

# 12

## Vata,pada Sutta

The Discourse on the Vows | S 11.11  
or Paṭhama (Sakka) Devā Sutta 1 The (Sakka) Discourse on Devas 1

Theme: Sakra's 7 vows

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2010, 2019

### 1 Sutta summary and significance

**1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY.** The **Vata,pada Sutta** (S 11.11), the discourse on the vows, is a short instructive text on the 7 vows that Sakra undertakes and fulfills, as the compassionate and public-spirited youth Magha and his 33 friends.<sup>1</sup> This is a vow of deeds, not one of attaining some *status*. Hence, the vows are wholesome acts which transform Magha, a diligent human, into Sakra, the lord of the devas, and the exemplar of a true individual to which any human can aspire. According to **the Sakka,pañha Sutta** (D 21), Sakra becomes a streamwinner, too.<sup>2</sup>

#### 1.2 SUTTA TEACHING

**1.2.1** The Vata,pada Sutta is a beautiful, even classic, example of how **mythology** is used to reinforce basic ethical and human values. **Sakra** represents the Everyman in us, with a great potential when not stunted and warped by religion and worldliness. Religion either ritualizes right or routinizes good, so that we become callous and dismissive of the good and pains of others.

By placing God above everything, for example, parents, family and humans become lesser creatures of a system that must worship and adore a Being made to be a transcendental Narcissist. Charity and other good become rituals to be done and seen as attracting charisma and authority for those who use religion as a means of class domination, social control and wealth generation in a religious market.

**1.2.2** Sakra's 7 vows remind us of our karmic being and natural goodness, of where we really start in life, where we should go, and how we go about it. These are not ritual vows (*sīla-b,bata*) but **active vows** (*vata,pada*), steps of cultivating oneself as a social being towards true and wholesome individuation, become a "true person" (*sappurisa*) [S 905d\*].

When humans are able to attain such a virtuous state, we have a **true heaven on earth**. Hence, these are no mean virtues: they culture Magha to arise in heaven as "lord of the devas." Goodness, then, is not created in heaven but begins at home, on earth. From these little acts of humble and precious good, arise the bliss and glory of heaven, even here on earth, where humans are God-like and live like gods.

#### 1.3 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

##### 1.3.1 Determination

**1.3.1.1** Sakra's 7 vows are not grandiloquent statements of glorious states, power or even paradise that we aspire to. They are the determination to act in 7 humble ways to bring the best out of oneself in human terms. In other words, these vows affirm, even celebrate, the best of our human state, our humanity.

<sup>1</sup> On Magha's story (with refs), see SD 15.13 (2.4).

<sup>2</sup> D 21,2 (SD 54.8).

**1.3.1.2** The vows begin with the biological and end with the divine, the whole existential range of a human being like any of us. These are simple but essential acts that free us from our lower animal states so that we evolve into a fully human state and touch the divinity within us.

### **1.3.2 Sakra's 7 vows**

#### **1.3.2.1 (1) "As long as I live, may I support my parents."**

Naturally, **the 1<sup>st</sup> vow** reminds us of our human roots, of *what* we are. Our present human state comes from the love of our parents who not only gave us a *human* body, but also nurtured us with love, diligence and wisdom so that we are well *humanized*.<sup>3</sup> Hence, once we become mature persons, and our parents are well past their prime, it is our turn to see to their welfare and happiness for their remaining years. This is **the 1<sup>st</sup> human act** in every sense of the term.

**1.3.2.2** God-centred religions put God (some imaginative Being) first. Humanity has no real place in such a *dehumanized* system. Such systems often encourage exploitation of others, especially through colonialism, slavery and sexualization of the helpless. Often, those who don't belong to the God-believing tribe are treated as subhuman ("heathens and pagans") or less (such as during the colonial days). Here, in this Sutta, we have a person who becomes a good god on account of his humane qualities!

#### **1.3.2.3 (2) "As long as I live, may I respect the family elders."**

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> vow** is to keep up the quality of a human family. As a *family*, we often have others: our own parents' family and our own generation. We have uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters. Even when we are the only child, there are others who are near and dear to us who are older than us, and who are kind to us. Whomever we are closest to, brought close by the bonds of love and care, that is **family**.

**1.3.2.4** Conversely, as family members, we should love and care for one another. Yet, by the very nature of rebirth, we have been family to one another, especially those with whom we closely associate in this life. **Our 2<sup>nd</sup> human act** is to show respect to these *elders*. To "**respect**" another basically means to *accept them as they are*: these elders not only have come before us but are also loving and caring of us in the way they best can, each according to their capability and wisdom.

**1.3.2.5** Although we begin our training in cultivating humane qualities with our biological family, it does not stop there. This humanity grows beyond the biological family. Buddhist respect is shown to others as members of an *extended spiritual* family, that is, the Buddhist community, connected by numerous past lives.

The highest expression of such a family value is found in **renunciation**. When a person "renounces the world" to join the Buddha sangha, he does not forsake his parents or family. Rather, he leaves the comfort and security of a biological family for a broader spiritual family centred on the sangha or monastic community. For this reason, members of the Buddhist community address one another as "brothers" and "sisters," or related respectful forms of address.

#### **1.3.2.6 (3) "As long as I live, may I speak gently."**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> vow** [1.2.2.7], **4<sup>th</sup> vow** [1.2.2.8] and **6<sup>th</sup> vow** [1.2.2.10] are about our human communication, that is, human speech. Doctrinally, this is right speech. Their sequence, as in the sequence of the vows as a set, begins with the most naturally, progressing through from what is fundamental to our humanity,

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<sup>3</sup> On our humanization process, see SD 38.4 (4.4).

through what is progressively harder to practise, the last being the most difficult quality which brings the best out of us.

**1.3.2.7 The 3<sup>rd</sup> vow** is about using gentle speech (*saṅha, vācā*), which is described as “speech that is loving, soft and sweet” (*piya, mudu, madhura, vāco*, SA 1:347,22 f). This should not be misunderstood as “weak” communication, but rather one that is well-toned with inner peace and lovingkindness. In other words, this is “loving speech,” the third of the 4 kinds of right speech.<sup>4</sup> Such a *vow* entails that we also practise meditation to calm the mind joyfully as well as to cultivate radiant lovingkindness, the unconditional acceptance of others.

**1.3.2.8 (4) “As long as I live, may I not speak divisively.”**

The 4<sup>th</sup> *vow* is that of not speaking divisively, that is, to practise speech that inspires unity through fellowship and lovingkindness (unconditional acceptance of others). We have already noted that this is a vital aspect of wholesome human communication [1.2.2.6]. This *vow* entails the awareness of others not only with their speech and actions but also by their silence and non-action: this is **deep listening**.

This kind of speech is healing speech, the language of spiritual counsellors. At the right time, we speak to our parents of their mutual goodness, so that they love each other even more. We speak of the goodness of our brothers and sisters, so that they rejoice in the family. We speak of the goodness of our relatives and friends, so that they feel uplifted and dignified to be karmically connected with us.

**1.3.2.9 (5) “As long as I live, may I dwell at home with a heart free from the stain of miserliness, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving, devoted to charity, delighting to have a share in giving.”**

The 5<sup>th</sup> *vow* is about generosity and charity, often taught in Dhamma lessons.<sup>5</sup> Charity begins at home with our sharing what are necessary and good in life—especially the gift of food, clothing, shelter and health. We should be ever ready to wholesomely respond to the near and dear when they are in need.

Charity here does not only mean giving material things (*āmisa, dāna*). Even more precious is **non-material giving** (*nirāmisa, dāna*),<sup>6</sup> that is, the gift of time (eg, in helping or listening to others), of fearlessness (comforting and inspiring others), and the highest gift, that of the Dharma (education others with diligence, peace and wisdom) so that they make the right choices in life for their own happiness.

The last part of the *vow* speaks of “**delighting to have a share in giving.**” This means that we not only joyfully join in group or communal efforts of charity, but we also encourage others to give the right things at the right time (*saṃvibhāga, rato*)<sup>7</sup>—this is the good karmic roots of wealth and friendship.

**1.3.2.10 (6) “As long as I live, may I speak the truth.”**

The 6<sup>th</sup> *vow* is about truth-telling, another aspect of right speech [1.2.2.6]. A rampant trait in “crowd communication”—what we hear being exchanged amongst people who don’t really care about one another—is that we rarely say what we mean nor care to mean what we say. The speech is often unclear, devious, demeaning, frivolous or simply false. This is wrong speech, which naturally has negative karma on the speaker.

<sup>4</sup> On right speech, see SD 10.16 (3.4).

<sup>5</sup> See **Nakula, māta S** (A 8.48/4:268 f) = **(Agata, phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10.6/3:287 = SD 15.3). At **Dīgha, jānu S** (A 8.54.14/4:284), this serves as the def for “the accomplishment in charity” (*cāga, sampadā*). Commented upon at Vism 7.101-106.

<sup>6</sup> On the 2 kinds of giving, see **Udakūpama S** (A 7.15), SD 28.6 (1.2.4.3).

<sup>7</sup> See **Cāgānussati**, SD 15.12.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of the **5 precepts**<sup>8</sup>—the basic code of moral conduct for our daily lives, especially as lay Buddhists—is the abstinence from lying or false communication. This is the only precept on speech and, hence, stands for all the 4 kinds of right speech: truthfulness, unifying speech, pleasant speech and useful speech. Although the “plain truth” is the ultimate basis for personal freedom and social justice of the good, it only works rightly when it is spoken at the *right time*: right speech is also *timely* spoken.<sup>9</sup>

**1.3.2.11 (7) “As long as I live, may I be free from anger, and, should anger arise in me, may I quickly dispel it.”**

**The 7<sup>th</sup> vow**—to avoid anger or minimize it—is last because it is the most difficult and also the noblest of the vows. Anger can arise in us for a number of reasons, or we can easily rationalize (explain away) our “righteous” anger. Although angry speech may not be as bad as “hate speech,” it can *never* be better than *true, pleasant, unifying, useful and timely words*. However, when people feel happy, they are more likely to remember our words and keep to them.

In **the (Khanti) Vepa,citti Sutta** (S 11.4), Sakra does not react with anger to his prisoner, Vepa,citti, despite the latter’s rude and provoking words. When the charioteer Mātali asks Sakra why he remains patient with Vepa,citti, Sakra replies by teaching us that when we are *angry* we fail twice: we have a negative emotion and we hurt the other person, too. To endure the rudeness and wrong speech of others with fearless patience, we are at least twice better than that person: we do not have any negative emotion and we are more likely to solve the problem in a wholesome way. This also shows that we are wise in the Dharma.<sup>10</sup>

## 2 Some key words

### **2.1 “Vows” (vata,pada)**

#### **2.1.1 Meaning**

**2.1.1.1** The Pali compound **vata,pada**, “steps of the vow,” comprises *vata*, “a religious duty, observance, vow” (similar to Skt *vrata*, “vow”).<sup>11</sup> This is also sometimes spelt as *vatta* (which also has the sense of a religious routine), as in *vatta,pada*, that is, “the 7 vows” (*satta vatta,padāni*) of the wanderer Kaḷāra,-muṭṭhaka, mentioned in **the Pāṭika Sutta** (D 24) [2.1.2.2]. The compound often goes with the absolute, *~samādāna*, “undertaking,” as in *vata,samādāna*, “undertaking a (good) practice, observance of a vow,” as in **the Vāta,miga Jātaka** (J 14/1:157,9).

**2.1.1.2** One of the 3 mental fetters to be overcome to attain streamwinning (reaching the path of awakening) is that of “**attachment to rituals and vows**” (*silā-b,bata parāmāsa*). Here, *bata* is **vata**, “vows,” with the initial *v* labialized on account of the preceding component’s final vowel *-a* following sandhi (euphonic combination) rules.

There is a vital difference between the **vows** that are “steps (of training or cultivation)” (*pada*), and merely performing a routine (blindly or with blind faith or with wrong view), such as reciting a holy name (mantra-like) believing that this will bring rebirth in some “Paradise” or some kind of security or gain.

Often, when we are **attached** (*parāmāsa*) to vows, this ritual or routine is rooted in the dharmas (truths) “as other” than what is real—the impermanent is taken to be *permanent* (ideas of paradise);

<sup>8</sup> See SD 21.6 (1.2.3).

<sup>9</sup> On right speech, see SD 10.16 (3.4).

<sup>10</sup> S 11.4/1:220-222 (SD 54.6a).

<sup>11</sup> See Macdonnell & Keith, *Vedic Index*, 1912 2:341.

suffering is taken to be *pleasant* (momentary or worldly calm is mistaken as “religious experience”); and non-self is viewed as some kind of *self* (some kind of theistic Buddha or cosmic Bodhisattva). Whatever we experience, no matter how exotic or sublime, can only be mind-made (otherwise, there is no experience); hence, *impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self* (without any essence).

Moreover, doing the same ritual act repeatedly expecting something else is a symptom of underlying issues that should be properly examined, defined, understood and resolved in the light of the 3 characteristics—that they are *mind-made*; hence, impermanent, unsatisfactory, and we should *not* own them.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.1.2 Occurrences of *vata,pada***

**2.1.2.1 The Kulavāka Jātaka** (J 31). The Pali-English Dictionary (PED) defines *vata,pada* as “an item of good practice, virtue (otherwise called *guṇa*, ‘virtue,’ Miln 90).” The closing verses on the 7 vows [§4] recur in **the Kulavāka Jātaka** (J 31) in a similar context, but are practised by the Bodhisattva, who goes on to become Sakra.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, these vows are a generic set of virtues for all those reborn as Sakra in their turn.

**2.1.2.2 The Pāṭika Sutta** (D 24) records the Buddha as telling us about a naked ascetic (*acela*) of Vesālī, called Kaḷāra,maṭṭaka (or Kandara,māsuka), who keeps the following 7 vows (*vata,pada*). They are only same in name and structure as the vows in **the Vata,pada Sutta**, but are very different as regards the vows themselves. The naked ascetic “undertakes and fulfills these 7 vows” (*satta vatta,padāni samattāni samādinnaṇi*) :

- (1) “As long as I live, may I be a naked ascetic, not wearing any clothes.” (*yāja,jīvaṃ acelako assaṃ, na vatthaṃ paridaheyyaṃ*).
- (2) “As long as I live, may I dwell as a celibate practitioner, not indulging in any coupling.” (*yāja,jīvaṃ brahma,cārī assaṃ, na methunaṃ dhammaṃ paṭiseveyyaṃ*).
- (3) “As long as I live, I will subsist on strong drinks and meat, abstaining from boiled rice and porridge.” (*yāja,jīvaṃ surā,maṃsen’eva yāpeyya, na odana,kummāsaṃ bhūṇjeyyaṃ*).
- (4) “I shall never go beyond the Udena shrine to the east of Vesālī.” (*puratthimena vesāliyaṃ udenaṃ nāma cetiyaṃ taṃ nātikkameyyaṃ*).
- (5) “I shall never go beyond the Gotamaka shrine to the south of Vesālī.” (*dakkhiṇena vesāliyaṃ gotamakaṃ nāma cetiyaṃ taṃ nātikkameyyaṃ*).
- (6) “I shall never go beyond the Satt’amba(ka) [the 7 women] shrine to the west of Vesālī” (*pacchimena vesāliyaṃ satt’ambaraṃ nāma cetiyaṃ taṃ nātikkameyyaṃ*).
- (7) “I shall never go beyond the Bahu,puttaka [the many sons] shrine to the north of Vesālī” (*uttarena vesāliyaṃ bahu,puttaṃ nāma cetiyaṃ taṃ nātikkameyyaṃ*). (D 24,1.11), SD 63.3<sup>14</sup>

While Sakra’s 7 vows are morally positive—they are karmically wholesome—Kaḷāra,maṭṭaka’s 7 vows are most restrictive apparently to instigate others to attribute charisma to him. Sakra keeps the vows to better himself spiritually; Kaḷāra,maṭṭaka does it for ritual, charisma<sup>15</sup> and worldly benefits.

The misguided monk, Sunakkhatta, who insists that the Buddha perform miracles and teach on the beginning of things, refuses to accept the Buddha’s advice that these do not define a true teaching. He

<sup>12</sup> On “attachment to ritual and vows,” see SD 40a.8 (3); SD 51.5 (5.2.4.2-5.2.4.5).

<sup>13</sup> **Kulavāka S** (J 31/1:202).

<sup>14</sup> For details of these 4 shrines (tree-shrines, *rukkha,cetiya*), see **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.1), SD 9.

<sup>15</sup> On charisma, see SD 3.14 (5-8).

goes on to follow sectarian teachers, one of whom is Kaḷāra,maṭṭaka, who obtains great gains and fame on account of the 7 vows mentioned.

Foolish people are easily misguided into believing that something “different” or “odd” was *religious* or even exceptional, which they would not or are unable to do. This may be said to be a kind of “performance” cult, since we actually *admire* and are *entertained* by such odd conduct, which lacks any spiritual value.<sup>16</sup>

**2.1.2.3 The Milinda,pañha** (Miln 90) gives a list of king Milinda’s **8 vows** in some detail. They, however, are very different from Sakra’s vows [§4]. The Milinda account is found at the start of ch 4 (the dilemmas). Once, it is said, king Milinda rose early in the morning, washed his hair, and then raised his joined palms to his forehead, recollecting the buddhas of the past, the future and the present. Having done all that, he dwells as an ascetic (*tapa*) emulating the state of a sage (*muni, bhāva*) for 7 days, observing these **8 vows** (*aṭṭha vata, pada*) during that period, thus:

- (1) “No advice on royal affairs will be given by me” (*mayā na raja, attho anusāsitaḥ*).
- (2) “No thought associated with greed will be harboured by me” (*na rāgūpasamhitam cittam upādetabham*).
- (3) “No thought associated with hate will be harboured by me” (*na dosūpasamhitam cittam upādetabham*).
- (4) “No thought associated with delusion will be harboured by me” (*na mohūpasamhitam cittam upādetabham*).
- (5) “I shall act humbly to the slaves, the labourers, the men [workers] and people” (*dāsa, kammakara, porisa, jane pi nivāta, vuttinā bhavitabham*).
- (6) “I shall guard my bodily and verbal deeds” (*kāyikam vācasikam anurakkhitabham*).
- (7) “I shall fully guard all my 6 sense-bases” (*cha pi āyatanāni niravasesato anurakkhitabham*).
- (8) “I shall direct my mind to the cultivation of lovingkindness” (*mettā, bhāvanāya mānasam pakkhipitabham*).  
(Miln 90)

Milinda’s vows seem to be inspired by the purpose of attracting charisma (empowerment from appearances). He only does this for 7 days—like the popular “short-term ordinations,” which are used as reinforcers of culture and fund-raisers mostly amongst SE Asian Buddhists.

Good as most (if not all) of Milinda’s vows may be, they should properly be his daily habitual conduct rather than merely a ritual to attract admiration and legitimation for his other worldly actions and views. It is likely, by his time, Milinda was inspired by grandiose Mahāyāna ideas of compassion as ritual action.

## 2.2 “UNDERTOOK AND FULFILLED” (*samattāni samādināni*)

**2.2.1 Reverse verb sequence.** The Sutta says that Sakra “undertook and fulfilled” (*samattāni samādināni*) the 7 vows [§2]. In a Pali sentence, the verbs in a series are often reversed. Hence, instead of translating the phrase as “fulfilled and undertook”—which does not make good sense—it should be rendered as “undertook and fulfilled,” since we must *undertake* them first and then *fulfil* them.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> D 24,1.11/3:9 (SD 63.3).

<sup>17</sup> On verb-reversal in translation, see (**Ceto, vimutti**) **Anuruddha S** (M 127,8.1), SD 54.10.

## 2.2.2 Commentarial explanations

**2.2.2.1 The Commentary** glosses *samattāni* with *paripuṇṇāni*, “fulfilled” (plural) and *samādinnaṇi*, “undertaken” (plural) with *gahitāni*, “grasped” (plural). Clearly, the Commentary takes *samatta* here as being cognate with the Sanskrit *samāpta* (completed, fulfilled).<sup>18</sup> The participle *samatta*, however, can be either Skt *samāpta* or BHS *samātta*, both meaning “taken upon oneself.”<sup>19</sup> Further, from its location before *samādinnaṇi* here, *samattāni* clearly has the sense of “undertaking.”

Both *samatta* and *samādinna* are alternative past participle formations of *sam + ā + dā*. PED does not mention this derivation, but only says that it is from Skt *samāpta* and from *samasta*, “combined, all” (the latter irrelevant here).<sup>20</sup> Further, it is vital to respect Pali idiom: the verb-sequence here should be translated *reversed* in English, as already noted [2.2.1].

## 2.3 “DEVOTED TO CHARITY” (*yāca,yoga*)

**2.3.1** The compound *yaca,yoga* has an interesting history. Often rendered as “being accessible for asking,” that is, “fit for asking” (*parehi yācitabb’āraho*, SA 1:347,26), being positively generous and charitable. It is a common enough word in the Pali texts.

However, it is likely that it was originally spelt *yāja,yoga*, borrowed from the Vedic, meaning “devoted to sacrifice.”<sup>21</sup> Understandably, the Buddha “naturally adapted”<sup>22</sup> this compound to express something more positive in our daily life: being openly charitable.

**2.3.2** The Visuddhi,magga, in fact, recognizes *yaja,yoga* as a variant of *yaca,yoga*.<sup>23</sup> The transformation of *yaja,yoga* to *yaca,yoga* is short of an ingenious innovation. Charity (*yāja*) is, after all, directed to those who ask (*yācaka*); hence, *yāca,yoga* perfectly means an actual act of giving and charity, not a mere pious but callous ritualization of it.<sup>24</sup>

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# Vata,pada Sutta

## The Discourse on the Vows

S 11.11

**1** [At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park in Jeta,vana, outside Sāvattḥī. There, the Blessed One addressed the monks: “Bhikshus!” “Bhante!” the monks replied to the Blessed One.

<sup>18</sup> *Sam-āpta* is past pass part from *VĀP* (to acquire), meaning “concluded.”

<sup>19</sup> On BHS *samātta* = P *samatta*, see A 2:193,1 (with *samādinna*) and DhA 1:164,21 (*vata,padāni samattāni samādinnaṇi*), “undertaking (of religious observance vows, etc). See BHSD

<sup>20</sup> For the derivation from *samātta*, see Nm 1:289,16-18; for the derivation from *samāpta*, see Nm 1:65,9-11.

<sup>21</sup> On such a sacrifice, see eg (**Pasenadi**) **Yañña S** (S 3.9/395\* f), SD 22.11.

<sup>22</sup> On the Buddha’s “natural adaption” of outside words and ideas, see SD 39.3 (3.3.4).

<sup>23</sup> Vism 7.122/224,11-12.

<sup>24</sup> For a philological analysis of *yaca,yoga* and *yaja,yoga*, see Sn:N 263, n87,2 (SnA 414,6-9).

The Blessed One said this:]<sup>25</sup>

2 “Bhikshus, in the past, Sakra, lord of the devas, when was a human being,<sup>26</sup> undertook and fulfilled<sup>27</sup> 7 vows. From this undertaking, Sakra came to his Sakra-state.<sup>28</sup>

3 What are **the 7 vows**?<sup>29</sup>

### Sakra’s 7 vows<sup>30</sup>

- 4 (1) As long as I live, may I support my parents.  
 (2) As long as I live, may I respect the family elders.  
 (3) As long as I live, may I speak gently.  
 (4) As long as I live, may I not speak divisively.  
 (5) As long as I live, may I dwell at home with a heart free from the stain of miserliness, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving, devoted to charity, delighting to have a share in giving.<sup>32</sup>  
 (6) As long as I live, may I speak the truth.  
 (7) As long as I live, may I be free from anger, and, should anger arise in me, may I quickly dispel it.

*yāva, jīvaṃ mātā, petti, bhāro assaṃ*<sup>31</sup>  
*yāva, jīvaṃ kule jeṭṭhāpacāyī assaṃ*  
*yāv, jīvaṃ saṅha, vāco assaṃ*  
*yāvajīvaṃ apisuṇavāco assaṃ*  
*yāva, jīvaṃ vigata, mala, maccherena*  
*cetasā agāraṃ ajjhāvaseyyaṃ*  
*mutta, cāgo payata, pāṇi vossagga, rato*  
*yāca, yogo dāna, samvibhāga, rato*  
*yāva, jīvaṃ sacca, vāco assaṃ*  
*yāva, jīvaṃ akkodhano assaṃ*  
*sace’pi me kodho uppajjeyya,*  
*khippam eva naṃ paṭivineyyan’ti*

5 *Bhikshus, in the past, when Sakra, lord of the devas, was a human being, he undertook and fulfilled 7 vows. From this undertaking, Sakra came to his Sakra-state.*

### The closing verses<sup>33</sup>

6 *Mātā, petti, bhāraṃ janturaṃ*  
*kule jeṭṭhāpacāyinaṃ*  
*saṅhaṃ sakhila, sambhāsaṃ*  
*pesuṇeyya-p, pahāyinaṃ* (S 904)

A person who supports his parents, respects the elders in the family, gentle and courteous in speech, refrains from divisive speech,

<sup>25</sup> Ce Se so: *Ekam samayaṃ bhagavā sāvatthiyaṃ viharati jetavane anātha, piṇḍikassa ārāme. Tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhu āmantesi bhikkhavo’ti. Bhadante’ti te bhikkhu bhagavata paccassosuraṃ. Bhagavā etad avoca.* Be Ee only has *Sāvatthiyaṃ*, “At Sāvattī.” This is an abbreviation of the full stock as supplied by **Suvīra S** (S 11,11/1:216), the 1<sup>st</sup> sutta in the Sakka Saṃyutta.

<sup>26</sup> In his previous life as the youth Māgha and his 33 friends: see (1.1).

<sup>27</sup> “Undertook and fulfilled” (*samattāni samādinnaṇi*), see (2.2).

<sup>28</sup> The whole para: *Sakkassa bhikkhave devānam indassa pubbe manussa, bhūtassa satta vata, padāni samattāni samādinnaṇi ahesuraṃ, yesaṃ samādinnaṇā sakko sakkattaṃ ajjhagā.* On *vata, pada*, see (2.1).

<sup>29</sup> On *vata, pada*, see (2.1). Cf Miln 90 where a different set of 8 vows are given in detail [2.1.2].

<sup>30</sup> For comys on these 7 vows, see (1.3.2). This whole passage recurs in **Sakka, nāma S** (S 11.12,5), SD 54.19.

<sup>31</sup> *Assaṃ* is 1 sg pot of *atthi*, “it is.”

<sup>32</sup> This is stock: also in **Nakula, māta S** (A 8.48/4:268 f) = (**Agata, phala**) **Mahānāma S** (A 6.10.6/3:287, SD 15.3). At **Dīgha, jānu S** (A 8.54.14/4:284), this serves as the def for “the accomplishment in charity” (*cāga, sampadā*). Commented upon at Vism 7.101-106.

<sup>33</sup> Recurs in **Kula, vāka J** (J 31/1:202,2-6). [2.1.1]

- 7 *macchera,vinaye yuttam*  
*saccam kodhābhibhum naram*  
*tam ve devā tāvatimsā*  
*āhu sappuriso itī* (S 905) devoted to removing his meanness,  
a truthful man, who overcomes anger—  
him, the devas of Tāvatisa  
call “a true person.”

evam

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