

13

How Pasenadi Overcame His Gluttony

Doṇa,pāka Sutta (S 3.13/1:81 f) & **Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu** (DhA 15.7/3:263-266)

Passages translated by Piya Tan ©2008, 2011

1 Pasenadi's gluttony

1.1 THE GRAVITY OF THE PROBLEM

1.1.1 The two texts presented here in translation—the **Doṇa,pāka Sutta** (S 3.13) [§1] and the **Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu** (DhA 15.7)—recount how the Buddha helps rajah Pasenadi overcome his problem of over-eating. The Sutta gives only the barest details, while DhA gives some useful details. We will discuss the Buddha's dieting strategy below [3].

Each of the two texts describes Pasenadi's weight problem by pointing out a clear symptom, that is,

(1) his heavy (and obviously difficult) breathing [§1.3]; and

(2) his rolling back and forth, that is, nodding as well as inability to sit upright steadily [§2.3].

There is also an allusion to some bodily discomfort and pains [§§1.6, 2.6].

1.1.2 The two texts only say that the rajah has been over-eating. The Saṃyutta Commentary, however, gives us a better idea *how much* food he is consuming, by saying that the bronze bowl (*kaṃsa,pāti*)¹ out of which he eats, that is, his meal bowl (*paribhoga,pāti*), is the size of a cartwheel (*ratha,cakka-p,pamāṇā*, SA 1:173)! Cartwheels, even in those times, are rather huge, much bigger than the kind of vessel we would use for our own meals.

1.2 THE RAJAH'S MOTIVATION FOR DIETING

1.2.1 The two texts reveal to us that it is the Buddha who notices the rajah's overweight problem, and points it out to him. It is likely that no one else dares to do so for fear of incurring his royal wrath. Since Pasenadi has deep devotion for the Buddha, understandably it is easier, also more natural or behooving, that the Buddha advises him to cut down on his meals.

1.2.2 The other person who is helpful in the rajah's dieting process is the brahmin youth, Sudassana, as he is called in the **Doṇa,pāka Sutta** [§4], but his relationship to the rajah is not mentioned. We only know that Sudassana is the rajah's nephew from DhA [§2.7]. We also have an abridged version of the **Doṇa,pāka Sutta**, that is, **the Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu** (DhA 23.4),² but there the youth is called prince Uttara.

1.2.3 A third helpful reason for Pasenadi's motivation, as hinted in the first of his litany of exultations on regaining his leanness and health, that is, his love of hunting [§2.10]. And to this we could add other kinds of sensual pleasures that ancient kings are wont to indulge in. Finally, we might add that Pasenadi is often conscious of his own dignity, such as hinted by the incident with Chatta,pāṇi.³ Being overweight, with its attending discomfort and ill health, certainly reduced him to at least a difficult level of physical indignity.

¹ This large Kosala bronze dish seems to be well known, and is used as a figure, describing the eyes of the serpent that Mārā has transformed himself into: see **Sappa S** (S 4.6/1:106), SD 61.14.

² DhA 23.4/4:15 f ad Dh 325.

³ Comys say that the layman **Chatta,pāṇi** is a once-returned (DhA 4.7/1:380 f), who, out of respect for the Buddha, does not rise even when rajah Pasenadi arrives, and the Buddha explains; but **Mahāsāra J** (J 92 intro, relating the same incident, with some variations) says he is a non-returned (J 92/1:381 f). Since the Buddha mentions, alongside Chatta,pāṇi, that the layman Ghaṭikāra (a non-returned), like him, takes only one meal a day (DhA 1:380), it is perhaps more probable that he, too, is a non-returned. It is said that Pasenadi, impressed by Chatta,pāṇi's spirituality and learning, invites him to be the palace women's instructor, but he declines, considering it an improper thing to do. The duty then is given to Ānanda. Noticing that the rajah is displeased, the Buddha makes special mention of Chatta,pāṇi's attainments (DhA 1:380 f; cf V 4:157 f).

2 Moderation in food: The teachings

2.1 MODERATE EATING AS PART OF MORAL TRAINING

2.1.1 Moderation in food (*bhojane mattaññutā*)⁴ is an important Buddhist practice, comprising a vital aspect of moral training.⁵ Concerning monastic training, the Buddha, in **the Mahā Assapura Sutta** (M 39) is recorded as declaring:

“Bhikshus, what more should be done? Bhikshus, you should train yourselves thus:

‘We will be practise **moderation in food**.

Wisely considering food, we will take it, not for amusement, not for intoxication, not for fattening, not for adorning; but only that this body may endure and continue, for keeping it unharmed, for helping it to live the holy life, thus: “I shall end the old feeling (of hunger), and not cause a new feeling to arise. Thus will I be blameless and live at ease.”

But, bhikshus, you may think, ‘We are accomplished in moral shame and moral fear; our conduct of body is pure; our conduct of speech is pure; our conduct of mind is pure; our livelihood is pure; our senses are restrained; we are moderate in eating. That much is enough, we have done enough, the goal of recluseship has been won. There is nothing more to be done.’ And so you would be pleased with yourselves with just that much.

Bhikshus, I declare to you; bhikshus, I make it known to you: you who desire recluseship, do not lose sight of the goal of recluseship—*there is still more to be done*.” (M 39,9/1:273), SD 10.13

2.1.2 The teaching on moderation in food is clearly an ancient one, as it is recorded in the context of forest practice in an old section of the Sutta Nipāta. In **the Rāhula Sutta** (Sn 2.11), the Buddha admonishes Rāhula thus:

<i>Mitte bhajassu kalyāṇe</i>	Resort to spiritual friends	
<i>pantañ ca sayan’āsanam</i>	and a remote dwelling,	
<i>vivittam appanigghosam</i>	secluded, with little noise,	
<i>mattaññū hohi bhojane</i>	be moderate in food.	(Sn 338)

2.2 MODERATE EATING AS BEING HELPFUL IN MEDITATION

2.2.1 **The Anaṅgana Sutta** (M 5) includes the lack of moderation in food as being amongst the contributory factors to a lack of concentration, hence, to difficulties in meditation and wisdom training, thus:

[T]here are people who are without faith,⁶ those who have left home for the homeless life, not out of faith, but for the sake of a living,⁷ who are false, crafty, fraudulent,⁸ haughty,⁹ insolent, fickle, garrulous, of loose speech,

⁴ Often with “being guarded at the sense-doors” (*indriyesu gutta,dvāratā*) etc: D 33,1.9(20)/3:213; M 5,32/1:32, 39,9/1:273, 53,6/1:354, 9/1:355, 69,11/1:471, 125,17/3:134; S 16.11/2:218; A 2.15.7/1:94, 3.16/1:113, 4.37.4/2:40, 5.56.3/3:70, 5.150.4/3:173, 6.17.3:301, 6.31.2/3:330, 6.117.2/3:449, 7.26.4/4:25, 8.9.5/4:168, 8.79.2/4:331; Nm 1:144, 2:480, 482; Dhs 7, 231, 232; Vbh 249 ×8; Pug 23 ×3; Kvu 616; Vism 7.31/202.

⁵ *Bhojane mattaññutā*, often with “guarding the sense-doors” (*indriyesu gutta,dvāratā*), etc: D 33.1.9(20)/3:213; M 53.5-18/1:354-356; A 2.15.7/1:94, 5.150.4/3:173, 6.31.4/3:330, 7.26.4/4:25, 8.79.2/4:331; Nm 1:144, 2:480; Dhs 7, 231 f; Vbh 249; Pug 25; Kvu 616. See also *Thīna,middha*, SD 32.6 (3.2.4).

⁶ *Ie bereft of faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha (assaddhā’ti buddha,dhamma,saṅghesu saddhā,-virahitā*, MA 1:152)

⁷ *Ie earning a living here because he is unable to earn a living outside, on account of being oppressed by the fear of debts, etc (jīvik’atthā’ti iṇa,bhay’ādīhi pīlitā bahi jīvitum asakkontā idha jīvik’atthikā hutvā*, MA 1:152).

⁸ *Fraudulent, ie a trained fraudster, whose craftiness is of accomplished strength. It is called “deceit” because it is the craftiness of seeing non-existent virtues, of making objects show qualities that are absent of (ketabhino’ti sikkhita,kerāṭikā, nipphanna,thāma,gata,sātheyyā ti vuttam hoti. Sātheyyañ hi abhūta,guṇa,dassanato abhūta,bhaṇḍa,-guṇa,dassana,samam katvā “kerāṭīyan ti vuccati*, MA 1:152)

⁹ *This line (see foll n), as at Jantu S (S 2.25/1:61,4), but replaces the last quality with pākat’indriyā, “loose in faculties.” See Intro [2.1].*

their sense-doors unguarded, lacking moderation in food, not devoted to wakefulness, with no regard for recluship, with no deep respect for the training, living in abundance, lax, prone to distractions,¹⁰ neglecting the task of seclusion, lazy, lacking effort, confused, lacking clear comprehension, unconcentrated, a wandering mind, lacking wisdom, unintelligent.

(M 5,32.1/1:32), SD 37.3

2.2.2 In one of the most fabulous stories on the mythology of meditation ever told in Indian religious literature, indeed in any religious literature, **the Māha Sudassana Sutta** (D 17) relates how the wheel-turner or universal emperor owns or enjoys 84,000 of various things like 84,000 each of cities, palaces, elephants, horses, chariots, jewels, women, cows, and so on, “But, Ānanda, of those 84,000 dishes, at that time, I ate only one pint-pot of rice at most with a suitable amount of curry.”¹¹

The Mahā Sudassana Sutta is actually a canonical Jātaka, a birth story of the Buddha as a past actor on the cosmic stage. His innumerable lives recount various events and adventures reflecting some deeper or universal truth, each and every one of which prepares him (as the Bodhisattva), to awaken as the Buddha, the most highly evolved being in any historic period.

2.3 MODERATE EATING AS A LEARNER’S QUALITY. **The Sekha Sutta** (M 53) lists moderation in food as the third of the 6 qualities of “the learner’s way,”¹² defining it thus:

And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple **one who knows moderation in food**?¹³

Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple, wisely considering, takes food not for amusement, not for intoxication, not for the sake of adorning [fattening],¹⁴ not for the sake of beautifying;

but only for the support and continuance of this body, for the ending of discomfort, for the sake of supporting the holy life, thinking, “Thus I shall ward off old feelings¹⁵ without arousing new feelings, and so that I shall go on without blame and dwell mentally at ease.

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is one who knows moderation in food.

(M 53,9/1:355), SD 21.14

2.4 MODERATE EATING FOR HEALTH

2.4.1 Moderation in food is not only integral to monastic discipline, but vital to any meditator who wishes to make good progress. As such, it also applies to the personal development of the laity. **The (Nīvaraṇa Bojjhaṅga) Āhāra Sutta** (S 46.51) reminds us that taking too much food leads to sloth and torpor or worsens it.

There are, monks, boredom, lethargy and fidgeting, after-meal drowsiness, and mental sluggishness (*arati tandi, vijambhūtā bhatta, sammado cetaso ca līnattam*).¹⁶ Frequently giving unwise

¹⁰ *Okkamane pubbaṅgamā*, ie “letting transgressions be the leader.” Comy explains these as the conditions for “going down,” ie going astray or transgressing, ie, the 5 mental hindrances (MA 1:101.26, 3:108,3). See M 1:14, 16 f = 3:5, 15 = A 1:71, 3 = 2:148, 30 = 3:108, 3; M 1:32, 21; A 1:243, 3 f. M:ÑB, foll M:H, has “leaders in backsliding,” which fails to reflect Comy which is helpful here. See CPD: ²o-kkamana.

¹¹ D 17,2.15/2:198 @ SD 36.12. *Yato nālik’odana, paramam bhuñjāmi tad upiyañ ca sūpeyyam*. The cpd *nālik’odana* = *nālika* (a *nāli* measure of boiled rice) + *odana* (“boiled rice”) (S 1:82; DhA 3:265, 4:17). Bodhi, foll Burlingame (“a pint-pot of rice,” DhA: B 3:77), tr *nālik’odana* as “a pint-pot measure of rice” (S:B 177 & 405 n231; cf DhA:B 3:76 f). Cf “bucket of (cooked) food” (*doṇa, pāka*): **Doṇa, pāka S** (S 3.13/1:81 f), SD 37.13.

¹² The 6 qualities of the learner of the path (*sekha pātipada*) are (1) being accomplished in moral virtue, (2) whose sense-doors are guarded, (3) who knows moderation in food, (4) devoted to wakefulness, (5) accomplished in the 7 virtues (an extension of the qualities for noble growth (*ariya, vadḍha*): see M 53.11), (6) attains dhyana at will and easily, living happily here and now. (M 53.7-19/1:355-357), SD 21.14. On *ariya, vadḍha*, see **Saṅkhār’upapatti S** (M 120.3/3:99), SD 3.4; **Vadḍhi S 1+2** (A 5.63+64/3:80) & SD 3.4 (3-4).

¹³ *Bhojane mattaññutā hoti*. See **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39.8/1:273), SD 10.13.

¹⁴ *Na mañḍanāya*, here, according to Buddhaghosa, “not for the sake of smartening, as with royal harem, courtesans, etc; not for the sake of plumpness in all the limbs” (Vism 1.89/32).

¹⁵ That is, of hunger, weakness, etc.

attention to them is food for the arising of unarisen sloth and torpor, and for the growth and abundance of arisen sloth and torpor. (S 46.51,7/5:103), SD 7.15

2.4.2 On a more general level, moderation in food is also an important part of human health. In fact, cutting down on food intake, as advised by the Buddha in **the Doṇa, pāka Sutta** (S 3.13), when done mindfully, benefits us with physical comfort (our bodily pains become manageable), slower age, and a longer healthier life.¹⁷ The Commentaries give us some more tips for overcoming sloth and torpor, as follows:

- (1) not over-eating (knowing when to stop eating),¹⁸
- (2) changing meditation postures,
- (3) mental clarity & perception of light,
- (4) staying outdoors,
- (5) spiritual friends,
- (6) conducive conversation.

DA 780; MA 1:284 = SA 3:166 = AA 1:50 = ItA 2:180; VbhA 273. Cf DA 216

2.4.3 The (Cira-ṭṭhita) Kula Sutta (A 4.255), however, gives it an economic dimension, by listing it as one of the four strategies for making a wealthy family last through posterity.¹⁹ In other words, besides the benefit already mentioned, moderation in eating (for those very reasons) is *a basis for accumulating wealth*.

3 Moderation in food: the practice

3.1 THE BUDDHA'S METHOD

3.1.1 The Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu (DhA 15.7) describes the Buddha's guidelines for overcoming rajah Pasenadi's gluttony as follows:

(1) "When the rajah eats his meal, and is about to take the last lump of boiled rice, you must recite this verse. The rajah will understand its purpose, and will at once put it aside." [§2.8]

The mantra taught by the Buddha to Sudassana, Pasenadi's nephew is this:

When a man is ever mindful, | knowing his measure with the meals he takes,
his pains become trivial, | he ages slowly, guarding his life. (S 402)²⁰ [§2.6]

This mantra acts as a preamble to the dieting, as well as a reminder of its benefits. However, the key term, "when it is time for his last lump of boiled rice" (*osāna, piṇḍa, kāle*) will need some explanation [3.2]. What is interesting here is that the verse on the negative effects of over-eating is mentioned only once in the Sutta. It is the positive verse that is used as a mantra to motivate the rajah in reducing his food.

3.1.2 At some point in the rajah's meal, when he is perceived as having taken a healthy amount of food, his nephew Sudassana recites the mantra. This now acts as a signal, a sort of Buddha's call, for him to stop eating. This works easily for the rajah, as he is deeply devoted to the Buddha.

(2) "When it is time to boil the rice for the rajah's meal, reduce the measure of uncooked rice by just that much (the amount that was put aside)." [§2.8]

¹⁶ This stock passage is found in **Nidda Tandi S** (S 1.2.6/1:7), (**Āhāra**) **Kāya S** (S 46.2/5:64), and expl at Vbh 352. On methods of this hindrance, see §17n.

¹⁷ S 3.13/1:81 f @ SD 37.13 (1). The Sutta verse recurs in the DhA story about the rajah Pasenadi: DhA 15.7/-3:263-266 @ SD 37.13(2).

¹⁸ See **Thīna, middha**, SD 32.7.

¹⁹ The 4 strategies for sustaining a wealthy family are: (1) look for what is lost; (2) repair what is worn out; (3) eat and drink in moderation; and (4) put authority in a moral person (A 4.255/2:249), SD 37.10.

²⁰ See **Doṇa, pāka S** (S 3.13), SD 37.13.2 (below).

This is a follow-up instruction regarding the preparation of the rajah's meals. For every meal, there would be a gradual and gentle reduction. The last mouthful or spoonful or serving, as it were, must be foregone, obviously without telling the rajah about this, which would be easier on him. In other words, this is the second of the two-pronged dieting strategy for the royal dieting.

3.2 “HIS LAST LUMP OF BOILED RICE”

3.2.1 A key expression in the Buddha's dieting method for the rajah Pasenadi is “when it is time for his last lump of boiled rice” (*osāna, piṇḍa, kāle*). It would not be helpful to take this literally to refer to the usual amount of food that the rajah takes, as the reduction would be insignificant.

More effectively, the “last lump” (that is, his last “spoonful”) would be a sizable but comfortable amount of reduction in the rajah's intake. The strategy is explained as follows: “When it is time to boil the rice for the rajah's meal, reduce the measure of uncooked rice by just that much (the amount that was put aside).” [§2.8]. There is an interesting and efficacious psychological aspect that need to be pointed out here.

3.2.2 It is well known among monastics that they should take their meals slowly and mindfully. Some of the Sekhiya (training) rules of the Pātimokkha prescribe how a monastic should receive food, and how to eat it.²¹ Essentially, to practise moderation in food, it helps for us to eat slowly. In this way, we give the food time to settle in our stomach, and more easily feed fullness.

A further strategy is to drink some water before the meal, which helps reduce the amount of food we take in by eating slowly. If the situation is appropriate, we may also drink some water or soup during the meal. It is always helpful to note that **hunger** is only a feeling, and if we have taken a suitable amount of food, we simply note the lingering feeling of hunger, and let it go. The feeling will dissipate after a short while.

3.2.3 The Commentaries have a very interesting phrase for what is canonically known as “moderation in food” (*bhojane mattaññutā*), that is, “grasping the sign in over-eating.”²² The “sign” (*nimitta*) refers to our gut feeling that we are going to be full after taking four or five more morsels²³ (Tha 983), and to stop eating right there (before we feel full), and then perhaps drink some water. The water is not only to rinse the mouth, but also to cut off the feeling of hunger.²⁴

However, it is unlikely here, at least in the initial stages, that the rajah himself would be willing or able to notice this crucial moment. This is the role that his nephew, Sudassana, plays, that is, by watching the amount that the rajah has taken. When this amount is more or less reached, the nephew utters the mantra, and the rajah stops eating.

In due course, as the rajah has more control over his own eating habit, then he would be able and willing to note that point or “sign,” before over-eating sets in. When this process is self-willed, then the rajah (or anyone) is on the way to success in his dieting. [3.2.4]

3.2.4 How do we actually notice the “sign” of impending fullness [3.2.3]? The answer is a simple one, but its execution needs diligence. We must learn to eat more slowly—mindfully chewing every morsel and mouthful. Our mind and heart are then in our mouth, our eating—we are really enjoying our food. Such a mindful eating allows us to feel how we are gradually feeling satiated.

It makes good sense then to eat slowly and mindfully—it's a great way to fully enjoy our meal. As a bonus, such enjoyable eating allows us to feel satiated before we are really full. Hence, we are able to feel that we are *nearly* full. That's when we stop eating.

— — —

²¹ For monks: Sekh 27-55; for nuns: Bhī Sekh 27-55. They are actually the same set of rules.

²² *Ati, bhojane nimitta-g, gāha*. DA 3:780; MA 1:284 = SA 3:166 = AA 1:50 = ItA 2:180; VbhA 273.

²³ Tha 983 (misunderstood in Tha:RD); Vism 1.94/33, also qu Tha 983; qu at Miln 407.

²⁴ See *Thīna, middha*, SD 32.6 (3.2.4).

SD 37.13(1)**Doṇa,pāka Sutta**The Discourse on Food by the Bucketful | **S 3.13/1:81 f**

Theme: Rajah Pasenadi overcomes gluttony

1 Originating at Sāvattihī.**2** Now at that time, rajah Pasenadi of Kosala had eaten a bucketful of rice.

Then rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, having eaten, breathing heavily, approached the Blessed One.

Having approached, he saluted the Blessed One and sat down at one side.

3 Then the Blessed One, knowing that rajah Pasenadi of Kosala was breathing heavily on account of his meal, uttered this verse at that time:

*Manujassa sadā satīmato
mattam jānato laddha,bhojane
tanukassa bhavanti vedanā
saṅikam jīrati āyu,pālayan'ti.*

When a man is ever mindful,
knowing his measure with the meals he takes,
his pains become trivial,
he ages slowly, guarding his life. **402**

4 Now at that time, the brahmin youth Sudassana was standing behind rajah Pasenadi of Kosala.**5** Then rajah Pasenadi of Kosala addressed the brahmin youth Sudassana:

“Come now, dear Sudassana, go before the Blessed One and learn the verse. Recite it to me whenever I am having a meal.

And I will present you a hundred karshapanas²⁵ worth of meal daily on a regular basis.**6** “Yes, your majesty!” the brahmin youth Sudassana replied to rajah Pasenadi of Kosala. Then he went before the Blessed One, and having learned the verse, spoke it to rajah Pasenadi of Kosala during his meals.

When a man is ever mindful,
his pains become trivial,

knowing his measure with the meals he takes,
he ages slowly, guarding his life. **402**

7 Then rajah Pasenadi of Kosala gradually reduced the amount of his rice to stop at a mere pint-pot²⁶ at most.**8** Then, later on, rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, when he was much slimmer, stroked his limbs with his hands, and at that time, uttered this verse of uplift [udana]:

“The Blessed One was indeed compassionate to me for my own good,
for my benefit here and now, and also for my benefit hereafter!”

— evaṃ —

²⁵ *Kahāpana* (Skt *kārśāpana*), a small coin (of various metals, usu copper or silver): see **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19-23 (1).

²⁶ Burlingame’s term: see DhA:B 77: see (2.3) above.

SD 37.13(2)**Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu (1)**The Story of Pasenadi of Kosala (1)²⁷ | DhA 15.6/3:263-266

Theme: Rajah Pasenadi overcomes gluttony

1 “**Health is the highest gain...**” The Teacher gave this Dharma teaching while staying in Jetavana, in connection with rajah Pasenadi of Kosala. [264]

The rajah overeats and suffers

2 For a time, the rajah would eat boiled rice by the bucketful, along with portions of sauce and curry.

3 One day, after he had taken his breakfast, still heavy with drowsiness from over-eating, he went before the Teacher, rolled back and forth, looking weary. Overcome by a desire to sleep, but not able to lie down or stretch himself out, he sat down at one side.

4 Then the Teacher said to him,

“Did you come, maharajah, without having rested?”

“Yes, bhante. There is this great difficulty I always have after meal-time.”

The Buddha admonishes the rajah

5 Then the Teacher said to him, [265]

“Maharajah, over-eating brings that kind of suffering.”

Having said that, the Teacher pronounced this verse:

*Middhī yadā hoti mah’agghaso ca
niddāyitā samparivatta,sāyī
mahā,varāho’va nivāpa,puṭṭho
puna-p,punam gabbham upeti mandô it*

When he is slothful and a glutton,
a sleeper who lies rolling about,
like a great hog fed on grain,
again and again the fool goes to a womb. Dh 325²⁸

6 Having advised him with the verse, he advised him further with this verse:

*Manujassa sadā satīmato
mattam jānato laddha,bhojane
tanukassa bhavanti vedanā
saṅikam jīrati āyu,pālayan’ti.*

When a man is ever mindful,
knowing his measure with the meals he takes,
his pains become trivial,
he ages slowly, guarding his life. S 402²⁹

How the rajah’s meal is reduced

7 The rajah was unable to master the verses. So the Buddha instructed his nephew, the brahmin youth named Sudassana, “Son, memorize this stanza.”

After he had mastered the verse, he asked the Teacher, “What shall I do now, bhante?”

8 Then the Teacher said:

“When the rajah eats his meal, and is about to take the last lump of boiled rice, you must recite this verse. The rajah will understand its purpose, and will at once put it aside.

When it is time to boil the rice for the rajah’s meal, reduce the measure of uncooked rice by just that much (the amount that was put aside).”³⁰

²⁷ Pasenadi Kosala Vatthu (2), which recounts the same event in brief is at DhA 23.4/4:15-17.

²⁸ Also at **Dasaka Tha** (Tha 17), cf Tha 101. For technical analysis, see Dh:N 140 n325 & Tha:N.

²⁹ See **Doṇa,pāka S** (S 3.13), SD 37.13.2 (above).

³⁰ *Tasmim piṇḍe sittha,gaṇanāya rañño bhatta,pacana,kāle tattake taṇḍule hareyyāsī ti.* Burlingame’s tr here reads: “(His nephew) would fetch for his next meal just as many grains of fresh rice as there were grains of boiled rice in the lump of boiled rice which the king had thrown away,” which is unclear (DhA:B 3:77). See (2.4).

9 “Very good, bhante,” he said. Whenever the rajah eats his meal, and is about to take the last lump of boiled rice, he recited the verse. The rajah understood its purpose, and at once put it aside. And when it was time to boil the rice for the rajah’s meal, it was reduced by just the amount that was put aside.

And every time the rajah heard that verse, [266] he had a thousand pieces of money given. So the rajah had only a pint-pot of boiled rice³¹ at most, never exceeding that amount. After a time, his health improved and his body became leaner.

The rajah rejoices for various reasons

10 One day, the rajah visited the Buddha, and having saluted him, said:

“Bhante, I’m healthy now. Once again I’m able to chase and catch deer and horses.

Before, I used to only battle with my nephew, but now I have given him my daughter Vajirā in marriage.³² I’ve given this village as bath money [dowry].³³ Now that my quarrels with my nephew have ended, I have reason to be happy.

11 The other day, we lost a precious stone, belonging to our royal family, but it was just now returned to my hand, and for this reason I am happy, too.

12 Wishing for the trust of your disciples, I have made the daughter of one of your relatives as a member of our household, and for this reason I am happy, too.”³⁴

The highest happiness

14 The Teacher replied,

“Health, maharajah, is said to be the greatest gain. Whoever is contented, it is as if he has received the greatest wealth. Trust is like the best of relatives. But there is no happiness that is like nirvana.”

Having said that, he uttered this verse,

*Ārogya, paramā lābhā
santuṭṭhi, paramaṃ dhanam
vissāsa, paramā ñāti
nibbāna, paramaṃ sukhan’ti*

Health is the highest gain,³⁵
contentment is the greatest wealth,
the trusted is the best relative,
nirvana is the greatest happiness.

Dh 204

15 At the end of the teaching, many attained the fruit of streamwinning and so on.³⁶

111121 111122 111228 120428a 131118 140815 150526 160429 160628

³¹ On the pint-pot of boiled rice (*nālik’odana*), see (2.2).

³² This nephew is of course **Ajāta,sattu**, who upon killing his own father, Bimbi,sāra, who is married to Kosala,-devī, Pasenadi’s sister. When Kosala,devī dies of grief, Pasenadi punishes him by confiscating village of **Kāsī** (her bath money or dowry). Ajātasattu retaliates by waging war against the aged Pasenadi, who eventually wins and imprisons him, ie, until he renounces his claim to the throne and marries **Vajirā** (or Vajirī, Pasenadi’s only daughter). Kāsī is again given as bath money, and so returns to Ajāta,sattu (J 239/2:237, 283/2:403, 492/4:342 f). On the Buddha’s consoling Pasenadi’s having only a daughter by Mallikā, see (**Dhītā**) **Mallikā S** (S 3.16/1:86), SD 66.3; she is mentioned in **Piya,jātika S** (M 2:110,10-18).

³³ *So gāmo tassā yeva nhāna,cuṇṇa,mūlam katvā dinno*. The phrase *nhāna,cuṇṇa,mūla*, “the price of perfumed powder for the bath” refers to “bath money” or dowry (money or property brought by a woman to her husband at marriage): AA 1:410; J 2:403; DhA 1:398. Burlingame seems unaware of this (DhA:B 3:77).

³⁴ This is ref to Pasenadi’s marriage to Vāsabha,khattiyā (Mahānāma’s daughter by a slave-woman), the union of which gave birth to prince Viḍudabha, who would later massacre the Sakyas in revenge. On **Viḍudabha**, see DhA 4.3/1:345-360; Intro to J 133 (J 4:144-153). The embedded story of the past (DhA 1:342-345) is a free version of J 346 (J 3:142-145). Cf J 1:133, 4:146 f, 151f.

³⁵ Lines ad are found in the Buddha’s verse to Māgandiya: see (**Paribbājaka**) **Māgandiya S** (M 75,19/1:508 f), where cp Pasenadi’s joy to Māgandiya’s exultation.

³⁶ The commentarial glosses have been omitted.