

## SD 62.12ab The Two (Udāna) Dabba Suttas

(Udāna) Dabba Sutta 1 (U 8.9); (Udāna) Sutta 2 (U 8.10)

Theme: The elder Dabba's parinirvana

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### 1 Sutta summaries

There are two (Udāna) Dabba Suttas, both recording the Parinirvana of the arhat Dabba:

- (1) **(Udāna) Dabba Sutta 1** (U 8.9): the arhat Dabba's parinirvana. [SD 62.12a]
- (2) **(Udāna) Dabba Sutta 2** (U 8.10): Dabba's parinirvana related by the Buddha. [SD 62.12b]

### 2 Dabba Malla,putta

#### 2.1 A 7-YEAR-OLD ARHAT

##### 2.1.1 Origins and name

**2.1.1.1 Dabba** was a 7-year-old arhat,<sup>1</sup> born at Anupiya<sup>2</sup> in a Malla family of **Kusinārā**.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, Dabba's remarkable birth portends that he would master the fire element (*tejo,dhātu*) by way of the fire-kasina (*tejo,kasiṇa*). Born of the funeral fire, Dabba later self-cremated himself through dhyanic self-combustion (like the elder Ānanda<sup>4</sup> and the elder Bakkula<sup>5</sup>).

**2.1.1.2** Although **the Udāna Commentary** mentions that the 7-year-old Dabba approached his parents for permission to be ordained (UA 430,13 f), other commentarial sources say that it was from his grandmother that he sought permission to do so. According to **the Aṅguttara Commentary**, **the Thera,-gāthā Commentary** and **the Vinaya Tīkā** (Sār'attha,dīpanī) his mother had died when she was about to give birth. As her body was being cremated, her belly split open and Dabba rose into the air by the power of his merits, landing on or at the wooden pillar (*dabba-t,thambhe*) of the funeral pyre.<sup>6</sup>

**The Apadāna** and its **Commentary** give a different detail: it says that the boy rose from his mother's body on the funeral pyre and landed on a heap of **darbha** grass (*dabba,puñjamhi*);<sup>7</sup> hence, he was given the name *Dabba*.<sup>8</sup> The account clearly plays on the word *dabba* as referring to the *kusa* grass (another name for darbha) [2.1.1.3].<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dh Comy gives accounts of five 7-year-old arhats: a girl Cīrā (DhA 14.12/3:210 f); 4 novices (DhA 26.23/4:176-180): Saṅkicca (DhA 8.9/2:240-253), Paṇḍita (DhA 6.5/2:127-147), Sopāka (DhA 26.23/4:176) and Revata (DhA 7.9/-2:188-200); Sukha (DhA 10.1/4:48 f); Sumana (DhA 25.12/4:120-127) and Tissa (DhA 5.15/2:84-103).

<sup>2</sup> A township in Malla country to the east of Kapila,vatthu.

<sup>3</sup> Ap 531/(2:)471-473 (tr Ap:W 889).

<sup>4</sup> Ānanda died at 120; after his self-cremation, his bodily relics fell in equal proportion on both sides of the river Rohinī, for his relatives in the Sakya and the Koliya clans. See DhA 2:99 f.

<sup>5</sup> **Bakkula S** (M 124,40 f/3:127 f), SD 3.15. Bakkula died at 160 [M 124,3 n (SD 3.15)]. In his case, it is said that his bodily relics were found after the cremation (MA 4:196).

<sup>6</sup> AA 1:274,13 f; ThaA 1:43,13-16; VAṬ:Be 2:342 f. See also DPPN 1:1060, sv Dabba-Mallaputta Thera.

<sup>7</sup> Be Ce Se *patito dabba,puñjamhi tato dabbo vissuto | brahmacari,balenāham\* vimutto satta,vassisako* || Ap 531/\*36/473 (tr Ap:W 894). Ee *\*brahmacera,phalenāham*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ath'ekho tassā sarīraṃ jhāpanatthāya citakasmim āropetvā kumāraṃ dabb'antare patitaṃ gahetvā paṭijaggāpesi* (ApA 505,4-7).

<sup>9</sup> On the miraculous birth of another 7-year-old arhat, Saṅkicca, see DhA 8.9/2:240-253 qu at Vism 379 (story tr DhA:B 2:238-246).

### 2.1.1.3 The word **dabba** has 4 important senses:<sup>10</sup>

**dabba**<sup>1</sup> (Skt *dravya* (neut) from *dravati*, VDRU)

wise, fit, capable;<sup>11</sup> a wise, skilled or worthy person.<sup>12</sup>

**Dabba**<sup>2</sup> (Skt *dravya*, from VDRU)

(Skt *dravya*), what is from a tree; wood (P *daru*).<sup>13</sup>

**dabba**<sup>3</sup> also *dravya*

(Skt *darbha*; P *dabbha*) a kind of grass, that is, kusa (Skt *kuśa*) often used in Vedic sacrifices<sup>14</sup> [2.1.1.4].

**dabba**<sup>4</sup> (Skt *dravya*, from VDRU)

(Skt *dravya*), what is from a tree; wood (P *daru*).<sup>15</sup>

The third sense—a kind of grass, kusa—applies to the *dabba* in the two **Dabba Suttas** (U 8.9+10). [2.1.1.4]

**2.1.1.4 Dabba** (Skt *darbha*)—henceforth anglicized as “darbha”— is also a name for a well-known sacred Indian grass, called as **kusa**<sup>16</sup> (DhA 3:484) or kusha (*Poa cynosuroides*) (PED),<sup>17</sup> or muñja (*Saccharum munja*);<sup>18</sup> when used as Vedic sacrificial grass, it is called *pavitram* (SED). Most likely, it is *Demostachya bipinnata* (big cordgrass and salt reed-grass), or *Saccharum cylindricum*<sup>19</sup> (SED).<sup>20</sup>

Clearly, these names refer to certain kinds of grass common in various regions of the central Gangetic plain. Apparently, *dabba*, *kusa* and *muñja* are subspecies of the same species, or actually different types of grass, since **the Loma,sak’aṅgiya**<sup>21</sup> **Thera,gāthā**, in one of its verses, says:

*dabbaṃ kusaṃ poṭakilaṃ  
usiraṃ muñja,babbajam  
urasā panudissāmi  
vivekaṃ anubrūhayam*

With my chest,<sup>22</sup> I shall push aside dabba grass,  
kusa grass, poṭakila grass, usīra,  
muñja grass, and bulrushes,  
devoting myself to seclusion.

(Tha 27)<sup>23</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See DP: svv *dabba*<sup>1</sup>, *dabba*<sup>2</sup>, and *dabba*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> V 3:164,32; S 1:187,5\* = Tha 1218; Tha 5.

<sup>12</sup> Pañca.gati,dīpana 14.

<sup>13</sup> J 2:405,4; Ap 559,8.

<sup>14</sup> D 1:141; M 1:344, 2:162; A 2:207; Pug 56.

<sup>15</sup> J 2:405,4; Ap 559,8.

<sup>16</sup> On *kusa*, see SD 22.8 (3.3) D 5 qu n; SD 52.1 (15.1.1); **Nadi S** (S 22.93,3), SD 42.19.

<sup>17</sup> *Poa* is Gk for “fodder.” Also known as meadow-grass (mainly in Europe and Asia), bluegrass (in N America), tussock (some New Zealand species) and speargrass. [Wiki]

<sup>18</sup> D 2:174; Sn p28, 440. The reed itself is called *isīka* (D 1:17,12 = M 2:17,27; Vism 6:406; DA 105,12; J 6:67,24\*).

<sup>19</sup> Or, *imperata cylindrica*, in **W D Clayton**, K T Harman, H Williamson, World Grass Species - Synonymy database The Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 2006; **Z Wu** & P H Raven (eds), *Poaceae. Flora of China* 22 2006:1-733. Missouri Botanical Garden Press, St. Louis. [IPNI] 8 Feb 2025.

<sup>20</sup> See SED *darbha*; G M Meulenbeld, *The Madhavanidāna and its chief commentary*, 1974:561 f], a kind of grass.

<sup>21</sup> On his name, MA 5:6,27-29.

<sup>22</sup> “With my chest” (*urasā*) prob means “with all my heart.”

<sup>23</sup> Tha 27 = Ap 545.18/505; Ce *dabbaṃ*; Be *kāsaṃ*; Ee *dabbhaṃ*; Se *sabbaṃ*), Tha 27abc = J:Be \*1833abc/6:508.

**ThaA 1:90,15: *dabban ti dabba,tiṇaṃ āha yaṃ saddulo ti pi vuccati***, “Dabba grass is also called saddula.” Saddula, however, in Skt is *durva*, used esp in Ayurveda medicine and Hindu rituals: this is *Cynodon dactylon*. 8 Feb 2024. See Tha:N 127 n27.

The Commentaries also explain *darbha* as follows: “Poor wandering Ātharva mendicants, it is said, not taking salt for 7 days, lying down on darbha on the ground, perform austerities.”<sup>24</sup> However, such a practice would very likely be post-Buddha.

**2.1.1.5** The word **Malla,putta**, literally, “Malla son (of family),” refers either to a “young Malla” or a member of a renowned Malla family. **The Udāna Commentary** explains *malla,putta* as “son of a Malla rajah” (*malla,rājassa putto*, UA 2:430,9). Here, however *rāja* does not mean “king” since the Mallas (like the Sakyas) were a tribal confederation, not a kingdom (like Magadha or Kosala). *Rāja* here refers to a kshatriya noble, especially of the ruling class. In short, Dabba was from a noble Malla family.

## 2.1.2 Renunciation

**2.1.2.1** The 7-year-old Dabba saw the Buddha when the latter was visiting in Malla country, and Dabba asked his grandmother (his mother having died at his birth) [2.1.1.2] if he might join the sangha under the Buddha. She brought him to the Buddha, who seeing his spiritual potential (*upanissaya*) for the undertaking, gave him permission to go forth. Dabba returned with the Buddha to **Rājagaha** where Dabba was ordained.

**2.1.2.2** As a result of the Buddha’s exhortation to Dabba on the occasion of his going forth, the 3 states of existence (*bhava-t,taya*) presented themselves as if ablaze.<sup>25</sup> Established in insight, even while still in the tonsure-hall, he attained **arhathood**.<sup>26</sup> **The Aṅguttara Commentary** details that Dabba was established in fruition of streamwinning with the falling of the first lock of hair, in the fruit of once-returning with the second, in the fruition of nonreturning with the third. And in the fruition of arhathood by the time the rest of his hair had been shaven (A 1:274 f).

**2.1.2.3** Upon reaching arhathood, the 7-year-old arhat, Dabba, attained all the qualities of a **disciple** (*sāvaka*), that is, the 3 knowledges,<sup>27</sup> the 4 analytic insights,<sup>28</sup> the 6 superknowledges,<sup>29</sup> the 9 supermundane states,<sup>30</sup> and so on. Having attained all that, he became one of **the 80 great disciples** (ThaA 3:205).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> NmA 1:413,24 (*āthabban’iddhikā kira sattāhaṃ aloṇikaṃ bhuñjitvā dabbe attharitvā pathaviyaṃ sayamānā tapam caritvā*) = DhsA 92,8 f (Be Se *dabbe*; Ce Ee *dabbhe*).

<sup>25</sup> On *bhavattaya* as Māra’s range, cf UA 321,27-39).

<sup>26</sup> UA 430,8-20.

<sup>27</sup> **The 3 knowledges** (*te,vijjā* or *ti,vijjā*) are those of: (1) recollecting one’s own past lives, (2) recollecting of the past lives of others, and (3) the knowledge of the destruction of the influxes (sense-desire, existence, views, ignorance). See **Te,vijja S** (D 13) @ SD 1.8 (2.2.2); **Cūḷa Hatthi,padôpama S** (M 27,23-25), SD 40.5. As nos. 7-9 of the Buddha’s 10 powers (*dasa,bala*): **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,17-19), SD 49.1 = 2.24 (abr).

<sup>28</sup> **The 4 analytic insights** (*catasso paṭisambhidā*) are those of: (1) meanings, (2) teachings, (3) language, and (4) ready wit. See SD 28.4 (4); SD 41.6 (2.2); SD 58.1 (5.4.2.13).

<sup>29</sup> **The 6 superknowledges** (*cha ābhijñā*) are those of: (1) psychic powers, (2) clairaudience, (3) mind-reading, (4) retrocognition, (5) clairvoyance, and (6) the knowledge of the destruction of the influxes. See **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,89-99), SD 8.10; **Kevaḍḍha S** (D 11,55-66), SD 1.7; SD 27.5a (5).

<sup>30</sup> **The 9 supermundane states** (*nava lok’uttara,dhammā*) are the 4 paths (*magga*) of streamwinning, once-returning, nonreturning and arhathood, + their 4 respective fruitions (*phala*), + nirvana: SD 15.9 (2.0); SD 54.2b (1.2.0.3).

<sup>31</sup> Ie, the 80 great elders (*āsīti mahā,thera*), see SD 15.10a (7); SD 55.11 (3.4.2.2).

For this was said by the venerable elder:

“Arhathood has been realized by me even years after my birth. Whatever is to be reached by a disciple, all that has been reached by me.”<sup>32</sup>

### 2.1.3 Dabba’s glowing finger

Even as an arhat, Dabba wished to be of service to the sangha. With the Buddha’s permission, Dabba took upon himself the task of appointing night-lodgings to travelling monks and of assigning them their meals. He performed his duties most diligently and with great skill; his fame spread far and wide.<sup>33</sup>

Monks coming from afar, wishing to witness his skill, would deliberately arrive late and ask for lodgings in some place remote from Rājagaha. Dabba would walk ahead of them, with his **finger radiating light** to show them the way. In due course, he was declared the foremost of monks who assign lodgings (*senāsana, paññāpakānaṃ*, A 1:24).<sup>34</sup>

It was the sight of Dabba on one of his residence-assigning journeys which led to **Puṇṇā**, a slave-woman of Rājagaha, meeting the Buddha. She made a simple offering of a rice-flour cake baked over a fire, which the Buddha accepted. Upon hearing the Buddha’s admonitions, she became a streamwinner.<sup>35</sup>

## 2.2 ACCUSATIONS AGAINST DABBA

### 2.2.1 Mettiya, bhummajakā

Dabba’s enthusiasm and meticulousness in his service to others made him famous and popular. This must have made some unawakened monks jealous. It once happened that meals were allotted by Dabba to **the Mettiya-Bhummajakā** (a group of 6 monks, followers of Mettiya and Bhummajakā) at the house of a rich man, who, discovering their identity, gave orders that they were to be fed without care. The Mettiya-Bhummajakā were greatly offended, and thinking (wrongly) that Dabba had intended to slight them, had one of their members, the nun Mettiyā, to falsely accuse Dabba of having seduced her. The charge was investigated, Mettiyā was expelled, and Dabba’s fame increased.<sup>36</sup>

### 2.2.2 Other accusations

The Mettiya-Bhummajakā persuaded the Licchavi, **Vaḍḍha**, to make a similar charge against Dabba regarding his wife<sup>37</sup> (V 2:124 f). **The Taṇḍula, nāli Jātaka** (J 5/1:123 f) mentions another dispute, where the boastful monk, **Lāludāyī**, charges Dabba with not performing his duties conscientiously. Thereupon Lāludāyī was appointed to the task but he proved a failure.

<sup>32</sup> V 3:158; UA 431,24-26.

<sup>33</sup> For details on Dabba’s renunciation, see UA 430 (tr UA:M 1063).

<sup>34</sup> **A glowing finger** familiarly appears on an alien being<sup>34</sup> in the 1982 American science fiction film, “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial,” produced and directed by Steven Spielberg and written by Melissa Mathison. It tells the story of Elliott, a boy who befriends an alien being he names “E.T.” who has been stranded on Earth. Along with his friends and family, Elliott must find a way to help E.T. find his way home. In the movie, ET has incredible powers: Telekinesis and telepathy, not to mention his iconic glowing finger which heals all things including wounds and dying plants.

<sup>35</sup> DhA 17.6/3:321-325; **Kuṇḍaka, kucchi, sindhava, potaka J** (J 254/2:287-291) was related in her connection: even in a past life, she made a similar offering to the bodhisattva.

<sup>36</sup> Tha 5; V 2:74-80 (Cv 4.1-11) ~ 3:158-163 (Saṅgh 8) + 166-168 (Saṅgh 9); V 4:37 f; VA 3:598 f; ApA 505.

<sup>37</sup> Cv 5.20 (V 2:124-127). The sangha inverted the almsbowl (*patta, nikkujjana*) or boycotted the Licchavī Vaḍḍha for making a false accusation against Dabba (which means Vaḍḍha was deprived of an opportunity for making merit). This canonical precedent was used in Sep 1990 by the Burmese sangha against the leaders of the armed forces for their atrocities. [Trinity] [HumanRights] 5 Feb 2025.

### 2.2.3 Dabba's past karma

**2.2.3.1** In the time of **Vipassī Buddha** (the 19<sup>th</sup> of the 24 past buddhas), Dabba made false accusation against an arhat elder; hence, the conspiracy against Dabba by the Mettiya, bhummajakā.<sup>38</sup>

In the time of **Kassapa Buddha** (the buddha before Gotama) Dabba, with 6 others, went up to a hill-top, determined not to leave until they had accomplished their purpose. The assembly leader attained arhathood, and another nonreturning—both were unnamed. The remaining 5 of them died before this came to pass. These 5 were Pukkusāti, Kumāra Kassapa, Bāhiya Dāru, ciriya, Dabba Malla, putta and Sabhiya.<sup>39</sup>

**2.2.3.2** In the time of **Padum'uttara Buddha** (the 10<sup>th</sup> of the 24 past buddhas), Dabba was a seth's son in Haṁsa, vatī. It was then that he **aspired** [2.2.3.3] to be a disciple (*sāvaka*), one who is foremost of monks who assign lodgings.<sup>40</sup>

For 103 times he became king among *devas* and 105 times king of humans.<sup>41</sup>

## 3 Dabba's parinirvana

### 3.1 DABBA'S AGE AT HIS PARINIRVANA

The suttas do not tell us Dabba's age when he died; apparently, he entered parinirvana quite young. **The Udāna** (U 8.9; UA 431 f) contains accounts of his passing [1].

One day, returning from his almsrounds in Rājagaha, he realized that he had but a short while yet to live. He approached the Buddha and, with his leave, showed various psychic powers and passed away by way of self-cremation. [2.1.1.1]

### 3.2 DABBA'S REASON FOR ATTAINING PARINIRVANA

#### 3.2.1 The reason for Dabba's parinirvana

Dhammapāla, the Udāna Commentator, was diligent in informing us the real reason for Dabba's parinirvana.

**"Now is the time for my final nirvana"** (*parinibbāna, kālo me ti*), should be understood as follows (*dasseti*):

"Blessed One, the time for my final nirvana without remnant of substrate has presented itself. I wish to attain parinirvana, once I have informed the Blessed One of this."

Some however say that the elder (*thera*)<sup>42</sup> asked for leave from the Teacher for the sake of attaining parinirvana, despite the fact that he was neither aged nor sick, with this reason: that he begged leave of the Teacher after coming to the conclusion."

'The monks Mettiya and Bhummajaka previously charged me with a defeat (*pārājika*) offence that was groundless. Yet they would still curse me even though the case has been settled. Whilst other worldlings, believing them, treat me with irreverence and contempt.

Why should I be hauling this useless burden of suffering? Thus, I should attain parinirvana right now.'

<sup>38</sup> ApA 504,19-23.

<sup>39</sup> DhA 2:212; UA 81; VA 2:578 f; ThaA 1:44 Jātaka (Ap quote); Ap 2:471 f (ApA 504,31-505,3).

<sup>40</sup> ApA 504,10-19, 505,9-506,8.

<sup>41</sup> Ap 531,15\*/471 + 16\*/472.

<sup>42</sup> Although young, he was firmly established (*thira*) in path and nirvana.

But this is without basis. (*Taṃ akāraṇaṃ*)

For those in whom the influxes have been destroyed do not, so long as their life-formations are not fully exhausted, set their hearts on parinirvana, apply and exert themselves for the sake of it, for fear or blame and so on from others. Nor do they remain long for the sake of applause and so forth from others.

Rather they await the full exhaustion of their own life-formations solely as a result of their functioning of which it is said:

I delight not in death, nor do I delight in life; I shall cast aside this body fully aware and mindful.  
I delight not in death, nor do I delight in life; but I await my time as a servant his wages.

(**Sāriputta Tha**, Tha 1002 f)<sup>43</sup>

The Blessed One, having surveyed Dabba's life-formations and come to know of their complete exhaustion, said:

"Dabba, now is the time you may consider (doing what is right)." [U 8.9,4]

(UA 431,18-432,6)

### **3.2.2 Description of Dabba's Parinirvana**

**3.2.2.1** The elder Dabba, having saluted the Buddha, circumambulated (rightwise) him thrice; then, standing at one side, said:

"Having lived 100,000 aeons with you, Blessed One, doing meritorious deeds in various places with you, I acted in connection with this goal alone. That very same goal has today reached its climax—this is your last sight of me."

To some amongst those who were worldly monks or streamwinners and once-returners, there arose great compassion; some others ended up weeping. (UA 432,13-20)

**3.2.2.2** Then the Blessed One, having discerned the course of Dabba's mind, said,

"In that case, Dabba, display psychic wonders to me and the sangha of monks."

When the whole sangha had assembled, Dabba displayed all the wonders, common to all the disciples, that is to say, "Having been one, he becomes many," and so on.<sup>44</sup>

At the end of the psychic display, Dabba once more went before the Buddha and saluted him.

Then, having seated himself cross-legged in meditation, Dabba rose into the sky. Creating the earth kasina, he remained there in the sky.

**Having attained the heat element (*tejo, dhātum samāpajjitvā*)**, Dabba then reached the attainment of the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana in the fire kasina.<sup>45</sup> Then, emerging from the fire kasina, Dabba adverted to his own body, and resolved that the fire element would consume it, and thus entered parinirvana.<sup>46</sup>

Following that resolution, Dabba's whole body blazed up. And through that power of resolution, that fire—like the fire ushering in the end of world-period—instantaneously cremated whatever had

<sup>43</sup> Only Tha 1003 is qu in UA here. Elsewhere, these are well quoted verses. Tha 1002 = 607; 1003 = 606, qu at SA 1:126 (on S 1:126) & UA 432 (on U 8.9); Tha 606 f qu at Miln 45 & DA 810 (with a variation). Cf Tha 20, 196 & Manu 6.45. See also **Chann'ovāda S** (M 144) @ SD 11.12 (7.4); SD 39.3 (1.4.4).

<sup>44</sup> Traditionally, there are **8 types of psychic wonders**: (1) multi-transformation, (2) dematerialization, (3) moving through solids, (4) earth-diving, (5) walking on water, (6) levitation, and (7) touching the sun, and (8) astral travel. They are fully listed in, eg, **D 2**,1:87-98 (SD 8.10); **D 11**,4-5/1:215 (SD 1.7).

<sup>45</sup> Vism says that Dabba first gets into **the earth kasina** to project the earth element so that he is able to remain midair (*paṭhavī, kasiṇe pana paṭhamam jhānam samāpajjitvā*) (Vism374).

<sup>46</sup> Apparently, this process occurs at the "subconscious" of the life-continuum (*bhav'aṅga*)



taken formation, even the size of an atom, without leaving anything remnant, not even mere soot, thus extinguishing itself.<sup>47</sup> (UA 432)

**3.2.2.3** The Udāna Commentary goes on explicating a note of **apologetics**:

Why did the elder perform a display of psychic wonders, that is said to be a show of superhuman state (*uttari,manussa,dhamma*)? Had not such a performance been rejected by the Buddha?<sup>48</sup>

This question should not be raised since it was a display of psychic wonders before the sangha, not before the laity, which is prohibited.<sup>49</sup> It was not a self-willed display of mere psychic transformations.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the elder only displayed the psychic wonder upon being instructed by the Buddha himself.

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## SD 62.12a Paṭhama Dabba Sutta The First Dabba Discourse

Theme: Dabba's parinirvana

**U 8.9**

**1** Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying at the squirrels' feeding ground in the bamboo grove at Rājagaha.

**2** Then the venerable<sup>51</sup> **Dabba Malla,putta** approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One and saluted the Blessed One, he sat down at one side.

**3** As he sat at one side, the venerable Dabba Malla,putta said this to the Blessed One:  
"Now is the time for my final nirvana (*parinibbāṇa*),<sup>52</sup> sugata [happy one]."

**4** "Dabba, now is the time for what you think (is the right thing to do)."<sup>53</sup>

**5** Then, the venerable Dabba Malla,putta having risen from his seat, saluted and then circumambulated the Blessed One (sunwise).

Then the venerable Dabba Malla,putta rose up into the air, and sitting cross-legged in the sky,<sup>54</sup> entered the fire-element, and emerging, attained final nirvana.<sup>55</sup>

**6** And as the venerable Dabba Malla,putta's body was burning and blazing away, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>47</sup> On the Buddha's own display of the "twin wonder" (*yamaka pāṭihāriya*)—the simultaneous display of the fire and water elements, see Pm 594 f/1:125; UA 1:141 f,

<sup>48</sup> See **Miracles**, SD 27.5a (7.2). On arhats without psychic powers, see (**Arahatta**) **Susīma S** (S 12.70), SD 15.8.

<sup>49</sup> V 2:112; esp VA 1203.

<sup>50</sup> *Taṇ ca kho vikubbana,vasena, na pan'evaxm adhiṭṭhāna,vaseva* (UA 433,10 f).

<sup>51</sup> "The venerable," *āyasmā*, is not a status-marker, but "a loving appellation" (*piya,vacanaṃ*, UA 2:8).

<sup>52</sup> *Parinibbāṇa* (Skt *parinirvāṇa*), anglicized as "parinirvana."

<sup>53</sup> *Yassa'dāni tvaṃ dabba kālaṃ maññasi*. This is stock; see essay **SD 60.7; D 2**,103 n (SD 8.10); SD 60.6 (3.3.1).

<sup>54</sup> *Atha kho āyasmato dabbassa malla,puttassa vehāsaṃ abbhuggantvā ākāse antalikkhe pallaṅkena nisīditvā*.

<sup>55</sup> *Tejo,dhātuṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhahitvā parinibbutassa*.

<sup>56</sup> *Sarīrassa jhāyamānassa dayhamānassa n'eva chārikā paññāyittha na masi*.

**7** Just as butter or oil burning and blazing, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen,  
so too *the venerable Dabba Malla,putta rose up into the air, and sitting cross-legged in the sky,*  
*entered the fire-element, and emerging, attained final nirvana.*

*And as the venerable Dabba Malla,putta's body was burning and blazing away, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen.*

**8** Then the Blessed One, understanding the significance of this, at that very moment, uttered this udāna:

**9** *abhedi kāyo nirodhi saññā  
vedanā sīti,bhaviṃsu<sup>57</sup> sabbā*

The body has broken up, perception ceased;  
all feelings have been cooled;

*vūpasamiṃsu saṅkhārā  
viññāṇaṃ atthamāgamā ti*

formations have been stilled;  
consciousness has come to an end.<sup>58</sup>

—evaṃ—

## SD 62.12b (Udāna) Dabba Sutta 2

### The (Udāna) Second Dabba Discourse

Theme: The Buddha announces Dabba's parinirvana

**U 8.10**

**1** Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika's monastery in Jeta's grove.

**2** There the Blessed One addressed the monks:

"Bhikshus."

"Bhadante," the monks replied to the Blessed One.

**3** The Blessed One said this:

"Bhikshus, when the venerable Dabba Malla,putta rose up into the air, and sitting cross-legged in the sky,<sup>59</sup>

entered the fire-element, and emerging, attained final nirvana;<sup>60</sup>

**4** and as the venerable Dabba Malla,putta's body was burning and blazing away, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen.

**5** Just as butter or oil burning and blazing, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen,  
so too *the venerable Dabba Malla,putta rose up into the air, and sitting cross-legged in the sky,*  
*entered the fire-element, and emerging, attained final nirvana.*

*And as the venerable Dabba Malla,putta's body was burning and blazing away, neither ash nor soot was there to be seen."*

<sup>57</sup> Se Be Ce; Ee pi 'tidahaṃsu; Se pītidaḥaṃsu; Ka sītidaḥiṃsu (Ka)

<sup>58</sup> "The body" (form), perception, feelings, formations and consciousness are the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k,khandha*): SD 17.

<sup>59</sup> On Ānanda and Bakkula, see (2.1.1.1).

<sup>60</sup> *Tejo,dhātuṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhahitvā parinibbutassa.*



6 Then the Blessed One, understanding the significance of this, at that very moment, uttered this udana:

7 *ayo,ghana,hatass'eva  
jalato jāta,vedaso<sup>61</sup>  
anupubbūpasantassa  
yathā na ñāyate gati*

Just as when iron is struck,  
though the fire continues to blaze,  
(the iron's) gradually fading glow—  
it's not known where the glow has gone—

8 *evaṃ sammā,vimuttānaṃ  
kāma,bandh'ogha,tārinaṃ  
paññāpetuṃ gati n'atthi  
pattānaṃ acalaṃ sukhaṃ ti*

even so, for those fully purified,  
who have crossed over the floods of pleasures' bonds,  
no rebirth-destiny exists—  
they have attained unshakeable joy.

—evaṃ—

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<sup>61</sup> *Dabbassa bhikkhave malla,puttassa vehāsaṃ abbhuggantvā ākāse antalikkhe pallaṅkena nisīditvā.*