little township, a barren little township, a jungle outpost. There are, bhante, other great cities, that is to say, Campā, Rājagaha, Śāvatthī, Sāketa, Kosambi, Benares. Pass into parinirvana there, bhante; there are many wealthy kshatriyas there, many wealthy brahmmins there, many wealthy houselords there who are great in faith in the Tathāgata. They will perform the funeral rites of the Tathāgata.”

The Udāna Comy gives 3 reasons why the Buddha chooses to pass away in Kusinārā, ie (1) it would be the occasion for teaching the fourfold companies to see Ānanda, it will be pleased to see him, it will be pleased when he talks on Dharma, but will be disappointed if he is silent.

Bhikshus, these are four wonderful and marvellous qualities found in Ānanda.

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805 As at (Cakka,vatti) Abbhuta Dhamma S (A 4.130), but the two sections are reversed, with the wheel-turner being mentioned first (A 4.130/2:133), SD 36.10(2.1). Very likely it is such passages [§§5.15-16] that constitutes “marvels” (abhuta,dhamma), rather than miraculous stories: see eg Abbhuta Dhamma Ss mentioned in the §§ nn. It is possible to incl lion-roars (siha,nāda) here, too: see SD 36.10 (3). See also Ency Bsm: Aṅga (under abbutadhamma).

806 The foll 2 §§ [5.17-18] are as at Mahā Sudassana S (D 17.1.1-3/2:169 f), where the §§ are expanded on. This episode is not found in the Tibetan Dunva version.

807 This incident of Ānanda’s remark regarding Kusinārā is recounted in the Intro to Mahā Sudassana S (M 17.1-3/2:169 f) & Mahā Sudassana J (J 95/1:391). See also Gomaya S (S 22.96), where Mahā Sudassana is referred to as a “head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (rājā...khattiyo muddhāvasitto) (S 22.96/3:144).

808 The Udāna Comy gives 3 reasons why the Buddha chooses to pass away in Kusinārā, ie (1) it would be the occasion for teaching Mahā Sudassana S (D 17), SD 36.12; (2) the wanderer’s Subhadda’s conversion, and (3) the brahmin Doṇa would fairly distribute his relics, thus preventing a bloodshed (UA 402). See (Pāda) Doṇa S (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).

809 Janapada-t,ṭhāvariya-p,patto, see DA 1:250, 2:443; MA 3:365; SA 1:167; SnA 2:449.

810 On the 7 jewels (satta ratanā) of the wheel-turning king—the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem-jewel, the woman-jewel, the houselord jewel, the commander jewel—see Bāla,paṇḍita S (M 129,33-41/3:172-176), SD 2.22.

811 The rest of the sentence: Puraththimena ca pacchimena ca dvādasa yojanāni, āyāmena uttarena ca dakkhiṇena ca satta yojanāni vīthārena.

812 About 135 km (84 mi) long.

813 About 79 km (49 mi) wide.

814 As a whole, 24 yojanas (about 135 km) long in latitude and 14 yojanas (79 km) wide in longitude. Raṅgo Ānanda Mahā,sudassanassa avay Kusinārā Kusāvati nāma rājadhiṃ ahosi, puraththimena ca pacchimena ca dvādasa yojanāni āyāmena, uttarena ca dakkhiṇena ca satta yojanāni vīthārena.

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And, Ánanda, the royal city of Kusāvatī was wealthy and prosperous, [147] with a large population, crowded with humans and replete with food. Ánanda, it is like the celestial city of the devas called Ājakamandā,815 wealthy and prosperous, with a large population, crowded with yakshas and replete with food. Even so, Ánanda, was the royal city of Kusāvatī wealthy and prosperous, with a large population, crowded with humans and replete with food.

And Ánanda, the royal city of Kusāvatī, night and day will resound with 10 sounds, that is to say, elephant sound, horse sound, chariot sound, drum sound, mirutangkam [barrel drum]816 sound, veena817 sound, the sound of singing, cymbal sound, gong sound, and the sound of ‘Enjoy! Drink! Eat!’ [‘Eat, drink and be merry!’]. These are the 10 sounds.818

The Mallas of Kusinārā

5.19819 Go, Ánanda, into Kusinārā and announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā, thus:

‘Vāseṭṭhas,820 the parinirvana of the Tathāgata will occur during the last watch tonight. Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Come out, Vāseṭṭhas!821 Regret not later,822 saying,

“The parinirvana of the Tathāgata occurred within the confines of our own village, but we did not have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time!”’

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ánanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and having dressed himself, carrying his robe and bowl, entered Kusinārā with a companion.

5.20 Now at that time, the Mallas of Kusinārā were gathered in their assembly hall attending to some business. Then the venerable Ánanda went to the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā, and announced to them thus:

“Vāseṭṭhas, the parinirvana of the Tathāgata will occur during the last watch tonight. Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Regret not later, saying,

‘The parinirvana of the Tathāgata occurred within the confines of our own village, [148] but we did not have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time!’”

815 Ājakamandā was the royal city of Kuvera, the king of Uttara,kuru, the northern continent (D 3:201). It is possible that this was an allusion to Alexandria, of which there were at least 11 ancient cities founded by Alexander the Great in the course of his campaigns (334-323 BCE). Alexandria on the Indus, founded in 325 near the confluence of the Indus river with the Hydaspes, Acesines and Hyphasis rivers, perhaps identifiable with Uch, in Bahāwalpur (Pakistan). Alexandria in Gedrosia, founded in 325: the modern Bela, in Pakistan. Both of these cities were to the “north” of the Gangetic plain. If this allusion were made, then the sutta was added just before or during Asoka’s reign (c 265-238 BCE or c 273-232). Cf Cakkavatti Sīha,nāda S (D 26) prediction of India and Ketu,mati in the distant future (D 26.23:3/76).

816 “Mirutangkam,” muddinga, vl mutinga (Skt myrdanga, lit “body of clay”), a double-headed Indian barrel drum, the modern mridanga. As at Sāmaṇa,phala S (D 1.2:90/2:79), where bheri...mutinga are mentioned. A myrdanga is a barrel-shaped drum played horizontally with the hands beating both ends. Comy says that the drum, made from the claw of a giant crab, made a sound that could be heard for 12 leagues (135 km) around to summon the people to assemble on festival days (SA 2:228). The mridangas have stretched skin of black paste that gives a different playing surface. In north India, it is called pakhwaj. The mridangam is today used in most Carnatic (south of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh) concerts as accompaniment to both vocal and instrumental performances. Also called sangītā maddalam, it is believed to be the oldest of all percussion instruments. A bheri is a small conical drum. See Āṇi S (S 20.7/2:266 f), SD 7.7 for n & picture.

817 “Veena,” vīnā, Hindi “bīn,” a family of Indian stringed instruments, basically stick zither, having a narrow neck, neckless, non-resonating body with strings running the entire length. Veenas [Vinās], usually 7-stringed and fretted, appear in many sizes and shapes. The classical vina of northern Indian (Hindustani) music, a difficult solo instrument, has a large resonating gourd under each end of body and high, movable frets. Veena may also refer generically to stringed instruments. Before about 1000, it may have referred to an arched harp. (Ency Brit 15th ed)

818 In the Tibetan Dulva account, the Upavāna episode in inserted here (Rockhill 1884:136 f) where Upavāna’s former life is recounted (f 608-609).

819 The following sections §§5.19-26—the impending parinirvana announced to the Mallas & Subhadda’s visit—are unique to this Sutta.

820 Vāseṭṭha (Skt Vāsiṣṭha). This was the gotra (gotta) or clan name of the Mallas of Kusinārā and of Pāvā. The clan was held in high esteem (V 4:8). The clan probably traced its descent to the sage Vāsiṣṭha (V 1:245; D 1:104; M 2:164; 200).

821 “Come out…come out!” abhikkhamatha...abhikkhamatha (PTS abhikkhamatha is wr), or “approach…approach!”; also tr as “advance… advance!” This is stock phrase for summoning someone: abhikkama (imper 2nd sg): V 2:156; D 1:50, 3:17; M 3:333; S 1:211; Nn 1:172; abhikkhamata (imper 2nd pl) (V 1:351; D 2:147, 3:16; M 1:205.

822 Mā pacchā vipātasārino āhuvattha), also occurs at §§5.20 & §§5.23 x3 (the Buddha’s last words) = Kusinārā S (A 4.76/2:79 f); Devatā S (A 9.19/4:392). For comy, see MA 1:195 f, SA 3:111 f, 266 f. http://dhamfarer.org
Lamentations of the Mallas

5.21 Then when they had heard the venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas were grieved and saddened, afflicted at heart, and some of them lamented, with hair dishevelled; they lamented, with arms outstretched; they fell to the ground as if their feet had been cut off," reading chinnam pādaṁ viya papatanti throughout following Se. PTS has chinna-papātam papatanti throughout (D 16,5/6:2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf chinna,pādā (J 6:301, 303).

Then this occurred to the wanderer Subhadda,

“Very rarely, do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’

And the parinirvana of Gotama will occur tonight.

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now, since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.”

Subhadda the last convert

5.23 Now at that time, a wanderer named Subhadda was dwelling at Kusinārā. The wanderer Subhadda heard, “It is said that the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight.”  

Then this occurred to the wanderer Subhadda,

“If I were to allow the Mallas of Kusinārā to salute the Blessed One one by one, the night will have passed before they have all paid homage. What if I were to let them pay homage family by family, saying, ‘Bhante, the Malla named so-and-so with his children, with his wife, with his servants, pay homage with their heads at the Blessed One’s feet.’”

Subhadda was from a high-caste wealthy brähmin family (udicca.brāhmaṇa.mahā.sāla) a holy person. Elsewhere, the stock passage reads: “Then (so and so) went up to the Blessed One. Some exchanged greetings with him; some greeted him with their palms together; some announced their name and clan before the Blessed One—and then sat down at one side. Some kept silent and sat down at one side” (D 1:151, 2:356, 3:208; M 1:229, 401; 3:291; S 5:353; A 1:181). It is customary that those well-disposed to the Buddha would announce their names when visiting him. This passage here and others in the Pali Canon (151, 2:356, 3:208; M 1:229, 401; 3:291; S 5:353; A 1:181). It is customary that those well-disposed to the Buddha would announce their names when visiting him. This passage here and others in the Pali Canon indicate that it was quickly adopted by the Indian Buddhists. It continued in the Buddhist custom of having the donor’s name inscribed in bas-reliefs near or on a stupa, even in locations where the name would not be directly visible to human eyes.

Subhadda was from a high-caste wealthy brähmin family (udicca.brāhmaṇa.mahā.sāla) (DA 2:588; cf DhA 3:376 f).

It is interesting that in the past, Subhadda and Ānātha Koṇḍañño—the first saint (a streamwinner) after the Buddha (S 56.-11,16/1:423), and then arhat (S 22.59.24/3:68)—were brothers (DA 2:588). According to the Tibetan Dulva, Subhadra (Rab-brang) is 120 years old, greatly respected by the people of Kusinārā. After attaining arhathood, Subhadra performs miracles and converts the Mallas, and then passes away before the Buddha (Rockhill 1884: 138). The Sanskrit Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūtra adds an interesting detail: the Buddha, before relinquishing his life-formation, lives on long enough so that the two persons, namely, Supriya, the king of the Gandharvas, and Subhaddra the wanderer, who could benefit from being taught by the Buddha himself, would gain spiritual maturity within three months. See Intro (9.5).

Very rarely,” kadāci karahaci, lit “perhaps sometimes.”

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5.24 Then the wanderer went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas, approached the venerable Ānanda, and said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Now I have heard this being said amongst teacher after teacher, mature and aged, ‘Very rarely do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’ And the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight.

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.

Master Ānanda, may I have a darshan [seeing] of the recluse Gotama.”

5.24.2 When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Enough.”

avuso Subhadda, trouble not the Tathāgata. The Blessed One is tired.”

For the second time, the wanderer requested.

For the third time, the wanderer said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Now I have heard this being said amongst teacher after teacher, mature and aged, ‘Very rarely do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’ And the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight. [150]

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.

Master Ānanda, may I have a darshan with the recluse Gotama.”

For the third time, too, the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Enough, avuso Subhadda, trouble not the Tathāgata. The Blessed One is tired.”

The Buddha welcomes Subhadda

5.25 Now the Blessed One heard the venerable Ānanda’s conversation with the wanderer Subhadda. Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Enough, Ānanda, do not hinder Subhadda. Ānanda, let Subhadda have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata. Whatever Subhadda will ask me, all that is for the sake of knowledge: he wishes to ask not for the sake of vexing the Tathāgata. And whatever he will ask, I will answer so that he will quickly understand.”

Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Go, avuso Subhadda, the Blessed One gives you the opportunity.”

5.26 Then the wanderer Subhadda approached the Blessed One, and having exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, there are recluses and brahmins, heads of an order, heads of a group [congregation], congregation teachers, well known and famous, ford-makers [who bring others across the river of suffering], regarded as good by the masses, that is to say, Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesambalī, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Saññiyāja Beḷāṭhī,putta and Niganṭha Nāṭha,putta. [151] Have they all, according to their own declaration, gained superknowledge or have they not, or have some gained superknowledge and some not?”

The presence of saints

5.26.2 “Enough, Subhadda, let this matter rest, that is to say, whether they all have, according to their own declaration, gained superknowledge or not, or whether some have gained superknowledge and some not!

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I will teach you the Dharma, Subhadda. Listen to it, Subhadda, pay close attention. I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante,” the wanderer Subhadda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

5.27 835 Subhadda, in whatever Dharma [teaching] and Vinaya [discipline], where the **noble eightfold path** is not found,

the reclusion of the first kind [streamwinner] is not found there,
the reclusion of the second kind [once-returner] is not found there,
the reclusion of the third kind [non-returner] is not found there,
the reclusion of the fourth kind [arhat] is not found there.

5.27.2 835 But, Subhadda, in whatever Dharma and Vinaya, where the **noble eightfold path** is found,

the reclusion of the first kind [streamwinner] is found there,
the reclusion of the second kind [once-returner] is found there,
the reclusion of the third kind [non-returner] is found there,
the reclusion of the fourth kind [arhat] is found there.

5.27.3 Empty of recluses are the other outside doctrines, 835 but, Subhadda, **if these monks were to live rightly here [in this teaching], this world will not be empty of arhats.**

Subhadda joins the order

5.28 838 When this was said, the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Blessed One:

“Excellent, bhante! Excellent! Bhante! Just as if, bhante, one were to place upright what had been overturned, or to reveal what was hidden, or to show the way to one who was lost, or to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed One.

I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks.

May I, bhante, receive the going-forth before the Blessed One; may I receive admission into the order.”

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835 This §5.27 is qu at Kv 601. See also Gethin 2001:260 f.

836 The next two paras at M 1:63 f & A 2:138.

837 Subhā para-p, pavādā samanehi aṁṇe. Comy says that “other sects” are the proponents of the 62 views, who lack the 12 kinds of ascetics, viz, the 4 who have attained the fruits (phal’atṭhaka,samaṇa), the 4 who have attained the path (mag-g’atṭhaka,samaṇa), and the 4 working on insight (āraddha,vipassaka samaṇa) to attain the respective paths (AA 3:214).

838 This sentence forms part of a longer lion-roar (siha,nāda) at Cūla Siha,nāda S (M 11.2.2), SD 49.2 & (Catukka) Samaṇa S (A 4.239/2.238,9), SD 49.14

839 This declaration should not be interpreted as a triumphalist and exclusivist statement, but merely reflecting the religious conditions of the Buddha’s time. It should be balanced with the Buddha’s declaration in Puppha S (S 3:138): “I do not quarrel with the world, monks, but the world quarrels with me. One who speaks Dharma does not quarrel with anyone in the world. Of that to which the wise men of the world do not assent, I too say that it is not so. Of that to which the wise men of the world assent, I too say that it is so” (S 22.94/3:138). “Here the Buddha emphasizes that he does not reject all ontological propositions, but only those that transcend the bounds of possible experience” (S:B 1085 n185). See also Gethin 2001:261.

840 On these dates, see SD 47.12 (1.2) n on Rāhula.

841 “The right way that is the wholesome truth” (nāya kusala dhamma): see n in (Brahma,vihāra) Subha S (M 99,2/-2:197), SD 38.6.

§5.28 (on the probate who is from another religion) is found at V 1:69, 71, D 1:176, M 1:391, 494, S 2:21.

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the four months, the monks who are satisfied will give him the going-forth [novice initiation] and ordain him into monkhood [higher ordination].

However, I see a difference amongst individuals here.”

5.29 “If, bhante, anyone who was previously a follower of an outside teaching and wishes to go forth in this Dharma and Vinaya, and wishes for the ordination, has to go on a probation of four months, …I will take that probation for four years! At the end of the four years, let the monks who are satisfied give me the going-forth [novice initiation] and ordain me into monkhood [higher ordination].”

Then, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Then, Ānanda, let Subhadda go forth!”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

5.30 Then the wanderer Subhadda said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“It is a gain for you, Ānanda, a great gain, that you have been anointed here before the Teacher [by his own mouth] with the pupil’s anointing [the discipleship consecration].” [153]

5.31 THE FULL ARHATHOOD PERICOPE

Then the wanderer Subhadda received the going forth and the ordination before Blessed One himself. And not long after his ordination, dwelling alone, aloof (from the world), diligent, exertive, and resolute, in no long time at all, right here and now, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge, attained and dwelled in the supreme goal of the holy life.

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842 This section [§§5.28b-29], as at Kassapa Sihanāda S (D 8.24/1:176), Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16.5.28b-29), SD 9, Acela Kassapa S (S 12.17/2:18-22), SD 18.5, & Sabhiya S (Sn 3.6/p102).

843 This rule and procedure are found at Mv 1.38 = V 1:69; see also D 1:176; M 1:494, 512; S 2:21; Sn p101 f.

844 “Satisfied,” āradhā,citta, ie satisfied that the probate has fulfilled all conditions as stipulated at Mahāvagga 1.38 = V 1:69 (V 5:990; DA 2:363; MA 3:106; SA 2:37; SnA 2:436).

845 Api ca m’ettha puggala,vemattati vihidtā ti. Sankhīṭa S 2 (S 48.13) explains that “the difference in individuals” (puggala,vematattā) is due to one’s level in cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties (indriya)—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom—“Thus, monks, due to a difference in the faculties, there is a difference in the fruits; due to a difference in the faculties, there is a difference among individuals” (S 48.13/5:200). In other words, the Buddha takes exception of him, as he did in the case of the fire-worshipping matter hair ascetics (the 3 Kassapa brothers) (V 1:34 f; J 1:82, 4:180) and Acela Kassapa (D 8.24/2:176 f; see SnA 2:436). The wanderer Sabhiya, however, had to observe the 4-month probation (Sn 3.6/p102). The Buddha knows whether a non-Buddhist convert needs probation or not (DA 2:362), and Subhadda does not, apparently because his 5 spiritual faculties are well developed. Comy says that after the Buddha has granted Subhadda permission to join the order, Ānanda takes him aside, pours water over his head, teaches him the “meditation with skin as fifth” (taca,pañcaka kammathāna), then shaves off his hair and beard, clads him in the saffron robes, and then administers to him the three refuges. Then he leads him back to the Buddha who gives him a meditation subject. Subhadda immediately goes into solitary practice, walking in meditation and wins arhathood that same night, and comes down to sit beside the Buddha (DA 2:590). Subhadda’s ordination is said to be the Buddha’s last act before his parinirvana (KhA 89). For the case of Seniya, the dog ascetic, see Kukkura,vatika S (M 57.14-15.6/p391), SD 23.11.

846 Subhadda’s reply here is the same as that of Acela Kassapa, as in the Buddha’s following reply (D 8.24/2:176 f).

847 However, Subhadda’s case is unique in that he wins arhathood on the same night.

848 This statement of the Buddha’s clearly shows that Subhadda is not personally ordained by the Buddha himself. Moreover, the Buddha is not physically capable of doing so since he has lain down without the thought of rising again ([§5.1].

849 Lābha vo āvuso ānanda, suḷaddhaṁ vo āvuso ānanda, ye [Ce yo] ettha sattu [Ce sattari] samakkhā anevābhisekena abhiṣitā ti. Comy says that after the Buddha has granted Subhadda permission to join the order, Ānanda takes him aside, pours water over his head, teaches him the “meditation with skin as fifth” (taca, pañcakakammattāna), then shaves off his hair and beard, clads him in the saffron robes, and then administers to him the three refuges. Then he leads him back to the Buddha who gives him a meditation subject. Subhadda immediately goes into solitary practice, walking in meditation and wins arhathood that same night, and comes down to sit beside the Buddha (DA 2:590). Subhadda’s ordination is said to be the Buddha’s last act before his parinirvana (KhA 89). For the case of Seniya, the dog ascetic, see Kukkura, vatika S (M 57.14-15.6/p391), SD 23.11.

850 Subhadda’s case is unique in that he wins arhathood on the same night.

851 This statement of the Buddha’s clearly shows that Subhadda is not personally ordained by the Buddha himself. Moreover, the Buddha is not physically capable of doing so since he has lain down without the thought of rising again ([§5.1].

852 For further details & refs on this pericope, see Pottapāda S (D 9.56.3) nn, SD 7.14.

853 Alattha kho subhaddo parihājako bhāgavā sāntike pabbajitā, alatthaṁ upasampadaṁ.

854 Aciṟāpasaṁpannaṁ kho pan āyasmā subhaddo eko vāpakatho appamutto āṭāpī pahitʿ attaṁ viharanto, na cirasṣʿ eva yassʿ asthāyā kula, putṭaṁ sammad-eva agārasūṁ anagāriyaṁ pabbajanti, tad anuttaraṁ brahma,cariya, pariyoṣānaṁ, dīṭṭhe-va dhamme sayāṁ abhiṁāṁ sacchikattvā upasampajjā vihāsi. This first part, along with the rest of this section form the “full arhathood pericope.” See foll n.

855 Eko vāpakatho appamutto āṭāpī pahitʿ attaṁ viharanto. This stock: V 2:258; M 1:177; A 2:258, 3:218; U 24. The first word, “alone” (eka) refers to bodily aloveness and physical solitude; “aloof” (vāpakathi) is mental solitude; both body and mind are aloof from the objects of sense-pleasures; often this word alone refers to a practitioner’s effort to rid the mind of sense-desire (M 36/1:246f = 85/2/93); “diligent” (appamutto), keeping to his meditative mindfulness; “exertive” (āṭāpī) is putting forth both physical and effort; “resolute” (pahitʿ atta), “mentally resolute” by absence of longing regarding the body or life itself (DA 2:363; MA 1:180). Also as ekā vāpakatho appamutto āṭāpino pahitʿ attaḥ vihareyya (V 2:258; A 3:218 (Ke Se ekeka…), 4:280). Sometimes the initial eka is omitted in the pericope.

856 Na cirasṣʿ eva…dīṭṭhe-va dhamme sayāṁ abhiṁāṁ sacchikattvā upasampajjā.

857 Tad anuttaraṁ brahma,cariya, pariyoṣānaṁ…vihāsi.
for the sake of which sons of family\(^{853}\) rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness.\(^{854}\) He directly knew:

“Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, done what is to be done, there is no more for this state of being.”

And the venerable Subhadda became one of the arhats.

5.32 He was the last direct disciple of the Blessed One.\(^{856}\)

Chapter 6
(Sixth Recital, chaṭṭhī bhāṇavāra)

THE BUDDHA’S FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Dharma-Vinaya as teacher

[154] 6.1 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, it may be that you may think:

‘Gone is the Teacher’s word! We have no teacher.’

It should not be seen thus, Ānanda, for the Dharma and the Vinaya [the teaching and the discipline] that I have taught and explained to you, will, at my passing, be your teacher.\(^{857}\)

6.2 Ānanda, now the monks address one another as ‘Āvuso’ [friend].\(^{858}\) but after my passing, they should not address one another so. Ānanda, the more junior monks should be addressed by the more senior monks by

\(^{853}\) Kula,puttā are of 2 kinds: those who are born so (jāti kula,putta), and those who are so by conduct (ācāra kula,putta). Either the second (which is all inclusive) is meant (DA 2:363), or both is meant (MA 1:180).

\(^{854}\) Yass’ atthāya kula,puttā sammad-eva agārasmā anagāriyaṁ pabhajanti,

\(^{855}\) This whole sentence: Khīṇa jāti vusitaṁ brahmacariyaṁ katanā karaṇīyaṁ nāparāṁ itthattayāti abhaṇṇāsi. This can be called “the abhaṇṇāsi pericope,” or the essential arhathood stock passage, which in fact, refers to the arhat’s review knowledge (paccavekkhāna,ṇāṇa). Abhaṇṇāsi is the aorist (past tense) of abhiyānāti, “he directly knows,” and the noun of which is abhiyānā, “direct knowledge.” On the abhiyānāsi pericope and the paṭicaya pericope (shorter arhathood stock passage), see SD 47.1 (3.2.2.3).

\(^{856}\) This line added by the Council fathers (saṅgītī,kārā) (DA 2:590). “Direct disciple,” sakkhī,śāvaka, lit “the disciple who witnesses (the Buddha).” Subhadda’s ordination is most interesting as there is no mention of the “act with the motion as the fourth” (natti,catuttha kamma,vācā, Mahāvagga 1.38 = V 1:69). Without such a ceremony—ie the Buddha ordaining Subhadda himself—leads Rhys Davids to surmise that “it is otherwise probable that no such ceremony was usual in the earliest days of Buddhism” (D:RD 2:170). This may mean that the Vinaya ceremonies as we have them are possibly post-Buddha institutions.

\(^{857}\) Gārava S (S 6.2 @ SD 12.2) relates how the newly-awakened Buddha declares that the Dharma is his teacher, worthy of his reverence. The above may be said to give the essence of the MPS. The term saṭṭhā (teacher) is here redefined: while the Buddha lives, he is teacher; after his passing, the role is found in the Dharma and Vinaya. With the Buddha’s passing, Buddhism ceases to be a cult (where the teacher or leader is the final authority) and becomes a spiritual system or teaching-centred religion. In this sense, it may be said that the MPS is the Buddha’s last will and testament to his spiritual heirs. On the other hand, while the religious and faith-inclined here accept that the Buddha’s authority and presence have been spiritually transferred to the Dharma and Vinaya, they may also perceive that he is “physically” transferred into his relics, the stupa and the Buddha image. See Ray 1994: 348-352, 364. On Gopaka Mogghallāna S (M 108), see foll §6.2 n.

\(^{858}\) Āvuso, meaning “Friend!” “Sir!” a polite vocative for monks equal in “rains” with the speaker, or to juniors; prob derived from *āvuso < *āyuṣmān (cf Whitney, A Sanskrit Grammar, London, 3rd ed 1896 §454); cf BHS āvusa. āyuṣman. Uses: (1) by and to non-Buddhists (V 1:8; Upaka; D 2:130, Ājīra Kālāma; M 1:372, nigrantha; Tha 1196; J 2:448, 3:230); (2) by monks and nuns (a) to laity (V 1:84; M 1:299, to Visākhā; J 3:191, 4:244; (b) to each other (but not to the Buddha), later only by a senior monk to a junior (āvuso,vādā) (V 1:9; D 2:154; UA 311): see RO Franke, “The Buddhist Councils at Rājagaha and Vesālī,” Journal of the Pali Text Society, 1908:18-44, See CPD & DP sv.

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name, or by clan [gotra] or as ‘Āvuso.’ The more senior monks should be addressed by the more junior monks as ‘Bhante’ [Bhante] or as ‘Ayasmā’ [Venerable].

The lesser and minor rules

6.3 Ānanda, after my passing, the order may, if it wishes, abrogate the lesser and minor rules.

The supreme penalty imposed on Channa

6.4 Ānanda, after my passing, the supreme penalty should be imposed on Channa.

And what, bhikkhus, is the supreme penalty (brahma,danda)?

Bhikkhus, let the monk Channa say whatever he wishes to say: that monk should not be spoken to nor admonished nor instructed.”

THE FINAL MOMENTS

The Buddha’s last words

6.5 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Now, bhikkhus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikkhus. Regret not later, saying: ‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

When this was spoken, the monks remained silent. And for the second time, the Blessed One addressed the monks.

“Now, bhikkhus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikkhus. Regret not later, saying:

‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

859 The reason here is clearly to prevent fractrernizing and disrespect, and to inculcate due respect to seniority, so that proper authority is acknowledged and harmony maintained, hence promoting solidarity in the order. In this way, the Dharma protects the order. In Gopaka Moggallāna S (M 108), the Magadha chief minister, Vassakāra, questions Ānanda on the authority and succession of power in the order, and Ānanda answers that no one person holds such an authority or power, but that the order has “the Dharma as our refuge” (D 108.9/3:9), that they are guided by the Pātimokkha (D 108.10/3:10), and that an individual monk is respected not for his position but for his spiritual qualities (D 108.11-23/3:10-12), SD 33.5.

6.6 The lesser and minor rules (khuddakānukuddakā sikkhāpada). See Intro (12) above.

A monk named Channa (Skt Chandaka) is depicted at several places in the Vinaya as despising all other monks on the grounds that “the Buddha is mine; the Dharma is mine! It was by my young master that that an individual monk is respected not for his position but for his spiritual qualities (D 108.11-23/3:10-12), SD 33.5.

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As defined by the Buddha, the supreme penalty (brahma,danda) is effectively a total boycott by the order. The closing of Culla,vagga 11 of the Vinaya records how when Ānanda conveys the supreme penalty to Channa at Ghosī’tarāma (in Kosambi), he faints at the thought of being boycotted by the order. He then goes into retreat to develop himself (V 2:292).

Channa S (S 22.90) records in a humorous tone, how he attempts to seek Dharma instruction from other monks, and how Ānanda admonishes him (S 3:133 ff.). Apparently, no monk actually boycotts him, since they try to answer his questions, albeit careful to not offend him. As Ānanda then explains in that passage, the supreme penalty is automatically lifted at the moment of Channa’s final attainment.

Channa S (S 22.90) has a different version of how Channa corrects himself—Ānanda gives the teachings of the Kaccēna,gotta S (S 12.15/2:17) on how dependent arising counters the two extreme views of eternalism and annihilationism, and how self-view is replaced by the realization that it is only dukkha that arises and ceases—and he breaks through to the Dharma (S 3:132-134). Cf D 1:96 where brahma,danda is used differently.

The brahma,danda is a total boycott of a monk who is scurrilous (mukhara) and uncivil to other monks (VA 7:1402 on the Parivāra). Cony says that, after being boycotted by the Sangha, Channa experiences samvega (spiritual urgency) so that he finally directs all his efforts towards spiritual training and attains breakthrough (SA 2:317 f.), as reported in (Dvi,-lakkhāna) Channa S (S 22.90/3:132-135), SD 56.5.

6.5 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Now, bhikkhus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikkhus. Regret not later, saying: ‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

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But for the second time, the monks remained silent.
And for the third time, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“How, bhikshus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikshus. Regret not later, saying:

‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

But for the third time, the monks remained silent.

6.5.2 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

‘If, bhikshus, you do not ask out of respect for the Teacher, then, bhikshus, let a friend tell it another friend.’

When this was spoken, the monks remained silent.

6.6 Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! I have faith [confidence], bhante, in this order of monks, that there is neither doubt nor misgiving in a single monk as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way.”

“Ānanda, you speak out of faith (pasādā). But Ānanda the Tathāgata knows here that there is in this order of monks, neither doubt nor misgiving in a single monk as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way.

For, Ānanda, amongst these 500 monks, even the most backward [the least developed] monk is a stream-winner, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening.”

6.7 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: [156]

“If, bhikshus, I exhort you: Conditioned things are subject to decay—strive on diligently [with diligence]!”

These were the Tathāgata’s last words.

The Buddha’s 9 progressive abodes[870]

6.8 Then the Blessed One attained the first dhyana.

[865] According to the Vinaya—see §6.20n on the old Subhadda below—the Buddha was journeying with 1250 monks (V 1:249 f) when he was visited by the old Subhadda at Atumā [§4.30]. There appears a discrepancy in the number of monks here. However, it is possible that the 1250 refers to a total number of monks accompanying the Buddha, but the 500 refers only to the saints sitting close to the Buddha. It is unlikely that the entourage had started with 1250 but dwindled to 500 at this crucial point.

[866] Avinīpāta, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of vinīpāta, “the world of suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (duggāti) or the 4 lower worlds (apāya) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (pañca,gati) (D 3:234=33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (nīrāya), the animal kingdom (tiṇaḥkī, the ghost realm (pīti,visāya), the human world (manussa) and the heavenly world (deva). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (asura,kīya) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (sugāti). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 1999:14-19.

[867] On attaining streamwinning, one’s doubts regarding the Dharma are uprooted (Sn 231). Since those present are at least of this level, none of them asks any question. Skt Mahā,parinirvāṇa Sūtra §42.8 tells us that the Buddha acts out of compassion for future generations (for us today): api tu karanīyam etat tathāgatena yathāpī tat pāścīmam janatāṁ anukāmanāṇaṁ (Waldschmidt 1951:392). This act testifies to the fact that at the disciples at the time of the Buddha’s death are free from doubts regarding the teachings. As the Buddha has passed away at remote Pāvā, no nuns are present because they did not follow the monks in their wanderings. Nuns are not permitted to travel with monks (V 4:62,28). See Analayo 2014:5. See Silence and the Buddha, SD 44.1 (5.1.2.2).

[868] The foll §§ [6.7-10] are at Parinibbāṇa S (S 1:157-159) but differs as to order of sentences.

[869] Vaya,dhammā sankhārā, appamādāna sampādethā tī. In Parinibbāṇa S (S 6.2), this is reversed: appamādāna sampādetha, vaya,dhammā sankhārā tī (S 6.2:1:158). However, Bodhi appears not to have noticed this, rendering it asvin Mahā-parinibbāṇa S (S:B 251). The Sarvāstivāda ed omits appamādāna sampādetha. The Chin versions vary, T1 eg gives a more elaborate exhortation here.

[870] On why the Buddha passes away upopn emerging from the 4th dhyana, see (9.10). The 9 progressive abodes (nava anupubba,vihāra) are the 4 for dhyānas, the 4 formless attainments, and cessation: see SD 8.4 (1.2) & SD 48.2 (3.6.3).

[871] As at Parinibbāṇa S (S 6.15/1.157 f) but it omits Ānanda’s remark that the Buddha (while in cessation) had passed away, and Anuddha’s reply. It also omits mention of the earth-tremor and thunder. In Parinibbāṇa S, Ānanda’s stanza precedes Anuruddha’s (which is last, showing its importance) but in Mahā Parinibbāṇa S Anuruddha’s stanza comes first, and Ānanda’s stanza is last.

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Emerging from the first dhyana, he attained the second dhyana.
Emerging from the second dhyana, he attained the third dhyana.
Emerging from the third dhyana, he attained the fourth dhyana.
Emerging from the fourth dhyana, he attained the base of infinite space.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of infinite space, he attained the base of infinite consciousness.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of infinite consciousness, he attained the base of nothingness.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained the cessation of perception and feeling.

6.8.2 Then the venerable Ānanda addressed the venerable Anuruddha thus: 873

“Bhante Anuruddha, the Blessed One has attained parinirvana!”

“Avuso Ānanda, the Blessed One has not attained parinirvana: he has attained the cessation of perception and feeling.”

6.9 Then the Blessed One, emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling, attained the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained the base of nothingness.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of nothingness, he attained the base of infinite consciousness.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of infinite consciousness, he attained the base of infinite space.
Emerging from the attainment of the base of infinite space, he attained the fourth dhyana.
Emerging from the fourth dhyana, he attained the third dhyana.
Emerging from the third dhyana, he attained the second dhyana.
Emerging from the second dhyana, he attained the first dhyana.
Emerging from the first dhyana, he attained the second dhyana.
Emerging from the third dhyana, he attained the second dhyana.
Emerging from the third dhyana, he attained the second dhyana.
Emerging from the fourth dhyana, the Blessed One immediately attained parinirvana. 876

The parinirvana process that follows here is evidently noted by Anuruddha, the foremost of the monks, through his “divine eye” (dībba, cakkhu), ie clairvoyance (A 1:23). See foll §[6.9]. Interestingly, Apadāna describes Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī’s parinirvana in similar terms (except for the cessation of perception and feeling):

Having sent them all away, she attained the supreme state,
To the first dhyana, and the second and the third and the fourth. (145)
Then she attained the realm of (boundless) space, and of boundless consciousness, too;
To the realm of nothingness, and to neither perception (nor non-perception) in stages. (146)
Then Gotamī attained the dhyanas in reverse; then from the first as far as the fourth dhyana.* (147)
Having risen from there, free from the influxes, she went out like a lamp.

The great earth shook, lightning fell from the sky. (148)
Tato sātā visajīvā, paṭhamāṃ jhānām uttaman; | Dutiyaṃ ca tatiyaṃ ca, saṃpājī ca catutthakam. || 145
Ākāśāyatanāṃ c’eva, viññāṇāyāṃ ayatanām tathā; | Ākāśāyatanāṃ c’eva saññānāṃ ca, saṃpājī vissukkamāvam. || 146
Paṭilomena jhānānī, saṃpājījītha gotamī; | Yāvatā paṭhamāṃ jhānānī, tato vāva catutthakam. || 147
Tato vaṭṭhāya nibbāyi, dipac’c’eva nirāsavāv; | Bhūmi, cālo mahā ādi, nabhāsā vijjutā pari. || 148 (Ap 145-48)

Sañgīti S (D 33.3.2(6)) says that by attaining the 1st dhyana, sensuous perception (kāma, saññā) stops; by attaining the 2nd dhyana, initial application and sustained application stops; by attaining the 3rd dhyana, zest stops; by attaining the 4th dhyana, in-and-out breathing stops (D 33.3.2(6):3:266, 290). On dhyana, see SD 8.4. On nirodha, see SD 1.1 (6). See S:B 441 n441.

872 “The cessation of perception and feeling,” saññā, vediyītā nirodha: see (9.10.5).
873 Ānanda, assuming that the Buddha has passed away, addresses Anuruddha, his senior, as “bhante,” in line with the Buddha’s instructions [§6.2].
874 This §[9] as at Vihāra S 2 (A 9.33/4:410 ff.)
The 4 verses

6.10 (1) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvāṇa, Brahmā Saṁhampati uttered this stanza on that occasion:

All beings in the world shall forsake this bodily formation!
Even the Teacher, peerless in the human world, is such a one.
The One Thus-come, empowered, the self.awakened has passed away.

6.10.2 And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvāṇa, it was accompanied by a great earth-tremor, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth] [157]

(2) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvāṇa, Sakra, the kings of the devas, uttered this stanza at that very moment.

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875 Samanantarā. Saṁyutta Comy: Here there are 2 kinds of samanantarā: immediately after dhyāna and immediately after reviewing. In the former case, one emerges from the 4th dhyāna, descends into the life-continuum (bhavanga) and attains parinirvāṇa. In the latter case, one emerges from the 4th dhyāna, reviews the dhyāna-factors again, then descends into the life-continuum and attains parinirvāṇa, in the case of the Buddha. But buddhas, pratyeke buddhas, noble disciples, and even ants and termites pass away by way of the noble truth that is suffering, with a karmically indeterminate bhavanga consciousness (SA 1.224).

876 These stages that the Buddha passes through in his very last moments—the 4 dhyanas (jhāṇas), the 4 formless attainments (saṁāpattis), and the cessation of perception and feeling (saṁnādayedavitanirodha)—are known as “the 9 successive abodes” (anupubbavihāra) (D 3:265, 290; cf 2:156, 4; A 4:410, 414; S 2:216, 222; U 78; PM 1.5, 2.30; Miśn 176. Cf Waldschmidt 1951:394; DA 2 = T1.) The Elottar’āgama says that Mahā Prajāpatī Gautamī (who had just after the Great Awakening invited the Buddha to proclaim the Dharma) (V 1:5) called the 4th dhyāna, passes away, accompanied by a great earth-tremor (EĀ 52.1 = T2.) These stages are also called “the 9 successive cessations” (anupubbavirodha) (D 33.3.2(6)/3:266, 290; A 9.31/4:409, 456; PM 1.35). (Anupubba) Vihāra S 2 calls them “the successive attainments” (anupubba,samāpatti) (A 9.33/4:401-414). On why the Buddha passes away upon emerging from the 4th dhyāna, see (9.10). On “the progressive cessation of formations” (anupubba,sankhāranam nirodho), see Rahogata S (S 36.11/4:217).

877 The German Tibetophile, self-styled LamaGovinda, for some strange reason, thinks that this event “confirms our assumption that the death-consciousness coincides with the fifth jhāna from where two ways are open to the meditator: that of remembrance of former lives or that which leads to the four arūpaloka-jhānās” (The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy. 1961:131). Are we to understand that at the moment of dying all beings, or at least human beings, would attain the four (Abhidharma “fifth”) dhyānas? On Govinda, see Lopez, Jr, Prisoners of Shangri-La. 1998:7, 59-63.

878 Parinibbāṇa S of the Brahma Saṁyutta (S 1:158) contains the first verse since it is attributed to Brahmā. The second is Sakra’s. The last two verses are then put into the mouths of Ānanda and of Anuruddha respectively, perhaps because Anuruddha’s verse forms a more fitting conclusion (S 1:158). In the Dīgha, however, Ānanda’s verse comes last, “either in depreciation of Ānanda (which is scarcely probable), or more probably the way in which the early Buddhists regarded the passing of the Buddha. These four speakers are ‘four representative persons’: Brahmā, the exalted god of the brahmins; Sakra (Śakra), the king of the gods, popular with the Buddhists; Anuruddha, the holy, thoughtful arhat; and Ānanda, the loving, childlike disciple” (D. RD 2:71, 73). The Chinese Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūtra of the Dirgh āgama Sūtra (Nanjio no 545) records 18 speakers uttering stanzas on this occasion (see Sino-Indian Studies 1.4 1945).

879 Brahmā Sahajāt (who had just after the Great Awakening invited the Buddha to proclaim the Dharma) (V 1:5-7 = M 1:169 = S 1:138 f). See Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004:4.2.

880 “At that very moment,” free tr of saha parinibbānā. See n on the 1st line here.

881 Bala-p, patta, here refers to the Buddha’s 10 powers: see Mahā Śihanāda S (M 12.9-20/1:69-71).

882 This § [6.10] as at Tha 905, 1046, A 1:236; cf Tha 905

883 Traditionally, it is said that the Buddha passed away in the early hours of the full-moon day of the month of Vaiśākha, 543 BC (or, according to modern scholars, c. 483 BCE) at the age of 80. To remember the Buddha and mark this important occasion, south and south-east Asian Buddhists calculate their respective Buddhist calendars from this year (that is, by adding the number 543 to the Common Era). On whether the Buddha actually died on Vesak day, see Intro (9.4).

884 The phrase in the sentence thus far: Parinibbūte Bhagavati saha parinibbānā. As a similar phenomenon (dhamma,niyāma) follows immediately after the Buddha relinquishes the rest of his lifespan

885 Sakra, the king of the gods, utters this popular ancient verse, said to be a remnant from the teaching of the previous Buddha, Kasapa, that only he remembers: D 16,6.10/2:157 = D 17,2.17/2:199 = S v21/1.11/1:6, 609, S v609/6.15/1:158, S http://dharmafarer.org

Dīgha Nikāyā 2, Mahā Vagga 3

159
Impermanent, alas, are formations! It is their nature to rise and fall:
having arisen, they cease to be—happy it is when they are stilled!

(3) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, the venerable Anuruddha uttered this stanza at that very moment:\footnote{886}

There is no more in-breath and out-breath for such a one of steady mind;\footnote{887}
The wise sage [silent sage], unstirred, bent on peace, passed away.
With mind unshaken, he endured the feeling [the pain]:
Like a lamp extinguished, his mind is freed.

(4) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, the venerable Ānanda uttered this stanza at that very moment:\footnote{888}

Then there was terror, then there was hair-raising fear,
When the self-awakened one, perfect in all excellent qualities, attained parinirvana.

The monks lament

6.10.3 When the Blessed One passed into parinirvana, some of those monks who were still not free from lust lamented, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,\footnote{889} rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One \footnote{158} entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

But those monks that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,
‘Impermanent are formations [conditioned things]! How else could it be?’\footnote{890}

6.11 Then the venerable Anuruddha addressed the monks:

“Enough, avuso, do not grieve! Do not weep! Has not the Blessed One told you before: ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible,’\footnote{891}

Avuso, the devas are grumbling [protesting against your lamentation]!”
The devas lament

6.11.2 “But, bhante, what kinds of devatas is the venerable Anuruddha considering?”

“There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in the sky [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the air]; 894 lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, 895 rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!’

6.11.3 There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in earth [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the ground]; 896 lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, 897 rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!’

But those devatas that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,

‘Impermanent are conditioned things! How else could it be?’

892 This whole section repeats in §5.6, in the Buddha’s mouth.
893 The following sections [§§6.11-15]—Anuruddha consoles Ānanda, instructs him to announce the Buddha’s passing to the Mallas, and the laying in state—are unique to this Sutta.
894 See n in §5.6b above.
895 “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading chinna, pādam viya papatanti throughout following Se. PTS has chinna, pādam papatanti throughout (D 16, 5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf chinna, pādā (J 6:301, 303).
896 See n in §5.6b above.
897 “As if their feet have been cut off,” see n at 6.11a.
Anuruddha and Ānanda

6.12 Then the venerable Anuruddha and the venerable Ānanda spent the rest of the night in Dharma discourse. Then the venerable Anuruddha said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Go, avuso Ānanda, into Kusinārā and announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying:

‘Vāsetṭhas, the Blessed One has attained parinirvana. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.’”

“‘Yes, bhante,’ the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the venerable Anuruddha, and having dressed himself, carrying his robe and bowl, entered Kusinārā with a companion. [159]

The Mallas of Kusinārā mourn

6.12.2 Now at that time, the Mallas of Kusinārā were gathered in their assembly hall attending to some business. Then the venerable Ānanda went to the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā, and announced to the Mallas of Kusinārā thus:

“Vāsetṭhas, the Tathāgata has attained parinirvana. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

6.12.3 Then when they had heard the venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas were grieved and saddened, afflicted at heart, and some of them lamented, with hair dishevelled; they lamented, with arms outstretched; they fell to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

6.13 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their workers, saying:

“Come now,” gather together incense and garlands, and all the musicians in Kusinārā!”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā brought the incense and garlands and all the musicians, and 500 yugas of cloth [new unbleached cotton cloth], to the Upavattana sal grove at Kusinārā. Having approached the Blessed One’s remains, they passed the day, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, and making canopies of flowers and arranging circles of wreaths [garlands].

6.13.2 Then this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā:

“It is too late to cremate the Blessed One’s remains today. We will cremate the Blessed One’s remains tomorrow.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā passed the second day, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, and making canopies of flowers and arranging circles of wreaths [garlands]; and they passed the third day in that way, too; and they passed the fourth day in that way, too; and they passed the fifth day in that way, too; and they passed the sixth day in that way, too.

The seventh day

6.14 Then on the seventh day, this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: [160]

“We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the south of the city and we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains outside the city, in the south.”

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898 This whole §6.12 is similar to §§5.19-21 when the Mallas of Kusinārā were informed of the Buddha’s impending parinirvana.

899 “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading chinna, pādam viya papatanti throughout following Se. PTS has chinna, pāpātum papatanti throughout (D 16, 5.6.2:140, 6.10.2:157, 6.11:2:158). Cf chinna, pādā (J 6:301, 303).

900 “Come now,” bhane, PED: (1st sg med of bhāṇati), “I say,” used as an interjection of emphasis, like “to be sure,” “look here.” It is a familiar term of address, often used by a king to his subjects (V 1:240, 241; Miln 21).

901 First mentioned at §5.11b above; again at §6.17 below.

902 See §5.11 above. No “teased cotton” is mentioned here: see §6.17-18 below.

903 Mayāṁ Bhagavato sarīraṁ naccehi gitehi vāditethi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garukarontā māṇentā pājentā, dakkhiṇena dakkhiṇaṁ nagarassa haritvā bāhīrena bāhīraṁ dakkhiṇato nagarassa Bhagavato sarīraṁ jhāpessām ā ti. Cf §6.15 n. The Mallas are probably keeping to some ancient taboo against ritually polluting the city with a dead body. So they have to skirt the city and also take an inauspicious direction for a funeral. The devatas however think otherwise [§6.15]. Cf §6.23a & n. See D:RD 2:182 n1. On the ancient Indian notion of ritual impurity of death, see Gombrich 1988:123 f.
Now at that time, eight Malla chieftains washed their heads and donned unbleached garments [as a mark of mourning], thinking,

“We will bear the Blessed One’s remains,” but they were unable to do so.

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the venerable Anuruddha:

“What is the reason, bhante, what is the cause [condition], bhante, that these eight Malla chieftains, with heads washed and donning unbleached garments, thinking of bearing the Blessed One’s remains have been unable to do so?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, it is because your intention is one thing, the intention of the devatas another.”

6.15 “But what, bhante, is the intention of the devatas?”

“Your intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is thus:

‘We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the south of the city and we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains outside the city, in the south.’

But the devatas’ intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is thus:

‘We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with heavenly dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the north of the city, enter the city through the north gate and bear the Blessed One’s remains around the middle of the city, exit through the city’s east gate, go east of the city to the Malla shrine called Makuta Bandhana, and there we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains.”

“If that is the devatas’ intention, bhante, let it be so!”

6.16 Now at that time, even the rubbish-dumps and sewers of Kusinārā were covered knee-deep in heavenly mandarava [coral-tree] flowers. Then the devatas and the Mallas of Kusinārā, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with heavenly and human dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, bore the Blessed One’s remains to the north of the city, entered the city through the north gate and bore the Blessed One’s remains around the middle of the city, exited through the city’s east gate, went east of the city to the Malla shrine called Makuta Bandhana. And there they put down the Blessed One’s remains.

Preparations for cremation

6.17 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“How shall we treat the Blessed One’s remains?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, treat the Tathāgata’s remains as you will the remains of a wheel-turning king [a just world ruler].”

“But how, bhante, is the bodily remains of a wheel-turning king to be treated?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, the body should be wrapped alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then with a layer of teased cotton. It should be done in this manner to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths], and then the body is placed in an oil-vat of iron. This should be covered with an iron lid. The pyre should comprise totally of fragrant material, and then cremate the body. Then a stupa [burial mound] should be built at the crossroads [where four highways meet]. This is how, Vāseṭṭhas, the remains of a wheel-turning king is to be treated.

Ānanda, just as one treats the remains of a wheel-turning king, even so, one should treat the remains of the Tathāgata. Then a stupa [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the Tathāgata at the crossroads [where four highways meet]. And they who offer a garland, scent, or perfume powder, or bow down there, or brighten their minds with faith there, it will be for their profit and welfare for a long time to come.”

6.18 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their workers:

904 This location, where the Buddha’s remains are cremated, is believed to be marked today by the Rāmahār Stūpa (about 15 m or 50 ft high), located about 1.5 km from Māthā-kuār Shrine.

905 Mayāṃ Bhagavato sarīram dibbheī naceheī gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandheheī sakkarontā garukarontā mānentā pūjentā, uttareṇa uttarāṃ nagarassā harivā, uttareṇa dvāreṇa nagaranna paveseṭvā, majjhena majjhāṃ nagarassā harivā, puratthimena dvāreṇa nikkhamitvā pararūthimato nagarassa Makuta,bandhanāṃ nāma Mallānāṃ cetiyāṃ, ettha Bhagavato sarīram jhāpessāmā ti. Cf §6.14 n.

906 Yathā bhante devatānāṃ adhippāvato tathā hotā ti, lit “Bhante, whatever the devatas’ intentions, let them be.”

907 This whole section parallels §5.11 (D 2:141 f).

908 See §5.11b nn.

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“Come now, gather together teased cotton.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā wrapped the Blessed One’s remains alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then [162] with a layer of teased cotton, and they did this to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths]. Then the body was placed in an oil-vat of iron, which was then covered with an iron lid. The pyre was made up totally of fragrant material.

**MAHĀ KASSAPA**

### Mahā Kassapa’s last respects

**6.19** Now at that time, the venerable Mahā Kassapa was journeying on the highroad from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, numbering some 500. Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa stepped down from the highroad and sat down under a certain tree.

Now at that time, a certain naked ascetic [ājīvaka], holding a mandarava [coral-tree] flower, was journeying along the highroad from Kusinārā to Pāvā. The venerable Mahā Kassapa saw the naked ascetic coming from afar. Seeing the naked ascetic, the venerable Mahā Kassapa said this to the naked ascetic:

“This ascetic, do you know our Teacher?”

“Yes, avuso, I do know. Seven days ago today the recluse Gotama attained parinirvāṇa. For that reason, I found this mandarava flower.”

Then, some of those monks who were still not free from lust lamented, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,911 rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvāṇa! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvāṇa! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

But those monks that were free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,

‘Impermanent are conditioned things! How else could it be?’

### The old Subhadda

**6.20** Now at that time, seated amongst the group was Subhadda,912 who had gone forth in old age. Subhadda then said this to the monks:

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909 There are two canonical versions of the next 2 sections [§§6.19-20]: the Dīgha version (Mahā Parinibbāna S) gives in narrative form (as before), and the Vinaya version (V 2:284-308 = Cullavagga 11), put into the mouth of Mahā Kassapa himself. An interesting point here is that in the Dīgha version, Mahā Kassapa’s speech is put after the outburst of the old Subhadda (different from the newly ordained Subhadda) [§§5.23-29]. The Vinaya, however, puts it before the old Subhadda’s remark—that is, the last two paragraphs in the Dīgha are transposed in the Vinaya (D:RD 2:75). Hermann Oldenberg was the first western scholar to point out (Vinaya Texts, 1881:xxvi-xxviii) the parallel between the two texts. He suggests that the change is due to the position occupied by this episode in the Vinaya. It is there used as an introduction to the account of the Council of Rājagha held, according to the Theravāda, to counteract such sentiments as were expressed by the old Subhadda’s outburst. It was considered more appropriate, therefore, that in that connection, Subhadda’s words should come last, to lead up to what follows. The whole story is then interpolated from our sutta. But the last paragraph is transposed, and the whole is put into Mahā Kassapa’s mouth, on whose advice the Council is said to have been convened.

RO Franke, in his article, “The Buddha councils at Rājagha and Vesālī,” gives various details showing how Cullavagga 11 of the Vinaya is heavily dependent on the MPS (1908:8-18). Unlike Oldenberg and Franke, however, TW Rhys Davids rejects the notion that Cv 11 borrowed from MPS, suggesting that “the Subhadda story may have been in existence before either Dīgha or Vinaya was put into its present shape. If so, it was doubtless current in the form now preserved by the Dīgha; and was changed by the compilers of the Vinaya…it is quite possible that the two books—Dīgha and Vinaya—may have been put together, as we now have them, at the same time” (D:RD 2:76 n1). See An Yang-Gyu, “The date and the origin of the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta,” 2001:64-66 & Piya Tan, The Buddha and His Disciples, 2004:6.27.

910 Ājīvaka. The naked ascetics (V 1:291, 2:130) are followers of Makkhali Gosālī (the teacher of fatalism or determinism), and regarded as the worst of the non-Buddhist religious. See Mahā Saccaka S (M 1:238) and also S 1:66. Upaka was a naked ascetic who converted when he met the newly awakened Buddha (V 1:8; M 1:71; J 1:81; DhA 4: 71 f).

911 “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading chinna pādam viya papatanti throughout following Se. PTS has chinna.papātam papatanti throughout (D, 16.5, 6.2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf chinna.pādā (J 6:301, 303).

912 The old Subhadda (Subhadra). The Mahāvagga of the Vinaya has an interesting story of “a former barber, one gone forth in old age” (vaddhā.pabbajjito nahāpīta.pubbo) who, on learning that the Buddha and 1250 monks are coming to Atumā [§4.30], instructs his two sons, “sweet-voiced, witty, skilled, skillful in their craft in the profession of their own teacher,” to go from house to house to beg for “nālī measures of offerings, and collect salt and oil and husked rice and solid food” (begging for such things are not allowed by the Vinaya) to prepare conjev for the Buddha and the monks. On learning of this, the Buddha laid down two rules entailing wrong-doing (dukkata): (1) “One who who gone forth should not make cause (others) to take what is not allowable.” (2) “One who who formerly a barber should not carry about a barber’s...
“Enough, brothers, do not sorrow! Do not weep! We are free of that great sage! We were harassed thus: ‘This is allowable to you! This is not allowable to you!’ But now we can do what we like, and not do what we do not like!’

Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa addressed the monks:

“Enough, avusos, do not grieve! Do not weep! [163] Has the Blessed One not told you before: ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.’”

CREMATION AND RELICS

The cremation

6.21 [917] Now at that time, the four Malla chieftains, having washed their hair and donned unbleached garments, thought, “We will light the Blessed One’s pyre,” but they were unable to light it.

Then the Malla chieftains said this to the venerable Anuruddha:

“Bhante, what is the reason for this, venerable Anuruddha? What is the cause [condition] for this, that we having washed our hair and donned unbleached garments, thinking, ‘We will light the Blessed One’s pyre,’ but were unable to light it?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, it is because the intention of the devatas is different.”

equipment.” (V 1:249 f). On nālī (a measure), see V:H 1:12 n2. Buddhaghosa (DA 2:599) identifies the “one gone forth in old age” as the old Subhadda (then a novice, sāmānera) mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S as being relieved at the Buddha’s passing (D 16,6.20:2:162), and refers to the V episode at length (DA 2:599). In neither passage, he was mentioned as “venerable” (ayasmā), as at the time of the Buddha’s visit to Atūmā, he was a novice (sāmānera) (DA 2:599). Dullabhā S 1 (A 5.59:3:78) & Dullabhā S 2 (A 5.60:3:78 f) each lists 5 things difficult to find in one gone forth in old age.

[913] “We were harassed,” PTS uppadutta wr for uppadutta (Be Ce), pp of upaddavati, “he oppresses, assails, harasses, tyrannies.”

[914] In Cullavagga (V 11.1:2:284), Mahā Kassapa cites this statement as good reason to hold a council for standardizing the Dhamma & Vinaya “before what is not Dharma shines out and Dharma is obscured, before what is not Vinaya shines out and Vinaya [discipline] is obscured; before those who speak what is not-dhamma become strong and those who speak what is Dharma become weak; before those who speak what is not-discipline become strong and those who speak what is Vinaya become weak.” Thus the First Council was held during the Rains Retreat following the Buddha’s parinirvana.

[915] This nested quote is stock: (D 16) §§3.48 = 5.144 = 6.11a = 6.20.

[916] It is interesting to note that neither Mahā Kassapa nor any other monks responded to the old Subhadda’s rude remark. Buddhaghosa unconvincingly explains that Kassapa was silent fearing that his reproaching Subhadda could reveal to the local people that the Sangha quarrelled in the Buddha’s absence (DA 2:601). The Skt texts and the Chinese trs give various accounts. The Skt version say that when a certain old monk makes a bad remark, the gods do not allow Mahā Kāsya’s pupils to hear it, only Kāsya himself hears it. The Yo-hsing-ching (T1.28c13) says that when Subhadra makes his remark, Kāsya is disappointed. The Pan-ni-hung-ching (T1.189b24) similarly says that Kāsya is disappointed but makes not response. The Fo-pan-ni-huang-ching (T1.174c25) says that when a certain makes the bad remark, all the monks present censure him and report him to the gods, who remove him from the Sangha. Interestingly, Kāsya is silent here. Does this imply that Kāsya does not know of the incident? The Ta-pa-nieh-pan-ching (T1.206c19 ff) similarly say that Kāsya and his followers do not respond at all, and when the “three baskets” have been compiled, he does not make any mention of the incident either. In the Milasavastividin version (T24.401a17), the gods intervene, allowing only Kāsya to hear Subhadra. Kāsya stops his journey to admonish Subhadra on impermanence. Then he says, “Enough, stop talking about this incident. We should go quickly!” Then, Kāsya, realizing that the long-lived gods’ concern that the “three baskets” might be reduced to ashes unless their compilation is made, proposes their compilation (T24.402c9). Here however, it is the god’s foreboding, not Subhadra’s remark that moves Kāsya to hold the recital. In summary, then, we can conclude from the various versions that Kāsya does not ignore Subhadra’s remark, and that he does not fall back on this incident to hold the first council. However, it is curious that no mention of the First Council is made at all in this sutta: see George Bond 1982:18-22.

An Yang-Gyu: “In my view of the incident, as it really took place by chance around the time of the Buddha’s parinibbāna, the author of the Proto-MPS could not help recording it. He might think it worth recording, because this incident enables listeners to lessen their too excessive grief at the loss of the Buddha, by feeling resentment against the corrupt monk, and concern about the preserving of the Buddha’s teaching and the unity of his community in his absence” (2001:71). See An Yang-Gyu, “The date and origin of the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta,” 2001:53, 69-72.

The following sections §§6.21-26, on the Buddha’s cremation and distribution of his relics, are unique to this Sutta.

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6.21b “But what, bhante, is the intention of the devatas?”

“The intention of the devatas, Vāseṭṭhas, is thus:

‘The venerable Mahā Kassapa is journeying on the highroad from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, numbering some 500. So long as the venerable Mahā Kassapa had not bowed his head at the Blessed One’s feet, you will not be able to light the Blessed One’s pyre.”

“If that is the devatas’ intention, bhante, let it be so!”

6.22 Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa approached the Makūṭa Bandhana shrine of the Mallas outside Kusinārā, and went up to the Blessed One’s pyre. Arranging his upper robe to one side [baring the right shoulder], putting his palms together lotus-like, he thrice circumambulated the pyre rightwise. The Blessed One’s feet protruded (from the pyre) and he saluted them.918

The 500 monks, too, arranging their upper robes to one side [baring the right shoulder], putting their palms together lotus-like, thrice circumambulated the pyre rightwise, and then saluted the Blessed One’s feet.

As soon as the venerable Mahā Kassapa and the 500 monks had done their salutation, the Blessed One’s pyre, of its own accord, burst into flames.

6.23 Of the Blessed One’s burnt up body, there was to be seen no skin, nor tissue,919 nor flesh, nor sinew, nor synovial fluid; not even soot—only the relics [burnt bones]920 remained.

Just as when ghee or oil is burned, neither ash nor soot remains, even so, there was to be seen no skin, nor tissue, nor flesh, nor sinew, nor synovial fluid; not even soot—only the relics remained.921

Of the 500 rounds of cloth,922 neither the innermost nor the outermost were burned up.923

And when the Blessed One’s body had burned up, streams of water fell from the sky and put out the Blessed One’s pyre. Water from the ground and salt trees,924 too, shot forth putting out the Blessed One’s pyre. The Mallas of Kusinārā, too, put out the Blessed One’s pyre with all their fragrant water.925

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918 Buddhaghosa says that Mahā Kassapa enters the 4th dhyana and uses it as the basis for a psychic feat so that the Buddha’s feet would appear out of their extensive wrappings (DA 2:603). The Dulva, however, says that Mahā Kaśyapa uncovers the body and worships it. Then he changes the garments that enshrouded the Blessed One with those from his own store. And when the coffin cover is replaced, fire bursts forth from the pile and consumes the body (Dulva 6459 = Rockhill 144). See D:RD 2:186 n1 (qu Spence Hardy): “Just before a Jew is taken out of the house to be buried, the relatives and acquaintances of the departed stand around the coffin; when the feet are uncovered; and each in rotation lays hold of the great toes, and begs pardon for any offence given to the deceased, and requests a favourable mention of them in the next world” (A Manual of Buddhism, 1853:348).

919 “Tissue,” cammāna, lit “hide,” but here refers to the subcutaneous layer next to the bone, “integument” (S 2:238 = A 4:129; PVA 68). Here I have used a free tr, following Vajir & Story (1998).

920 Prior to this, the Buddha’s body is referred to as sarīra (singular) [§5.11]. Here the plural is used (sarīre), meaning “relics,” and so remains for the rest of the text. On the significance of these relics, see Schopen, “Monks and the Relic Cult in the Mahāparībhāṇa-sutta,” 1997:99-113 & Wynne, “How old is the Suttapiṭaka?” 2003:5-8.

921 This important passage clearly states what remains of the Buddha’s body: one wonders how to explain the recent claims in Singapore and Malaysia of “relics” of the Buddha’s blood, veins and skin! Comy describes the Buddha relics as follows: “the relics are like jasmine buds, or washed pearls, or gold” (sumana,makula,sadisā ca dhota,mutta,sadisā ca suvanna,sadisā ca dhātuyo) (DA 2:603 f). On the authenticity of relics, Trainor notes, “I have never come across a textual account from the Theravāda tradition of any effort to distinguish authentic relics on the basis of their appearance. The relics I saw in Sri Lanka varied in appearance. Some had the brownish color and irregular surface texture that one would expect to see in old bones. Others were smoothly polished and pearly in appearance” (1997:120 n80). On relic authenticity, see Intro (7.10) above.

922 See §6.18 & Intro (7.1).

923 Tesāni ca paññānaṁ dussa,yuğa,yuga,satānaṁ dvē ca dussāni dayhinsu yaṁ ca sabba,abhantarimarāṁ yaṁ ca bāhiraṁ. Following Be Ce na dayhinsu; Ee Se omits na (“were burnt up”). The reading na dayhinsu is attested by the Skt Mahā-parinirvāṇa,sūtra (ed Waldschmidt, 1951). J Strong suggests that the unburnt layers have to do with keeping the relics separate from the ashes of the fire (but does not mention the Pali variants). See Gethin 2008:281 n95.

924 Udaka,sālato (Be Ee & Be at DA 604); vl -sālaka in DA:Ee 604; these are wr for udakaṁ sālato (Ce Se) (DPL). Comy gives 2 possible explanations of udaka,sālā: (1) the sal tree around rained miraculously from their trunks, branches and leaves; (2) water burst forth from the ground and formed a sort of ring “like a crystal diadem” (phalika,vyātamsaka,sadisā) around the pyre (DA 2:604). See Waldschmidt, Das Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra, 1944-48: 430 & Überlieferung vom Lebensende des Buddha, 1950-51:430; also RO Franke, D tr: Dighanikāya...in Auswahl übersetzt, Göttingen, 1913:251 n5.

925 The description given in this § reflects the ritual purity of the Buddha’s death. See §6.14n above.
Claims for the Buddha relics

6.23.2 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā installed the Blessed One’s relics in an enclosure [a cage] of spears, surrounding it with a wall of bows in their assembly hall. Then they honoured, served, respected, esteemed and venerated them with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances.

6.24 Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi, putta of Magadha sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; I, too, am a kshatriya. I, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. I will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Licchavis of Vesālī heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Licchavis of Vesālī sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Sakyas [Śākyas] of Kapīla, vatthu heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Sakyas of Kapīla, vatthu sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was our foremost relative. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Bulis [Bulakas] of Alla, kappa [Cala, kalpa] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Bulis of Alla, kappa sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Koliyas [Kraudyas] of Rāma, gāma heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Koliyas of Rāma, gāma sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the brahmin Vetha, dipaka [Visnu, dvipa] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the brahmin Vetha, dipaka sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya, but I am a brahmin. I, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. I will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Mallas of Pāvā [Pāpā] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Mallas of Pāvā sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

6.25 When this was said, the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the sanghas and groups:926 [166]

“The Blessed One attained parinirvana within the confines of our village. We will not give away any portion of the relics.”

926 “The sanghas and groups,” sanghe gane. “Sangha” here refer to all those who have come to have a share of the relics, except for Ajātasattu’s representative, here referred to as “group.” “Sangha” here refers to the ancient republics of the Licchavis, Mallas, etc. There is a hint of tension here, esp evident in §6.25 where the Mallas of Kusinārā refuse to give away any Buddha relics. The imminent danger of war over the relics is depicted in the bas-reliefs of the Saṅcī stupa: Marshall & Foucher, Monuments of Sāṅcī, 1940 1:112-119, 214 f, pls 15, 61; Strong 2004:119. The appeal of relics is clearly not just spiritual, but also mundane due to their portability and promise of power. See fonn on the Buddha’s awareness of this danger and how he prevented it (UA 402); see also Intro (7.10).

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Distribution of the Buddha relics

6.25.2 When this was said, the brahmin Doṇa said this to the sanghas and groups:

Listen, sirs, to a word from me,
Our Buddha is a speaker [teacher] of patience.
It is not right that the highest individual’s relics-distribution should bring strife.
Let there be, sirs, the common good, the one path, for all:
As avusos, let’s make eight the shares:
Let there be stupas far and wide,
That all have faith in the One with Eyes.

“In that case, brahmin, divide the Blessed One’s relics into eight equal portions and distribute them!”
“Yes, sir,” the brahmin Doṇa replied in assent to the sanghas and groups, and he divided the Blessed One’s relics into eight equal portions and distributed them, saying:

“And they gave the urn to the brahmin Doṇa.
6.26 Then the Moriyas [Mauryas] of Pipphali,vana heard:
“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”
Then the Moriyas of Pipphali,vana sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,
“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we too are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics.
We, too, will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

“There is no more share of the Blessed One’s relics. The Blessed One’s relics have been divided up. Take from these cinders.”
And they took from those cinders.

6.27 Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics. [167]
The Licchavis, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Vesālī.
The Sakiyas, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Kapilavatthu.
The Bulis, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Allakappa.
The Koliyas, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Rāma, gāma.

The brahmin Veṭṭhapaka, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics in Veṭṭha, dipa.
The Mallas of Pāvā, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Pāvā.
The Mallas of Kusinārā, too, built a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics at Kusinārā.

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927 The Udāna Comy gives 3 reasons why the Buddha chooses to pass away in Kusinārā, ie (1) it would be the occasion for teaching Mahā Sudassana S (D 17), SD 36.12; (2) the wanderer’s Subhadda’s conversion, and (3) the brahmin Doṇa would fairly distribute his relics, thus preventing a bloodshed (UA 402). See (Pāda) Doṇa S (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).
928 Doṇa, says Comy, seizing the opportunity, hid the right eye-tooth of the Buddha in his turban, but Shakra saw this, and thinking that Doṇa was incapable of showing suitable honour to the relic, removed it and kept it in the Cūḷa, mani Cetiya [the crown jewel shrine] in Tāvataṃsa (DA 2:609). The Dhātu,vaṇṇa adds that Doṇa hid a second eye-tooth between his toes, and a third inside his clothing. The second was subsequently stolen by the Nāga king Jaya, sena, who enshrined in his realm, and the third, by was taken by someone from Gandhāra, who enshrined it there (Dhātu,vaṇṇa). The Cūḷa, mani Ceṭiya, said to be 1 league high, was created by Shakra to enshrine the hair cut off by the Buddha when he donned the ascetic’s robe on the bank of the Anoma (J 1:65). After the Buddha’s parinirvana, Shakra enshrined his right collar bone there, too (BA 235; Mahv 17.20). According to Sinhala hagiography, on the request of the novice Sumana, who was sent by the elder Mahinda, it is said, Shakra handed over the right collar bone over to Sumana, but kept the right eye-tooth. The right collar bone was finally enshrined at Thūp’ārāma (VA 1:84 ff; Mahv 17.13 ff). On Doṇa, see (Pāda) Doṇa S (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (4). See also Strong 2004:119-121, 158 f.
929 “A speaker [teacher] of patience,” khanti, vādi, an allusion to Khanti, vādi J (J 313) where the Bodhisattva shows the highest patience and lovingkindness against the extreme cruelty of a king against him.
930 It is prob here that Doṇa is tarditionally said to have recited his lion-roar, the Doṇa, gajjita (“Doṇa’s thunder”): see (Pāda) Doṇa S (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2.2) & Mahā Sudassana S (D 17), SD 36.12 (1.2).
931 This is the first incident of a relic theft in the Canon. See Intro (7.10); but cf (Pāda) Doṇa S (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).
932 The Buddha relics of Rāma, gāma (situated on the Ganges bank) has a fascinating history/mythology behind it, as recorded in Thūpā, vaṇṇa, a late Pāli hagiographical chronicle of Sri Lanka (13th cent). It recounts how the Rāma, gāma relics were washed into the waters during a great flood. The naga-king, Mahā, kāla, saved the relics and enshrined them in great splendour in his Manjjerika nāga abode, worshipping them with lavish offerings. See Trainor 1997:124-135.
The brahmin Doṇa, too, built a great stupa over the urn.
The Moriyas of Pipphali,vana, too, built a great stupa over the cinders at Pipphali,vana.933
So it was in the days of old.934

Stupas over the Buddha’s four eye-teeth935

6.28 Eight measures of relics of the One with Eyes, seven were honoured in Jambu,diṣa [India]
And one measure of the highest hero was kept by the naga kings in Rāmagāma.
One eye-tooth936 by the Three Heavens [realm of the 33]937 honoured, and one in Gandhāra revered.
The victorious Kalinga king has one more,938 and the nagas, too, honour one.
This Mother Earth, her ground decked in their glory with the highest gifts.
Thus is the One with Eyes’ relics well honoured by the honoured, [168]
Worshipped by the leader of the devas, by naga chiefs, and by lords of men,
Their hands clasped in homage—for hard it is to find the Buddha in a hundred aeons.939

— evān —

933 Mahā.vaṁsa Ṭīkā says that the Moriyas were orig Sakya princes of Kapila,vatthu, who escaped to the Himalayas to save themselves from Vidudabhā’s massacre, and founded a city there. As such, Asoka, the greatest of the Maurya emperors, was a kinsman of the Buddha. (MahṬ 183). See further DPPN: Moriya.
934 This seems to be the original end of sutta, and Buddhaghosa’s comy ends here. Comy says that these stanzas are those of the elders at the Third Council. Comy makes no remark on the following stanzas, except saying that they were added by the elders in Lanka (DA 2:615). Rhys Davids notes that the additional verse found in the Phayre MS is in the same way probably added in Burma (D:RD 2:191).
935 This stanza is added by the elders in Lanka (Tambapanṇi,therehi vuttā, DA 2:615). Interestingly, the Dulva (Tibetan Vinaya) stanza agrees closely here with regards to the 4 eye-teeth (Dulva f 652b; Rockhill 147). It is possible that the Sinhalese elders learn of this from the Mahāyāna (Vaipulya) tradition in Sri Lanka and incorporated it into our Sutta for the sake of completeness.

We have here two relic lists, which “bear witness to an expanding textual tradition that has recorded and thereby authenticated the dispersion of relics as new devotional centres have arisen claiming to possess relics of the Buddha” (Trainor 1997:121). Trainor uses “textual” here “in an extended sense to include a relatively fixed, orally transmitted composition” (id fn). See prec n.
936 “Eye-tooth,” dāthā (f), ie a canine.
938 The Dāthā,vaṁsa is a hagiology of how this eye-tooth that is said to have been taken to Sri Lanka by a brahmin woman in 4th cent during the reign of Sirimeghavana, and is now kept in the Tooth Relic Temple, Kandy.
939 On whether the Buddha is still living, see Intro (9.7) & is he really dead? See Intro (9.8).

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Appendix 1

Afterword: Buddhism after the Buddha

1 From light to light

World religions, after their founders’ death, invariably have their disciples build on, expand and innovate on the founder’s teachings. When we study or practise, for example, Theravāda today, are we practising the Buddha’s teachings or following Buddhaghosa’s instruction along with various Sinhalese biases and peculiarities? When we practise Chinese Buddhism are we practising our sifu’s teachings or the Buddha’s (they are not always the same).

Of course, there are those who say does it really matter? Religion is a person’s faith, so we should be prescriptive about it. I agree, and I am not saying that we should not interpret Buddhism, but that in doing so, are we throwing the baby out along with the bathwater? If we are talking about Sakyamuni Buddha, we are not talking about Maitreya, for example (who is not yet a Buddha, anyway).

Understandably, Buddhism needs to be interpreted or adapted so that the many can understand it and so benefit from it. And yet these are provisional teachings often answering immediate needs and measuring up to the expectations and eccentricities of the audience. More importantly, such provisional teachings should be carried further leading progressively towards the true Dharma. We are not shepherds herding a flock, who end up in the slaughterhouses anyway. The Dharma teacher is like a loving and wise parent raising multitudinous children of various whims and wisdom, and we have to raise them to be healthy, happy and spiritually independent adults, singular jewels in Indra’s cosmic net of jewels.

In short, basic Buddhist missiology should be two-tiered. On the worldly level, the crowd needs to be entertained with fun Dharma so that its less defilements find acceptable links with the Dharma, that is, sugar-coating the spiritual medicine for their ills. In due course, we have to teach our patients to learn to take their medicine themselves and keep to a healthy life-style.

**Buddhist missiology.** On the spiritual level, the individual must have direct access to the Dharma, either through mindfulness exercises (“meditation”) and the Sutta teachings. Underlying all this, there is the sustained support of a systematic Buddhist education system and a Right Livelihood philosophy. This means that our community needs of Buddhist college, better still, a Buddhist university. The graduates from such institutions, if they choose the Buddhist ministry, should be gainfully employed by Buddhist temples, centres and groups. Such properly educated and trained ministers surely will benefit society and themselves than will the occasional self-taught gurus and self-propelled sifus.

2 From self-reliance to relics

The Buddha founded the world’s first missionary religion: he went forth to teach the Dharma for all who will listen. The Buddha’s compassion and wisdom flows in the tolerance and resilience of the Buddhist tradition. As Buddhism spreads beyond India, it adopted and adapted itself to indigenous ideas and ways. Such vitalizing developments in due course turn Buddhism into a world religion. Sometimes, this protean quality entails a heavy cost. More often than not, the new religious forms and ideas, directly or indirectly, contradict the teachings of the founder. Much of Tibetan Buddhism, for example, is no different from the indigenous Bon shamanism with a generous smattering of Saivism.

After the Buddha’s parinirvana, the majority of his followers refuse to believe that he has really died, or that although his physical form is no more, his spiritual form still persists. The Buddha relics might have at first been regarded as the ideal objects to remember a dead teacher by, but in due course, faithful followers attribute special powers and presence to them. When these relics (or their replica) are enshrined in a stupa or shrine, the structure itself is regarded as the Buddha’s living person or presence. The true Buddha is no more the historical Gautama, but a docetic presence or superhuman deity. The Buddha’s Dharma became Buddhism.

Once spirituality is externalized or objectified, and its mythical and symbolic qualities forgotten or misconstrued, these externals next go into the “commodity” phase: spiritual becomes a thing that one supplicates, negotiates with, and invokes its power. The most extreme of this commodification of spirituality, of course, simony, religion comes to be measured in worldly and financial benefits.

3 Monastic business

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After the Buddha’s passing, especially with the rise of the more liberal Mahāsaṅghika, we see the growing laicization of monastic life. **Archaeological field work** and scholarly analyses since John Marshall (mid-18th century), Alexander Cunningham (1920s), up to Gregory Schopen in our times, have shown that the monasteries openly collected money, traded, loaned money, charged interests and made “merit-making” an important part of their lives. Translated into our own times, this refers to monasteries having bank accounts, credit cards, property, expensive cars, and affairs. Perhaps they are emulating the Bodhisattva Siddhartha living in the pleasure palaces of the three seasons replete with lotus ponds. Perhaps they have yet to see the four sights. So nothing is new.

These scholars, looking at artifacts and ancient sites left behind by the worldly monastic past, have given us valuable historical evidence to mullo over the fate of post-Buddha Buddhism (or at least Indian Buddhism). If such archaeology and scholarship have opened a dark window to our religious past—one of dead monks, bones, stones and monastic business—our spirituality directs us to open a different window, a bright one, indeed a door, to the **Buddha’s living word of inner peace and liberating wisdom**. For spirituality is not transmitted through relics, stupas, monasteries or worldly artifacts, but flows as spiritual lifeblood through living teachers and practitioners.

4 The Dharma has ended for some, but not for others

Gregory Schopen’s research and writing methodology give us some insights into modern Buddhist sociology and missiology, especially in regards to modern fieldwork in Buddhism in Malaysia and in Singapore where Sinhalese Buddhism has had great social success amongst the English-speaking Buddhists and yet dismally fails to nurture local vocations even after a century of mission—in other words, the Sinhalese mission still remains a “mission,” unlike say, the Theravada Buddhism in the US or the UK where local vocations are growing with much shorter history. It is important to remember that when the arhat **Mahinda** came to Sri Lanka, he ordained native Sinhalas, Mahā Ariṭṭa and 55 of his brothers into the order at Cetiya, giri. In due course, Anulā and her 500 companions were ordained as nuns by Saṅgha, mittā at the Upāsikā, vihāra in Anurāda, pura. With these events, the teaching (sāsana) was established in Sri Lanka and Sinhala Sangha grew.

940 H L Seneviratne, in his The Work of Kings (1999), asserts that a significant number of Sinhalese monks often use social service as a cover for questionable activities, “going overseas and establishing themselves in foreign lands, facilitated by both philanthropists of those lands and by expatriate communities of Buddhists. A few of these monks control vast revenues and live the life of busy executives, replete with symbols like Mercedes Benzes and BMWs and cellular phones. These monks have a foothold both in the country of their adoption and in Sri Lanka, and hold immigrant status in several countries. At the lower end of this financially comfortable class are the salary-earning monks, mostly graduates, who, especially if they also have support from laity as well as productive land, are able to invest money in business[es] like repair shops, taxi services, rental properties and tuition classes. A small minority also commercially practice astrology, medicine and various occultisms, the ‘beastly arts’ that are taboo for monks. Throughout history there were monks who practiced these, but they now do so with a new sense of legitimacy and commercialism. These come from the new definition of monk’s role as social service” (1999:336).

An important example suffices. The Sinhalese mission (mostly of the goyigama-caste Siyam Nikāya) in Malaysia often appears to be foreign business ventures where the local Chinese faithfuls are regarded as a rich source of religious funds and this market, nurtured and secured with a “Dale Carnegie” (win friends and influence people) approach to Buddhism. Either these missionaries deem the local followers as being incapable of learning Buddhism beyond the prescribed and popular texts or that the limited knowledge of the congregation serves their purposes better. A third possible reason, a corollary to the finance-centred goals of such missions, is that these missionaries lack the spirituality to attract and nurture such vocations. The worldliness and problems attending such a Buddhist business is reported in such works as *The Work of Kings* (1999). A proper socioanthropological study of this situation would surely reveal interesting living parallels to Gregory Schopen’s own archaeological fieldwork on the ancient monasteries of India (see biblio). Schopen’s works, however, should be used with care, as they can be insensitive to the early Buddhist texts.

941 Dipv 7.18-19, 12.39-54; Mahv 5.195, 13, 14; VA 61-105.
942 Mahv 16.10 f; VA 82 f.
943 Dipv 15.73 ff; Mahv 15.18 f, 19.65; VA 90 f.

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Such historical realities of Buddhism should be comparatively studied with the “accommodation” method of the Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) (whose work would have converted much of China if not for papal bungling) and with the “Nevius method” of the Protestant missionary John Nevius (1829-93) (whose work has produced phenomenal success in church growth in Korea, making it one of the largest Christian communities in Asia).

The dead, bones, stones, and monastic businesses and affairs are still alive and well all around us today. Perhaps this is a religious response to worldly wealth, power and pleasure that religion has always been associated with throughout its history. Perhaps it is simply out of pure greed, lust and desperation that people turn to religion. However, greed, lust, desperation and their likes, are older than religion, but it is because of them that Buddhas and spiritual teachers have arisen in the world. The Dharma-ending age may have descended upon many, but for many of those who are islands unto themselves, the Dharma still guides them just as the Buddha himself would have. It is just a matter of which direction we choose to look to.

The Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta is the Buddha’s last will and testament to the world. Throughout the sutta we see the Buddha as a humane being, exhorting us to keep to the timeless path of the Dharma. Even in the face of miraculous reports, we see the Buddha admonishing us to look to our inner goodness and self-power. The supreme worship is not our adoration for the Buddha, but practising the Dharma. Without partaking of this spiritual food, one will be ever be spiritually hungry or at least under-nourished.

5 The engaged observer

5.1 The second millennium opened auspiciously with the publication of Buddhist Theology in 2000, with which it may be said that academics who are soi-disant (self-proclaimed, in a fond sense) Buddhists finally came out of the closet:

…this means, first, that Buddhist theologians take some particular Buddhist tradition to be normative for them, to constrain and order their intellectual work, and to provide a technical lexicon and a set of intellectual purposes or goals. Second, it means that Buddhist theologians understand their own works to be a contribution to the development of the tradition out of which they speak, think, and write: they want, perhaps, to offer tradition-specific interpretations of or judgments about contemporary phenomena; or they want to develop the tradition’s understanding of itself; or they want to apply the tradition’s claims and understandings in a critical fashion to lively opposed claims and understandings found outside any Buddhist tradition.

(Paul Griffiths, review of Buddhist Theology, in Journal of Global Buddhism 1 2000:56 f)

A growing number of the new-millennium western scholars of Buddhism feel that the best way of studying of Buddhism is by a practising Buddhism, or as Lama John Makransky (an associate professor of theology at Boston College, Massachusetts, USA, and a Dzogchen practitioner) puts it in chapter 6, “Historical Consciousness as an offering to the trans-historical Buddha” of Buddhist Theology:

Religious Studies, including Buddhist studies, has begun to shed light on the historical nature of Buddhist traditions, only Buddhist traditions can reflect critically upon the implication of such findings for their own systematic understandings, practice and relevance to our time.

(p1 = Jackson & Makransky, 2000: ch 6)

5.2 This approach is of at least two advantages for Buddhism and one for other religions. The interest that people have shown in Buddhism is precisely because of its “truth and transformative value” (id). Moreover, as “Buddhist theology,” Buddhist scholars of Buddhism can now increasingly appropriate the academy’s critical tools for the use of Buddhist tradition: to shine new light upon its historically conditioned patterns of thought and practice, to learn better how those inherited patterns have worked to communicate, or sometimes obscure, the truth and transformative

945 Jackson, Roger & John Makransky (eds), Buddhist Theology: Critical reflections by contemporary Buddhist scholars. Curzon, Richmond, Surrey, 2000.
power of Dharma, and thus, in what new ways the Dharma may need to be understood and expressed in our time.

The larger and growing number of people in contemporary cultures with serious interest in Buddhism do not look to it primarily as a basis for fascinating discussions (a primary criterion of topics selection for Religious Studies forums), but for its truth and transformative potential. They include not only those who may identify themselves as contemporary Buddhists, but prominently also Christians, Jews and others who find that Buddhist teaching or practice sheds further light for them upon the truth of their own traditions, or upon possibilities for integration of those truths into life. (Jackson & Makransky, op cit)

In other words, when Buddhist scholars of Buddhism study and discuss it with a significant level of academic discipline, its truth and transformative value will reach a wider audience and benefit a greater number, whether they call themselves Buddhist or not.

5.3 To keep this high academic standard, Buddhists themselves have to show a moral responsibility in their learning and teaching of the Buddhism. Buddhists have to be more aware of the implications of their historical consciousness for their own self-understanding. Very often, sadly, this is not case, Makransky observes,

For example, many of the most learned Asian Mahāyāna teachers continue to speak as if the historical Buddha personally taught the Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures, in spite of much evidence to the contrary …and to do this is to deny the historical evidence…” (Jackson & Makransky, op cit)

Such notions fit in snugly with my own understanding of Buddhism today as “a family of Buddha-inspired religions,” each member with their own memory of the father and their own way of enjoying their spiritual inheritance. No sibling in such a family should pontificate that his or her memory of the teacher is the only right one, or that the inheritance should be used in only their prescribed way.

5.4 The “one way,” then, is not a Procrustean bed of fitting fellows, but a partnership of pilgrims humbly walking towards the same goal, that is, the “one way” of spiritual transformation.

We should therefore get out of the habit of inserting our own current systematic perspective into Śākyamuni Buddha’s mouth in the mistaken attempt to force such conformity.

Such has been the repeated misuse of our reverence for Śākyamuni Buddha. Accomplished members of practice communities in all Buddhist cultures past and present are the actual source of our wisdom through history, yet each of our traditions has repeatedly submerged or erased many of their voices, voices of the trans-historical Buddha, for ahistorical reconstructions of Śākyamuni that support our own exclusive understanding of the moment. (Makransky,2000: 19)

In other words, there is so much we can use from the wealth of our past and present, from our innumerable teachers, and even from past and present of other faiths so that we have a better understanding of our own until the moment of our own spiritual awakening. With the Buddha’s passing, the Dharma and Vinaya become the veritable transhistorical Buddha, the living teacher in our presence even as we keep to the Dharma and Vinaya. Why limit the Buddha’s presence to curious relics, stony stupas and silent images when we can find his liberating “presence” in the all into which we look deeply enough? “He who sees the Dharma, sees me; he who sees me, sees the Dharma” (S 22.87,13/3:120).947

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947 What is meant here is not some kind of pantheistic immanence of the Buddha, but our vision into the true nature of reality (yathābhūta) where “seeing is not by the eye but by insight” (DhsA 350). In this connection, see Vakkali S (S 22.-87/3:119 -124) & Vakkali-t,thera Vatthu (DhA 25.11/4:118 f), both in SD 8.8.

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Japanese depiction of the Great Parinirvana
## Bibliography

For other abbreviations and details, see Textual Conventions in any of *Sutta Discovery* vols 1-4.

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### PRIMARY SOURCES

**The Dīgha Nikāya & Saṁyutta Nikāya**

[References are usually to *volume:page* of the Pali text (eg S 3:79 or SN III 79). These are given in the translation at the top of the left hand page, but exact Pali page-breaks are not indicated within the text of the translation. The most useful reference, however, is: *sutta no. (section.) verse / vol:page*, eg M 35.5/1:229. For details, see Textual Conventions in any of *Sutta Discovery* vols 1-4.]

**A Aṅguttara Nikāya**

**A:**WH  The *Book of Gradual Sayings* (A:WH), tr FL Woodward & E.M. Hare, Oxford: OUP, 1932-36. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the beginner.]

**A:**NB  *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* (Anthology) (A:NB), tr Nyanaponika Thera & Bhikkhu Bodhi. Walnut Creek: Altamira & Kandy: BPS, 1999. (208 selected suttas.)


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**M Majjhima Nikāya**

**M:**H  *Middle Length Sayings* (M:H), tr I.B. Horner, London: PTS, 1954, 1957, 1959. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the beginner.]


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