

SD 62.3

Jana,vasabha Sutta

The Discourse on Jana,vasabha

D 18

Theme: Lay disciples who have attained the path, Bimbisāra and Sanañkumāra

Translated by Piya Tan ©2019, 2024

1 Summary and significance

1.1 SUMMARIES

1.1.1 Sutta summary

The Jana,vasabha Sutta records the Buddha's declaration that numerous followers from **Nādikā** have attained various stages of the path. Ānanda then requests the Buddha to declare the path-attainments of deceased followers from Magadha, too. The celestial yaksha, **Janavasabha** (Bimbisāra) [§4] appears before the Buddha and reports that the great brahma Sanañkumāra [§17], appearing in Tāvatiṃsa, taught Dharma to the devas and that many followers from Magadha have been reborn amongst them as path-attainers.

1.1.2 Narrative summary

§§1-2. **The Jana,vasabha Sutta** (D 18) is a sutta elaborating on the Nādikā episode of **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16,2.5-2.7), recording the Buddha's declaration of the path attainments of various deceased followers (*paricārika*) from Nādikā.

§§2-7. **Ānanda** realizes that it is both proper and beneficial that the Buddha similarly declares the spiritual destinies of the deceased followers of Magadha, where the Buddha gained awakening. Ānanda then presents his view to the Buddha.

§§8-14. The following morning, while the Buddha is directing his mind to this matter of the followers from Magadha, the celestial yaksha **Jana,vasabha** (Bimbisāra reborn in Vessavaṇa's host in the heaven of the 4 great kings) appears before the Buddha and describes his own state as a streamwinner and wishes to be a once-returner. Janavasabha then relates how the devas of Tāvatiṃsa and the 4 Great Kings assemble in the Sudhamma Hall of Tāvatiṃsa.

§§15-28. Janavasabha then describes how the great brahma Sanañkumāra appears before the Sudhamma Hall assembly and teaches it Dharma, thus: the 4 bases of power [§22], the threefold opening [§§23-25], the 4 focuses of mindfulness [§26] and the 7 requisites of samadhi [§27].

§17.5. Brahmā Sanañkumāra himself declares that over 2,400 streamwinners have arisen in the assembly from Magadha; and also once-returners, and other followers from Magadha reborn in Tāvatiṃsa on account of their good karma.

§29. The great king Vessavaṇa, with Sanañkumāra's affirmation, then transmits these teachings and news to his host. Janavasabha, having heard them from both Sanañkumāra and Vessavaṇa, relates them to the Buddha, who then relates them to Ānanda, who in turn records them for our benefit and for posterity.

1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

1.2.1 Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) episodes

1.2.1.1 Although the fullest account of the Buddha’s last year is recorded in **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16),¹ detailed episodes and sections of it are found elsewhere in the Pali canon [SD 9 (2)]. The two discourses following it in the Dīgha—**the Mahā Sudassana Sutta** (D 17) and **the Jana,vasabha Sutta** (D 18)—give detailed accounts of related events.

1.2.1.2 The Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) states the Buddha’s reason for choosing Kusinārā, a “remote jungle township,” to spend his last days is because it was once the capital of the great ancient king Sudassana (D 16,5.17 f). This story is told in detail in **the Mahā Sudassana Sutta** (D 17), relating the king’s greatness as being due to generosity (*dāna*), self-control (*dama*), and self-restraint (*saṃyama*). The story is clearly meant for the inspiration of the laity.²

1.2.1.3 While the Buddha is residing in the brick house at Nādikā, it is said that the yaksha **Jana,vasabha**, appears to him and declares that he was the erstwhile king Bimbisāra, now reborn in the host of Vessa,vana, one of the 4 kings of the quarters (the north) [§11].

1.2.2 A 4th episode expanded: Kaliṅgara Sutta (S 20.8)

1.2.2.1 The Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta actually forms *the hub of at least 4 long discourses*, that is, the two Dīgha Nikāya suttas that immediately follow: the Mahā Sudassana Sutta (“the Discourse on Mahā Sudassana,” D 17) and the Jana,vasabha Sutta (“the Discourse on Jana,vasabha,” D 18); and the Sampasādanīya Sutta (D 28, “the Discourse that Inspires”).³

A 4th episode, that about the tribal strength of the Licchavī, is elaborated, albeit briefly, into a sutta of its own—**the Kaliṅgara Sutta** (S 20.8)—where the Buddha states that, so long as the Licchavīs sleep on spartan beds and keep up their training and exercises, they would be invincible to their enemies. The spartan bed is made of wooden planks with wooden headrests (*kaliṅgar’upadhāna*).⁴ In Myanmar, for example, monastics and meditators in traditional monasteries and centres sleep on simple plank beds with nothing more than a straw mat. Soft mattresses are not used.⁵

1.2.2.2 In summary, these 4 sutta expansions on passages from the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta are as follows:

<u>Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Expanded as</u>		
D 16,1.16/2:81	Amba,laṭṭhikā	Sampasādanīya Sutta	D 28 = S 47.2	SD 14.14
D 16,2.5-7/2:91-93	Nādika	Jana,vasabha Sutta	D 18	SD 62.3
D 16,3.49/2:119	Great Wood	Kaliṅgara Sutta	S 20.8/2:267 f	SD 55.10c
D 16,5.17-18/2:146 f	Kusinārā	Mahā Sudassana Sutta	D 17	SD 36.12

¹ D 16/2:72-168 (SD 9).

² D 17/2:169-199 (SD 36.12).

³ D 28, S 47.2/5:159-161; cf J 5:443.

⁴ Strictly, *upadhāna* (n, “rest”) can mean a “resting place” or “support”; hence, it may also refer to a simple bed. Not “straw” as in DPPN: Kaliṅgara Sutta. See **Kaliṅgara S** (S 20.8,3.2) n, SD 55.10c.

⁵ DPPN ([Aimwell ed](#)): Kaliṅgara Sutta n.

Jana,vasabha Sutta

The Discourse on Jana,vasabha

D 18

DECLARATION ON THOSE OF NĀDIKĀ AND OTHERS (NĀDIKIY'ĀDI BYĀKARANA)

1 [200] Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was dwelling in the brick house⁶ at **Nādikā** [Ñātikā].⁷

Now at that time the Blessed One was going about all over among the Kasis and Kosalas, the Vajjis and Mallas, the Cetis and Vaṃsas, the Kurus and Pañcālas, the Macchas and Sūrasenas, declaring about the deceased, those long gone, and their rebirths, saying:

“This person was reborn there, that person was reborn there.”⁸

1.2 More than 50 deceased followers⁹ [disciples] from **Nādikā**,¹⁰ those long gone, have completely destroyed the 5 lower fetters, passed utterly away, attained **spontaneous rebirth** (in the pure abodes), attained nirvana, never to return from there.

Over 90 deceased followers from **Nādikā**,¹¹ too, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters and diminishing lust, hatred and delusion, became **once-returners**, will return only once to this world and make an end of suffering.

Over 500 deceased followers from **Nādikā**,¹² too, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters, became **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world,¹³ sure of going over to self-awakening.”¹⁴

⁶ **The brick house** (*giñjak'āvasatha*) is mentioned in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,2.5/2:91 + 2.10/2:96) + n, SD 9; **Jana,vasabha S** (D 18,1/2:200), SD 62.3; **Cūḷa Go,siṅga 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).

⁷ **Nādikā** or **Ñātikā** (according to Buddhaghosa, two villages of the same name on the same riverbank) was on the highroad between Koṭigāma and Vesālī (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 Saṃyutta, which has **Ñātikā** as the place-name (**Giñjakāvasatha Ss 1-3**, S 55.8-10/5:356-361). Comys to both the Dīgha and the Saṃyutta confirm it as “Ñātikā,” explaining that “There were two villages close by the same pond, inhabited by the sons of two brothers. Thus, both of them were called Ñātikā ('of the relatives')” (DA 2:543; SA 2:74).

⁸ For details, see **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,2.7/2:92 f), SD 9.

⁹ “Followers,” *paricārikā*: D 1:101, 2:200; Tha 475; Sn p218 (Nc -cārikā); J 1:84, 4:362; Pv 4:8.3 wr -vātaka); DA 1:137, 269; see PED *paricārikā*. As servant, attendant: SD 54.8 (1.4.3); cf pāda,paricārikā, SD 54.8 (1.4.3); paid companion, SD 3.8 (4.1).

¹⁰ “More than 50 deceased followers,” *paro,paññāsa nādikiyā paricārakā abbhātītā*.

¹¹ *Sādhikā navuti nādikiyā paricārakā abbhātītā*.

¹² *Sātirekāni pañca,satāni nādikiyā paricārakā abbhātītā*.

¹³ *Avinipāta,dhammā. Avinipāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinipāta*, “the world of ruin/suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*), esp as *niraya,tiracchāna,pettivisaya,asurakāyā* (Khpa 189,12 = DA 2:496,11 (on D 2:55,27) = SA 2:97,5 (on S 2:92,16); Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 courses (*pañca,gati*) (D 33,2.1(4)/3:234; A 9.68/4:459) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tiracchāna,yoni*), the ghost realm (*petti- or pittī,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 A:ÑB 1999:14-19. See **Pañca,gati S** (A 9.68/-4:459), SD 2.20. On a late work, *Pañca,gati,dīpana*, ed L Feer (JPTS 1884:152 ff); tr Feer, *Annales du Musée Guimet* 5, 1883: 514-528: sv Naraka,kaṇḍa, Tiracchāna~, Peta~, Manussa~, Deva~.

¹⁴ See (**Khandha**) **Sotāpanna S** (S 22.109), SD 17.1a(2.3). On streamwinners' certainty of attaining awakening within 7 lives, see SD 60.1d (7.7.2).

2 [201] Now the followers at Nādikā heard this:

“It is said that *the Blessed One* was going about all over among the Kasis and Kosalas, the Vajjīs and Mallas, the Cetis and Vaṃsas, the Kurus and Pañcālas, the Macchas and Sūrasenas, declaring about the deceased, those long gone, and their rebirths, saying:

‘This person was reborn there, that person was reborn there.

More than 50 deceased followers [disciples] from Nādikā, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 5 lower fetters, passed utterly away, attained **spontaneous rebirth** (in the pure abodes), attained nirvana, never to return from there.

Over 90 deceased followers from Nādikā, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters and diminishing lust, hatred and delusion, became **once-returners**, who will return only once to this world to make an end of suffering.

Over 500 deceased followers from Nādikā, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters, became **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world,¹⁵ sure of going over to self-awakening.’

2.2 Then the hearts of the (living) followers from Nādikā were uplifted, glad and joyful to hear that the Blessed One had answered the questions (about the destinies of those deceased followers).

3 Now, the venerable Ānanda heard this:

[§2] “It is said that *the Blessed One* was going about all over among the Kasis and Kosalas, the Vajjīs and Mallas, the Cetis and Vaṃsas, the Kurus and Pañcālas, the Macchas and Sūrasenas, declaring about the deceased, those long gone, and their rebirths, saying:

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Over 500 deceased followers from Nādikā, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters, and became **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening.’

3.2 [2.2] Then the hearts of the (living) followers from Nādikā were uplifted, glad and joyful to hear that the Blessed One had answered the questions (about the destinies of those deceased followers).”

ĀNANDA’S CONCERNED TALK (ĀNANDA PARIKATHĀ)

4 Then, it occurred to the venerable Ānanda:

“Now, there were also [202] the followers from Magadha, many of them, and of long standing, who have passed away in death. One might think that Anga-Magadha¹⁶ were void of followers who have passed away in death!

¹⁵ *Avinipāta, dhammā. Avinipāta*, alt tr, “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinipāta*, “the world of ruin/suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*), esp as *niraya, tiracchāna, petti, visaya, asura, kāyā* (Khpa 189,12 = DA 2:496,11 (on D 2:55,27) = SA 2:97,5 (on S 2:92,16); Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 courses (*pañca, gati*) (D 33,2.1(4)/3:234; A 9.68/4:459) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tiracchāna, yoni*), the ghost realm (*petti-* or *pitti, visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura, kāyā*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see A:ÑB 1999:14-19. See **Pañca, gati S** (A 9.68/4:459), SD 2.20. On a late work, *Pañca, gati, dīpana*, ed L Feer (JPTS 1884:152 ff); tr Feer, *Annales du Musée Guimet* 5, 1883: 514-528: sv *Naraka, kaṇḍa, Tiracchāna~, Peta~, Manussa~, Deva~*.

For they too had joyful faith in the Buddha, in the Dharma, in the sangha, and fulfilled the moral precepts. It would be good if the Blessed One had declared their passing away. That declaration by the Blessed One would rouse faith in the many, on account of which they would attain happy states [go to heaven].

4.2 Then, there was **Seniya Bimbisara**,¹⁷ king of Magadha, too, Dharma-spirited, ruling righteously; good to brahmins and householders, to townsfolk and country-folk, too. People are spreading his fame abroad, saying:

‘Dead is our Dharma-spirited king, so righteous, whose rule made us so happy! How well have we lived in the kingdom of such a righteous king!’

4.3 He, too, had joyful faith in the Buddha, in the Dharma, in the sangha, and fulfilled the moral precepts.

And people had also said thus, ‘Seniya Bimbisara, king of Magadha, who up to the day of his death was given to praises of the Blessed One, is dead.’ It would be good if the Blessed One had declared his passing away.

That declaration by the Blessed One would rouse faith in the many, on account of which they would attain happy states [go to heaven].

4.4 Moreover, **the Blessed One attained awakening in Magadha**. Now where the Blessed One had awakened, how should there be no declaration from the Blessed One concerning followers from Magadha who have passed away in death? **[203]**

If the Blessed One declares nothing concerning them, the (living) followers from Magadha will be dejected. And since they would be dejected, how can the Blessed One not declare it?”

5 Then, the venerable Ānanda, having thus pondered by himself in solitude, rose early at dawn and approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he saluted the Blessed One and sat down at one side. Sitting at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

5.2 “Bhante, it was heard by me thus:

[2] ‘It is said that *the Blessed One was going about all over among the Kasis and Kosalas, the Vajjīs and Mallas, the Cetis and Varṃsas, the Kurus and Pañcālas, the Macchas and Sūrasenas, declaring about the deceased, those long gone and their rebirths, saying:*

‘This person was reborn there, that person was reborn there.

*More than 50 deceased followers [disciples] from Nādikā, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 5 lower fetters, passed utterly away, attained **spontaneous rebirth** (in the pure abodes), attained nirvana, never to return from there.*

*Over 90 deceased followers from **Nādikā**, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters and diminishing lust, hatred and delusion, became **once-returners**, who will return only once to this world and make an end of suffering.*

¹⁶ Aṅga-Magadha. Before king **Bimbisāra** (544-492 BCE), Aṅga and Magadha were 2 states of the 16 great states (*mahā, janapada*) [SD 4.18 App, SD 9 (16): map (16.3)], often at war with each other (J 4:454 f). Aṅga-Magadha (V 1:27; SA 2:362; J 4:454; CA 126; VA 3:614) was one of the 4 great kingdoms of India at the Buddha’s time, the others being Kosala, Varṃsa and Avanti. Ancient Magadha is identified with modern South Bihar. On Bimbisāra, see SD 8.10 (1).

¹⁷ **Bimbisāra** (544-492 BCE) was founder of the Haryāṅka dynasty and king of Aṅga-Magadha; he built his capital at Rājagṛha. The expansion of his kingdom laid the foundation of India’s greatest empire, the Maurya (322-185 BCE). See SD 8.10 (1).

*Over 500 deceased followers from Nādikā, too, those long gone, have completely destroyed the 3 fetters, and became **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening.'*

5.3 [§2.2] Then the hearts of the (living) followers from Nādikā were uplifted, glad and joyful to hear that the Blessed One has answered the questions (about the destinies of those deceased followers).

5.4 [§4] "Now, there were also the **followers from Magadha**, many of them, and of long standing, who have passed away in death. One might think that Anga-Magadha were void of followers who have passed away in death!

For they too had joyful faith in the Buddha, in the Dharma, in the sangha, and fulfilled the moral precepts. It would be good if the Blessed One had declared their passing away. That declaration by the Blessed One would rouse faith in the many, on account of which they would attain happy states [go to heaven].

5.5 [§4.2] *Then, there was **Seniya Bimbisara**, king of Magadha, too, Dharma-spirited, ruling righteously; good to brahmins and householders, to townsfolk [204] and country-folk, too. People are spreading his fame abroad, saying:*

"Dead is our Dharma-spirited king, so righteous, whose rule made us so happy! How well have we lived in the kingdom of such a righteous king!"

5.6 [4.3] *He, too, had joyful faith in the Buddha, in the Dharma, in the sangha, and fulfilled the moral precepts.*

And people have also said thus, "Seniya Bimbisara, king of Magadha, who up to the day of his death was given to praises of the Blessed One, is dead." It would be good if the Blessed One had declared his passing away.

That declaration by the Blessed One would rouse faith in the many, on account of which they would attain happy states [go to heaven].

5.7 [4.4] *Moreover, **the Blessed One attained awakening in Magadha**. Now where the Blessed One had awakened, how should there be no declaration from the Blessed One concerning followers from Magadha who had passed away in death?*

If the Blessed One declares nothing concerning them, the (living) followers from Magadha will be dejected. And since they would be dejected, how can the Blessed One not declare it?'

6 And when the venerable Ānanda had presented his concerned talk before the Blessed One, he rose from his seat, saluted the Blessed One, circumambulating him rightwise [sunwise], departed.

7 Then, not long after the venerable Ānanda had departed, the Blessed One robed himself at dawn and, taking robe and bowl, went on alms-round in Nādikā.

And when he had walked through Nadika for alms, after his meal, when he had returned from his alms-round and washed his feet, he entered the brick house and sat down on a prepared seat. He started thinking over, directing his attention, considering, concentrating his whole mind¹⁸ regarding the followers from Magadha, thinking:

"I will find out their future, their destinies hereafter, where these good people are bound, what their destinies are."

¹⁸ "Started thinking over, directing his attention, considering, concentrating his whole mind," *ārabbha aṭṭhikatvā manasikatvā sabbam cetaso samannāharitvā*.

And the Blessed One saw the followers from Magadha, where they were bound, [205] and what their destinies were.

Then, in the evening, the Blessed One, arising from his solitude, went out of the brick house, and sat down on a mat spread in the shade behind the lodging-place.

ADVENT OF JANA, VASABHA (JANAVASABHA, GAMANA)

8 Then, the venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down on one side. Thus seated, he said to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the Blessed One looks serene, his complexion radiant, as it were, owing to the tranquillity of his faculties. Bhante, the Blessed One must have dwelt pleasantly today.”

9 “When you had made that concerned talk before me, Ānanda, concerning the followers from Magadha and had departed, [§7] when *I had walked through Nādikā for alms, after my meal, when I had returned from my alms-round and washed my feet, I entered the brick house and sat down on a prepared seat there and started thinking over, directing my attention, considering, concentrating my whole mind regarding the followers from Magadha, thinking:*

‘I will find out their future, their destinies hereafter, where these good people are bound, what their destinies are.’

9.2 And I saw, Ananda, those followers from Magadha, where the good people were bound, what their destinies would be.

9.3 Thereupon an invisible¹⁹ yaksha made himself heard,²⁰ saying:

‘I am **Jana,vasabha**, Blessed One; I am Jana,vasabha, well-gone one!’

Now, to your knowledge, Ānanda, have you ever before heard of anyone bearing such a name as Jana,vasabha?’

9.4 ‘No, bhante, I have never before heard of one bearing such a name as Jana,vasabha. Moreover, bhante, on hearing such a name as Jana,vasabha, my hairs stood on ends! I imagine [206] it can be no ordinary yaksha who bears such a well-formed name as Jana,vasabha.’²¹

10 “Even as those words were uttered,²² Ānanda, the yaksha himself appeared before me, a glorious presence. For a second time, it was heard:

‘I was **Bimbisāra**, Blessed One! I was Bimbisāra, well gone one! It is now the seventh time, bhante, that I am reborn into companionship with the great king Vessavaṇa, having deceased as a human king.

*ito satta tato satta
saṃsārāni catuddasa*

Hence seven, thence seven,
thus 14 times wandering on.²³

¹⁹ “Invisible,” *antarahito* (*yakkho*), past part of *antaradhāyati*, “to disappear.” The more common meaning of *antarahita* is “disappeared (from)” (D 1:222; M 1:487); it can also mean “without, bereft,” such as “unobstructed soil” (*antarahitāya bhūmiyā*), V 1:47, 2:209; M 2:57. Cf use of *antarā* in §10 below. For other senses: DP sv antara.

²⁰ *Atha kho ānanda antarahito yakkho saddam-anussāvesi.*

²¹ “I imagine ... such a well-formed name as Jana,vasabha,” *na hi nūna so orako yakkho yass’idam eva, rūpaṃ nāma, dheyyam supaññattam yad idam jana,vasabho ti. Jana,vasabha*, lit, “a bull of the people,” ie, a glorious leader. C A F Rhys Davids: “The name seems scarcely to justify the good Ananda’s excitement, as such epithets were then, as now, common enough in India. But it is part of the art of the story-teller to make a mystery of it.” (D:RD 2:240 n2). On “well-formed,” *supaññattam*, see n on “full wisdom” [§22.2 n].

²² *Antarā kho ānanda saddā pātubhāvā.*

²³ Comy explains these 7+7 births (togglng between human and divine birth) totalling 14 births is according to the “sequence of the aggregates” (*khandha, paṭipāṭiyo*, DA 2:638,15). Traditionally it is said that a streamwinner

*nivāsam abhijānāmi
yattha me vusitarā pure*

So I recall the lives
that I've lived before.

Long, bhante, have I, who am destined not to be reborn in any woeful state, known no such woeful destiny, and now I wish to attain once-returning.'

10.2 'Wonderful is this, marvellous is this that you, the venerable yaksha Jana,vasabha, tell me:

"Long have I who am destined not to be reborn in the woeful state perceived that destiny," and again:

"Now I wish to attain once-returning."

10.3 How has it come about that Jana,vasabha the venerable yaksha recognizes his attainment to a distinction so glorious?'

11 'None other than through your teaching, Blessed One! None other than through your teaching, well gone one! From the moment when I found full and singular faith in the Blessed One, from that moment, bhante, [207] did I who am destined not to be reborn in a woeful state, have known no such destiny. Now I wish to attain once-returning.

11.2 Now, bhante, I have been sent on a mission concerning some business²⁴ by king Vessavaṇa to king Viruḥhaka; and on my way I saw the Blessed One [57] *entering the brick house and sitting down on a prepared seat there and started to think over, directing his attention, considering, concentrating his whole mind regarding the followers from Magadha.*

Isn't it wonderful, it was only a moment before, bhante, that I had heard face to face and had understood from king Vessavaṇa's own mouth, how he had said to his assembly *where these good people were bound, what their destinies were.*

So it occurred to me that I would visit the Blessed One, and I would announce it to him, too.

These, bhante, are **the 2 reasons** why I came forth to visit the Blessed One.²⁵

THE HEAVENLY ASSEMBLY (DEVA,SABHĀ)

12 In days long gone, bhante, it came to pass that on the night of the uposatha, the 15th day at the full moon in the month for entering the rains-retreat,²⁶ all the gods in Tāva,timsa were assembled, seated in the Sudhamma hall.

(which Bimbisāra is) would not go beyond 7 rebirths. My understanding is that only the rebirth-nexus (switch between one birth to the next) is counted as 2 rebirths. Hence, this is actually Bimbisāra's last rebirth (ie, as a once-returned or a non-returned), after which he becomes an arhat. On the tradition of "7 times at most," see SD 60.1d (7.7.2).

²⁴ "Sent ... on a mission concerning some business," *pesito ... kenaci-d-eva karaṇīyena*. Comy this phrase in **Assa-lāyana S** (M 93,147,4, SD 40a.2) explains it as: "on some undetermined matter regarding sacrifice, worship, and so on" (**kenaci-d-evā** *ti yaññ'upāsanādinā aniyamita,kiccena*, MA 3:408,7). Pischel's ed of M (Chemnitz, 1880) mis-read the lemma as *kenaci deva,karaṇīyena*, "on some matter connected with worship of the gods." See D:RD 2:235 f. The insert -d- is for the euphonic combination (sandhi) of 2 vowels, the final -i of the preceding word and the initial e- of the subsequent particle, *eva*.

²⁵ Comy: These 2 reasons are: firstly, that he had heard a statement by Vessavaṇa; secondly, that (having noticed, on his way, how the Blessed One had been thinking on that very same matter) he wished to report it to the Blessed One. (DA 2:638,33-639,4)

²⁶ *Vassūpanayika*. The term refers to the 3-month monastic rains-retreat (*vass'āvāsa*), beginning on the full moon of Āsālhā (June-July), by which monastic seniority is measured: SD 38.3 (1.2.1). Cf **Mahā,govinda S** (D 19,2), SD 63.4. See A 1:51; V 1:137.

12.2 And around them on every side a vast celestial host was seated; and at the 4 quarters of the firmament sat **the 4 great kings**.²⁷ There were:

Dhataratṭha,	king of the East,	seated facing the west,	before the devas;
Virūhaka,	king of the South,	seated facing the north,	before the devas;
Virupakkha,	king of the West,	seated facing the east,	before the devas; and
Vessavaṇa,	king of the North,	seated facing the south,	before the devas. [208]

Whenever, bhante, all the gods in Tāva,tiṃsa heaven assembled and sat in their Sudhamma hall, *around them on every side a vast celestial host was seated, and at the 4 quarters of the firmament sat the 4 Great Kings.*

12.3 Behind that were our divans [seats].

And then (behind us) were those gods, bhante, who had been recently reborn in Tāva,tiṃsa because they had lived the holy life under the Blessed One, they outshone the other gods in appearance and in glory.

12.4 And with that, bhante, the Tāva,tiṃsa devas were glad and of good cheer, were filled with joy and happiness, saying:

“Truly, sirs, the celestial hosts are waxing, the asura hosts²⁸ are waning.”

13 Now, bhante, Sakra, lord of the devas, when he saw the serene satisfaction felt by the Tāva,tiṃsa devas, rejoiced with these verses:

13.2	<i>modanti vata bho devā tāvatiṃsā sah'indaka tathāgataṃ namassantā dhammassa ca sudhammataṃ</i>	The Tāva,tiṃsa devas truly rejoice along with their lord Indra, honouring the Tathagata, truly good, and to the Dharma.	
13.3	<i>nave deve ca passantā vaṇṇavante yasassine sugatasmim' brahma, cariyam caritvāna idh'āgate</i>	Seeing the gods newly arisen, beautiful and glorious, who live the holy life under the well gone, have come here:	≈d ≈c
13.4	<i>te aññe atirocanti vaṇṇena yasa'āyunā sāvakā bhūri, paññassa visesūpagatā idha</i>	(with final knowledge,) ²⁹ they outshine others in beauty, glory and life, the disciples of the one greatly wise, attained to distinction here. ³⁰	
13.5	<i>idaṃ disvāna nandanti tāvatiṃsā sah'indakā</i>	Seeing this they rejoice, the Tāva,tiṃsa devas with their lord [<i>indra</i>],	

²⁷ *Cātum, mahā, rājikā devā*, the deva heaven of the 4 great kings is the lowest of the sense-world heavens, just below and conjoined with the heaven of the 33 (*tāvatiṃsa*), for which they serve as protectors. Both Tāvatiṃsa and Cātum, mahā, rājika form the “earth-bound heavens”; hence, they are often involved in the affairs of the human world (like the Greek gods of Mt Olympus).

²⁸ “The asura hosts” (*asura, kāyā*). On the asuras, see SD 57.28 (1.2).

²⁹ *Te aññe atirocati vaṇṇena yassa'āyun*. There's wordplay on *aññe*, which can simply mean “others” or “in final knowledge” (ie, arhathood).

³⁰ *Sāvakā bhūri, paññassa visesūpagatā idha*. *Visesa-upagata* means both “who have attained distinction (ie, the path of streamwinning etc)” or literally, “who have arisen here with distinctions.”

tathāgataṃ namassantā honouring the Tathagata,
dharmassa ca sudhammatan ti truly good, and to the Dharma.

[209] Here, bhante, *the Tāva,tiṃsa devas were even more abundantly glad and of good cheer and filled with joy and happiness, saying:*

[§12.4] *“Truly, sir, the celestial hosts are waxing, the asura hosts are waning!”*

14 Then, bhante, concerning the matter for which the Tāva,tiṃsa devas were assembled in their divans in the Sudhamma Hall, they took counsel and deliberated about it. And with respect to that matter the 4 Great Kings were addressed, and with respect to that matter the 4 Great Kings were admonished, standing by their divans:

14.3 *te vutta,vākya rājāno* The uttered word, the Kings
paṭiggayhānusāsaniṃ accepted as instructed,
vippasannamanā santā peacefully, with a calm clear mind,
aṭṭhaṃsu samhi āsane ti (as each) stood in his place.

15 Then, bhante, **a glorious light** arose out of the north; a radiance shone around surpassing the divine glory of the gods.

Then, bhante, Sakra, lord of the devas, addressed the Tāva,tiṃsa devas:

“Sirs, from the signs now seen—the light that arises, the radiance that shines—**Brahmā** will appear. For this is the herald sign of Brahmā’s manifestation, that is, when the light appears and the glory shines”:³¹

15.2 *yathā nimittā dissanti* Just as the signs are seen,
brahmā pātubhavissati so Brahmā will appear.
brahmuno h’etaṃ nimittam For this is Brahmā’s sign,
obhāso vipulo mahati an immense mighty radiance.

THE WORDS OF SANAÑ,KUMĀRA (SANAÑKUMĀRA,KATHĀ)

16. Then, bhante, the Tāvatiṃsa devas sat down in their own places, saying:

“We will know what this radiance is and its result; when we have ascertained it, we will go to meet him.”

The 4 Great Kings also sat down in their own places, saying:

“We will know what this radiance is and its result; when we have ascertained it, we will go to meet him.” [210]

And when the Tāvatiṃsa devas heard this, they were all together agreed:

“We will know what this radiance is and its result; when we have ascertained it, we will go to meet him.”

17 When, bhante, **Brahmā Sanañkumāra**³² appears before the Tāvatiṃsa devas, he appears as a (relatively) gross personality which he has specially created. For Brahmas’ usual appearance is not sufficiently materialized to impress the vision of the Tāvatiṃsa devas.

³¹ So also in **Kevaddha S** (D 11,80.4), SD 1.7.

³² A Mahā Brahmā who is a very devout follower of the Buddha: D 1:121; M 1:358; S 1:153; A 5:327; D 1:121; M 1:358; S 1:153; A 5:327. Buddhaghosa says that, in his former birth, he practised dhyana (*jhāna*) while yet a boy with his hair tied in 5 knots (*pañca,cūḷaka,kumara,kāle*), and was reborn in the brahma world. He liked the guise of

And, bhante, when Brahmā Sanañkumāra appears before the Tāvatiṃsa devas, he outshines the other devas in beauty and glory.

17.2 Just, bhante, as a figure made of gold outshines the human frame, so, when Brahmā Sanañkumāra appears before the Tāvatiṃsa devas, does he outshine the other gods in beauty and in glory.

17.3 And when, bhante, Brahmā Sanañkumāra appears before the Tāvatiṃsa devas, there is no deva in all that assembly that salutes him, or rises up, or invites him to be seated. They all sit in silence, with clasped hands and cross-legged, thinking:

17.4 “Now, of whichever deva Brahmā Sanañkumāra wishes, he will sit down on that deva’s divan.”³³

And with whichever deva he does sit down, that deva is filled with a sublime satisfaction, a sublime joy, even as a kshatriya rajah, newly anointed and crowned, is filled with a sublime satisfaction, a sublime joy.

18 [211] So, bhante, Brahmā Sanañkumāra having projected a grosser personality as the handsome youth **Pañca,sikha** (Five-crest),³⁴ manifested himself to the Tāvatiṃsa devas.

Rising up into the air, he sat down cross-legged in the sky.

Just, bhante, as easily as a strong man might sit down cross-legged on a well-spread divan or on level ground, even so did Brahmā Sanañkumāra, rising up into the air, sit down cross-legged in the sky.

Seeing the serenity of the Tāvatiṃsa devas, he rejoiced with these verses:

- | | | |
|------------|--|--|
| [§13] 18.2 | <i>The Tāva,timsa devas truly rejoice
honouring the Tathagata,</i> | <i>along with their lord Indra,
truly good, and to the Dharma.</i> |
| 18.3 | <i>Seeing the gods newly arisen,
who live the holy life</i> | <i>beautiful and glorious,
under the well gone, have come here:</i> |
| 18.4 | <i>(with final knowledge,
the disciples of the one greatly wise,</i> | <i>they outshine others in beauty, glory and life;
attained to distinction here.</i> |
| 18.5 | <i>Seeing this they rightly rejoice,
honouring the Tathagata,</i> | <i>the Tāva,timsa devas with their lord,
truly good, and to the Dharma.</i> |

19 This was the matter **Brahmā Sanañkumāra** spoke on. He spoke on this matter with a voice of eightfold qualities: one that was *distinct, clear, charming, pleasant, full, fluent, deep, and resonant*.³⁵

Bhante, even as Brahmā Sanañkumāra addressed the assembly, the sound of his voice strayed not beyond the assembly. He whose voice has these 8 qualities is said to be Brahmā-voiced.

youth and assumed so, hence the name (MA 3:33,20-25; cf SA 1:219,13-16). See **SD 54.3d (2.2)**. Cf **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3,28/1:99), SD 21.3. See DPPN sv.

³³ *Yassa’dāni devassa icchissati brahmā sanañ,kumāro tassa devassa pallañkena nisīdissatī ti.*

³⁴ Pañca,sikha, the “five-crested,” which became a famous name in Indian legends, and was adopted by Saivite and Sankhya writers. It is nowhere explained what, or how disposed, his 5 crests were. However, as a child, Sanañkumāra had his hair tied in 5 knots (MA 3:33) [§17 n].

³⁵ The 8 qualities of Brahma’s voice (and speech) (*aṭṭha,samannāgata sara*): distinct (*vissaṭṭha*), clear (*viññeyya*), charming (*mañju*), pleasant (*savanīya*), full (*bindu*), fluent (*avisarī*), deep (*gambhīra*) and resonant (*ninnādī*). (D 18,-19/2:211), also at **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19,18/2:227), SD 63.4. The Buddha’s voice is said to be “Brahma-like” (*brahma-s,sara*), eg, **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30,2.22.3), SD 36.9.

20 Then, bhante, Brahmā Sanañkumāra, having projected 33 shapes of himself [212], each sitting on the couch of each of the Tāvatiṃsa devas, addressed them thus:

“Now what do you think, good sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa?

Since the Blessed One has acted for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the welfare, for the happiness of gods and humans, they, whoever they be, sirs, who have taken the Buddha as their refuge, the Dharma as their refuge, the sangha as their refuge.

They, on the dissolution of the body after death, have been reborn,

some of them in	companionship with Paranimmita-Vasavatti devas,
some of them in	companionship with Tusita devas,
some of them as	devas in the retinue of Yama,
some of them as	Tāvatiṃsa devas,
some of them amongst	the 4 Great Kings.

Those who fill the number of the lowest group, they go to fill the number of the gandharva host.”

21 This, bhante, was the matter of Brahmā Sanañkumāra’s talk. And he spoke it with such a voice, that each god fancied³⁶: “He who is on my divan, he alone has spoken.”

21.2	<i>ekasmim bhāsamānasmim sabbe bhāsanti nimittā ekasmim tuṅhim āsīne sabbe tuṅhī bhavanti te</i>	When all the apparitions spoke they assumed but one voice. When one sat in silence, they all became silent, too.	b a d c
21.3	<i>tadāsu devā maññanti tāvatiṃsā saḥ’indakā yvyāraṃ mama pallaṅkasmim svāyaṃ eko’va bhāsati ti</i>	Right then the Tāvatiṃsa devas with their lord thought “He who is on my couch, it is only he that speaks.”	b a

22 Then, bhante, Brahmā Sanañkumāra remerged himself into his one true self.³⁷ [213] He sat with Sakra on Sakra’s throne. Sitting there, Brahmā Sanañkumāra addressed the Tāvatiṃsa devas, thus:

THE CULTIVATION OF THE 4 BASES OF POWER (IDDHI, PĀDA BHĀVANĀ)

22.2 “Now what do you think, sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa, the great wisdom³⁸ with which the esteemed Blessed One, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, has well laid out [has formulated] **the 4 bases of power**, for abundant power, burgeoning power, transformative power?³⁹

³⁶ In the text read *so so devo*.

³⁷ *Atha kho bhante brahmā sanañkumāro ekattena attānaṃ upasaṃharati*. I have used “remerged” for *upa-saṃharati*, “to collect, bring together.”

³⁸ “The great wisdom ... esteemed ... has well laid out,” Be Ce Se *supaññattā*, Ee *suppaññattā*. Also at §§23.2, 26.2, 27.2. *Su-paññattā* has 3 senses all applicable here: (1) from *paññatta*, pp of *paññāpeti* (*pā* + *ñā*, “to know” + *āpe* + *tā*): *su* (well) + “laid out, formulated, defined,” as in *nāma, dheyyaṃ supaññattarā*, “well formed name” [§9.4]; (2) *su* + *paññatta* (neut; abstraction from *paññā*, “wisdom, sense, etc”), “of great wisdom”; (3) *su* + *paññatta* (caus pp of *pajānāti*), “well known, esteemed.” This term recurs in **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19/2:222,28, 223,3, 228,26, 229,6), (SD 63.4); **Kandaraka S** (M 51,4/1:340), SD 32.9; **Arakkheyya S** (A 7.55,9/4:83), SD 51.25.

22.3 What are the four?

Here, sirs, a monk cultivates:⁴⁰

- (1) the base of success that is the samadhi based on **zeal** [desire] and effort.⁴¹
- (2) the base of success that is the samadhi based on **energy** and effort.⁴²
- (3) the base of success that is the samadhi based on **mind**⁴³ and effort.⁴⁴
- (4) the base of success that is the samadhi based on **investigation** and effort.⁴⁵

These, sirs, are the 4 bases of power that the Blessed One, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, has laid out⁴⁶ for abundant power, burgeoning power, transformative power.⁴⁷

22.4 Sirs, those recluses and brahmins in the long ancient **past**, who have enjoyed spiritual powers in one or more forms, they have all done so through cultivation and development of just these *4 bases of power*.

And, sirs, those recluses and brahmins in the long distant **future**, who will enjoy spiritual powers in one or more forms, they will all do so through cultivation and development of just these *4 bases of power*.

And, sirs, those recluses and brahmins even **now**, who are enjoying spiritual powers in one or more forms, they are doing so through cultivation and development of just these *4 bases of power*.

Do you see, sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa, in me a potency of spiritual power such as this?"

"Yes, Great Brahmā."

"I too, sirs, through cultivating and developing just these 4 bases of power **[214]**, have acquired such great power and great glory."

23 This, bhante, was the matter of that Brahmā Saṅkumāra's talk. And having spoken thus, he addressed the Tāvatiṃsa devas:

THE THREEFOLD ATTAINMENT OF THE OPENING (TIVIDHA OKĀSĀDHIGAMA)

23.2 (1) "Now what do you think, sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa, of *the great wisdom* [§22.2] with which *the esteemed* Blessed One who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, *has laid out the 3 attainments of the opening* awakens disciples for the attainment of happiness?⁴⁸

³⁹ "For abundant power, burgeoning power, transformative power," *iddhi, pahutāya iddhi, visavitāya iddhi, vikubbanatāya*. The 3 expressions are surely suggestive of the 3 trainings that they represent: moral training, concentration training and wisdom training, respectively, esp with the attaining dhyana and the path.

⁴⁰ On the 4 bases of power [success] (*iddhi, pāda*), see **Cattāro Iddhi, pāda**, SD 10.3 (1.1.1).

⁴¹ *Chanda, samādhi-p, padhāna, saṅkhāra, samannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti*. I have here simplified these 4 trs, which more fully is: "the base of success that is (the accomplishment in) the samadhi based on <zeal | energy | mind | investigation> and volitional striving." Basically, these are the ways of gaining the 4th dhyana with all the psychic powers.

⁴² *Vīriya, samādhi-p, padhāna, saṅkhāra, samannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti*.

⁴³ The "mind" (*citta*) is mental purity.

⁴⁴ *Citta, samādhi-p, padhāna, saṅkhāra, samannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti*.

⁴⁵ *Vīmaṃsā, samādhi-p, padhāna, saṅkhāra, samannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti*.

⁴⁶ "Has laid out," *paññattā*. See n on *supaññattā* [§22.2].

⁴⁷ *Iddhi* can simply mean "success"; hence, we have here the "4 ways to success," ie, mental and physical effort in *zeal, energy, mind* and *investigation*. Of these, there are 2 kinds: worldly success (*āmisā, iddhi*) and spiritual success (*dhamma, iddhi*), A 2.14.8 (SD 2.18 (1.2)). Here spiritual powers (*lok'uttara iddhi*) are meant, esp dhyana: **Kevaladha S** (D 11/1:211-223), SD 1.7; the other is worldly psychic powers (*lokiya iddhi*): SD 27.5a (7.5.1).

What are the three?

Here, sirs, a certain one dwells indulging in sense-pleasures, indulging in unwholesome states.

23.3 On another occasion, **he hears the noble teaching** (to which) he wisely attends (and) practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

Having come to hear the noble Dharma he wisely attends (to it, and) practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

On his not indulging in sensuality, not indulging in unwholesome states, happiness arises. The joy grows more pleasant.

23.4 This, sirs, is **the 1st attainment of the opening** with which the Blessed, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, brings about the awakening of disciples for the attainment of happiness.

24 (2) Further, sirs, here a certain one:

- has **the grosser bodily formations**⁴⁹ not entirely stilled;
- has **the grosser verbal formations** not entirely stilled;
- has **the grosser mental formations** not entirely stilled.

24.2 *On another occasion, he hears the noble Dharma, keeps wise attention, practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.*

Having come to hear the noble Dharma he wisely attends (to it, and) practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

- In him **the grosser bodily formations** are entirely stilled.
- In him **the grosser verbal formations** are entirely stilled. **[215]**
- In him **the grosser mental formations** are entirely stilled.

From

- his **grosser bodily formations** being entirely stilled,
 - his **grosser verbal formations** being entirely stilled,
 - his **grosser mental formations** being entirely stilled,
- ease grows into mental joy.⁵⁰

24.3 Just, sirs, as from gladness is born delight, so for him, sirs, happiness arises, and the happiness grows more pleasant.

24.4 This, sirs, is **the 2nd attainment of the opening** with which the Blessed One who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, brings about the awakening of disciples for the attainment of happiness.

25 (3) Further, sirs, here a certain one

does *not* understand according to reality, ‘This is wholesome’;

does *not* understand according to reality, ‘This is unwholesome’;

‘This is blameworthy [wrong]’; ‘This is not blameworthy [right]’;

‘This is to be followed’; ‘This is to be avoided’;

‘This is gross [base]’; ‘This is fine [refined].’

He does *not* understand according to reality, ‘This is of partly dark, partly bright.’

⁴⁸ *Taṃ kiṃ maññanti, bhonto devā tāvatimsā, yāvañ c’idaṃ tena bhagavatā jānatā passatā arahatā sammāsam-buddhena tayo okāsādhigamā anubuddhā sukhasādhigamāya.*

⁴⁹ *Saṅkhāra*. This paragraph throws light on the famous verse beginning with *aniccā vata saṅkhārā* given at the end of **Mahā Sudassana S** (M 17/2:198).

⁵⁰ *Sukhā bhiiyyo somanassam.*

25.2 On another occasion, **he hears the noble teaching** (to which) he wisely attends (and) practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

Having come to hear the noble Dharma he wisely attends (to it, and) practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma,

he *understands* according to reality, ‘This is wholesome’;

he *understands* according to reality, ‘This is unwholesome’;

‘This is blameworthy [wrong]’; ‘This is not blameworthy [right]’;

‘This is to be followed’; ‘This is to be avoided’;

‘This is gross [base]’; ‘This is fine [refined].’

He *understands* according to reality, ‘This is of partly dark, partly bright.’

25.3 For him thus knowing, thus seeing, ignorance is abandoned, wisdom arises.

From the extinction of ignorance, from the arising of wisdom, happiness arises and the happiness grows more pleasant.

25.4 *Just, sirs, as from gladness is born delight, so for him, sirs, from the extinction of ignorance, from the arising of wisdom, happiness arises, and the happiness grows more pleasant.*

This, sirs, is **the 3rd attainment of the opening** with which the Blessed One who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, brings about the awakening of disciples for the attainment of happiness.

25.5 These, sirs, are **[216] the 3 attainments of the opening** with which the Blessed One who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, brings about the awakening of disciples for the attainment of happiness.”

26 This, bhante, was the matter of Brahmā Sanañkumāra’s talk. And having spoken thus, he addressed the Tāvatiṃsa devas:

THE 4 FOCUSES OF MINDFULNESS (*SATIPAṬṬHĀNA*)

26.2 ‘Now what do you think, sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa, of *the great wisdom* [§22.2] with which *the esteemed* Blessed One, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, *has well laid out* these **4 focuses of mindfulness**⁵¹ for the attainment of the wholesome.

What are the four?

(1) Here, the good monk⁵² dwells ⁵³exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating the body in the body,⁵⁴

removing⁵⁵ covetousness and displeasure [discontent]⁵⁶ in regard to the world.⁵⁷

⁵¹ The 4 *satipaṭṭhāna*: SD 13.1.

⁵² “The good monk,” *bho bhikkhu*.

⁵³ *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā, domanassam*. Here we find 4 of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’-indriya*) in action: see SD 13.1 (4.2).

⁵⁴ “Contemplating body in the body” (*kāye kāyānupassī*). See SD 13.1 (3.4).

⁵⁵ *Vineyya* can mean “would or should remove” (as pot or opt, like *vineyya*, Sn 590) or as “having removed” (as ger or absol, like *vineyya*, Sn 58, or *vinayitvā*, 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 Sn:N 170 n58 + 284 n590. See SD 13.1 (4.2c).

⁵⁶ “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassam*, alt trs: “desire and discontent,” “desiring and disliking,” or “longing and loathing.” Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders it as “hankering and fretting [in regard to the world].” See SD 13.1 (4.2).

As he dwells contemplating the body in the body internally,
he attains to right concentration, he attains right insight.⁵⁸

He, having right concentration and right insight therein,
brings about knowledge and vision into all other physical bodies external to himself.⁵⁹

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

contemplating feeling in the feelings,

removing covetousness and displeasure [discontent] in regard to the world.

As he dwells contemplating feeling in the feelings internally,
he attains to right concentration, he attains right insight.

He, having right concentration and right insight therein,
brings about knowledge and vision into all other feelings external to himself.

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

contemplating the mind in the mind,⁶⁰

removing covetousness and displeasure [discontent] in regard to the world.

As he dwells contemplating the mind in the mind internally,
he attains to right concentration, he attains right insight.

He, having right concentration and right insight therein,
brings about knowledge and vision into all other minds external to himself.

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

contemplating dharma [mind-object] in the dharmas,⁶¹

removing covetousness and displeasure [discontent] in regard to the world.

As he dwells contemplating dharma in the dharmas internally,
he attains to right concentration, he attains right insight.

He, having right concentration and right insight therein,
brings about knowledge and vision into all other dharmas external to himself.

These, sirs, are the 4 focuses of mindfulness, that the Blessed One, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, has laid out⁶² **for the attainment of the wholesome.**'

THE 7 REQUISITES OF SAMADHI (SATTA SAMĀDHI, PARIKKHĀRA)

27 This, bhante, was the matter of Brahmā Sanañkumāra's talk. And having spoken thus, he addressed the Tāvatiṃsa devas:

27.2 "Now what do you think, sirs, devas of Tāvatiṃsa, of *the great wisdom* [§22.2] with which *the esteemed* Blessed One, who knows, who sees, arhat, fully self-awakened, has well laid out the 7 requisites of concentration,⁶³ by the Blessed One,

⁵⁷ "World" (*loka*). See SD 13.1 (4.2.4).

⁵⁸ *Ajjhattaṃ kāye kāyānupassī viharati viharanto tattha sammā, samādhīyati sammā, vipassīdati.*

⁵⁹ *So tattha sammā samāhito sammā vippassanno bahiddhā para, kāye ñāṇa, dassanaṃ abhinibbatteti.*

⁶⁰ Here he understands the state of the mind (*citta*), whether it is *lustful, hating, deluded*; or *great, surpassable, concentrated* or *freed*—or *not* in each case: see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,34) and nn therein. In the prec stage, he sees the mind (*citta*) as it is; here he sees the condition (*dhamma*) behind that mind.

⁶¹ Here he understands the mind-object (*dhamma*), in terms of *the 5 hindrances*, or *the 5 aggregates*, or *the 6 sense-bases*, or *the 7 awakening-factors*, or *the 4 noble truths*—how each arises and passes away.

⁶² "Has laid out," *paññattā*. See n on *supaññattā* [§22.2].

for the attainment of right samādhi, the cultivation of right samādhi, the fulfillment of right samādhi?

27.3 What are the seven?

Right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, [217] right effort, right mindfulness.⁶⁴

27.4 Now, sirs, the mental unification equipped with these **7 limbs** is called the noble right samadhi [concentration], together with its bases, together with its right requisites.⁶⁵

From (1) right view comes	(2) right intention;
from right intention comes	(3) right speech;
from right speech comes	(4) right action;
from right action comes	(5) right livelihood;
from right livelihood comes	(6) right effort;
from right effort comes	(7) right mindfulness;
from right mindfulness comes	(8) right concentration;
from right concentration comes	(9) right knowledge;
from right knowledge comes	(10) right freedom [liberation].

27.5 If anyone uttering right speech, sirs, were to say:

‘Well taught is the Blessed One’s true teaching—seen for oneself, immediate (having nothing to do with time), inviting one to come and see, accessible (leading on to nirvana), to be personally known by the wise,⁶⁶

then in saying:

27.6 **“Wide opened are the portals to the death-free!”**⁶⁷

he would be rightly saying that.

For, sirs, the Dharma well proclaimed by the Blessed One is all that; and
“Wide opened are the portals to the deathfree!”

27.7 For, sirs, whosoever has wise faith⁶⁸ in the Buddha, wise faith in the Dharma, wise faith in the sangha, and is endowed with the virtues pleasing to the noble ones—

[218] they are spontaneously born (here),

that is, over 2,400 deceased followers from Magadha, long gone, led here by the Dharma,⁶⁹

⁶³ *Samādhi, parikkhārā*.

⁶⁴ Right concentration is the last to be added to this set of 7, constituting the noble eightfold path (*aṭṭhaṅgika ariya, magga*): SD 10.16.

⁶⁵ The 7 limbs or requisites (*parikkhāra*) are the bases for right samadhi, forming the noble eightfold path. These 8 are the limbs for right knowledge and right freedom (that of the path to awakening), collectively known as the 10 rightness (*sammatta*): see SD 10.16.

⁶⁶ On this recollection on the virtues of the Dharma, see **Dhajajga S** (SD 15.5); **Dhammānussati** (SD 15.9).

⁶⁷ *Apāruta amatassa dvārā ti. Apāruta*, pp of *apāpurati*. This line is well known: **Mahā’pādāna S** (D 14,3.7), SD 49.8. See also V 1:7,4* = M 1:169,24 (cf Mvst 3:319,3*); S 1:138; D 1:136 (DA 1:297), D 2:39 Vipassī Buddha; J 1:264; Mvst 3:318. Cf Sn 1146c. See SD 12.1 (3.1).

⁶⁸ “Wise faith,” *avecca-p, pasāda*, **D** 2:93,27 (DA 2:544,22), 2:217,19 f, 3:227,7; **M** 1:37,16 (MA), 46,23 (= “unshakable faith,” *acala-p, pasādena*, MA), 2:51,16, 3:253,31; **S** 2:69,21 (SA 2:74,4: “not absent,” *avigatena ... acala-p, pasādena*), 4:271,34 f, 5:343,1, 345,10, 405,1 (cf 381,29 opp, *appasādena*); **A** 2:56,9, 3:212,15, 332,29 f, 451,2 f, 4:406,22 f; **DhsA** 336,15; UA 109,9 f; °-*vasena, pasannā*, **MA** 3:451,5 (= *abhippasannā*); *tīsu vatthusu °-saṅkhātāya lok’uttara, saddhāya*, **DhA** 176,17 ; loc. ~e, **A** 1:222,13. See CPD, DP, sv *avecca*.

who, having completely destroyed the 3 fetters, have become **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world,⁷⁰ sure of going over to self-awakening. [1,2] And there are here **once-returners**, too.”

27.8	<i>atthâyam itarā pajā puñña,bhāgā ti me mano saṅkhatum no pi sakkomi musā,vādassā ottappan ti</i>	There are these other people, ⁷¹ to my mind, full of merit; I’m not able to measure, for fear of false speech.
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28 This, bhante, was the matter of Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra’s talk.

And concerning what he had spoken, this reflection arose in the mind of Great King **Vessa,vaṇa**:

“Wonderful truly it is, sirs, marvellous it is, that there should be so glorious a teacher, so glorious a teaching of the Dharma, and that such glorious attainment to distinction⁷² should be made known!”

Then, bhante, Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra discerning this reflection in the mind of Great King Vessavaṇa, said this to him:

28.2 “Now what do you think, my lord, Great King Vessavaṇa?

There both has been in past times, a teacher so glorious, a proclaiming of the Dharma so glorious, a making known such glorious attainment to distinction, and there will be also in future times a teacher so glorious, **[214]** a proclaiming of the Dharma so glorious, a making known such glorious attainment to distinction.”

29 This, bhante, was about the matter that **Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra** spoke to the Tāvatiṃsa devas.

And this matter **great king Vessavaṇa**, having personally heard it spoken to the Tāvatiṃsa devas who assented to it, reported to his own following.

And this matter **the yaksha Janavasabha**, having personally heard it so reported by Vessavaṇa who assented to it, and Janavasabha himself reported it to the Blessed One.

And this matter **the Blessed One**, having personally heard it so reported by the yaksha Janavasabha and assented to it by his own superknowledge, and reported to the venerable Ānanda.

And this matter **the venerable Ānanda**, having personally heard it from the Blessed One and assented to it, reported to the monks, the nuns, the laymen and the laywomen.

⁶⁹“They are spontaneously born ... ,” *ye c’ime opapātikā* dhamma,vinītā sātirekāni catu,vīsati,sata,sahassāni māgadhakā paricārakā abbatitā kālaṅkatā, tiṅṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā sotāpannā avinipāta,dhammā niyatā sambodhi,parāyaṇā*. Clearly, *opapātikā* here is a non-*tt*, meaning simply “spontaneously arisen” as devas, and not referring to non-returners (who would not be reborn in Tāvatiṃsa anyway, but in the pure abodes).

⁷⁰ *Avinipāta,dhammā. Avinipāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinipāta*, “the world of ruin/suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*), esp as *niraya,tiracchāna,pettivisaya,asurakāyā* (KhP A 189,12 = DA 2:496,11 (on D 2:55,27) = SA 2:97,5 (on S 2:92,16); Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 courses (*pañca,gati*) (D 33,2.1(4)/3:234; A 9.68/4:459) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tiracchāna,yoni*), the ghost realm (*petti- or pittī,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 A:ÑB 1999:14-19. See **Pañca,gati S** (A 9.68/4:459), SD 2.20. On a late work, *Pañca,gati,dīpana*, ed L Feer (JPTS 1884:152 ff); tr Feer, *Annales du Musée Guimet* 5, 1883: 514-528: sv Naraka,kaṇḍa, Tiracchāna~, Peta~, Manussa~, Deva~.

⁷¹ “These other people” prob refers to those reborn into Tāvatiṃsa on account of performing acts of merit (*puñña*) while living a moral life (*sīla*) but have not attained the path.

⁷² *Visesādhigama*, see §13 n above.

And so that holy life grew greatly in influence and prosperity and expanded amongst the many, spreading in huge numbers, well broadcast among devas and humans.

—evaṃ—

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