

## SD 63.2

# Uruvelā Pāṭihāriyā The Miracles at Uruvelā

Mv 1.15-21 (V 1:24-35)

Theme: Conversion of Uruvelā Kassapa, Nadī Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa

Translated and annotated by Piya Tan ©2009; 2025

### 1 Sutta summary and significance

#### 1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

**Uruvelā Pāṭihāriyā** (the miracles at Uruvelā) (Mv 1.15-21) is a Vinaya account of the Buddha's meeting with the matted hair (*jaṭila*) ascetic, **Uruvelā Kassapa**,<sup>1</sup> and performing a long series of wonders or miracles (*pāṭihāriya*), none of which converted<sup>2</sup> Kassapa, until the Buddha finally read his mind, telling him directly that he was not an arhat (perfected one).

Following Uruvelā Kassapa's conversion, his 2 brothers, **Nadī Kassapa** and **Gayā Kassapa**, who lived further down the river Nerañjarā, too renounced to become monks following the Buddha's teachings. To the 1,000 followers—Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500, Nadī Kassapa and 300, and Gayā Kassapa and 200—the Buddha taught them **the Āditta Pariyāyā Sutta** (the fire discourse)<sup>3</sup>—at the end of which they all became arhats.

#### 1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

**1.2.0 The Uruvelā Pāṭihāriyā** is significant in at least 2 important ways:

- (1) it shows that the Buddha was adept in various psychic wonders (*pāṭihāriya*) or “miracles,” and
- (2) that the Buddha was an adept missionary, able to convert 1,000 (or 1,003 to be exact) followers in a short period.

#### 1.2.1 Miracles or wonders (*pāṭihāriya*)?

**1.2.1.1** After centuries of observation, study, research and development, scientists and technologists have been able today to invent various kinds of machines, instruments and methods to measure, manipulate and make use of matter (solidity, fluidity, heat/light, motion and space) such as by way of the telescope, microscope, X-ray machines and so on to discover more about our universe, and about our body and mind, and their diseases, thus to heal or lessen many of their problems. We can also travel faster, farther, and more efficiently, in better machines, and even explore outer space. Early Buddhist psychology is now helping and inspiring modern psychology to discover and study deeper and in more

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<sup>1</sup> These matted hair ascetics were the 3 Kassapa brothers (*te, bhātika jaṭilā*) living along the Nerañjarā river. On their names, see [§1 nn].

<sup>2</sup> Ordinarily, to **convert** (somebody) is to “change or make somebody change their religion or beliefs” (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1948, 9<sup>th</sup> ed 2015). While that may well describe conatively what happens when one hears Dharma and renounces, but spiritually, one, as a rule, realizes streamwinning or a deep level of understanding and acceptance of true reality and either renounces or “goes for refuge” (lives a Dharma-spirited life). This latter part is vitally significant in our Buddhist usage. In real terms, one thus “converts” oneself by joyfully understanding the Dharma by seeing true reality, with the Buddha or other Buddhists as one's witnesses.

<sup>3</sup> S 35.28/4:19 f (SD 1.3).

detail and sophistication into the nature of the human mind, and to manage, even heal, mental issues and diseases.

Through careful observation and study of our universe in terms of *matter, space and consciousness*, modern science has evolved to the advanced level where it is today. We often refer to such modern wonders of human development as “**miracles**” of science and psychology.

**1.2.1.2** This analogy of the “miracles” of modern scientific development is helpful in our understanding of the Buddha’s “**psychic powers**” (*pāṭihāriya*), which he attained by mastering his mind through deep meditation, by gaining the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana (*jhāna*). By attaining dhyana, the Buddha frees his mind from the distraction of the senses so that his mind has much better focus and clarity than any ordinary being. In modern terms, we can say that, through dhyana, the Buddha gains mastery of “**mind over matter**,” meaning that he not only understands the nature of “*earth, water, fire and wind*” (the 4 basic elements), but also of *space and consciousness*: these are known in early Buddhism as **the 6 elements** (*cha dhātu*).<sup>4</sup>

Just as the modern scientists and technologists are able to manipulate and make use of these 6 elements today, the Buddha, with his mental powers, was able to perform “miracles” or “wonders” with the 6 elements. Besides the Buddha, many of the early arhats, too, were able to perform such miracles or wonders due to their own mental mastery of **the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana**.

**1.2.1.3** Throughout this translation of **Uruvelā Pāṭihāriya** I have used the popular term “miracle/s” for *pāṭihāriya*, which is often translated as “wonder/s” to avoid being misconstrued as having any theistic connotation. Thus, in keeping with the popular tone of this story of the 3 Kassapa brothers, I have resorted to using the better known term “miracle/s” than the judicious rendition, “wonder/s.” In this way I feel that the “miraculous” tone of the narrative is preserved for the benefit of the general reader rather than the sutta-savvy.

The various miracles build up into a climax, that is, Uruvelā Kassapa’s conversion. However, despite the numerous and impressive “miracles,” Uruvelā Kassapa is depicted as totally unimpressed by all but the last of them. These miracles can be briefly listed as follows:

Mv 1.15	the 1 <sup>st</sup> miracle:	the taming of the ferocious fire-serpent;
Mv 1.16	the 2 <sup>nd</sup> miracle:	descent of the 4 great kings;
Mv 1.17	the 3 <sup>rd</sup> miracle:	descent of Sakra, lord of the devas;
Mv 1.18	the 4 <sup>th</sup> miracle:	descent of Brahmā Sahampati;
Mv 1.19	the 5 <sup>th</sup> miracle:	the Buddha goes to Uttara, kuru;
Mv 1.20	1-6 a set of 4 miracles	the rag-robe was washed; kneaded; the bent branch; robe spread;
	7-9 rose-apple	the Buddha reached <u>the fire-house</u> before Kassapa who left earlier;
	10 emblic myrobalan	(at the fire-house)
	10 chebulic myrobalan	(at the fire-house)
	11 coral tree flower	(at the fire-house)
	12-14 3 x 500 miracles	chopping firewood; kindling fire; quenching fire;
	15 the 500 coal-pans	during the snowing 8 days;
	16 the water-walking	after the rains and floods;
	17 <b>the final miracle</b>	the Buddha confronts Kassapa: that he is <u>not</u> an arhat in any way.

**Table 1.2.1.3.** The Buddha’s miracles at Uruvelā

<sup>4</sup> **Cha-b, bisodhana S** (M 112, 7/3:31), SD 59.7; **Titth’āyatana S** (A 3:61, 6/1:173), SD 6.8). A person’s make-up **Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140, 7 f + 13-19), SD 4.17. See also M 10, 12/1:57 (SD 13.3) the 4 elements; Vbh 82.

Thus, the greatest miracle is not merely that of the Buddha's **thought-reading**; but then the gods and deities were also able to read the Buddha's thoughts [Mv 1.20]. The greatest miracle, in fact, is that the Buddha told Uruvelā Kassapa the "ultimate truth," that Kassapa was *not an arhat at all*! This truth gave Kassapa such a **spiritual shock** (*saṃvega*) that he realized his true predicament and decided to renounce under the Buddha, followed by his 500 followers, and then Nadi Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa along with their respective 300 and 200 followers, totalling 1003 converts.

**1.2.1.4** In the closing of the narrative of the various miracles, the Vinaya states that:

Through the Blessed One's resolution,  
500 pieces of fire-wood that could not be chopped were chopped up;  
500 fires that could not be kindled were kindled;  
500 fires that could not be quenched were quenched;  
500 coal-pans were created.

In this way, there came to be **3,500 miracles**. (Mv 1.20.24 @ V 1:34,9 f)

This number of 3,500 is clearly much larger than the actual total of wonders performed by the Buddha here. It seems to be early Indian rhetoric for dramatizing the story from an ancient oral tradition. We can try to see how we can get that number of miracles.

From the above list, we have only 2,000 acts of wonder (that is, for each of the 500 matted hair ascetics). Even when we count the 500 followers of Nadi Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa, we have a total of only **2,500**. Perhaps we should count the first 5 miracles [Table 1.2.1.3] as being witnessed by Uruvelā Kassapa's 500 followers; we then have **3,000 miracles**. For the balance of **500 miracles**, we include the 5 miracles of the rag-robe (actually a set of 4 miracles), the rose-apple, the emblic myrobalan, the chebulic myrobalan, and the coral tree flower (totalling 8 miracles)—counted as 1 set of minor miracles—witnessed by or recounted to the 500 followers.

## 1.2.2 The Buddha as a missionary

**1.2.2.1** Two months after the great awakening, on the full moon day of June-July, around 449 BCE,<sup>5</sup> the 35-year-old Buddha taught the 5 monks who in due course became arhats. The Buddha then converted the youth Yasa of Benares, his 4 friends, and a further 50 friends of his, youths from the leading families (*pubbānupubbaka*) of Benares. We thus have a total of **60 monks** who came to the Buddha, heard the teaching and renounced the world. Here is a list of the first 60 arhats (except for Yasa's parents and ex-wife):

the 5 monks	Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma, and Assaji	Mv 1.6.10-47 (V 1:8-14)
Yasa	(his parents and ex-wife as lay followers) [SD 11.2(7+8)]	Mv 1.7-8 (V 1:15-18)
Yasa's 4 friends	Vimala, Subāhu, Puṇṇaji, and Gavampati [SD 11.2(9)]	Mv 1.9.1-4 (V 1:18 f)
Yasa's 50 friends <sup>6</sup>	all youths of Benares [SD 11.2(10)]	Mv 1.10 (V 1:20)
<b>the 60 arhats</b>	<b>the great commission</b> [SD 11.2(11)]	Mv 1.11.1 (V 1:21)

**Table 1.2.2.1** The first 60 arhats (after the Buddha)

<sup>5</sup> Modern scholars generally agree that the historical Buddha was born as **between 484-404 BCE**, and passed away between 410 and 400 BCE, prob 404 BCE. His traditional dates are about 200 years earlier, ie, 623-543 BCE (the Sinhala dates are 1 year earlier, counting year 0 as 1). See SD 58.1 (1.1.1).

<sup>6</sup> 5 monks + Yasa + 4 friends + 50 friends = 60.

When there were **61 arhats** (the first 60 arhats and the Buddha) in the world, the Buddha gave the 60 arhats **the great commission**<sup>7</sup>: he sent them out into the world so that it would witness the presence of the Buddha Dharma and respond to its presence. The Buddha's sending out of the first 60 arhats to declare the Dharma to the world makes Buddhism the first missionary religion.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See **The great commission**, SD 11.2; SD 45.16 (1.3.1.1).

<sup>8</sup> Mv 11.1 (V 1:20 f) = **(Māra) Pāsa S 2**, S 4.5/1:105 f (SD 61.19). For modern comy on the great commission, see SD 61.19 (1.3).

# Uruvela Pāṭihāriya

## The Miracles at Uruvelā

Mv 1.15-21@ V 1:24-36

### 21<sup>9</sup> THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MIRACLE<sup>10</sup> (PROSE, *GAJJA*)<sup>11</sup> [Mv 1.15.1-2]

Mv 1.15

1 Then, the Blessed One, walking on a tour, in due course reached **Uruvelā**.

Now, at that time, 3 matted hair ascetics were living at Uruvelā: Uruvela Kassapa, Nadī Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa. Amongst them,

1.2 **Uruvelā Kassapa**<sup>12</sup> was leader, guide, eldest, foremost, chief, head of 500 matted hair ascetics;  
**Nadī Kassapa**<sup>13</sup> was leader, guide, foremost, chief, head of 300 matted hair ascetics;  
**Gayā Kassapa**<sup>14</sup> was leader, guide, foremost, chief, head of 200 matted hair ascetics;

2 Then, the Blessed One approached the hermitage<sup>15</sup> of the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa. Having approached, he said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“If it is all right with you, Kassapa, let me stay for one night<sup>16</sup> in the fire-house.<sup>17</sup>”

“It’s not inconvenient for me, great recluse, but therein is a fierce serpent-king of great power. He is a very venomous serpent. Let him not harm you!”

2.2 A second time, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“If it is all right with you, Kassapa, let me stay for one night in the fire-house.”

“It’s not inconvenient for me, great recluse, but therein is a fierce<sup>18</sup> serpent-king of great power. He is a very venomous serpent. Let him not harm you!”

2.3 A third time, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“If it is all right with you, Kassapa, let me stay for one night in the fire-house.”

<sup>9</sup> For the numbering of the episode **titles** [21-38], I have followed (ed) Anandajoti, *Mahākhandaḥko*, 2009:§§21-38; the paragraph numbering keeps to that of Ee (PTS).

<sup>10</sup> On the early Buddhist attitude to **miracles**, see SD 27.5a.

<sup>11</sup> Prose, *gajja*, esp elaborate prose composition: *gajjam pajjam ca geyyam ca ... yam cuṇṇiyeh’eva padehi-m-abhisankhataṃ veyyākaraṇa,saṅkhātāṃ taṃ gajjan ti pavuccati* (Sadd 610,4\* f).

<sup>12</sup> Uruvelā Kassapa, “of Uruvelā,” is declared by the Buddha as the foremost of monks who have large followings (A 1:25). His verses are at Tha 375-380. Comy say that Belatṭha,sīsa, “tamed” (*damane*) by Kassapa as a fire-worshipping follower, after conversion by the Buddha, later become Ānanda’s teacher (ThaA 1:71,12-15). The 3 Kassapa brothers had a sister whose son, Senaka, was converted by the Buddha (ThaA 2:120 f on Tha 287-290).

<sup>13</sup> Nadī Kassapa, “of the river,” ie, the Nerañjarā. His verses are at Tha 341-344. Comy (on Uruvelā Kassapa) says that Nadī Kassapa was so called because he “went forth” at the bend of a great river (Nerañjarā) (ThaA 2:160,14).

<sup>14</sup> Gayā Kassapa is so called because he “went forth” at Gaya,sīsa (ThaA 2:160,15), His verses are at Tha 345-349.

<sup>15</sup> *Assama* (Skt *āsrama*), like a monastery (*ārāma*), with leaf-huts (*paṇṇa,sālā*), meditation walkway (*caṅkama*) and not far from a village for almsround (*gocara,gāma*) (SnA 581,14 f). Only in post-Buddha sense, “stage of life”: BA:Ce 62,17-65,7 ≈ J 1:61-10,29\*; see CPD sv.

<sup>16</sup> “For one night,” Be Ce Se *eka,rattim*. Ee *eka,rattam* throughout (wr). The Buddha makes this request thrice [§§2.1, 2.2, 2.3]. He stays only *one* night to be with Uruvelā Kassapa and his followers. Once he has tamed the serpent, the Buddha stays on his own in the forest nearby for a few days [§23.1].

<sup>17</sup> “Fire-house,” *agyāgāra* (Skt *agny-āgāra*) where the fire-worshippers’ sacred fire is kept: D 1:101,22, 102,1; M 1:501,25 (= *aggi.hotta,sālā*, MA); A 5:234,14 = 250,5; V 1:24,25, 4:109,2; J 6:535,22\*, 5:3,10.

<sup>18</sup> Se *Api ca kho cand’ettha* throughout.

*“It’s not inconvenient for me, great recluse, but therein is a fierce serpent-king of great power. He is a very venomous serpent. Let him not harm you!”*

2.4 “It is unlikely that he will harm me. Please, Kassapa, allow me to use the fire-house.”

“Stay there, then, great recluse, as you wish.”

## 21B THE SERPENT IN THE FIRE-HOUSE [Mv 1.15.3-5]

### Mv 1.15

3 Then, the Blessed One, having entered the fire-house, spread out a grass mat, sat down cross-legged, keeping his back erect, aroused mindfulness before him.

3.2 Then, the serpent saw that the Blessed One had entered the fire-house. Seeing this, he was unhappy, upset, and blew forth smoke.<sup>19</sup>

3.3 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“What now if I, without harming the serpent’s [25] skin and hide and flesh and ligaments and bones and bone-marrow, were to overcome fire with fire?<sup>20</sup>”

4 Then, the Blessed One, displaying psychic power, blew forth smoke.

Then, the serpent, unable to restrain his anger, flared up.<sup>21</sup>

4.2 The Blessed One attained the fire element and flared up, too.<sup>22</sup>

When both were in flames,<sup>23</sup> the fire-house appeared as if burning, ablaze, in flames.

4.3 Then, the matted hair ascetics surrounded the fire-house, called out to the Blessed One:

“Handsome indeed is the great recluse; he is harmed by the serpent [he will be harmed by the serpent]!”<sup>24</sup>

5 Then, late in the night,<sup>25</sup> the Blessed One, without harming that serpent’s skin and hide and flesh and ligaments and bones and the bone-marrow, having mastered fire by fire, placed him in his bowl.<sup>26</sup>

5.2 The Blessed One showed the serpent to the matted hair ascetic, Uruvelā Kassapa, saying,

“This, Kassapa, is your serpent, his fire was mastered by fire.”

5.3 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“The great recluse is truly of great psychic power, of great majesty, in that he can master by fire the fire of the fierce serpent king, a fearsomely venomous snake who has psychic power; but he is not an arhat as I am.”

<sup>19</sup> “Unhappy ... smoke,” Be *dummano padhūpayi*; Ce Ee Se *dukkhī dummano padhūpāsī*. Preterit *Padhūpāyi* (vll *padhūpāsī*, *padhūmāsī*) (PED).

<sup>20</sup> V:B 4:20 tr simply as “Let me overpower this dragon, using fire against fire, but without harming it in the slightest way.”

<sup>21</sup> *Atha kho so nāgo makkhaṃ asahamāno pajjali*. Comy glosses *makkha* (BHS *mrakṣya*) with *kodha*, “anger” (*makkhaṃ ti kodhaṃ*, VA 5:972,20). For *makkha*, “hypocrisy,” see PED: *makkha*<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> *Bhagavā pi tejo, dhātuṃ samāpajjitvā pajjali*.

<sup>23</sup> Be Ce Ee *ubhinnaṃ sajoti, bhūtānaṃ*; Se *-sañjoti-* (a Sanskritism).

<sup>24</sup> Be Ce Se *abhirūpo vata bho mahā, samaṇo nāgena viheṭhiyatī ti*; Ee ... *viheṭhissatī ti*. All MSS has present tense, except Ee is future tense. Notice the difference in tense reflects the ascetics’ reactions. See *viheṭhiyati* here at 6.6d.

<sup>25</sup> *Abhikkantāya rattiya*, when the night was far advanced or waning, ie, at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> watch (around 2-3 am): D 2:86,24 = S 4:183,29 = U 87,27; A 4:204,27 = V 2:236,6 f; Sn p46,14 (SnA 114,15); D 2:220,5 (DA) = 3:194,8 (DA) = 3:194,8 (Sv = Pj) = S 1:1,9 (SA = Pj) = A 1:278,26 = U 23,28 (Ua = Pj) ≈ M 1:142,16 = 143,25 ≈ A 4:204,24.

<sup>26</sup> The Buddha’s action of placing the serpent, which was magical and must have been large, into his almsbowl, suggests that the Buddha must have psychically reduced its size to that of an ordinary snake to fit into the alms-bowl, and also to show that it is harmless and the Buddha does not intend it any harm.

**22 THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MIRACLE (VERSE, GĀTHĀ)<sup>27</sup> [Mv 1.15.6-7]**

Mv 1.15.6

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| <p><b>1</b> <i>Nerañjarāya<sup>28</sup> bhagavā  <br/>uruvelā,kassapaṃ jaṭilaṃ avoca  <br/>sace te kassapa agaru viharemu<br/>ajjuṇho<sup>29</sup> aggī,sālamhī ti.<sup>30</sup>   </i></p> <p><b>2</b> <i>Na kho me mahā,samaṇa garu  <br/>phāsu,kāmo'va<sup>32</sup> taṃ nivāremi  <br/>caṇḍ'ettha nāga,rājā   <br/>iddhimā āsi,viso ghora,viso  <br/>so taṃ mā viheṭhesī ti   </i></p> <p><b>3</b> <i>Appeva maṃ na viheṭheyya  <br/>iṅgha tvarṃ kassapa<br/>anujānāhi agyāgāraṇa ti   <br/>dinnan ti taṃ veditvā<br/>abhīto<sup>34</sup> pāvīsi bhayaṃ atīto   </i></p> <p><b>4</b> <i>Disvā isiṃ pavitṭhaṃ<br/>ahi,nāgo dummano padhūpāyi   <br/>sumana,manaso adhimano<sup>36</sup><br/>manussa,nāgo'pi tattha padhūpāyi</i></p> <p><b>5</b> <i>Makkhañ ca asahamāno  <br/>ahi,nāgo pāvako'va pajjali  <br/>tejo,dhātusu kusalo<sup>37</sup>  <br/>manussa,nāgo pi tattha pajjali   </i></p> | <p>Near the Nerañjarā, the Blessed One<br/>spoke thus to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:<br/>“If it is not inconvenient to you, Kassapa,<br/>let me stay this day in the fire-house.”<sup>31</sup></p> <p>“It’s not inconvenient to me, great recluse,<br/>but I’m desirous for your comfort;<br/>therein is a fierce serpent king,<br/>a fearsomely venomous snake of psychic power.<br/>Let him not harm you.”</p> <p>“’Tis unlikely that he can harm me.<br/>Please, Kassapa, do you<br/>allow the use of the fire-house?”<br/>“It is given,” having understood this.<sup>33</sup><br/>The fearless one entered, going past fear.</p> <p>Having seen that the seer had entered,<br/>the upset mighty snake<sup>35</sup> spewed forth smoke.<br/>The lord of man, with mind intent on joy,<br/>sent forth smoke right there, too.</p> <p>But the mighty snake, not conquering anger,<br/>blazed up like a fire.<br/>The lord of man, skilled in the heat element,<br/>spewed forth fire right there, too.</p> |
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<sup>27</sup> Be lays out these 2 sections [§§6-7] as verse, but neither Ce, Ee nor Se.

<sup>28</sup> Se so; Be Ce Ee *nerañjarāyaṃ* (alt form of loc). In §§6+7 (except for the closing clause of §7) the opening story (§§1-5) is repeated in popular style. “This appears in a more archaic redaction than the preceding. We do not know any other instance in the Pāli Piṭakas of a similar repetition, excepting a short passage at the end of ch 24,3; and one other in **the Mahā Padhāna S.**” (V:RO 1:120 n4)

<sup>29</sup> Be *ajjaṇho* (*ajja* + *juṇho*, by ellipsis of *ju-*); all MSS *ajjuṇho*. CPD say that *ajjaṇho* is wr.

<sup>30</sup> Ce Se *aggī,saraṇamhī ti*.

<sup>31</sup> I take *sālā*, “hall,” as poetic licence for the *agāra*, “house,” a broad term for “lodging,” which is prob a small hut which the ascetics can surround.

<sup>32</sup> Ee *va*; Be omits; Ce Se *ca*.

<sup>33</sup> Uruvelā Kassapa understands that the Buddha has no fear.

<sup>34</sup> Be Se so; Ce Ee *asambhīto* (emphatic synonym, but unmetrical).

<sup>35</sup> “The mighty snake,” *ahi,nāgo*, occurs only here in the canon. This clearly is to contrast with *manussa,nāga*, “the lord of man” or “the lordly man,” viz, the Buddha. Cf *mahā,nāga*, “the great lordly one,” used of the 2 chief disciples at the end of **Anaṅgana S** (M 5/1:32) and of **Ratha,vinīta S** (M 24/1:151), and def of *nāga* in **Vammika S** (M 23/1:145) as “synonym for that monk in whom the influxes are destroyed”; also MA 1:153. Cf also **Nāga Vagga** of Dh (ch 23).

<sup>36</sup> Se *sumana,mānaso na vimano*: -*mā*- is unmetrical; Ee *sumanaso avimano*, “sumanaso” prob a printing error.

<sup>37</sup> Se *tejo,dhatu,kusalo* (cpd form) is unmetrical.



6 *Ubhinnaṃ sajoti, bhūtānaṃ<sup>38</sup>  
agyāgāraṃ udiccare<sup>39</sup> jaṭilā  
abhirūpo vata bho mahā, samaṇo  
nāgena viheṭhiyatī<sup>40</sup> ti bhaṇanti ||*

When both were burning brightly,  
the matted hair ascetics, looking at the fire-house, said:  
“Handsome indeed is the great recluse,  
but he is being harmed by the serpent!”

## 22B Mv 1.15.7

1 *Atha tassā rattiya<sup>41</sup> accayena  
hatā nāgassa acciyo honti<sup>43</sup>  
iddhīmato pana ṭhitā,<sup>44</sup>  
aneka, vaṇṇā acciyo honti ||*

Then, at the end of the night,<sup>42</sup>  
the serpent’s flames were put out.  
But the one with psychic powers remained  
with flames in various colours:

2 *Nīlā<sup>45</sup> atha lohitakā  
mañjittā<sup>46</sup> pītakā phalika, vaṇṇāyo  
aṅgī, rasassa<sup>47</sup> kāye |  
aneka, vaṇṇā acciyo honti ||*

deep blue, deep red,  
light red, yellow, crystal colours,  
on Aṅgi, rasa’s<sup>48</sup> body,  
with flames of various hues.

3 *Pattamhi odahitvā |  
ahi, nāgaṃ brāhmaṇassa dassesi  
ayaṃ te kassapa nāgo  
pariyādinno assa tejasā tejo ti ||*

Having put the lord of snakes into his bowl,  
he showed it to the brahmin,<sup>49</sup> saying:  
“This, Kassapa, is your serpent;  
his fire was mastered by fire,”

Then, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, fully believing in this wonder of psychic power of the Blessed One, spoke thus to the Blessed One:

“Stay<sup>50</sup> right here, great recluse, I shall supply you with food.”

<sup>38</sup> B *agyāgāraṃ ādittam hoti sampajjalitam sajoti, bhūtaṃ udiccare jaṭilā*, “The fire-house was ablaze, so bright the ascetics surveying it (said).” This differs from all the other MSS.

<sup>39</sup> *Udiccare*, med pres 3 pl of *ud-ikkhati* (to look at, behold; look up to; look out for),

<sup>40</sup> *Ee nāge na viheṭhissiyati*, “will not be harmed by the serpent” gives a very different reading which does not fit here. On *viheṭhiyati*, see here (§1.15) 4.3 n.

<sup>41</sup> Be so. *Ee atha kho tassa rattiya*; Ce Se *atha rattiya*; read as *rattīya* (2 syllables) mc.

<sup>42</sup> *Rattiya accayena*, when the night was spent; at the crack of dawn.

<sup>43</sup> Be Ee so. Ce Se *ahī, nāgassa acciyo na honti*, “the serpent’s fire were no more.”

<sup>44</sup> Ce *panuṭṭhitā*, “(the flames): flared up,” which is more dramatic, but -uṭ- makes it unmetrical.

<sup>45</sup> Ce *nīlakā* (unmetrical).

<sup>46</sup> Be *mañjittā*; Ee Se *mañjettā*. The 2 are alt spellings. *Mañjittā* is not *magenta* (purple-red), which does not occur naturally, but can only be obtained by mixing blue and red lights. In other words, there is no single light ray that can be called magenta.

<sup>47</sup> Ce Ee Se *aṅgī, rassa*; but long -ī- is needed for metre: Be *aṅgī, rassasa*.

<sup>48</sup> The name *aṅgī, rasa* or *aṅgi, rasa* (“whose body emits radiant rays”) is often attr to the Buddha: V 1:25,32\*; D 3:196,7\*; S 1:81,15\*; S 1:196,3\* = Tha 1252; A 3:239,25\*; Tha 536; Comys explain as “rays flowing from the (Buddha’s) body” (*aṅgato raṃsiyā saṃsaranti*, VA 971). See CPD sv.

<sup>49</sup> Uruvelā Kassapa is here addressed as a “brahmin,” hinting that he will soon give up his caste status for the true state of a saint, as an arhat.

<sup>50</sup> Be Ce Ee so; Se *viḥāraṃ*, “staying,” is wr; Ke *viharatha* is grammatically correct but unmetrical.



**23 THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MIRACLE: THE 4 GREAT KINGS**

Mv 1.16.1

**[26] 1** Then, the Blessed One stayed in a certain forest grove near the hermitage [ashram] of the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa.

**2** Then, late in the night, **the 4 great kings**,<sup>51</sup> having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One. Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, they stood at the 4 quarters like huge bonfires.

23B Mv 1.16.2

**1** Then, at the end of the night,<sup>52</sup> the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he spoke thus to the Blessed One:

“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.

**2** But now, who were these, great recluse, who, *having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One? Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, they stood at the 4 quarters like huge bonfires.*”

“Kassapa, they were **the 4 great kings** who have approached me to hear Dharma.”

**3** Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that **the 4 great kings** also approach him to hear Dharma;  
but he is not an arhat as I am.” [§1.15,5.3]

**4** Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.

**24 THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MIRACLE: SAKRA LORD OF THE DEVAS**

Mv 1.17

**1** Then, late in the night,<sup>53</sup> **Sakra**, lord of the devas,<sup>54</sup> *having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One. Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, he stood at one side just like a huge bonfire, of more glorious, more exquisite colour than the former.*

**2** Then, *at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he spoke thus to the Blessed One:*

“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.

**2.2** But now, who was this, great recluse, who, *having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One? Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, he stood at one side like a huge bonfire, of more glorious, more exquisite colour than the former.*”

“Kassapa, he was **[27] Sakra**, lord of the devas, who has approached me to hear Dharma.”

**2.3** Then, *it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:*

<sup>51</sup> *Cātum, mahā, rājika*, lords of the lowest of the 6 sense-world heavens, the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 “earthbound” heavens [SD 54.3a (3.5.1); SD 60.8 (1.1.1.2)].

<sup>52</sup> *Rattiyā accayena*, ie, when the night was spent; at the crack of dawn.

<sup>53</sup> Clearly this was the following night after the 4 great kings’ visit. On *abhikkantāya rattiyā*, see §5 n.

<sup>54</sup> *Sakka, devānam indo*; he is celestial lord of his heaven, Tāvātimsa (“the 33”) as well as the heaven of the 4 great kings (*cātum, mahārājika*). These 2 are the lowest of the 6 sense-world heavens, and are “earthbound” [§1.2 n]. For details, see SD 54.3a (2.2.1).

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that **Sakra**, lord of the devas, also approached him to hear Dharma, but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,55.3]

*2.4 Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

## 25 THE 4<sup>TH</sup> MIRACLE: BRAHMĀ SAHAMPATI

Mv 1.18

**1** Then, late in the night, **Brahmā Sahampati**, having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One. Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, he stood at one side just like a huge bonfire, of more glorious colour than the former.

**2** Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he spoke thus to the Blessed One:

*“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.*

*2.2 But now, who was this, great recluse, who, having brightened up the entire forest grove in brilliant light, approached the Blessed One? Having approached and saluted the Blessed One, he stood at one side like a huge bonfire, of more glorious, more exquisite colour than the former.”*

*“Kassapa, he was **Brahmā Sahampati**, who has approached me to hear Dharma.”*

*2.3 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:*

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that **Brahmā Sahampati** also approached him to hear Dharma, but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

*2.4 Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

## 26 THE 5<sup>TH</sup> MIRACLE: UTTARA, KURU

Mv 1.19

**1** Now, at that time, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa held a **great sacrifice**,<sup>55</sup> and all of Aṅga and Magadha, bringing abundant food, hard and soft, wanted to attend.<sup>56</sup>

**1.2** Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

*“My great sacrifice is going on right now, and the whole of Aṅga and Magadha, bringing abundant food, hard and soft, will come. If the great recluse does a psychic wonder before the populace, the great recluse’s gains and honour will greatly increase, my gains and honour will decline.*

*Surely, I hope that the great recluse will not come tomorrow!”*

<sup>55</sup> This *yañña* (Skt *yajña*) is the fire-sacrifice (*aggi, hutta*, Skt *agni, hotra*) performed (*paccupaṭṭhito hoti*) by Uruvelā Kassapa himself. On the *aggi, hutta*, see Dh 392 (DhA 4:151,13-17); Sn 249, 428, p79,23 (SnA 401,13); S 2:66,21); see CPD *aggi-hutta*.

<sup>56</sup> Comy: At another public festival, the Buddha converted Uruvelā Kassapa’s nephew, Senaka (ThaA 2:120 f).

2 Then, the Blessed One, [28] having read the thoughts<sup>57</sup> of the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, left for **Uttara,kuru**.<sup>58</sup> Having gathered almsfood from there, he ate it by Lake Anotattā,<sup>59</sup> and then took his midday rest there.

2.2 Then, at the end of that night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he said this to the Blessed One:

“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready. But why did you not come yesterday, great recluse?”

2.3 We thought of you however, saying “How is it that the great recluse does not come?”

A portion of food, hard and soft, was put aside for you.”

3 “Now, Kassapa, did it not occur to you:

*‘At present my great sacrifice is going on, and the whole of Aṅga and Magadha, taking abundant solid food and soft food, will come. If the great recluse does a wonder of psychic power before the populace, the great recluse’s gains and honour will increase, my gains and honour will decline. Now, I hope that the great recluse will not come tomorrow!’?*

4 So I, Kassapa, having read your thoughts, left for Uttara,kuru. Having gathered almsfood from there, I ate it by Lake Anotattā, and then took my midday rest there.”

4.2 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, that he reads my thoughts, but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

4.3 Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by)<sup>60</sup> the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.

## 27 THE RAG-ROBE AND OTHER ACCOUNTS [Mv 1.20.1-6]

### Mv 1.20

1 Now, at that time, a rag-robe accrued to the Blessed One.

Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“Now, where can I **wash** the rag-robe?”

1.2 Then, **Sakra**, lord of the devas, reading the Blessed One’s thought, dug a lotus-tank with his hands, and then spoke thus to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the Blessed One may wash the rag-robe here.”

1.3 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“Now, on what can I **knead** the rag-robe?”

1.4 Then, Sakra, lord of the devas, read the Blessed One’s thought.

Having laid down a large stone (near the Blessed One), he said:

“Bhante, knead the rag-robe here.”

<sup>57</sup> “Read the thought,” *cetasā parivittakam*. This seems not to be “mind-reading” as an arhat’s power, as it is knowing or surmising another’s intention. Psychic mind-reading is *parassa ceto,pariya,ñāṇa* (D 2,93.2) SD 8.10; SD 1.7 (1.4); whereas “thought-reading” is *ādesana,pāṭihāriya* (D 11,6-7), SD 1.7; SD 27.5a (5.5.5). Although called *pāṭihāriya*, “psychic wonder,” the latter is a mere mundane ability while the former is one of an arhat’s abilities.

<sup>58</sup> **Uttara,kuru** is the mythical northern continent in ancient Indian cosmology; 3 other continents (*mahā,dīpa*), viz, Jambu,dīpa (India), Aparā,goyāna, and Pubba,videha, and 4 x 500 smaller islands (*dīpa*) surrounding each of the great ones; this constitutes a world system (*cakka,vāḷa*). Uttara,kuru is described as a paradise, detailed at **D 32,7/-3:199,25 f.** See DPPN & CPD sv. Also Lüders, Varuṇa, 1951:288-293; W Kirfel, *Dis Kosmographie der Inder*, 1920.

<sup>59</sup> **Anotattā** is one of the 7 mythical lakes of ancient Indian geography: **Satta Suriya S** (A 7.62.16), SD 47.8; prob Aral Sea, lying between Kazakhstan (north) and Uzbekistan (south) [SD 62.11 (1.2.2.2) n].

<sup>60</sup> On another occasion.

2 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“Now, holding on to what can I **come up** (from the water)?”<sup>61</sup>

2.2 Then, a deity inhabiting a kakudha tree [arjun tree],<sup>62</sup> having read the Blessed One’s thought, bent down<sup>63</sup> [lowered] a bough, and said:

“Bhante, the Blessed [29] One, holding on here, may come up.”

2.3 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“Now, on what can I **stretch out**<sup>64</sup> the rag-robe?”

2.4 Then, Sakra, lord of the devas, reading the Blessed One’s thought, laid down a large stone near him, and said:

“Bhante, the Blessed One may stretch out the rag-robe here.”

3 Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he said this to the Blessed One:

“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.

3.2 But, how is it, great recluse, that this lotus-tank was not here before, and now there is this tank? Nor was this stone laid down here before. By whom was this stone put down?

Nor was the bough of this kakudha tree bent down here before, and now there is this bent bough.<sup>65</sup>

4 “Here, Kassapa, a rag-robe accrued to me. [§1.20.1]

Then, it occurred to me:

‘Now, where can I wash the rag-robe?’

4.2 Then, Sakra, lord of the devas, reading my thought, dug a lotus-tank with nonhuman hands, and then spoke thus to me:

“Bhante, the Blessed One may wash the rag-robe here.”

This lotus-tank, Kassapa,<sup>66</sup> was dug up<sup>67</sup> with nonhuman<sup>68</sup> hands.

4.3 Then, it occurred to me:

“Now, on what can I knead the rag-robe?”

4.4 Then, Sakra, lord of the devas, read my thought.

Having laid down a large stone (near me), said:

“Bhante, knead the rag-robe here.”

This stone, Kassapa, was laid<sup>69</sup> by a nonhuman.

<sup>61</sup> Be Ee *Kimhi nu kho ahaṃ ālambitvā uttareyyan ti*; Ce ... *uttareyan ti*; Se ... *uttareyyanti* (wr).

<sup>62</sup> PED says that **kakudha** is the arjun (or arjuna) tree, *Terminalia arjuna*; Ap 328,28, 346,3, 450,20; J 6:535,15\*. It is Anomadassī’s bodhi tree: B 8.23; J 1:36,6, 6:518 f; DhA 1:105,25, 4:153. VA 972 calls it “arjuna tree” (*ajjuna, ruk-kha*), which PED names as *Pentaptera arjuna*. Refs & photos: [Wiki] 5 June 25.

<sup>63</sup> “Bent down,” Ee *onamesi*; Be Ce Se *onāmesi*. *O-nāmeti* (Skt *avanāmayati*) is also written *oṇāmeti* (caus of *onameti*) [DP 1:574] [hence confusion between -a- and -ā-]; also spelt *onamati* [DP], “to cause to bend down, to bend down, to lower (opp *unnāmeti*). See CPD svv *onameti*, *onāmeti*, *oṇameti*, and *oṇāmeti*.

<sup>64</sup> *Vissajjeyyaṃ*, which Comy explains as *sukkhā, panatthāya pasāretvā ṭhapeyyaṃ*, “(Where) can I, stretching it out, leave it to dry?” (VA 972,6)

<sup>65</sup> *Sāyaṃ sākha onatā*. *Sāyaṃ* = *sa* (deictic particle with a sense of “the, this”) + *ayaṃ* (“this”). PED: sv.

<sup>66</sup> *Kassapa* only in Be here and below [§5.4].

<sup>67</sup> Be *khaṇitā*; Ce *khatā*; Ee Se *khanitā*. Note the *n/ṇ* alternation.

<sup>68</sup> “Nonhuman,” *amanussena*. The term *amanussa* broadly refers to a non-human being, a (bad or good) spirit, a demon (*yakkha*, *rakkhasa*, etc), also said of gods (cf *amanussika*, *amānusa*); D 2:344,21 (with *yakkho*). For refs: CPD.

<sup>69</sup> “Laid,” *nikhittā*; above, it is “laid out,” *upanikkhipi* [§1.20,1.4] + *upanikkhittā* [§1.20,3.2].

5 Then, it occurred to me, Kassapa: [§1.20.2]

*“Now, holding on to what can I come up (from the water)?”*

5.2 Then, a deity inhabiting a kakudha tree, reading my thought, bent down a bough, saying:

*“Bhante, the Blessed One, holding on here, may come up.”*

So, Kassapa, this kakudha (branch) was a hold for the hand.<sup>70</sup>

5.3 Then, it occurred to me: [§1.20,2.4]

*“Now, on what can I stretch out the rag-robe?”*

5.4 Then, Sakra, lord of the devas, reading my thought, laid down a large stone (near me), and said:

*“Bhante, the Blessed One may stretch out the rag-robe here.”*

This stone, Kassapa, was laid down by a nonhuman.

6 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that Sakra, lord of the devas, does him a service,*

*but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

6.2 *Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

## 28 THE ROSE-APPLE [Mv 1.20.7-9]

Mv 1.20

7 Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, [30] he announced the time to the Blessed One:

*“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.”*

1.2 “You go on,<sup>71</sup> Kassapa, I’ll come along. Having dismissed the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, the Blessed One took a fruit from a **rose-apple tree**<sup>72</sup>—after which this Rose-apple Land (*jambu,dīpa*)<sup>73</sup> is named—and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down.

8 The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One in the fire-house. Seeing him, he said this to the Blessed One sitting in the fire-house:

*“By what way have you come, great recluse? I set out before you, but you, having arrived first, are sitting in the fire-house.”*

9 “Now, Kassapa, having dismissed you, and then taken a fruit from a rose-apple tree—after which this Rose-apple Land is named—and then, having arrived first, I’m sitting in the fire-house. Truly, Kassapa, this rose-apple fruit is full of colour, full of fragrance, full of flavour—if you like, do eat it.”

*“There’s no need, great recluse. You alone deserve it, you should eat it.”<sup>74</sup>*

<sup>70</sup> “This *kakudha* was a hold for the hand,” *svāyaṃ āhāra,hattho kakudho*.

<sup>71</sup> “You go on,” Ce omits *tvaṃ* (“you”),

<sup>72</sup> Be Ce Se *yāya jambuyā*; Ee *yāya jambuyāyaṃ* (“this jambu”) throughout. **Rose-apple** (*Syzygium cumini*) is not the SE Asian “rose-apple” but the black plum (Vism 13.9/409). Also it should be noted that the Buddha did not pluck but took one that has fallen on the ground. On Jambu,dīpa & tr of *jambu*, see SD 16.15 (3).

<sup>73</sup> Viz, ancient India.

<sup>74</sup> Be *Alaṃ mahā,samaṇa tvaṃ y’eva taṃ arahasi, tvaṃ y’ev’etaṃ paribhuñjahī ti*. Ee Ce Se ... *tvaṃ y’ev’etaṃ ...*; Ee ... *arahasi, paribhuñjāhī ti*; Ce Se ... *āharasi, paribhuñjā ti*. The preferred reading is *arahasi*, “you are worthy (of it).” *Paribhuñja* and *paribhuñjāhi* are alt forms of imperative of *paribhuñjati*.

9.2 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he took a fruit from a rose-apple tree—after which this Rose-apple Land is named—and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down;*

*but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

9.3 Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.

## 29 THE MANGO FRUIT [Mv 1.20.10; abbreviated in Be Ee Se]75

Mv 1.20.10

1 Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he announced the time to the Blessed One:

*“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.”*

2 “You go on, Kassapa, I’ll come along. Having dismissed the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, the Blessed One took a fruit from **a mango tree**<sup>76</sup> not far (from the rose-apple tree), and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down. [28.7.2]

3 The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One in the fire-house. Seeing him, he said this to the Blessed One sitting in the fire-house:

*“By what way have you come, great recluse? I set out before you, but you, having arrived first, are sitting in the fire-house.”*

4 “Now, Kassapa, having dismissed you, I took a fruit from a mango tree; then, having arrived first, I’m sitting in the fire-house. Truly, Kassapa, this mango fruit is full of colour, full of fragrance, full of flavour—if you like, do eat it.”

*“There’s no need, great recluse. You alone deserve it, you should eat it.”*

5 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he took a fruit from a mango tree, and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down; but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

6 Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove. [§9]

## 30 THE EMBLIC MYROBALAN FRUIT [Mv 1.20.10 abbreviated]

Mv 1.20.10

7 Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he announced the time to the Blessed One:

*“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.”*

<sup>75</sup> Be Ee Se abbreviate: *tassā avidūre ambo ... tassā avidūre āmalakī ... tassā avidūre harītakī ... tāvatimsaṃ gantvā ...*; Ce gives the full text but gives *tassā avidūre tāvatimsaṃ gantvā*; the underscored is clearly erroneous.

<sup>76</sup> **Mango tree** (*amba*), ie, the Indian mango, *Mangifera indica*.

“You go on, Kassapa, I’ll come along. Having dismissed the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, the Blessed One took a fruit from **an emblic myrobalan tree**<sup>77</sup> not far (from the mango tree), *and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down.* [29.2]

**8** *The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One in the fire-house. Seeing him, he said this to the Blessed One sitting in the fire-house:*

*“By what way have you come, great recluse? I set out before you, but you, having arrived first, are sitting in the fire-house.”*

**9** *“Now, Kassapa, having dismissed you, I took a fruit from an emblic myrobalan tree; then, having arrived first, I’m sitting in the fire-house. Truly, Kassapa, this myrobalan fruit is full of colour, full of fragrance, full of flavour—if you like, do eat it.”*

*“There’s no need, great recluse. You alone deserve it, you should eat it.”*

**10** *Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:*

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he took a fruit from an emblic myrobalan tree, and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down; but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

**11** *Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

### **31 THE CHEBULIC MYROBALAN FRUIT** [Mv 1.20.10 abbreviated in Be Ee Se]

Mv 1.20.10

**12** *Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he announced the time to the Blessed One:*

*“It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready.”*

**13** *“You go on, Kassapa, I’ll come along. Having dismissed the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, the Blessed One took a fruit from **a chebolic myrobalan tree**<sup>78</sup> not far (from the emblic myrobalan tree), and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down.* [30.2]

**14** *The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One in the fire-house. Seeing him, he said this to the Blessed One sitting in the fire-house:*

*“By what way have you come, great recluse? I set out before you, but you, having arrived first, are sitting in the fire-house.”*

**15** *“Now, Kassapa, having dismissed you, I took a fruit from a chebolic myrobalan tree. Then, having arrived first, I’m sitting in the fire-house. Truly, Kassapa, this myrobalan fruit is full of colour, full of fragrance, full of flavour—if you like, do eat it.”*

*“There’s no need, great recluse. You alone deserve it, you should eat it.”*

**16** *Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:*

*“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he took a fruit from a chebolic myrobalan tree, and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down; but he is not an arhat as I am.”* [§1.15,5.3]

**17** *Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

<sup>77</sup> “Emblic myrobalan,” *āmalaka*, *Phyllanthus emblica*; amalaka tree (V 1:30,27; J 5:12,6; as medicinal, M 1:306,6 f; SnA 372,13 ≈ SA 3:101,17; Bhcs 10.63). The fruit is allowed as medicine for monastics (V 1:201; cf V 1:278).

<sup>78</sup> “Chebolic myrobalan,” or black myrobalan, *haritaka* (tree), *haritakī* (fruit), *Terminalia chebula* (cf *Terminalia citrina*, the yellow myrobalan). Chebolic myrobalan is allowed as medicine for monastics (V 1:201; cf M 3:127).



**32 TĀVATĪMSA: THE CORAL TREE FLOWER** [Mv 1.20.11 abbreviated in Be Ee Se]

Mv 1.20.11

**1** *Then, at the end of the night, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he announced the time to the Blessed One:*

*"It is time, great recluse, the meal is ready."*

**2** *"You go on, Kassapa, I'll come along. Having dismissed the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, the Blessed One went to Tāvatiṃsa [heaven of the 33],<sup>79</sup> took a flower from the coral tree;<sup>80</sup> then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down. [31.2]*

**3** *The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One in the fire-house. Seeing him, he said this to the Blessed One sitting in the fire-house:*

*"By what way have you come, great recluse? I set out before you, but you, having arrived first, are sitting in the fire-house."*

**4** *"Now, Kassapa, having dismissed you, I went to Tāvatiṃsa and took a flower from a coral tree there; then, having arrived first, I'm sitting in the fire-house.*

*Truly, Kassapa, this coral tree flower is full of colour, full of fragrance—if you like, [31] do take it."<sup>81</sup>*

*"There's no need, great recluse. You alone deserve it, you should have it."*

**5** *Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:*

*"Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he took a flower from a coral tree, and then arrived first in the fire-house where he sat down; but he is not an arhat as I am." [§1.15,5.3]*

**6** *Then, the Blessed One, having eaten the meal (offered by) the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, stayed in that same forest grove.*

**33 WOOD AND FIRE** [Mv 1.20.12-14]

Mv 1.20.12

**1** *Now, at that time, these matted hair ascetics, wanting to tend the sacred fire,<sup>82</sup> were unable to chop firewood.<sup>83</sup>*

*Then, it occurred to these matted hair ascetics:*

*"Clearly, it is due to the psychic might of the great recluse that we are unable to chop firewood."*

<sup>79</sup> On Tāvatiṃsa, see 24.1 (n) on "Sakra."

<sup>80</sup> "The coral tree" (*paricchattaka*, "shady all around"), ie, the Indian coral tree or tota tree, *Erythrina indica*. In Skt, it is called *mandāravā*. Sometimes, it is called "umbrella tree." **Paricchattaka S** (A 7.69/4:117120) describes the devas' rejoicings at each stage of the appearance of the shoot and bloom; for nn see A:H 4:78; DA 2:649. Sometimes called "flame tree" because of its red flowers, but this is a generic name for other trees, too, like "the flame of the forest," which itself may refer to the palasha tree (*palāsa*, Skt *palāśa*; *Butea monosperma*) or the royal poinciana tree (*Delonix regia*). It is said that coral tree flowers are never plucked (DPPN sv). Pāc 11 forbids monastics from destroying plant life (*bhūta,gāma*), which incl plucking any part of the plant (V 4:34,34). Hence, the Buddha must have picked up the coral tree flower or caught one as it fell; cf Moggallāna catching with his robe bodhi-tree seeds as they dropped (J 479/4:228 f). The *paricchattaka* was said to shed its flowers on the Buddha as he lay on his deathbed (D 2:137).

<sup>81</sup> Ee so. Ce Se omit this line; Be puts it within brackets. They are needed to complete the sutta context here.

<sup>82</sup> "The sacred fire," throughout: Be Ce *aggim* (sg; uncountable); Ee Se *aggi* (pl). The fire here is for a personal ritual, ie, a (Skt) *homa*. The "great sacrifice" (*mahā,yañña*) is a public fire ritual (Skt *yajña*).

<sup>83</sup> This sacred firewood was prob from the baval or babul tree, *Acacia nilotica* (var, indica), or gum arabic.

2 Then, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Kassapa, let the firewood be chopped!”

Five hundred pieces of firewood were chopped all at once.<sup>84</sup>

3 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that firewood is chopped; but he is not an arhat as I am.” [§1.15,5.3]

34 Mv 1.20.13

1 Now, at that time, these matted hair ascetics, wanting to tend the sacred fire, were **unable to kindle<sup>85</sup> the fire.**

Then, it occurred to these matted hair ascetics:

“Clearly it is due to the psychic might of the great recluse that we are unable to kindle the fire.” [§12.1]

2 Then, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Kassapa, let the fires be kindled.”

Five hundred fires were kindled all at once.

3 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that fires are kindled; but he is not an arhat as I am.” [§1.15,5.3]

35 Mv 1.20.14

1 Now, at that time, these matted hair ascetics, wanting to tend the sacred fires, were **unable to quench the fire.**

Then, it occurred to these matted hair ascetics:

“Clearly it is due to the psychic might of the great recluse that we are unable to quench the fire.” [§13.1]

2 Then, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Kassapa, let the fires be quenched.”

Five hundred fires were quenched at all once.

3 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that fires are quenched; but he is not an arhat as I am.” [§1.15,5.3]

### 36 WINTRY NIGHTS AND COAL-PANS

Mv 1.20.15

1 Now, at that time, on **the cold winter nights** between the eights,<sup>86</sup> a time of snowfall,

<sup>84</sup> “All at once,” *sakid eva*, “just once.” Clearly, this was a small log, one for each matted hair ascetic.

<sup>85</sup> “Unable to kindle,” *Be Ee Se na sakkonti ... ujjaletuṃ; Ce na sakkonti ... jāletuṃ. Ujjaletuṃ* is infinitive of *ujjaleti*, caus of *ujjalati*, *ujjalayati*, or *ujjā-*, “lights or blazes up, flames.” *Jāletuṃ* is inf of *jaleti*, “sets light to, causes to blaze,” caus of *jalati*. Both *ujjalati* + *jalati* der from *√JAL*, to burn. See DP: *ujjalati*.

<sup>86</sup> “Between the eights,” *antar’atṭhakāsu*, the “eighth days” (*atṭhaka*) which Comys say are “the 8 days between Māgha (Jan-Feb) and Phagguna (Feb-Mar)” (VA 1128; UA 74). **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,50/1:79) these are “the 8-day period of snowfall” (*antar’atṭhake hima,pāta,samaye*); Comy: “4 at the end of the month of Māgha, 4 at the beginning of Phagguna, thus between the two there are 8 nights” (MA 2:48). The phrase is also at (**Hatthaka**) **Āḷa-vaka S** (A 3.34/1:136) where Comy explains: “the time extends for 8 days in the interval between Māgha and Phagguna. For there are 4 days at the end of Māgha, and 4 at the beginning of Phagguna, called ‘occurring between the eights’ (*antar’atṭhaka*) [‘the 8 (days) in between’]” (AA 2:225). SED *aṣṭhaka*: “the eighth day after the full moon” seems to mark the end of *hemanta*, winter months (Māga,sira, Phussa and Māgha). The phrase recurs at: Mv 3.13.-

these matted hair ascetics were plunging into the river Nerañjarā, then emerging and repeatedly plunging in and out.<sup>87</sup>

2 Then, the Blessed One created as many as 500 coal-pans,<sup>88</sup> right where these matted hair ascetics, having emerged (from the river), warmed themselves.<sup>89</sup>

3 Then, it occurred to these matted hair ascetics,

“Clearly, this is due to the psychic might of the great recluse that these coal-pans are created.”

4 Then, it occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that he created many coal-pans;<sup>90</sup> but he is not an arhat as I am.” [§1.15,5.3]

### 37 THE FLOOD

Mv 1.20.16

1 Now, at that time, heavy rain untimely fell and a great flood rose.<sup>91</sup>

The Blessed One was staying at a place flooded with the waters.<sup>92</sup>

2 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One:

“What now, if I were to make the waters recede all around, and then pace up and down in the middle on the dirt-covered ground?”<sup>93</sup>

3 Then, the Blessed One, having made the waters recede all around, paced up and down in the middle on the dirt-covered ground.

4 Now, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa, thinking,

“Let not the great ascetic be washed away by the waters!”<sup>94</sup>

went with a boat and some matted hair ascetics to where the Blessed One was.

5 The matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa saw the Blessed One who, *having made the waters recede all around, was pacing up and down in the middle on the dirt-covered ground.*

6 Seeing him, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa said this:

5 @ V 1:288, U 1.9/6 (UA 74). Ency Bsm (3:605) says that Māgha can be either Dec-Jan or Jan-Feb; more likely the latter since this makes **Vesākhā** fall on the full moon day of April-May or early June, which is the modern Vesak Day (M 1:249; DA 1:425; Jinak 26, 39; Ency Bsm 3:525-532: Vesak). On Woodward’s error (A:W 1:119) see UA:M 1:235 n1152. For the Indian months, see DEB App 1.

<sup>87</sup> It appears that the matted hair ascetics practised purification by fire and water; cf ritual bathing (thrice daily) mentioned by Gayā Kassapa at Tha 345.

<sup>88</sup> “Coal-pans,” *mandā, mukhī*, or fire-vessels (Comy: *aggi, bhājanāni*, VA 5:972,8 f), ie, a vessel for holding fiery embers for the sake of heating. Also VvA 147 (*mandā, mukhī* = *aṅgāra, kapalla* for *hattha, pātāpaka*, Vv 33,32).

<sup>89</sup> “Warmed themselves,” *visibessum* (3 aor pl of *visibbeti* = *visiveti*), as at Pāc 56 (V 2:115). Cf *visivetvā* (Miln 47) and *visiveturū* (J 2:68, vi *visibbiturū*).

<sup>90</sup> “In that he created many fire-pans,” Be Se *yatra hi nāma tāva bahū mandā, mukhiyo pi abhinimminissati*; Ce omits *pi* and has *abhinimminissanti* (pl) but here sg is needed. Ee *yatra hi nāma mahā, mandā, mukhiyo abhinimminissati*, suggesting that these were large coal-pans.

<sup>91</sup> “A great flood arose,” *mahā udaka, vāhako sañjāyi*. Cf **A 3.62**/1:178,13, where floods are one of the 3 perils that separate mother and child (SD 51.26).

<sup>92</sup> *Yasmim padese bhagavā viharati so padeso udakena otthaṭo hoti*. Ee *anuotthaṭo* (“covered all around”); Ce *otthaṭo* (past part of *ottharati*; = *avatthaṭa*); Se *otthato* Be *na otthaṭo* is wr. See CPD: *otthaṭa* + *ava-tthaṭa*.

<sup>93</sup> *Yan, nūnāham samantā udakam ussāretvā majjhe reṇu, hatāya bhūmiyā caṅkameyyan ti*. This is an early version of the Buddha’s “water-walking” miracle or a more elaborate version of it.

<sup>94</sup> *Mā h’eva mahā, samaṇo udakena vūlho ahoṣī ti*. Cf *vūlham*, Nis 6.3.1 (V 3:213).

“Is that really you, great recluse?”<sup>95</sup>

“I *am* he (*ayam aham asmi*),<sup>96</sup> Kassapa.”

7 The Blessed One then rose into the air and reappeared<sup>97</sup> in the boat.

8 Then, it occurred to the matted-hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might, in that the waters do not carry him away,<sup>98</sup>

but he is not an arhat as I am.”<sup>99</sup> [§1.15,5.3]

### 38 URUVELĀ KASSAPA’S RENUNCIATION [Mv 1.20.17-19]

Mv 1.20.17

1 Then, it occurred to the Blessed One: “Now, for a long time it will occur to this foolish man, ‘Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great might; but he is not an arhat as I am.’

2 Now, suppose I should move this matted hair ascetic with samvega [spiritual urgency]?<sup>100</sup>”

Then, the Blessed One said this to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa:

“Neither are you, Kassapa, an arhat nor have you attained the path of arhathood, nor have you the practice by which you either could be an arhat or could have attained the path of arhathood.”

3 Uruvelā Kassapa, having lowered his head to the Blessed One’s feet, spoke thus to the Blessed One: “Bhante, may I receive the going forth in the Blessed One’s presence, may I receive ordination.”<sup>101</sup>

38B Mv 1.20.18

1 “It is you, Kassapa, who are *leader, guide, eldest, chief, head* of 500 matted hair ascetics; do consult them so that they can do what they think is right.”

2 Then, the matted hair ascetic Uruvelā Kassapa approached those matted hair ascetics. Having approached, he spoke thus to these matted hair ascetics:

“Good sirs, I want [32] to live the holy life under the great recluse, may the good sirs [*bhavanto*] do what they think is right.”

4 “For a long time, we, good sir [*bho*], have been very pleased with the great recluse. If, good sir [*bhavaṃ*], you will live the holy life under the great recluse, we too will all live the holy life under the Blessed One, too.”

<sup>95</sup> Ee Se *idha nu tvaṃ*; Be Ce *idan nu tvaṃ* (better reading).

<sup>96</sup> *Ayaṃ* is for emphasis. Be Ce Ee *ayam aham asmi*. Se *āma aham asmi*, “Yes, it is I.”

<sup>97</sup> “Reappeared,” *paccuṭṭhasi* (aor 3 sg of *paccuṭṭhati*, *paccuṭṭheti*; Skt *pratyuttiṣṭhati*) = *paṭi* (directional) + *u(d)* (intensifier) + √THĀ, to stand. The verb usually means “to stand up” or “to rise,” as in getting up from a sitting or lying position (V 1:353,37, 4:158,1; A 4:390,24). Here, however, the Buddha rises from the ground and settles in the boat; thus, the sense here is “to reappear”; eg, **Sakkapañhā S** (D 21,1.2.4/2:263) relates Sakra “disappeared from Tāvatiṃsa and appeared at Vēdiya mountain” (SD 54.8). Also V 1:32,20; D 2:89,20, 3:57,21.

<sup>98</sup> “Do not carry him away”: Be Se *na pavāhissati*; Ee *na pavahissati* (wr); Se *na-p.pasahissati* (wr).

<sup>99</sup> See **Miraculous Stories**, SD 27.5b (4).

<sup>100</sup> *Yan nūnāhaṃ imaṃ jaṭilaṃ saṃvejeyyan ti*. On *saṃvega*, see SD 1.11 (3); SD 9 (7.6); also A K Coomaraswamy, “Saṃvega, ‘aesthetic shock’,” *Harvard J of Asiatic Studies* 7,3 Feb 1943;174-179; N Feinberg, *The Concept of Saṃvega (Distress) in Early Buddhist Scripture*, PhD diss, Univ of California, Berkeley, 2023.

<sup>101</sup> *Labheyyāmaṃ bhante bhagavato santike pabbajjāṃ labheyyāmi\* upasampadan ti*; \*Be Ee Ce *labheyyāhaṃ* (alt form of the opt). *Labheyyāmaṃ* = *labheyyāmi ahaṃ* (preferable).

**38c** Mv 1.20.19

1 Then, these matted hair ascetics, let their hair, their braids, their carrying poles and bundles,<sup>102</sup> their fire-worship implements be washed away<sup>103</sup> by the water.<sup>104</sup>

2 Then, they approached the Blessed One, lowered their heads to the Blessed One's feet, and said this to the Blessed One:

"Bhante, may we receive the going forth in the Blessed One's presence, may we receive ordination?"

3 "Come, monks," the Blessed One said, "well taught is Dharma, live the holy life for making an utter end of suffering."

So, this came to be these venerable ones' **ordination**.

**39 THE RENUNCIATION OF NADĪ KASSAPA AND HIS FOLLOWERS** [Mv 1.20.20-21]

## Mv 1.20.20

1 The matted hair ascetic **Nadī Kassapa** saw the hair, the braids, the carrying poles and bundles, the fire-worship implements being carried away by the water.

2 Seeing this, it occurred to him: "Let no danger come to my brother!" and he dispatched some matted hair ascetics, saying:

"Go and find out about my brother," and he himself, with his 300 matted hair ascetics, approached the venerable Uruvelā Kassapa, and said this to the venerable Uruvelā Kassapa:

3 "Is this better, revered Kassapa?"

"Yes, avuso, this is better."

**39B** Mv 1.20.21

1 Then, these matted hair ascetics, let their hair, their braids, their carrying poles and bundles, their fire-worship implements be carried away by the water.

2 Then, they approached the Blessed One, lowered their heads to the Blessed One's feet, and said this to the Blessed One:

"Bhante, may we receive the going forth in the Blessed One's presence, may we receive ordination?"

3 "Come, monks," the Blessed One said, "well taught is Dharma, live the holy life for making an utter end of suffering."

So, this came to be these venerable ones' **ordination**.

<sup>102</sup> "Their carrying poles and bundles," *khāri, kāja*, ie, the ascetic's burden (*khāri, bhāra*, VA 972). *Khāri* (a 3-bushel measure for grain) is used for carrying an ascetic's requisites: kindling wood, water pot, needle, etc (DA 269); *kāja* (= *vividha, vivadha*) is a carrying pole for the *khāri*. Cf D 1:101; U 65 = S 1:78.

<sup>103</sup> "Be washed away," *pavāhetvā* (absol of *pavāheti*, caus of *pavahati*, "to carry off or wash away"). A wordplay here suggesting that the ascetics are letting go of their past, and so they are going to be washed clean of their defilements on becoming arhats in due course. Cf Nadī Kassapa's **Tha 346**: "'Whatever evil I've done in past lives that I now wash away here': such was the view I formerly held."; **Tha 349**: "Having plunged into the eightfold stream, I've washed all my evil away."

<sup>104</sup> *Atha kho te jaṭilā kesa, missarāṃ jatā, missarāṃ khāri. kāja, missarāṃ aggī, hutta, missarāṃ udake pavāhetvā*. The suffix *-missarāṃ* means "with, accompanied by"; often untr, as Comy notes: *Kesa, missarāṃ ti ādisu kesā eva kesa, missarāṃ. Esa nayo sabbattha*, "In *kesamissarāṃ* etc, it is just *kesa*. This method applies to all (four)." (VA 3:52). *Aggī, hutta* (Skt *agnihotra*) has the foll senses: (1) an oblation to Agni, the sacred fire, V 1:36,17\*, qu at J 1:83,13\*; Dh 392 (DhA), Sn 249, 428, p78,23 (SnA 401,13); S 1:167,21, 2:661,21; Tha 341, ThīA 136,20; J 6:220,11\*. (2) the fire-worship and its rites (J 5:205,8\*, 207,23'). (3) an instrument for fire-worship (J 6:525,28\*; Ap 160,28). Here the last-named applies.

**40 THE RENUNCIATION OF GAYĀ KASSAPA AND HIS FOLLOWERS [Mv 1.20.22-24]**

Mv 1.20.22

**1** The matted hair ascetic **Gayā Kassapa** saw the hair, the braids, the carrying-poles and bundles, the fire-worship implements being carried away by the water.

**2** Seeing this, it occurred to him:

“Let no danger come to my brothers!” and he dispatched matted hair ascetics, saying:

“Go and find out about my brother,”

and he himself, with his 300 matted hair ascetics, approached the venerable Uruvelā Kassapa, and said this to the venerable Uruvelā Kassapa:

**3** “Is this better, revered Kassapa?” “Yes, avuso, this is better.”

**40B** Mv 1.20.23

**1** *Then, these matted hair ascetics, let their hair, their braids, their carrying poles and bundles, their fire-worship implements be carried away by the water.*

**2** *Then, they approached the Blessed One, lowered their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and said this to the Blessed One:*

*“Bhante, may we receive the going forth in the Blessed One’s presence, may we receive ordination?”*

**3** *“Come, monks,” the Blessed One said, “well taught is Dharma, live the holy life for making an utter end of suffering.”*

*So, this came to be these venerable ones’ ordination.*

**40C** Mv 1.20.24

Through the Blessed One’s resolution,  
500 pieces of fire-wood that could not be chopped were chopped up;  
500 fires that could not be kindled were kindled;  
500 fires that could not be quenched were quenched;  
500 coal-pans were created.

In this way, there came to be **3,500 miracles**.<sup>105</sup>

**41 THE FIRE DISCOURSE (ĀDITTA, PARIYĀYA SUTTA) (Mv 1.21)<sup>106</sup>**

Mv 1.21

**1** Then, the Blessed One, having stayed at Uruvelā for as long as he found suiting, set out on tour for Gayā, sīsa together with a large community of monks, with all those same 1,000 monks who had formerly been matted hair ascetics.

Then, the Blessed One stayed at Gayā, sīsa, near Gayā, together with the thousand monks.

**2** And there the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying:

“Bhikshus, **all is burning**!”<sup>107</sup>

*sabbam bhikkhave ādittam*

And what, bhikshus, is the all that is burning?

**3** (1) **The eye**, bhikshus, is burning,  
forms are burning,

<sup>105</sup> *Aḍḍh’uddha, pāṭihāriya, saḥassāni honti*; also at J 1:82,30; cf J 5:417,2, 418,24. *Aḍḍh’uddha* (“three and a half”), cf Skt *ardha-caturtha*; Amg *aḍḍhuṭṭha* (Pischel, *A Grammar of the Prakrit Languages*, 1955: §290, 450). See (1.2.1.4).

<sup>106</sup> Reprised as **Āditta (Pariyāya) S** (S 35.28/4:19 f), SD 1.3.

<sup>107</sup> Qu at Kvu 209.

eye-consciousness is burning,  
eye-contact is burning, and  
 whatever feeling that arises with eye-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral [neither painful nor pleasant]—that, too, is burning.*<sup>108</sup>

Burning with what?<sup>109</sup>

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**,<sup>110</sup>  
 burning with birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair, I say!

(2) **The ear**, bhikshus, is burning,<sup>111</sup>  
sounds are burning,  
ear-consciousness is burning,  
ear-contact is burning, and  
 whatever feeling that arises with ear-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral—*that, too, is burning.

Burning with what?

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**;  
 burning with birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair, I say!

(3) **The nose**, bhikshus, is burning,  
smells are burning,  
nose-consciousness is burning,  
nose-contact is burning, and  
 whatever feeling that arises with nose-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral—*that, too, is burning.

Burning with what?

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**;  
 burning with birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair, I say!

(4) **The tongue**, bhikshus, is burning,  
tastes are burning,  
tongue-consciousness is burning, [20]  
tongue-contact is burning, and  
 whatever feeling that arises with tongue-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral—*that, too, is burning.

<sup>108</sup> *Yam p'idaṃ cakkhu,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkham-asukhaṃ vā tam pi ādittaṃ.* In this key para, reflecting the others that follow, each deal with one of the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k-khandha*). The key factors are the sense-organ or faculty (*ajjhatta*, “internal”), the sense-object (*bahiddha*, “external”), the sense-consciousness (*viññāṇa*), the sense-contact (response to stimuli) (*phassa*) and the relevant feelings (*vedanā*). The imagery of “burning” (*āditta*) also refers to “mental proliferation” (*papañca*), as explained by Mahā Kaccāna in **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,16/1:111 f), SD 6.14.

<sup>109</sup> Be Ee Ce *kena ādittaṃ*; Se *kena ādittaṃ ādittaṃ*, which makes it difficult to parse.

<sup>110</sup> Qu at SnA 32.

<sup>111</sup> Ee Se abbreviate *saddā ādittā ... pe ... ghāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, gandhā ādittā ... pe ... jivhā ādittā, rasā ādittā ... pe ... kayo āditto, phoṭṭhabbā ādittā ... pe ... mano āditta ...*.



Burning with what?

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**;  
burning with *birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair*, I say!

(5) **The body**, bhikshus, is burning,  
touch is burning,  
body-consciousness is burning,  
body-contact is burning, and  
whatever feeling that arises with body-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral*—that, too, is burning.

Burning with what?

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**;  
burning with *birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair*, I say!

(6) **The mind**, bhikshus, is burning,  
thoughts are burning,  
mind-consciousness is burning,  
mind-contact is burning, and  
whatever feeling that arises with mind-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral*—that, too, is burning.

Burning with what?

Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hate**, with the fire of **delusion**;  
burning with *birth, decay and death; with grief, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair*, I say!

## REVULSION AND LIBERATION

### Liberation through the eye

4 Seeing thus, bhikshus, the learned noble disciple

(1) is revulsed<sup>112</sup> with **the eye**.  
He is revulsed with forms,  
*He is revulsed* with eye-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with eye-contact,  
*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with eye-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral*.

1.2 Through **revulsion**,<sup>113</sup> he becomes dispassionate.  
Through dispassion, his mind is freed.  
When it is freed, there arises the knowledge: ‘Freed!’<sup>114</sup>  
He understands:  
‘Destroyed is birth.  
The holy life has been lived.

<sup>112</sup> “Revulsed at,” *nibbindati* (sg *nibbidati*): on the meaning and tr, see **Nibbidā**, SD 20.1 esp (2.1)

<sup>113</sup> The presence of this “revulsion” (*nibbidā*) pericope means that awakening can occur at *any* of these 6 stages.

<sup>114</sup> *Vimuttismim vimuttam iti ñāṇam hoti*, or “When freed, there is the knowledge, it (the mind) is freed.” Note that the self is not addressed here.

What needs to be done has been done.  
There is no more of this state of being.'

### Liberation through the ear

- (2) He is revulsed with **the ear**,<sup>115</sup>  
*He is revulsed* with sounds,  
*He is revulsed* with ear-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with ear-contact,  
*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with ear-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral.*
- 2.2 Through **revulsion**, *he becomes dispassionate.*  
Through *dispassion*, *his mind is freed.*  
When it is freed, *there arises the knowledge: 'Freed!'*  
He understands:  
*'Destroyed is birth.*  
*The holy life has been lived.*  
*What needs to be done has been done.*  
*There is no more of this state of being.'*

### Liberation through the nose

- (3) He is revulsed with **the nose**,  
*He is revulsed* with smells,  
*He is revulsed* with nose-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with nose-contact,  
*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with nose-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral.*
- 3.2 Through **revulsion**, *he becomes dispassionate.*  
Through *dispassion*, *his mind is freed.*  
When it is freed, *there arises the knowledge: 'Freed!'*  
He understands:  
*'Destroyed is birth.*  
*The holy life has been lived.*  
*What needs to be done has been done.*  
*There is no more of this state of being.'*

### Liberation through the tongue

- (4) He is revulsed with **the tongue**,  
*He is revulsed* with tastes,  
*He is revulsed* with tongue-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with tongue-contact,

<sup>115</sup> Be Ee Se abbreviate on the other 4 faculties (except for the 5<sup>th</sup>): *saddesu pi nibbindati ... pe ... ghānasmim pi nibbindati, gandhesu pi nibbindati ... pe ... jivhāya pi nibbindati, rasesu pi nibbindati ... pe ... kāyasmim pi nibbindati, phoṭṭhabbesu pi nibbindati ... pe ... manasmim pi nibbindati ...*

*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with tongue-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral.*

- 4.2 Through **revulsion**, *he becomes dispassionate.*  
 Through dispassion, *his mind is freed.*  
 When it is freed, *there arises the knowledge: 'Freed!'*  
 He understands:  
   *'Destroyed is birth.*  
   *The holy life has been lived.*  
   *What needs to be done has been done.*  
   *There is no more of this state of being.'*

### **Liberation through the body**

- (5) He is revulsed with **the body**,  
*He is revulsed* with touches,  
*He is revulsed* with body-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with body-contact,  
*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with body-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral.*
- 5.2 Through **revulsion**, *he becomes dispassionate.*  
 Through dispassion, *his mind is freed.*  
 When it is freed, *there arises the knowledge: 'Freed!'*  
 He understands:  
   *'Destroyed is birth.*  
   *The holy life has been lived.*  
   *What needs to be done has been done.*  
   *There is no more of this state of being.'*

### **Liberation through the mind**

- (6) He is revulsed with **the mind**,  
*He is revulsed* with thoughts,  
*He is revulsed* with mind-consciousness,  
*He is revulsed* with mind-contact,  
*He is revulsed* with whatever feeling arising with mind-contact as condition—  
*whether pleasant or painful or neutral.*
- 6.2 Through **revulsion**, *he becomes dispassionate.*  
 Through dispassion, *his mind is freed.*  
 When it is freed, *there arises the knowledge: 'Freed!'*  
 He understands:  
   *'Destroyed is birth.*  
   *The holy life has been lived.*  
   *What needs to be done has been done.*  
   *There is no more of this state of being.'"*

**Arhathood**

5 The Blessed One said this. Satisfied, the monks rejoiced in the Blessed One's word.<sup>116</sup>

And while this discourse was being spoken, the minds of the thousand monks were, through non-clinging, freed from the defilements.

Told is the Fire Discourse  
*uruvelā,pariyāyaṃ niṭṭhitam*

Told is the 3<sup>rd</sup> section for recital: The wonders at Uruvelā  
*Uruvela,pāṭihāriyaṃ tatiya,bhāṇavāraṃ niṭṭhitam*

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<sup>116</sup> *Idam avoca bhagavā. Attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandunṃ.* Only in S; V omits.