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Thus have I heard. Once the Lord was staying at Savatthi, in Anathapindika’s park in the Jeta Grove, in the Kareri hutment. And among a number of monks who had gathered together after their meal, after the alms-round, sitting in the Kareri pavilion, there arose a serious discussion on former lives, as they said, "This is how it was in a former life," or "That is how it was."

And the Lord, with purified divine-ear faculty surpassing the powers of humans, heard what they were talking about. Getting up from his seat, he went to the Kareri pavilion, sat down on the prepared seat, and said, "Monks, what was your conversation as you sat together? What discussion did I interrupt?" and they told him.

"Well, monks, would you like to hear a proper discourse on past lives?"

"Lord, it is time for that! Well-Farer, it is time for that! If the Lord were to give a proper discourse on past lives, the monks would listen and remember it!"

"Well then, monks, listen, pay close attention, and I will speak."

"Yes, Lord." The monks replied, and the Lord said,

"Monks, ninety-one aeons ago the Lord, the Arahant, the fully enlightened Buddha Vipassi arose in the world. Thirty-one aeons ago, the Lord Buddha Sikhi arose; in the same thirty-first aeon before this Lord Buddha Vessabhu arose. And in this present fortunate aeon the Lord Buddhas Kakusandha, Konagamana, and Kassapa arose in the world. And, monks, in this present fortunate aeon I too have now arisen in the world as a fully enlightened Buddha.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi was born of Khattiya race, and arose in a Khattiya family, the Lord Buddha Sikhi likewise; and the Lord Buddha Vessabhu likewise; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha was born of Brahman race, and arose in a Brahmin family; the Lord Buddha Konagamana likewise; the Lord Buddha Kassapa likewise; and I, monks, who am now the Arahant and fully-ennobled Buddha, was born of Khattiya race, and arose in a Khattiya family.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi was of the Kondanna clan; the lord Sikhi likewise; the Lord Buddha Vessabhu likewise; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha was of the Kassapa clan; the Lord Buddha Konagamana likewise; the Lord Buddha Kassapa likewise; I who am now the Arahant and fully-ennobled Buddha, am of the Gotama clan.

"In the time of the Lord Buddha Vipassi the life-span was eighty-thousand years; in the time of the Lord Buddha Sikhi seventy thousand; in the time of the Lord Buddha Vessabhu sixty thousand; in the time of the Lord Buddha Kakusandha forty thousand; in the time of the Lord Buddha Konagamana thirty thousand; in the time of the Lord Buddha Kassapa it was twenty thousand. In my time the lifespan is short, limited, and quick to pass: it is seldom that anybody lives to be one hundred.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi gained his full enlightenment at the foot of a trumpet flower tree; the Lord Buddha Sikhi under a white mango tree; the Lord Buddha Vessabhu under a Sal tree; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha under an acacia-tree; the Lord Buddha Konagamana under a fig tree; the Lord Buddha Kassapa under a Banyan tree; and I became fully enlightened at the foot of an Assattha tree.

"The Lord Buddha Vippasi had the pair of noble disciples Khanda and Tissa; The Lord Buddha Sikhi had Abhibhu and Sambhava; the Lord Buddha Vessabhu had Sona and Uttara; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha had Vidhura and Sanjiva; the Lord Buddha Konagamana had Bhavyosa and Uttara; the Lord Buddha Kassapa had Tissa and Bharadvaja; I myself now have the pair of noble disciples Shariputra and Moggallana.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi had three assemblies of disciples, one of 6,800,000, one of a hundred thousand, and one of eighty thousand monks, and of these three assemblies all were Arahants; the Lord Buddha Sikhi had three assemblies of disciples: one of a hundred thousand, one of eighty thousand, and one of seventy thousand monks—all Arahants; the Lord Buddha Vessabhu had three assemblies, one of eighty thousand, one of seventy thousand, and one of sixty thousand monks, all Arahant; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha had one assembly: forty thousand
monks – all Arahants; the Lord Buddha Konagamana had one assembly: thirty thousand monks – all Arahants; the Lord Buddha Kassapa had one assembly: twenty thousand monks – all Arahants; I, monks, have one assembly of disciples, one thousand, two hundred fifty monks, and this one assembly consists only of Arahants.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi’s personal attendant was the monk Asoka; the Lord Buddha Sikhi’s was Khemankara; the Lord Buddha Vesabhu’s was Upasannaka; the Lord Buddha Kakusandha’s was Vuddhija; the Lord Buddha Konagamana’s was Sothija; the Lord Buddha Kassapa’s was Sabbamitta; my chief personal attendant now is Ánanda.

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi’s Father was King Bandhuma, his mother Queen Bandhumati and King Bandhuma’s royal capitol was Bandhumati. The Lord Buddha Sikhi’s Father was King Aruna, his mother Queen Pabhavati; King Aruna’s capitol was Arunavati. The Lord Buddha Vesabhu’s father was King Suppatita, his mother was Queen Yasavati; King Suppatita’s capitol was Anopama. The Lord Buddha Kakusandha’s father was the Brahmin Aggidatta, his mother was the Brahmin lady Visakha. The king at that time was Khema; his capitol was Khemavati. The Lord Buddha Kanogamana’s father was the Brahmin Yannadatta, his mother was the Brahmin lady Uttara. The king at that time was Sobha; his capitol was Sobhavati. The Lord Buddha Kassapa’s father was Brahmin Brahmadatta, his mother was the Brahmin Lady Dhanavati. The king at that time was Kiki; his capitol was Caranasi.

And now, monks, my father is King Suddhodana, my mother was Queen Maya, and the royal capitol was Kapilavatthu.”

Thus the Lord spoke, and the Well-Farer then rose from his seat and went to his lodging.

Soon after the Lord had gone, another discussion arose among the monks,

"It is marvelous, friends, it is wonderful, the Tathágata’s great power and ability – the way he recalls the past Buddha’s who have gained Parinibbána, having cut away the hindrances, cut off the road of craving, put an end to the round of becoming, overcome all suffering. He recalls their birth, their name, their clan, their life-span, the disciples and assemblies connected with him, 'Being born thus, these Blessed Lords were such and such, such were their names, their clans, their discipline, their Dhamma, their wisdom, their liberation.' Well now, friends, how did the Tathágata come by the penetrative knowledge through which he remembers that, 'Being born thus, these Blessed Lords were such and such, such were their names, their clans, their discipline, their Dhamma, their wisdom, their liberation?' Did some deva reveal this knowledge to him?’ This was the conversation of those monks, which came to be interrupted.

Then the Lord, rising from seclusion of the rest period, went to the Kareri Pavillion and sat down on the prepared seat. He said,

"Monks, what was your conversation as you sat together? What discussion did I interrupt?” And the monks told him.

"The Tathágata understands these things by his own penetration of the principles of the Dhamma; and devas, too, have told him. Well, monks, do you wish to hear still more about past lives?”

"Lord, it is time for that! Well-Farer, it is time for that! If the Lord were to give a proper discourse on past lives, the monks would listen and remember it.”

"Well then, monks, listen, pay close attention and I will speak.”

"Yes, Lord." The monks replied, and the Lord said,

"Monks, ninety-one aeons ago the Lord, the Arahant, the fully enlightened Buddha Vipassi arose in the world. He was born of the Khattiya race, and arose in a Khattiya family. He was of the Kondanna clan. The span of his life was eighty thousand years. He gained his full enlightenment at the foot of a trumpet flower tree. He had the pair of noble disciples Khanda and Tissa as his chief followers. He had three assemblies of disciples: one of 6,800,000, one of a hundred thousand, and one of eighty thousand monks, all Arahants. His chief personal attendant was the monk Asoka. His father was King Bandhuma, his mother was queen Bandhumati. The Kings Capital was Bandhumati.

"And so, monks, the Bodhisattva Vipassi descended from the Tushita heaven, mindful and clearly aware, into his mothers womb. This, monks, is the rule.
"It is the rule, monks, that when a Bodhisattva descends from the Tushita heaven into his mother's womb, there appears in this world with its devas, Maras and Brahmas, its ascetics and Brahmins, princes and people an immeasurable, splendid light surpassing the glory of the most powerful devas. And whatever dark spaces lay beyond the worlds end, chaotic, blind and black, such that they are not even reached by the mighty rays of sun and moon, are yet illumined by this immeasurable splendid light surpassing the glory of the most powerful devas. And those beings that have been reborn there recognize each other by this light and know, 'Other beings too, have been born here!' and this ten-thousand-fold world system trembles and quakes and is convulsed. And this immeasurable light shines forth. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb, four devas come to protect him from the four quarters, saying, "Let no man, no non-human being, no thing whatsoever harm this Bodhisattva or this Bodhisattvas mother!" That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb, his mother becomes by nature virtuous, refraining from taking life, from taking what is not given, from sexual misconduct, from lying speech, or from strong drink and sloth producing drugs. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb, she has no sensual thoughts connected with a man, and she cannot be overcome by any man with lustful thoughts. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb she enjoys the fivefold pleasures of the senses and takes delight, being endowed and possessed of them. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb, she has no sickness of any kind, she is at ease and without fatigue of body, and she can see the Bodhisattva inside her womb, complete with all his members and faculties. Monks, it is as if a gem, a beryl, pure, excellent, well cut into eight facets, clear, bright, flawless and perfect in every respect, were strung on a blue, yellow, red, white, or orange cord. And a man with good eyesight, taking it in his hand would describe it as such. Thus does the Bodhisattva's mother, with no sickness, see him, complete with all his members and faculties. That is the rule.

It is the rule that when a Bodhisattva's mother dies seven days after his birth and is reborn in the Tushita heaven. That is the rule.

It is the rule that whereas other women carry the child in their womb for nine or ten months before giving birth, it is not so with the Bodhisattva's mother, who carries him for exactly ten months before giving birth. That is the rule.

It is the rule that whereas other women give birth sitting or lying down, it is not so with the Bodhisattva's mother, who gives birth standing up. That is the rule.

It is the rule that when the Bodhisattva issues forth from his mothers womb, devas welcome him first, and then humans, that is the rule.

It is the rule that when the Bodhisattva issues forth from his mothers womb, he does not touch the earth. Four devas receive him and place him before his mother, saying, "Rejoice, your majesty, a mighty son has been born to you!" That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when the Bodhisattva issues forth from his mothers womb, he issues forth stainless, not defiled by water, mucus, blood, or any impurity, pure and spotless. Just as when a jewel is laid on the muslin from Kasi, the jewel does not stain the muslin, or the muslin the jewel. Why not? Because of the purity of both. In the same way the Bodhisattva issues forth stainless, not defiled by water, mucus, blood, or any impurity, pure and spotless. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that when the Bodhisattva issues forth from his mothers womb, Two streams of water appear from the sky, one cold, the other warm, with which they ritually wash the Bodhisattva and his mother. That is the rule.

"It is the rule that as soon as he is born the Bodhisattva takes a firm stance on both feet, facing north, then takes seven strides, and then under a white sunshade he scans the four quarters, and then declares with a bull-like voice, "I am chief in the world, supreme in the world, eldest in the world. This is my last birth, there will be no more re-becoming. That is the rule.
"It is the rule that when the Bodhisattva issues from his mothers womb there appears in this world with its devas, Maras and Brahmas, its ascetics and Brahmins, princes and people an immeasurable, splendid light surpassing the glory of the most powerful devas. This is the rule.

"Monks, when prince Vipassi was born, they showed him to king Bandhuma and said,

"Your majesty, a son has been born to you. Deign, sire, to look at him." The king looked at the prince, and then said to the Brahmins skilled in signs:

'You gentlemen are skilled in signs. Examine the prince.'

"The Brahmins examined the prince and said to King Bandhuma,

'Sire, rejoice, for a mighty son has been born to you. It is a gain for you sire, it is a great profit for you, sire, that such a son has been born into your family. Sire, this prince is endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man. To such, only two courses are open. If he lives the household life he will become a ruler, a wheel turning righteous monarch of the law, conqueror of the four quarters who has established the security of his realm and is possessed of the seven treasures. These are: the Wheel Treasure, the Elephant Treasure, the Horse Treasure, the Jewel Treasure, the Woman Treasure, the Householder Treasure, and, as seventh, the Counselor Treasure. He has more than a thousand sons who are heroes, of heroic stature, conquerors of the hostile army. He dwells having conquered this sea-girt land without stick or sword, by the law. But if he goes forth from the household life into ascetic life, then he will become an Arahant, a fully enlightened Buddha, one who draws back the veil from the world.

"And what, Sire, are these thirty-two marks of a great man?

I. He has feet with level tread
II. On the soles of his feet are wheels with a thousand spokes
III. He has projecting heels
IV. He has long fingers and toes
V. He has soft and tender hands and feet
VI. His hands and feet are net-like (webbed?)
VII. He has high-raised ankles
VIII. His legs are like an antelopes
IX. Standing and without bending, he can touch and rub his knees with either hand.
X. His male organs are enclosed in a sheath.
XI. His complexion is bright, the color of gold
XII. His skin is delicate and so smooth that no dust adheres to it
XIII. His body hairs are separate, one to each pore.
XIV. They grow upwards, bluish-black like collyruim, growing in rings to the right.
XV. His body is divinely straight
XVI. He has the seven convex surfaces.
XVII. The front part of his body is like a Lion's.
XVIII. There is no hollow between his shoulders.

XIX. He is proportioned like a banyan-tree: his height is as the span of his arms.

XX. His bust is evenly rounded.

XXI. He has a perfect sense of taste.

XXII. Her has jaws like a lion's

XXIII. He has forty teeth.

XXIV. His teeth are even.

XXV. There are no spaces between his teeth.

XXVI. His canine teeth are very bright.

XXVII. His tongue is very long.

XXVIII. He has a Brahma-like voice, like that of the Karavika-bird.

XXIX. His eyes are deep blue.

XXX. He has eyelashes like a cow's.

XXXI. The hair between his eyebrows is white, and soft like cotton down.

XXXII. His head is like a royal turban."

"Sire, this prince is endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man. To such, only two courses are open. If he lives the household life he will become a ruler, a wheel turning righteous monarch of the law, conqueror of the four quarters who has established the security of his realm and is possessed of the seven treasures. These are: the Wheel Treasure, the Elephant Treasure, the Horse Treasure, the Jewel Treasure, the Woman Treasure, the Householder Treasure, and, as seventh, the Counselor Treasure. He has more than a thousand sons who are heroes, of heroic stature, conquerors of the hostile army. He dwells having conquered this sea-girt land without stick or sword, by the law. But if he goes forth from the household life into ascetic life, then he will become an Arahant, a fully enlightened Buddha, one who draws back the veil from the world."

"Then King Bandhuma, having clothed those Brahmins in fresh clothes, satisfied all of their wishes.

"And King Bandhuma appointed nurses for Prince Vipassi. Some suckled him, some bathed him, some carried him, some dandled him. A white umbrella was held over him night and day, that he might not be harmed by cold or heat or grass or dust. And Prince Vipassi was much beloved of the people. Just as everybody loves a blue, yellow, or white lotus, so they all loved Prince Vipassi. Thus he was borne from lap to lap.

"And Prince Vipassi had a sweet voice, a beautiful voice, charming and delightful. Just as in the Himalaya mountains, the Karavika-bird had a voice sweeter, more beautiful, charming and delightful than all other birds, so too was Prince Vipassi's voice the finest of them all.

"And owing to the results of past karma, the divine eye was present to Prince Vipassi, with which he could see for a league day and night alike.

"And prince Vipassi was unblinkingly watchful, like the Thirty-Three Gods. And because it was said that he was unblinkingly watchful, the prince came to be called "Vipassi." When King Bandhuma was trying a case, he took prince Vipassi on his knee and instructed him in the case. Then, putting him down from his knee, his father would carefully explain the issues to him. And for this reason he was all the more called Vipassi.
"Then King Bandhuma caused three palaces to be built for Prince Vipassi, one for the rainy season, one for the cold season, and one for the hot season, to cater for all the fivefold sense pleasures. There Prince Vipassi stayed in the rainy season palace for the four months of the rainy season, with no male attendants, surrounded by female musicians, and he never left that palace."

[End of the Birth Section]

"Then, monks, after many years, many hundreds and thousands of years had passed, Prince Vipassi said to his charioteer, ‘Harness some fine carriages, Charioteer! We will go to the pleasure park to inspect it.’ The charioteer did so, then reported to the prince, "Your Royal Highness, the fine carriages are harnessed, it is time to do as you wish.’ And prince Vipassi mounted a carriage and drove in procession to the pleasure park.

"And as he was being driven to the pleasure park, Prince Vipassi saw an aged man, bent like a roof beam, broken, leaning on a stick, tottering, sick, his youth all vanished. At the sight he said to the charioteer, "Charioteer, what is the matter with this man? His hair is not like other men's, his body is not like other men’s."

"'Prince, that is what is called an old man.'

"'But why is he called an old man?'

"'He is called old, Prince, because he has not long to live.'

"'But am I liable to become old, and not exempt from old age?'

"'Both you and I, prince, are liable to become old, and are not exempt from old age.'

"'Well then, Charioteer, that will do for today with the pleasure park. Return now to the palace.'

"'Very good, Prince,' said the charioteer, and brought Prince Vipassi back to the palace. Arrived there, Prince Vipassi was overcome with grief and dejection, crying, ‘Shame on this thing birth, since to him who is born old age must manifest itself!’

"Then King Bandhuma sent for the charioteer and said, ‘Well, did not the prince enjoy himself at the pleasure park? Wasn't he happy there?’

"'Your Majesty, the Prince did not enjoy himself, he was not happy there.'

"'What did he see on the way there?'

"So the charioteer told the king all that had happened.

"Then King Bandhuma thought, ‘Prince Vipassi must not renounce the throne, he must not go forth from the household life into ascetic life – the words of the Brahmins learned in signs must not come true!’ So the king provided for Prince Vipassi to have even more enjoyment of the fivefold sense pleasures, in order that he should rule the kingdom and not go forth from the household life into ascetic life. Thus the prince continued to live indulging in, and addicted to the fivefold sense-pleasures.

After many years, many hundreds and thousands of years had passed, Prince Vipassi said to his charioteer, ‘Harness some fine carriages, Charioteer! We will go to the pleasure park to inspect it.’ The charioteer did so, then reported to the prince, "Your Royal Highness, the fine carriages are harnessed, it is time to do as you wish.’ And prince Vipassi mounted a carriage and drove in procession to the pleasure park.

"And as he was being driven to the pleasure park, Prince Vipassi saw a sick man, suffering, very ill, fallen in his own urine and excrement, and some people were picking him up, and others were putting him to bed. At the sight he said to the charioteer, ‘What is the matter with this man? His eyes are not like other men’s, his head is not like other men's."

"‘Prince, that is what is called a sick man.’
"'But why is he called a sick man?'

'Prince, he is so called because he can hardly recover from his illness.'

'But am I liable to become sick, and not exempt from sickness?'

'Both you and I, prince, are liable to become sick, and not exempt from sickness.'

'Well then, Charioteer, that will do for today with the pleasure park. Return now to the palace.'

'Very good, Prince,' said the charioteer, and brought Prince Vipassi back to the palace. Arrived there, Prince Vipassi was overcome with grief and dejection, crying, 'Shame on this thing birth, since to him who is born sickness must manifest itself!'

'Then King Bandhuma sent for the charioteer and said, 'Well, did not the prince enjoy himself at the pleasure park? Wasn't he happy there?'

'Your Majesty, the Prince did not enjoy himself, he was not happy there.'

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'And as he was being driven to the pleasure park, Prince Vipassi saw a large crowd collecting, clad in many colors and carrying a bier. At the sight he said to the charioteer, 'Why are those people doing that?'

'Prince, that is what they called a dead man.'

'Drive me over to where the dead man is.'

'Very good, Prince,' said the charioteer, and he did so. And Prince Vipassi gazed at the corpse of the dead man. 'Then he said to the charioteer, 'Why is he called a dead man?'

'Prince, he is called a dead man because now his parents and other relatives will not see him again, nor he them.'

'But am I subject to dying, not exempt from dying?'

'Both you and I, Prince, are subject to dying, not exempt from it.'

'Well then, Charioteer, that will do for today with the pleasure park. Return now to the palace.'

'Very good, Prince,' said the charioteer, and brought Prince Vipassi back to the palace. Arrived there, Prince Vipassi was overcome with grief and dejection, crying, 'Shame on this thing birth, since to him who is born death must manifest itself!'

'Then King Bandhuma sent for the charioteer and said, 'Well, did not the prince enjoy himself at the pleasure park? Wasn't he happy there?'}
"Your Majesty, the Prince did not enjoy himself, he was not happy there."

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"And as he was being driven to the pleasure park, Prince Vipassi saw a shaven headed man, one who had gone forth, wearing a yellow robe. And he said to the charioteer, ‘What is the matter with that man? His head is not like other men’s, and his clothes are not like other men’s.”

"Prince, he is called one who has gone forth."

"Why is he called one who has gone forth?"

"Prince, by one who has gone forth we mean one who truly follows the Dhamma, who truly lives in serenity, does good actions, performs meritorious deeds, is harmless and truly has compassion for living beings."

"Charioteer, he is well called one who has gone forth—one who truly follows the Dhamma, who truly lives in serenity, does good actions, performs meritorious deeds, is harmless and truly had compassion for living beings. Drive the carriage over to where he is."

"Very good, Prince,” said the charioteer, and did so. And Prince Vipassi questioned the man who had gone forth.

"Prince, as one who has gone forth I truly follow Dhamma…and have compassion for living beings."

"You are well called, one who has gone forth…‘

"Then Prince Vipassi said to the charioteer, ‘You take the carriage and drive back to the Palace, but I shall stay here and shave off my hair and beard, put on yellow robes and go forth from the household life into ascetic life.’

"Very good, Prince,’ said the charioteer, and returned to the Palace. And Prince Vipassi, shaving off his hair and beard and putting on yellow robes, went forth from the household life into ascetic life.

"And a great crowd from the royal capitol city, Bandhumati, eighty-four thousand people, heard that Prince Vipassi had gone forth into ascetic life. And they thought, ‘This is certainly no common teaching and discipline, certainly no common going forth, for which Prince Vipassi has shaved off hair and beard, donned yellow robes and gone forth into ascetic life. If the prince has done so, why should not we?’ And so, monks, a great crowd of eighty-four thousand, having shaved off their hair and beards and donned yellow robes, followed the Bodhisattva Vipassi into ascetic life. And with the following the Bodhisattva went on his rounds through villages, towns, and royal cities.

"Then the Bodhisattva, having retired to a secluded spot, had this thought, ‘It is not proper for me to live with a crowd like this. I must live alone, withdrawn from this crowd.’ So after a while he left the crowd and dwelt alone. The eighty-four thousand went one way, and the Bodhisattva another.

"Then, when the Bodhisattva had entered his dwelling alone, in a secluded spot, he thought, "This world, alas, is in a sorry state: There is birth and decay, there is death and falling into other states and being reborn. And no one knows any way of escape from this suffering, this aging and this death. When will deliverance be found from this suffering, this aging and death?"
"And then, monks, the Bodhisattva thought, "With what being present, does aging and death occur? What conditions aging and death?" And then, monks, as a result of wisdom born of profound consideration the realization dawned on him, "Birth being present, aging and death occurs, birth conditions aging and death."

"Then he thought, "What conditions birth?" And the realization dawned on him, "Becoming conditions birth"... "What conditions becoming?"... "Clinging conditions becoming."... "Craving Conditions clinging"... "Feeling conditions craving."... "Contact conditions feeling"... "The Six sense Bases condition contact"... "Mind and body condition the six sense bases"... "Consciousness conditions mind and body"... And then the Bodhisattva Vipassi thought, "With what being present does consciousness occur? What conditions consciousness?" And then, as a result of the wisdom born profound consideration, the realization dawned on him, "Mind and body conditions consciousness'."

"Then, monks, the Bodhisattva Vipassi thought, "This consciousness turns back at mind and body, it does not go any further. To this extent there is birth and decay, there is death and falling into other states and being reborn, namely mind - and- body conditions consciousness and consciousness conditions mind - and - body, mind - and - body conditions the six sense bases, the six sense bases conditions contact, contact conditions feeling, feeling conditions craving, craving conditions clinging, clinging conditions becoming, becoming conditions birth, birth conditions aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and distress. And thus this whole mass of sufferings takes its origin". And at the thought, "Origin, origin," there arose in the Bodhisattva Vipassi, with insight into things never realized before, knowledge, wisdom, awareness, and light.

"Then he thought "What now being absent does aging and death not occur? With the cessation of what comes the cessation of aging and death?" And then, as a result of the wisdom born of profound consideration, the realization dawned on him, "Birth being absent, aging and death does not occur. With the cessation of Birth comes the cessation of aging and death... with the cessation of what comes the cessation of birth?... With the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth... With the cessation of clinging comes the cessation of becoming...With the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging...With the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving... with the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling... with the cessation of the six sense bases comes the cessation of contact..."

"With the cessation of mind and body comes the cessation of the six sense bases... with the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of mind and body... with the cessation of mind and body comes the cessation of consciousness."

"Then the Bodhisattva Vipassi thought, "I have found the insight way to enlightenment, namely:

"By the cessation of mind and body, consciousness ceases; by the cessation of consciousness mind and body ceases; By the cessation of mind and body the six sense bases cease; by the cessation of the six sense bases contact ceases; by the cessation of contact feeling ceases, by the cessation of feeling craving ceases; by the cessation of craving clinging ceases; by the cessation of clinging becoming ceases; by the cessation of becoming birth ceases; by the cessation of birth aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and distress cease. And thus this whole mass of suffering ceases." And at the thought, 'Cessation, cessation,' there arose in the Bodhisattvas Vipassi, with insight into things never realized before, knowledge, vision, awareness and light.

"Then, monks, at another time the Bodhisattva Vipassi dwelt contemplating the rise and fall of the five aggregates of clinging, "Such is the body, such its arising, such its passing away; such is feeling...such is perception...such are the mental formations...such is consciousness...such its arising...such its passing away." And as he remained contemplating the rise and fall of the five aggregates of clinging, before long his mind was freed from the corruptions without remainder.

[End of Second Section]
all the mental formations, the abandonment of all substrates of rebirth, the waning of craving, dispassion, cessation and Nibbána. And if I were to teach Dhamma to others and they did not understand me, that would be a weariness and a trouble to me."

"And to the Lord Buddha Vipassi there occurred spontaneously this verse, never previously heard:

"This that I've attained, why should I proclaim?"
Those full of lust and hate can never grasp it.
Leading upstream this Dhamma, subtle, deep,
Hard to see, no passion-blinded folk can see it."

"As the Lord Buddha Vipassi pondered thus, his mind was inclined to inaction rather than to teaching the Dhamma. And, monks, the Lord Buddha Vipassi’s reasoning became mentally known to a certain Great Brahma. And he thought: "Alas the world is perishing, it will be destroyed because the mind of Vipassi, the Blessed Lord, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened Buddha is inclined to inaction rather than to teaching the Dhamma!"

"So this great Brahma, as swiftly as a strong man might stretch his flexed arm, or flex it again, disappeared from the Brahma world and reappeared before the Lord Buddha Vipassi. Arranging his upper robber over one shoulder and kneeling on his right knee, he saluted the Lord Buddha Vipassi with joined hands and said, "Lord, may the Blessed Lord teach Dhamma, may the Well-Farer teach Dhamma! There are beings with little dust on their eyes who are perishing through not hearing Dhamma: they will become knowers of Dhamma!"

"Then the Lord Buddha Vipassi explained "I have attained to this Dhamma, which is profound, hard to see, hard to grasp, peaceful, excellent, beyond reasoning, subtle, to be apprehended by the wise. But this generation delights in clinging, rejoices in it and revels in it. But for those who so delight rejoice and revel in clinging this matter is hard to see, namely, the conditioned nature of things, or dependant origination. Equally hard to see would be calming of all the mental formations, the abandonment of all substrates of rebirth, the waning of craving, dispassion, cessation and Nibbána. And if I were to teach Dhamma to others and they did not understand me, that would be a weariness and a trouble to me."

"And the Great Brahma appealed a second time and a third time to the Lord Buddha Vipassi to teach...then the Lord Buddha Vipassi, recognizing Brahma’s appeal and moved by compassion for beings, surveyed the world with his Buddha eye. And he saw beings with little dust on their eyes and with much dust, with faculties sharp and dull, of good and bad disposition, easy and hard to teach, and a few of them living in fear of transgression and of the next world. And just as in a pool of blue, red or white lotuses some are born in the water, grow in the water and, not leaving the water, thrive in the water, some are born in the water and reach the surface, while some, having reached the surface, grow out of the water and are not polluted by it, in the same way, monks, the Lord Buddha Vipassi, surveying the world with his Buddha eye, saw some beings with little dust on their eyes and with much dust, with faculties sharp and dull, of good and bad disposition, easy and hard to teach, and a few of them living in fear of transgression and of the next world.

"Then, knowing his thought, the Great Brahma addressed the Lord Buddha Vipassi in these verses,

As on a mountain peak a watcher sees the folk below
So, man of Wisdom, seeing all, look down from Dhamma heights!
Free from woe, look on those who are sunk in grief, oppressed with birth and age.
Arise, hero, victor in battle, leader of the Caravan, traverse the world!
Teach, O Lord, the Dhamma, and they will understand.
And the Lord Buddha Vipassi replied to the Great Brahma in verse,
Open to them are the Deathless doors!
Let those that hear now put forth faith.
For fear of trouble I did not preach at first
The excellent Dhamma for men, Brahma!

Then the Great Brahma, thinking, "I have been the cause of the Lord Buddha Vipassi’s preaching Dhamma," made obeisance to the Lord Buddha, and, passing by his right, vanished then and there.

"Then the Lord Buddha Vipassi thought, "To whom should I first teach this Dhamma? Who would understand it quickly?" Then he thought, "There are Khanda the King’s son and Tissa the Chaplain’s son, living in the capital city
of Bandhumati. They are wise, learned, experienced, and for a long time have had little dust on their eyes. If now I teach Dhamma first to Khanda and Tissa, they will understand it quickly." And so the Lord Buddha Vipassi, as swiftly as a strong man might stretch out his flexed arm, or flex it again vanished then and there from the root of that tree of enlightenment, and reappeared in the Royal Capital of Bandhumati in the deer park of Khema.

"And the Lord Buddha Vipassi said to the Park Keeper, "Keeper, go to Bandhumati and say to prince Khanda and the Chaplains son Tissa, 'My Lords, Vipassi the Blessed Lord, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened Buddha has come to Bhandumati and is staying in the Deer Park of Khema. He wishes to see you."

"Very Good Lord," said the park keeper, and went and delivered the message."

"Then Khanda and Tissa, having harnessed some fine carriages, drove out of Bhandumati making for the deer park of Khema. They took the carriages as far as they would go, then alighted and continued on foot until they came to the Lord Buddha Vipassi. When they reached him, they made obeisance to him and sat down to one side.

"And the Lord Buddha Vipassi delivered to them a graduated discourse on generosity, on morality and on heaven, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of sense desires, and the profit of renunciation. And when the Lord Buddha Vipassi knew that the minds of Khanda and Tissa were ready, pliable, free from the hindrances, joyful and calm, then he preached the Buddha's special sermon in brief: On sufferings, its origin, its cessation, and the path. And just as a clean cloth from which all stains have been removed receives the dye perfectly, so in prince Khanda and Tissa, the Chaplains son, as they sat there, there arose the pure and spotless Dhamma Eye, and they knew: whatever things have an origin must come to cessation.

"And they, having seen, attained, experienced, and penetrated the Dhamma, having passed beyond doubt, having gained perfect confidence in the teachers doctrine without relying on others, said,

"Excellent Lord, Excellent! It is as if someone were to set up what had been knocked down, or to point out the way to one who had got lost, or to bring an oil lamp into a dark place so that those with eyes could see what was there. Just so, the Blessed Lord has expounded the Dhamma in various ways. We go for refuge to the Lord and to the Dhamma. May we receive the going forth at the Lords hands, may we receive ordination!"

"And so Prince Khanda and Tissa the Chaplains son received the going forth at the hands at the Lord Buddha Vipassi and they received ordination. Then the Lord Buddha Vipassi instructed them with a discourse on Dhamma, inspired them, fired them and delighted them, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of conditioned things and the profit of Nibbána. And through their being inspired, fired, and delighted with this discourse, it was not long before their mind was free from the corruptions without remainder.

"And a great crowd of eighty four thousand people from Bhandumati heard that the Lord Buddha Vipassi was staying at the Deer Park in Khema, and that Khanda and Tissa had shaved off their hair and beards, donned yellow robes, and gone forth from the household life into ascetic life. And they thought: This is certainly no common teaching and discipline, certainly no common going forth, for which Prince Khanda and Tissa, the Chaplains son has shaved off their hair and beard, donned yellow robes and gone forth into ascetic life. If they can do this in the presence of the Lord Buddha Vipassi, why should not we? And so this great crowd of eighty-four thousand left Bhandumati for the Deer Park in Khema where the Lord Buddha Vipassi was. When they came to him they made obeisance to him and sat down to one side.

"And the Lord Buddha Vipassi delivered to them a graduated discourse on generosity, morality, and on heaven, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of sense desires and the profit of renunciation and just as a clean cloth from which all stains have been removed receives the dye perfectly, so in those eighty-four thousand, as they sat there, there arose the pure and spotless Dhamma Eye, and they knew: whatever things have an origin must come to cessation. And they, having seen, attained, experienced, and penetrated the Dhamma, having passed beyond doubt, having gained perfect confidence in the teachers doctrine without relying on others, said,

"Excellent Lord, Excellent! It is as if someone were to set up what had been knocked down, or to point out the way to one who had got lost, or to bring an oil lamp into a dark place so that those with eyes could see what was there. Just so, the Blessed Lord has expounded the Dhamma in various ways. We go for refuge to the Lord and to the Dhamma. May we receive the going forth at the Lords hands, may we receive ordination!"
"And those eighty-four thousand received the going forth at the hands of the Lord Buddha Vipassi and they received Ordination. And the Lord Buddha Vipassi instructed them with a discourse on Dhamma, inspired them, fired them and delighted them, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of conditioned things and the profit of Nibbána. And through their being inspired, fired, and delighted with this discourse, it was not long before their mind was free from the corruptions without remainder.

"Then the eighty-four thousand who had gone forth heard: The Lord Buddha Vipassi has come to Bhandumati and is staying in the Khema Deer Park giving Dhamma. And so this great crowd of eighty-four thousand left for Bhandumati to the Deer Park in Khema where the Lord Buddha Vipassi was. When they came to him they made obeisance to him and sat down to one side.

"And the Lord Buddha Vipassi delivered to them a graduated discourse on generosity, morality, and on heaven, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of sense desires and the profit of renunciation and just as a clean cloth from which all stains have been removed receives the dye perfectly, so in those eighty-four thousand, as they sat there, there arose the pure and spotless Dhamma Eye, and they knew: whatever things have an origin must come to cessation. And they, having seen, attained, experienced, and penetrated the Dhamma, having passed beyond doubt, having gained perfect confidence in the teachers doctrine without relying on others, said,

"Excellent Lord, Excellent! It is as if someone were to set up what had been knocked down, or to point out the way to one who had got lost, or to bring an oil lamp into a dark place so that those with eyes could see what was there. Just so, the Blessed Lord has expounded the Dhamma in various ways. We go for refuge to the Lord and to the Dhamma. May we receive the going forth at the Lords hands, may we receive ordination!"

"And those eighty-four thousand received the going forth at the hands of the Lord Buddha Vipassi and they received Ordination. And the Lord Buddha Vipassi instructed them with a discourse on Dhamma, inspired them, fired them and delighted them, showing the danger, degradation and corruption of conditioned things and the profit of Nibbána. And through their being inspired, fired, and delighted with this discourse, it was not long before their mind was free from the corruptions without remainder.

"And at that time in the Royal Capital there was a vast gathering of 6,800,000 monks. And when the Lord Buddha Vipassi had withdrawn into seclusion he thought, "There is now this great gathering of monks here in the capital. Suppose I were to give them permission, "wander abroad monks for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare and happiness of devas and humans. Do not go two together monks, but teach the Dhamma that is lovely in the beginning, lovely in its middle, and lovely in its ending, both in the letter and in the spirit and display the holy life fully complete and perfect. There are beings with little dust on their eyes who are perishing through not hearing Dhamma: They will become Knowers of Dhamma. But at the end of six years precisely you are to come together to the Royal Capital of Bhandumati to recite the disciplinary code."

"Then a certain great Brahma, having divined the Lord Buddha Vipassi’s thought, as swiftly as a strong man might flex his arm, or flex it again, vanish from the Brahma world and appeared before the Lord Buddha Vipassi. Arranging his robe over one shoulder, and saluting the Lord with joined palms, he said, "Just so, O Lord, just so, O Well-Farer! Let the Lord give permission to this great gathering to wander abroad for the good of the many for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare and happiness of devas and humans. Let them not go two together, but let them teach the Dhamma that is lovely in the beginning, lovely in its middle, and lovely in its ending, both in the letter and in the spirit and display the holy life fully complete and perfect. There are beings with little dust on their eyes who are perishing through not hearing Dhamma: They will become Knowers of Dhamma. And we too will do the same as the monks: at the end of six years we will come to Bhandumati and recite the disciplinary code.

"Having spoken thus, that Brahma made obeisance to the Lord Buddha, and passing by to his right, vanished there and then. So the Lord Buddha Vipassi, emerging from the seclusion of his Rest Period told the Monks what had occurred.

"I allow you, monks, to wander abroad for the good of the many, for the welfare and happiness of Devas and Humans. Do not go two together monks, but teach the Dhamma that is lovely in the beginning, lovely in its middle, and lovely in its ending, both in the letter and in the spirit and display the holy life fully complete and perfect. There are beings with little dust on their eyes who are perishing through not hearing Dhamma: They will become Knowers of Dhamma. But at the end of six years precisely you are to come together to the Royal Capital of Bhandumati to recite the disciplinary code." And the majority of those monks left that very day to wander about the country.
“And at that time there were eighty-four thousand religious residences in Jambudvipa. At the end of one year the Devas would proclaim: gentlemen, one year has passed, five remain. At the end of five years you are to return to Bhandumati to recite the disciplinary code. And similarly at the end of two, three, four, five years. And when six years had passed the Devas announced: "Gentlemen, six years have passed, it is now time to go to the Royal Capital of Bhandumati to recite the disciplinary code!" And those monks, some by their own psychic powers, and some by that of the devas, all in one day came to Bhandumati to recite the disciplinary code.

"And then the Lord Buddha Vipassi gave to the assembled monks the following precepts:

Patient forbearance is the highest sacrifice.
Supreme is Nibbána, so say the Buddhas.
He’s not ‘One Gone Forth’ who hurts others,
No ascetic, he who harms another.
Not to do any evil but to cultivate the good,
To purify ones mind, this the Buddha’s teach.
Not insulting, not harming, restraint according to rule,
Moderation in food, seclusion of dwelling,
Devotion to high thinking, this the Buddha’s teach.

"Once, monks, I was staying Ukkattha in the Subhaga grove at the foot of a great Sal tree. And as I dwelt there in seclusion it occurred to me: "There is no abode of beings easily accessible that has not been visited by me for so long as that of the Devas of the Pure Abodes. Suppose I were to visit them now? And then as swiftly as a strong man might stretch his flexed arm, or flex it again, I vanished from Ukkattha and appeared among the Aviha Devas. And many thousands of them came to me, saluted me and stood to one side. Then they said:

"Sir, it is 91 aeons since the Buddha Vipassi appeared in the world."

"The Lord Buddha Vipassi was born of Khattiya race and arose in a Khattiya family; he was of the Kondanna clan; in his time the life span was 80,000 years; he gained his full enlightenment under a trumpet flower tree; he had the pair of noble disciples Khanda and Tissa; he had three assemblies of Disciples, one of 6,800,000, one of a hundred thousand and one of eighty-thousand monks, all of whom were Arahants; his chief personal attendant was the Monk Asoka, his father was King Bandhuma, his mother Queen Bhandumati, and his fathers royal capital was Bhantumati. The Lord Buddha Vipassi’s renunciation was like this, his going forth like this, his striving like this, his full enlightenment like this; his turning of the wheel like this.

"And we, sir, who lived the Holy Life under the Lord Buddha Vipassi, having freed ourselves from sense desires, have arisen here.

"In the same way many thousands of Deva’s came, they said, "Sir, in this fortunate aeon, now the Lord Buddha has arisen in the world, he was born of the Khattiya race and arose in a Khattiya family; he was of the Gotama clan; in his time the life span is short, limited and quick to pass: it is seldom that anybody lives to be a hundred. He gained his full enlightenment under an Assattha tree; he has a pair of noble disciples, Shariputra and Moggallana; he has one assemblies of Disciples, one thousand, two hundred and fifty monks, who are all Arahants; his chief personal attendant is Ananda; his father is King Shuddhodana, his mother was Queen Maya, and his fathers royal capital is Kapilavatthu. Such was the Lord’s renunciation, such his going forth, such his striving, such his full enlightenment; such his turning of the wheel. And we sir, who have lived the Holy Life under the Lord, having freed our self from sense desires, have arisen here.

Then I went with the Aviha Devas to see the Atappa Devas, and with these to see the Sudassa Devas, and with these to see the Sudassi Devas, and with all of these to see the Akanittha Devas. And there many thousands of devas came, saluted me and stood to one side, saying, "Sir, it is ninety-one aeons since the Lord Buddha Vipassi appeared in the world. "The Lord Buddha Vipassi was born of Khattiya race and arose in a Khattiya family; he was of the Kondanna clan; in his time the life span was 80,000 years; he gained his full enlightenment under a trumpet flower tree; he had the pair of noble disciples Khanda and Tissa; he had three assemblies of Disciples, one of 6,800,000, one of a hundred thousand and one of eighty-thousand monks, all of whom were Arahants; his chief personal attendant was the Monk Asoka, his father was King Bandhuma, his mother Queen Bhandumati, and his fathers royal capital was Bhantumati. The Lord Buddha Vipassi’s renunciation was like this, his going forth like this, his striving like this, his full enlightenment like this; his turning of the wheel like this.
"And we, sir, who lived the Holy Life under the Lord Buddha Vipassi, having freed ourselves of sense desires, have arisen here.

"In the same way many thousands of Deva's came, they said, "Sir, in this fortunate aeon, now the Lord Buddha has arisen in the world, he was born of the Khattiya race and arose in a Khattiya family; he was of the Gotama clan; in his time the life span is short, limited and quick to pass: it is seldom that anybody lives to be a hundred. He gained his full enlightenment under an Assattha tree; he has a pair of noble disciples, Shariputra and Moggallana; he has one assembly of Disciples, one thousand, two hundred and fifty monks, who are all Arahants; his chief personal attendant is Ananda; his father is King Shuddhodana, his mother was Queen Maya, and his fathers royal capital is Kapilavatthu. Such was the Lord's renunciation, such going forth, such his striving, such his full enlightenment; such his turning of the wheel. And we sir, who have lived the Holy Life under the Lord, having freed our self from sense desires, have arisen here.

"And so it is, monks, that by his penetration of the Fundamentals of Dhamma, the Tathágata remembers the past Buddhas who have attained final Nibbána, cutting through multiplicity, blazing a trail, have exhausted the round, have passed by all suffering; he recalls their births, their names, their clan, their life span, their twin disciples, their assemblies of disciples: "These Blessed Lords were born Thus, were called thus, thus was their clan, thus was their morality, their Dhamma, their wisdom, their dwelling, thus was their liberation.""

Thus the Lord spoke, and the monks, delighted, rejoiced at his words.
I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Kurus. Now, the Kurus have a town named Kammashadhamma. There Ven. Ananda approached the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "It's amazing, lord, it's astounding, how deep this dependent co-arising is, and how deep its appearance, and yet to me it seems as clear as clear can be."

[The Buddha:] "Don't say that, Ananda. Don't say that. Deep is this dependent co-arising, and deep its appearance. It's because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dhamma that this generation is like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for aging and death?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition do aging and death come?' one should say, 'Aging and death come from birth as their requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for birth?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does birth come?' one should say, 'Birth comes from becoming as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for becoming?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does becoming come?' one should say, 'Becoming comes from clinging as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for clinging?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does clinging come?' one should say, 'Clinging comes from craving as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for craving?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does craving come?' one should say, 'Craving comes from feeling as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for feeling?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does feeling come?' one should say, 'Feeling comes from contact as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for contact?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does contact come?' one should say, 'Contact comes from name-and-form as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for name-and-form?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does name-and-form come?' one should say, 'Name-and-form comes from consciousness as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for consciousness?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does consciousness come?' one should say, 'Consciousness comes from name-and-form as its requisite condition.'
Thus, Ananda, from name-and-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness. From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form. From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress.

Aging and Death

"'From birth as a requisite condition come aging and death.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from birth as a requisite condition come aging and death. If there were no birth at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., of devas in the state of devas, of celestials in the state of celestials, of spirits in the state of spirits, of demons in the state of demons, of human beings in the human state, of quadrupeds in the state of quadrupeds, of birds in the state of birds, of snakes in the state of snakes, or of any being in its own state — in the utter absence of birth, from the cessation of birth, would aging and death be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for aging and death, i.e., birth.

Birth

"'From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. If there were no becoming at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., sensual becoming, form becoming, or formless becoming — in the utter absence of becoming, from the cessation of becoming, would birth be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for birth, i.e., becoming.

Becoming

"'From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. If there were no clinging at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., clinging to sensuality, clinging to precepts and practices, clinging to views, or clinging to doctrines of the self — in the utter absence of clinging, from the cessation of clinging, would becoming be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for becoming, i.e., clinging.

Clinging

"'From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. If there were no craving at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for no becoming — in the utter absence of craving, from the cessation of craving, would clinging be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for clinging, i.e., craving.
Craving

"'From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. If there were no feeling at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., feeling born of contact at the eye, feeling born of contact at the ear, feeling born of contact at the nose, feeling born of contact at the tongue, feeling born of contact at the body, or feeling born of contact at the intellect — in the utter absence of feeling, from the cessation of feeling, would craving be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for craving, i.e., feeling.

Dependent on Craving

"Now, craving is dependent on feeling, seeking is dependent on craving, acquisition is dependent on seeking, ascertainment is dependent on acquisition, desire and passion is dependent on ascertainment, attachment is dependent on desire and passion, possessiveness is dependent on attachment, stinginess is dependent on possessiveness, defensiveness is dependent on stinginess, and because of defensiveness, dependent on defensiveness, various evil, unskillful phenomena come into play: the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies.

"And this is the way to understand how it is that because of defensiveness various evil, unskillful phenomena come into play: the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies. If there were no defensiveness at all, in any way, of anything anywhere, in the utter absence of defensiveness, from the cessation of defensiveness, would various evil, unskillful phenomena — the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies — come into play?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for the coming-into-play of various evil, unskillful phenomena — the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies — i.e., defensiveness.

"'Defensiveness is dependent on stinginess.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how defensiveness is dependent on stinginess. If there were no stinginess at all, in any way, of anything anywhere, in the utter absence of stinginess, from the cessation of stinginess, would defensiveness be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for defensiveness, i.e., stinginess.

(Similarly back through the chain of conditions: stinginess, attachment, possessiveness, desire and passion, ascertainment, acquisition, and seeking.)

"'Seeking is dependent on craving.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how seeking is dependent on craving. If there were no craving at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for no becoming — in the utter absence of craving, from the cessation of craving, would seeking be discerned?"

"No, lord."
"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for seeking, i.e., craving. Thus, Ananda, these two phenomena [the chain of conditions leading from craving to birth, aging, and death, and the chain of conditions leading from craving to quarrels, etc.], as a duality, flow back into one place at feeling.

Feeling

"'From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. If there were no contact at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., contact at the eye, contact at the ear, contact at the nose, contact at the tongue, contact at the body, or contact at the intellect — in the utter absence of contact, from the cessation of contact, would feeling be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for feeling, i.e., contact.

Contact

"'From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes contact.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from name-and-form as a requisite condition comes contact. If the qualities, traits, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of name-group (mental activity) were all absent, would designation-contact with regard to the form-group (the physical body) be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of form-group were all absent, would resistance-contact with regard to the name-group be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of name-group and form-group were all absent, would designation-contact or resistance-contact be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for contact, i.e., name-and-form.

Name-and-form

"'From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form. If consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?"

"No, lord."

"If, after descending into the womb, consciousness were to depart, would name-and-form be produced for this world?"

"No, lord."
"If the consciousness of the young boy or girl were to be cut off, would name-and-form ripen, grow, and reach maturity?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for name-and-form, i.e., consciousness."

Consciousness

"'From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from name-and-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness. If consciousness were not to gain a foothold in name-and-form, would a coming-into-play of the origination of birth, aging, death, and stress in the future be discerned?

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for consciousness, i.e., name-and-form.

"This is the extent to which there is birth, aging, death, passing away, and re-arising. This is the extent to which there are means of designation, expression, and delineation. This is the extent to which the sphere of discernment extends, the extent to which the cycle revolves for the manifesting (discernibility) of this world — i.e., name-and-form together with consciousness.

Delineations of a Self

"To what extent, Ananda, does one delineate when delineating a self? Either delineating a self possessed of form and finite, one delineates that 'My self is possessed of form and finite.' Or, delineating a self possessed of form and infinite, one delineates that 'My self is possessed of form and infinite.' Or, delineating a self formless and finite, one delineates that 'My self is formless and finite.' Or, delineating a self formless and infinite, one delineates that 'My self is formless and infinite.'

"Now, the one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as possessed of form and finite, either delineates it as possessed of form and finite in the present, or of such a nature that it will naturally become possessed of form and finite [in the future/after death], or he believes that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form and finite obsesses him.

"The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as possessed of form and infinite, either delineates it as possessed of form and infinite in the present, or of such a nature that it will naturally become possessed of form and infinite [in the future/after death], or he believes that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form and infinite obsesses him.

"The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as formless and finite, either delineates it as formless and finite in the present, or of such a nature that it will naturally become formless and finite [in the future/after death], or he believes that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless and finite obsesses him.

"The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as formless and infinite, either delineates it as formless and infinite in the present, or of such a nature that it will naturally become formless and infinite [in the future/after death], or he believes that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless and infinite obsesses him.
Non-Delineations of a Self

"To what extent, Ananda, does one not delineate when not delineating a self? Either not delineating a self possessed of form and finite, one does not delineate that 'My self is possessed of form and finite.' Or, not delineating a self possessed of form and infinite, one does not delineate that 'My self is possessed of form and infinite.' Or, not delineating a self formless and finite, one does not delineate that 'My self is formless and finite.' Or, not delineating a self formless and infinite, one does not delineate that 'My self is formless and infinite.'

"Now, the one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as possessed of form and finite, does not delineate it as possessed of form and finite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will naturally become possessed of form and finite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form and finite does not obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as possessed of form and infinite, does not delineate it as possessed of form and infinite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will naturally become possessed of form and infinite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form and infinite does not obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as formless and finite, does not delineate it as formless and finite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will naturally become formless and finite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless and finite does not obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as formless and infinite, does not delineate it as formless and infinite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will naturally become formless and infinite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless and infinite does not obsess him.

Assumptions of a Self

"To what extent, Ananda, does one assume when assuming a self? Assuming feeling to be the self, one assumes that 'Feeling is my self' [or] 'Feeling is not my self: My self is oblivious [to feeling]' [or] 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious to feeling, but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling.'

"Now, one who says, 'Feeling is my self,' should be addressed as follows: 'There are these three feelings, my friend — feelings of pleasure, feelings of pain, and feelings of neither pleasure nor pain. Which of these three feelings do you assume to be the self?' At a moment when a feeling of pleasure is sensed, no feeling of pain or of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed. Only a feeling of pleasure is sensed at that moment. At a moment when a feeling of pain is sensed, no feeling of pleasure or of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed. Only a feeling of pain is sensed at that moment. At a moment when a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed, no feeling of pleasure or of pain is sensed. Only a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed at that moment.

"Now, a feeling of pleasure is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. A feeling of pain is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. A feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. Having sensed a feeling of pleasure as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of pleasure, 'my self' has perished. Having sensed a feeling of pain as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of pain, 'my self' has perished. Having sensed a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, 'my self' has perished.

"Thus he assumes, assuming in the immediate present a self inconstant, entangled in pleasure and pain, subject to arising and passing away, he who says, 'Feeling is my self.' Thus in this manner, Ananda, one does not see fit to assume feeling to be the self.
"As for the person who says, 'Feeling is not the self: My self is oblivious [to feeling],' he should be addressed as follows: 'My friend, where nothing whatsoever is sensed (experienced) at all, would there be the thought, "I am"?"

"No, lord."

"Thus in this manner, Ananda, one does not see fit to assume that 'Feeling is not my self: My self is oblivious [to feeling].'

"As for the person who says, 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious [to feeling], but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling,' he should be addressed as follows: 'My friend, should feelings altogether and every way stop without remainder, then with feeling completely not existing, owing to the cessation of feeling, would there be the thought, "I am"?"

"No, lord."

"Thus in this manner, Ananda, one does not see fit to assume that 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious [to feeling], but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling.'

"Now, Ananda, in as far as a monk does not assume feeling to be the self, nor the self as oblivious, nor that 'My self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling,' then, not assuming in this way, he is not sustained by anything (does not cling to anything) in the world. Unsustained, he is not agitated. Unagitated, he is totally unbound right within. He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"If anyone were to say with regard to a monk whose mind is thus released that 'The Tathagata exists after death,' is his view, that would be mistaken; that 'The Tathagata does not exist after death'... that 'The Tathagata both exists and does not exist after death'... that 'The Tathagata neither exists nor does not exist after death' is his view, that would be mistaken. Why? Having directly known the extent of designation and the extent of the objects of designation, the extent of expression and the extent of the objects of expression, the extent of description and the extent of the objects of description, the extent to which the cycle revolves: Having directly known that, the monk is released. [To say that.] 'The monk released, having directly known that, does not see, does not know is his opinion,' that would be mistaken.

Seven Stations of Consciousness

"Ananda, there are these seven stations of consciousness and two spheres. Which seven?

"There are beings with diversity of body and diversity of perception, such as human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms. This is the first station of consciousness.

"There are beings with diversity of body and singularity of perception, such as the devas of the Brahma hosts generated by the first [jhana] and some beings in the four realms of deprivation. This is the second station of consciousness.

"There are beings with singularity of body and diversity of perception, such as the Radiant Devas. This is the third station of consciousness.

"There are beings with singularity of body and singularity of perception, such as the Beautifully Lustrous Devas. This is the fourth station of consciousness.

"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving,] 'Infinite space,' arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of space. This is the fifth station of consciousness.

"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of space, [perceiving,] 'Infinite consciousness,' arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This is the sixth station of consciousness.
"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, [perceiving,] 'There is nothing,' arrive at the dimension of nothingness. This is the seventh station of consciousness.

"The dimension of non-perceptient beings and, second, the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. [These are the two spheres.]

"Now, as for the first station of consciousness — beings with diversity of body and diversity of perception, such as human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms: If one discerns that [station of consciousness], discerns its origination, discerns its passing away, discerns its allure, discerns its drawbacks, discerns the escape from it, would it be proper, by means of that [discernment] to take delight there?"

"No, lord."

(Similarly with each of the remaining stations of consciousness and two spheres.)

"Ananda, when knowing — as they actually are — the origination, passing away, allure, drawbacks of — and escape from — these seven stations of consciousness and two spheres, a monk is released through lack of clinging, he is said to be a monk released through discernment.

**Eight Emancipations**

"Ananda, there are these eight emancipations. Which eight?

"Possessed of form, one sees forms. This is the first emancipation.

"Not percipient of form internally, one sees forms externally. This is the second emancipation.

"One is intent only on the beautiful. This is the third emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving,] 'Infinite space,' one enters and remains in the dimension of the infinitude of space. This is the fourth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of space, [perceiving,] 'Infinite consciousness,' one enters and remains in the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This is the fifth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, [perceiving,] 'There is nothing,' one enters and remains in the dimension of nothingness. This is the sixth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of nothingness, one enters and remains in the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. This is the seventh emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, one enters and remains in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is the eighth emancipation.

"Now, when a monk attains these eight emancipations in forward order, in reverse order, in forward and reverse order, when he attains them and emerges from them wherever he wants, however he wants, and for as long as he wants, when through the ending of the mental fermentations he enters and remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release and discernment-release, having directly known it and realized it in the here and now, he is said to be a monk released in both ways. And as for another release in both ways, higher or more sublime than this, there is none."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ananda delighted in the Blessed One's words.
3. Maha-parinibbana Sutta (16)

Part One: In Magadha

1. Thus have I heard. Once the Blessed One dwelt at Rajagaha, on the hill called Vultures' Peak. At that time the king of Magadha, Ajatasattu, son of the Videhi queen, desired to wage war against the Vajjis. He spoke in this fashion: "These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they are, I shall annihilate them, I shall make them perish, I shall utterly destroy them."

2. And Ajatasattu, the king of Magadha, addressed his chief minister, the brahman Vassakara, saying: "Come, brahman, go to the Blessed One, pay homage in my name at his feet, wish him good health, strength, ease, vigour, and comfort, and speak thus: 'O Lord, Ajatasattu, the king of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjis. He has spoken in this fashion: 'These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they are, I shall annihilate them, I shall make them perish, I shall utterly destroy them.' And whatever the Blessed One should answer you, keep it well in mind and inform me; for Tathagatas do not speak falsely."

3. "Very well, sire," said the brahman Vassakara in assent to Ajatasattu, king of Magadha. And he ordered a large number of magnificent carriages to be made ready, mounted one himself, and accompanied by the rest, drove out to Rajagaha towards Vultures' Peak. He went by carriage as far as the carriage could go, then dismounting, he approached the Blessed One on foot. After exchanging courteous greetings with the Blessed One, together with many pleasant words, he sat down at one side and addressed the Blessed One thus: "Venerable Gotama, Ajatasattu, the king of Magadha, pays homage at the feet of the Venerable Gotama and wishes him good health, strength, ease, vigour, and comfort. He desires to wage war against the Vajjis, and he has spoken in this fashion: 'These Vajjis, powerful and glorious as they are, I shall annihilate them, I shall make them perish, I shall utterly destroy them.'"

Conditions of a Nation's Welfare

4. At that time the Venerable Ananda was standing behind the Blessed One, fanning him, and the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ananda thus: "What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis have frequent gatherings, and are their meetings well attended?"

"I have heard, Lord, that this is so."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis assemble and disperse peacefully and attend to their affairs in concord?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis neither enact new decrees nor abolish existing ones, but proceed in accordance with their ancient constitutions?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis show respect, honor, esteem, and veneration towards their elders and think it worthwhile to listen to them?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.
"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis refrain from abducting women and maidens of good families and from detaining them?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they refrain from doing so."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis show respect, honor, esteem, and veneration towards their shrines, both those within the city and those outside it, and do not deprive them of the due offerings as given and made to them formerly?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do venerate their shrines, and that they do not deprive them of their offerings."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis duly protect and guard the arahats, so that those who have not come to the realm yet might do so, and those who have already come might live there in peace?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do.

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline."

5. And the Blessed One addressed the brahman Vassakara in these words: "Once, brahman, I dwelt at Vesali, at the Sarandada shrine, and there it was that I taught the Vajjis these seven conditions leading to (a nation's) welfare. So long, brahman, as these endure among the Vajjis, and the Vajjis are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline."

Thereupon the brahman Vassakara spoke thus to the Blessed One: "If the Vajjis, Venerable Gotama, were endowed with only one or another of these conditions leading to welfare, their growth would have to be expected, not their decline. What then of all the seven? No harm, indeed, can be done to the Vajjis in battle by Magadha's king, Ajatasattu, except through treachery or discord. Well, then, Venerable Gotama, we will take our leave, for we have much to perform, much work to do."

"Do as now seems fit to you, brahman." And the brahman Vassakara, the chief minister of Magadha, approving of the Blessed One's words and delighted by them, rose from his seat and departed.

Welfare of the Bhikkhus

6. Then, soon after Vassakara's departure, the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ananda thus: "Go now, Ananda, and assemble in the hall of audience as many bhikkhus as live around Rajagaha."

"Very well, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda did as he was requested and informed the Blessed One: "The community of bhikkhus is assembled, Lord. Now let the Blessed One do as he wishes."

Thereupon the Blessed One rose from his seat, went up to the hall of audience, took his appointed seat there, and addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Seven conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say."

"So be it, Lord."

"The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they assemble frequently and in large numbers; meet and disperse peacefully and attend to the affairs of the Sangha in concord; so long as they appoint no new rules, and do not abolish the existing ones, but proceed in accordance with the code of training (Vinaya) laid down; so long as they show respect, honor, esteem, and veneration towards the elder bhikkhus, those of long standing, long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of the Sangha, and think it worthwhile to listen to them; so long as they do not come under the power of the craving that leads to fresh becoming; so long as they cherish the
forest depths for their dwellings; so long as they establish themselves in mindfulness, so that virtuous brethren of the Order who have not come yet might do so, and those already come might live in peace; so long, bhikkhus, as these seven conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.

7. "Seven further conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say."

"So be it, Lord."

"The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they do not delight in, are not pleased with, and are not fond of activities, talk, sleep, and company; so long as they do not harbor, do not come under the spell of evil desires; have no bad friends, associates, or companions; and so long as they do not stop halfway on account of some trifling achievement. So long, bhikkhus, as these seven conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.

Seven Good Qualities

8. "Seven further conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say."

"So be it, Lord."

"The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they shall have faith, so long as they have moral shame and fear of misconduct, are proficient in learning, resolute, mindful, and wise. So long, bhikkhus, as these seven conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus, and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.

Seven Factors of Enlightenment

9. "Seven further conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say."

"So be it, Lord."

"The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they cultivate the seven factors of enlightenment, that is: mindfulness, investigation into phenomena, energy, bliss, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity. So long, bhikkhus, as these seven conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus, and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.

Seven Perceptions

10. "Seven further conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say."

"So be it, Lord."

"The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they cultivate the perception of impermanence, of egolessness, of (the body's) impurity, of (the body's) wretchedness, of relinquishment, of dispassion, and of cessation. So long, bhikkhus, as these seven conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus, and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline."
Six Conditions to be Remembered

11. “Six further conditions leading to welfare I shall set forth, bhikkhus. Listen and pay heed to what I shall say.”

“So be it, Lord.”

“The growth of the bhikkhus is to be expected, not their decline, bhikkhus, so long as they attend on each other with loving-kindness in deed, word, and thought, both openly and in private; so long as in respect of what they receive as due offerings, even the contents of their alms bowls, they do not make use of them without sharing them with virtuous members of the community; so long as, in company with their brethren, they train themselves, openly and in private, in the rules of conduct, which are complete and perfect, spotless and pure, liberating, praised by the wise, uninfluenced (by mundane concerns), and favorable to concentration of mind; and in company with their brethren, preserve, openly and in private, the insight that is noble and liberating, and leads one who acts upon it to the utter destruction of suffering. So long, bhikkhus, as these six conditions leading to welfare endure among the bhikkhus, and the bhikkhus are known for it, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.

Counsel to the Bhikkhus

12. And the Blessed One, living at Rajagaha, at the hill called Vultures’ Peak, often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus:

“Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom.”

13. When the Blessed One had stayed at Rajagaha as long as he pleased, he addressed the Venerable Ananda thus: “Come, Ananda, let us go to Ambalatthika.”

“So be it, Lord.”

And the Blessed One took up his abode at Ambalatthika, together with a large community of bhikkhus.

14. At Ambalatthika the Blessed One came to stay in the king’s rest house; and there, too, the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus:

“Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom.”

15. When the Blessed One had stayed at Ambalatthika as long as he pleased, he addressed the Venerable Ananda thus: “Come, Ananda, let us go to Nalanda.”

“So be it, Lord.”

And the Blessed One took up his abode at Nalanda together with a large community of bhikkhus, and came to stay in the mango grove of Pavarika.

Sariputta’s Lion’s Roar

16. Then the Venerable Sariputta went to the Blessed One, respectfully greeted him, sat down at one side, and spoke thus to him:
"This faith, Lord, I have in the Blessed One, that there has not been, there will not be, nor is there now, another recluse or brahman more exalted in Enlightenment than the Blessed One."

"Lofty indeed is this speech of yours, Sariputta, and lordly! A bold utterance, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar! But how is this, Sariputta? Those Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of the past — do you have direct personal knowledge of all those Blessed Ones, as to their virtue, their motion, their wisdom, their abiding, and their emancipation?"

"Not so, Lord."

"Then how is this, Sariputta? Those Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of the future — do you have direct personal knowledge of all those Blessed Ones, as to their virtue, their motion, their wisdom, their abiding, and their emancipation?"

"Not so, Lord."

"Then how is this, Sariputta? Of me, who am at present the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, do you have direct personal knowledge as to my virtue, my motion, my wisdom, my abiding, and my emancipation?"

"Not so, Lord."

"Then it is clear, Sariputta, that you have no such direct personal knowledge of the Arahats, the Fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present. How then dare you set forth a speech so lofty and lordly, an utterance so bold, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar, saying: 'This faith, Lord, I have in the Blessed One, that there has not been, there will not be, nor is there now another recluse or brahman more exalted in Enlightenment than the Blessed One?'"

17. "No such direct personal knowledge, indeed, is mine, Lord, of the Arahants, the Fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present; and yet I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma. Suppose, Lord, a king's frontier fortress was strongly fortified, with strong ramparts and turrets, and it had a single gate, and there was a gatekeeper, intelligent, experienced, and prudent, who would keep out the stranger but allow the friend to enter. As he patrols the path that leads all around the fortress, he does not perceive a hole or fissure in the ramparts even big enough to allow a cat to slip through. So he comes to the conclusion: 'Whatever grosser living things are to enter or leave this city, they will all have to do so just by this gate.' In the same way, Lord, I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma.

"For, Lord, all the Blessed Ones, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of the past had abandoned the five hindrances, the mental defilements that weaken wisdom; had well established their minds in the four foundations of mindfulness; had duly cultivated the seven factors of enlightenment, and were fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment.

"And, Lord, all the Blessed Ones, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of the future will abandon the five hindrances, the mental defilements that weaken wisdom; will well establish their minds in the four foundations of mindfulness; will duly cultivate the seven factors of enlightenment, and will be fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment.

"And the Blessed One too, Lord, being at present the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, has abandoned the five hindrances, the mental defilements that weaken wisdom; has well established his mind in the four foundations of mindfulness; has duly cultivated the seven factors of enlightenment, and is fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment."

18. And also in Nalanda, in the mango grove of Pavarika, the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus:

"Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."
19. When the Blessed One had stayed at Nalanda as long as he pleased, he addressed the Venerable Ananda thus:

"Come, Ananda, let us go to Pataligama."

"So be it, Lord."

And the Blessed One took up his abode at Pataligama together with a large community of bhikkhus.

20. Then the devotees of Pataligama came to know: "The Blessed One, they say, has arrived at Pataligama." And they approached the Blessed One, respectfully greeted him, sat down at one side, and addressed him thus: "May the Blessed One, Lord, kindly visit our council hall." And the Blessed One consented by his silence.

21. Knowing the Blessed One's consent, the devotees of Pataligama rose from their seats, respectfully saluted him, and keeping their right sides towards him, departed for the council hall. Then they prepared the council hall by covering the floor all over, arranging seats and water, and setting out an oil lamp. Having done this, they returned to the Blessed One, respectfully greeted him, and standing at one side, announced: "Lord, the council hall is ready, with the floor covered all over, seats and water prepared, and an oil lamp has been set out. Let the Blessed One come, Lord, at his convenience.

22. And the Blessed One got ready, and taking his bowl and robe, went to the council hall together with the company of bhikkhus. After rinsing his feet, the Blessed One entered the council hall and took his seat close to the middle pillar, facing east. The community of bhikkhus, after rinsing their feet, also entered the council hall and took seats near the western wall, facing east, so that the Blessed One was in front of them. And the devotees of Pataligama, after rinsing their feet and entering the council hall, sat down near the eastern wall, facing west, so that the Blessed One was in front of them.

The Fruits of an Immoral and a Moral Life

23. Thereupon the Blessed One addressed the devotees of Pataligama thus: "The immoral man, householders, by falling away from virtue, encounters five perils: great loss of wealth through heedlessness; an evil reputation; a timid and troubled demeanor in every society, be it that of nobles, brahmans, householders, or ascetics; death in bewilderment; and, at the breaking up of the body after death, rebirth in a realm of misery, in an unhappy state, in the nether world, in hell.

24. "Five blessings, householders, accrue to the righteous man through his practice of virtue: great increase of wealth through his diligence; a favorable reputation; a confident deportment, without timidity, in every society, be it that of nobles, brahmans, householders, or ascetics; a serene death; and, at the breaking up of the body after death, rebirth in a happy state, in a heavenly world."

25. And the Blessed One spent much of the night instructing the devotees of Pataligama in the Dhamma, rousing, edifying, and gladdening them, after which he dismissed them, saying: "The night is far advanced, householders. You may go at your convenience.

"So be it, Lord." And the devotees of Pataligama rose from their seats, respectfully saluted the Blessed One, and keeping their right sides towards him, departed. And the Blessed One, soon after their departure, retired into privacy.

26. At that time Sunidha and Vassakara, the chief ministers of Magadha, were building a fortress at Pataligama in defense against the Vajjis. And deities in large numbers, counted in thousands, had taken possession of sites at Pataligama. In the region where deities of great power prevailed, officials of great power were bent on constructing edifices; and where deities of medium power and lesser power prevailed, officials of medium and lesser power were bent on constructing edifices.

27. And the Blessed One saw with the heavenly eye, pure and transcending the faculty of men, the deities, counted in thousands, where they had taken possession of sites at Pataligama. And rising before the night was spent, towards dawn, the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ananda thus: "Who is it, Ananda, that is erecting a city at Pataligama?"
"Sunidha and Vassakara, Lord, the chief ministers of Magadha, are building a fortress at Pataligama, in defence against the Vajjis."

28. "It is, Ananda, as if Sunidha and Vassakara had taken counsel with the gods of the Thirty-three. For I beheld, Ananda, with the heavenly eye, pure and transcending the faculty of men, a large number of deities, counted in thousands, that have taken possession of sites at Pataligama. In the region where deities of great power prevail, officials of great power are bent on constructing edifices; and where deities of medium and lesser power prevail, officials of medium and lesser power are bent on constructing edifices. Truly, Ananda, as far as the Aryan race extends and trade routes spread, this will be the foremost city Pataliputta, a trade-center. But Pataliputta, Ananda, will be assailed by three perils — fire, water, and dissension."

29. Then Sunidha and Vassakara went to the Blessed One, and after courteous greeting to the Blessed One, and exchanging many pleasant words, they stood at one side and addressed him thus: "May the Venerable Gotama please accept our invitation for tomorrow's meal, together with the community of bhikkhus." And the Blessed One consented by his silence.

30. Knowing the Blessed One's consent, Sunidha and Vassakara departed for their own abodes, where they had choice food, hard and soft, prepared. And when it was time, they announced to the Blessed One: "It is time, Venerable Gotama; the meal is ready."

Thereupon the Blessed One got ready in the forenoon, and taking bowl and robe, he went together with the community of bhikkhus to the abode of Sunidha and Vassakara, where he took the seat prepared for him. And Sunidha and Vassakara themselves attended on the community of bhikkhus headed by the Buddha, and served them with choice food, hard and soft. When the Blessed One had finished his meal and had removed his hand from the bowl, they took low seats and sat down at one side.

31. And the Blessed One thanked them with these stanzas:

Wherever he may dwell, the prudent man Ministers to the chaste and virtuous; And having to these worthy ones made gifts, He shares his merits with the local devas.

And so revered, they honor him in turn, Are gracious to him even as a mother Is towards her own, her only son; And he who thus enjoys the devas' grace, And is by them beloved, good fortune sees. After this, the Blessed One rose from his seat and departed.

Crossing the Ganges

32. Then Sunidha and Vassakara followed behind the Blessed One, step by step, saying: "Through whichever gate the recluse Gotama will depart today, that we will name the Gotama-gate; and the ford by which he will cross the river Ganges shall be named the Gotama-ford." And so it came to pass, where the gate was concerned.

33. But when the Blessed One came to the river Ganges, it was full to the brim, so that crows could drink from it. And some people went in search of a boat or float, while others tied up a raft, because they desired to get across. But the Blessed One, as quickly as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm or draw in his outstretched arm, vanished from this side of the river Ganges, and came to stand on the yonder side.

34. And the Blessed One saw the people who desired to cross searching for a boat or float, while others were binding rafts. And then the Blessed One, seeing them thus, gave forth the solemn utterance:

They who have bridged the ocean vast, Leaving the lowlands far behind, While others still their frail rafts bind, Are saved by wisdom unsurpassed.
Part Two: The Journey to Vesali

The Four Noble Truths

1. Now the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Kotigama."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode at Kotigama together with a large community of bhikkhus.

2. And the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Bhikkhus, it is through not realizing, through not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that this long course of birth and death has been passed through and undergone by me as well as by you. What are these four? They are the noble truth of suffering; the noble truth of the origin of suffering; the noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and the noble truth of the way to the cessation of suffering. But now, bhikkhus, that these have been realized and penetrated, cut off is the craving for existence, destroyed is that which leads to renewed becoming, and there is no fresh becoming."

3. Thus it was said by the Blessed One. And the Happy One, the Master, further said:

Through not seeing the Four Noble Truths, Long was the weary path from birth to birth. When these are known, removed is rebirth's cause, The root of sorrow plucked; then ends rebirth. 4. And also at Kotigama the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

5. When the Blessed One had stayed at Kotigama as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Nadika."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode in Nadika together with a large community of bhikkhus, staying in the Brick House.

The Four Specific Attainments

6. Then the Venerable Ananda approached the Blessed One and, after greeting him respectfully, sat down at one side. And he said to the Blessed One: "Here in Nadika, Lord, there have passed away the bhikkhu Salha and the bhikkhuni Nanda. Likewise there have passed away the layman Sudatta and the laywoman Sujata; likewise the layman Kakudha, Kalinga, Nikata, Katissabha, Tuttha, Santuttha, Bhadda, and Subhadda. What is their destiny, Lord? What is their future state?"

7. "The bhikkhu Salha, Ananda, through the destruction of the taints in this very lifetime has attained to the taint-free deliverance of mind and deliverance through wisdom, having directly known and realized it by himself.

"The bhikkhuni Nanda, Ananda, through the destruction of the five lower fetters (that bind beings to the world of the senses), has arisen spontaneously (among the Suddhavasa deities) and will come to final cessation in that very place, not liable to return from that world.

"The layman Sudatta, Ananda, through the destruction of the three fetters (self-belief, doubt, and faith in the efficacy of rituals and observances), and the lessening of lust, hatred, and delusion, has become a once-returner and is bound to make an end of suffering after having returned but once more to this world.

"The laywoman Sujata, Ananda, through the destruction of the three fetters has become a stream-enterer, and is safe from falling into the states of misery, assured, and bound for Enlightenment.

"The layman Kakudha, Ananda, through the destruction of the five lower fetters (that bind beings to the world of the senses), has arisen spontaneously (among the Suddhavasa deities), and will come to final cessation in that very place, not liable to return from that world.
"So it is with Kalinga, Nikata, Katissabha, Tuttha, Santuttha, Bhadda, and Subhadda, and with more than fifty laymen in Nadika. More than ninety laymen who have passed away in Nadika, Ananda, through the destruction of the three fetters, and the lessening of lust, hatred, and delusion, have become once-returners and are bound to make an end of suffering after having returned but once more to this world.

"More than five hundred laymen who have passed away in Nadika, Ananda, through the complete destruction of the three fetters have become stream-enterers, and are safe from falling into the states of misery, assured, and bound for Enlightenment.

The Mirror of the Dhamma

8. "But truly, Ananda, it is nothing strange that human beings should die. But if each time it happens you should come to the Tathagata and ask about them in this manner, indeed it would be troublesome to him. Therefore, Ananda, I will give you the teaching called the Mirror of the Dhamma, possessing which the noble disciple, should he so desire, can declare of himself: 'There is no more rebirth for me in hell, nor as an animal or ghost, nor in any realm of woe. A stream-enterer am I, safe from falling into the states of misery, assured am I and bound for Enlightenment.'"

9. "And what, Ananda, is that teaching called the Mirror of Dhamma, possessing which the noble disciple may thus declare of himself?

"In this case, Ananda, the noble disciple possesses unwavering faith in the Buddha thus: 'The Blessed One is an Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, perfect in knowledge and conduct, the Happy One, the knower of the world, the paramount trainer of beings, the teacher of gods and men, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.'

"He possesses unwavering faith in the Dhamma thus: 'Well propounded by the Blessed One is the Dhamma, evident, timeless, inviting investigation, leading to emancipation, to be comprehended by the wise, each for himself.'

"He possesses unwavering faith in the Blessed One's Order of Disciples thus: 'Well faring is the Blessed One's Order of Disciples, righteously, wisely, and dutifully: that is to say, the four pairs of men, the eight classes of persons. The Blessed One's Order of Disciples is worthy of honor, of hospitality, of offerings, of veneration — the supreme field for meritorious deeds in the world.'

"And he possesses virtues that are dear to the Noble Ones, complete and perfect, spotless and pure, which are liberating, praised by the wise, uninfluenced (by worldly concerns), and favorable to concentration of mind.

10. "This, Ananda, is the teaching called the Mirror of the Dhamma, whereby the noble disciple may thus know of himself: 'There is no more rebirth for me in hell, nor as an animal or ghost, nor in any realm of woe. A stream-enterer am I, safe from falling into the states of misery, assured am I and bound for Enlightenment.'"

11. And also in Nadika, in the Brick House, the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

12. When the Blessed One had stayed in Nadika as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Vesali."

"So be it, O Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode in Vesali together with a large community of bhikkhus, and stayed in Ambapali's grove.
### Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension

13. Then the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Mindful should you dwell, bhikkhus, clearly comprehending; thus I exhort you.

14. "And how, bhikkhus, is a bhikkhu mindful? When he dwells contemplating the body in the body, earnestly, clearly comprehending, and mindfully, after having overcome desire and sorrow in regard to the world; and when he dwells contemplating feelings in feelings, the mind in the mind, and mental objects in mental objects, earnestly, clearly comprehending, and mindfully, after having overcome desire and sorrow in regard to the world, then is he said to be mindful.

15. "And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu have clear comprehension? When he remains fully aware of his coming and going, his looking forward and his looking away, his bending and stretching, his wearing of his robe and carrying of his bowl, his eating and drinking, masticating and savoring, his defecating and urinating, his walking, standing, sitting, lying down, going to sleep or keeping awake, his speaking or being silent, then is he said to have clear comprehension.

"Mindful should you dwell, bhikkhus, clearly comprehending; thus I exhort you."

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### Ambapali and the Licchavis

16. Then Ambapali the courtesan came to know: "The Blessed One, they say, has arrived at Vesali and is now staying in my Mango Grove." And she ordered a large number of magnificent carriages to be made ready, mounted one of them herself, and accompanied by the rest, drove out from Vesali towards her park. She went by carriage as far as the carriage could go, then alighted; and approaching the Blessed One on foot, she respectfully greeted him and sat down at one side. And the Blessed One instructed Ambapali the courtesan in the Dhamma and roused, edified, and gladdened her.

17. Thereafter Ambapali the courtesan spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "May the Blessed One, O Lord, please accept my invitation for tomorrow's meal, together with the community of bhikkhus." And by his silence the Blessed One consented.

Sure, then, of the Blessed One's consent, Ambapali the courtesan rose from her seat, respectfully saluted him, and keeping her right side towards him, took her departure.

18. Then the Licchavi of Vesali came to know: "The Blessed One, they say, has arrived at Vesali and is now staying in Ambapali's grove." And they ordered a large number of magnificent carriages to be made ready, each mounted one, and accompanied by the rest, drove out from Vesali. Now, of these Licchavis, some were in blue, with clothing and ornaments all of blue, while others were in yellow, red, and white.

19. And it so happened that Ambapali the courtesan drove up against the young Licchavis, axle by axle, wheel by wheel, and yoke by yoke. Thereupon the Licchavis exclaimed: "Why do you drive up against us in this fashion, Ambapali?"

"Thus it is, indeed, my princes, and not otherwise! For the Blessed One is invited by me for tomorrow's meal, together with the community of bhikkhus!"

"Give up the meal, Ambapali, for a hundred thousand!"

But she replied: "Even if you were to give me Vesali, sirs, together with its tributary lands, I would not give up a meal of such importance."

Then the Licchavis snapped their fingers in annoyance: "See, friends! We are defeated by this mango lass! We are utterly outdone by this mango lass!" But they continued on their way to Ambapali's grove.
20. And the Blessed One beheld the Licchavis from afar, as they drove up. Then he spoke to the bhikkhus, saying: "Those of you, bhikkhus, who have not yet seen the Thirty-three gods, may behold the assembly of the Licchavis, and may gaze on them, for they are comparable to the assembly of the Thirty-three gods."

21. Then the Licchavis drove their carriages as far as the carriages could go, then alighted; and approaching the Blessed One on foot, they respectfully greeted him and sat down at one side. The Blessed One instructed the Licchavis in the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened them.

22. Thereafter the Licchavis spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "May the Blessed One, O Lord, please accept our invitation for tomorrow's meal, together with the community of bhikkhus."

"The invitation for tomorrow's meal, Licchavis, has been accepted by me from Ambapali the courtesan."

Then the Licchavis snapped their fingers in annoyance: "See, friends! We are defeated by this mango lass! We are utterly outdone by this mango lass!" And then the Licchavis, approving of the Blessed One's words and delighted with them, rose from their seats, respectfully saluted him, and keeping their right sides towards him, took their departure.

23. Then, after the night had passed, Ambapali the courtesan had choice food, hard and soft, prepared in her park, and announced it to the Blessed One: "It is time, O Lord; the meal is ready." Thereupon the Blessed One got ready in the forenoon, and taking bowl and robe, he went together with the community of bhikkhus to Ambapali's dwelling, and there he took the seat prepared for him. And Ambapali herself attended on the community of bhikkhus headed by the Buddha, and served them with choice food, hard and soft.

24. And when the Blessed One had finished his meal and had removed his hand from his bowl, Ambapali the courtesan took a low seat, and placing herself at one side, spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "This park, O Lord, I offer to the community of bhikkhus headed by the Buddha." And the Blessed One accepted the park. He then instructed Ambapali in the Dhamma, and having roused, edified, and gladdened her, he rose from his seat and departed.

25. And also at Vesali, in Ambapali's grove, the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

26. When the Blessed One had stayed in Ambapali's grove as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to the village of Beluva."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode in the village of Beluva together with a large community of bhikkhus.

The Blessed One's Deadly Sickness

27. At that time the Blessed One spoke to the bhikkhus, saying: "Go now, bhikkhus, and seek shelter anywhere in the neighborhood of Vesali where you are welcome, among acquaintances and friends, and there spend the rainy season. As for me, I shall spend the rainy season in this very place, in the village of Beluva."

"So be it, O Lord," the bhikkhus said.

28. But when the Blessed One had entered upon the rainy season, there arose in him a severe illness, and sharp and deadly pains came upon him. And the Blessed One endured them mindfully, clearly comprehending and unperturbed.
29. Then it occurred to the Blessed One: "It would not be fitting if I came to my final passing away without addressing those who attended on me, without taking leave of the community of bhikkhus. Then let me suppress this illness by strength of will, resolve to maintain the life process, and live on."

30. And the Blessed One suppressed the illness by strength of will, resolved to maintain the life process, and lived on. So it came about that the Blessed One's illness was allayed.

31. And the Blessed One recovered from that illness; and soon after his recovery he came out from his dwelling place and sat down in the shade of the building, on a seat prepared for him. Then the Venerable Ananda approached the Blessed One, respectfully greeted him, and sitting down at one side, he spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Fortunate it is for me, O Lord, to see the Blessed One at ease again! Fortunate it is for me, O Lord, to see the Blessed One recovered! For truly, Lord, when I saw the Blessed One's sickness it was as though my own body became weak as a creeper, every thing around became dim to me, and my senses failed me. Yet, Lord, I still had some little comfort in the thought that the Blessed One would not come to his final passing away until he had given some last instructions respecting the community of bhikkhus."

32. Thus spoke the Venerable Ananda, but the Blessed One answered him, saying: "What more does the community of bhikkhus expect from me, Ananda? I have set forth the Dhamma without making any distinction of esoteric and exoteric doctrine; there is nothing, Ananda, with regard to the teachings that the Tathagata holds to the last with the closed fist of a teacher who keeps some things back. Whosoever may think that it is he who should lead the community of bhikkhus, or that the community depends upon him, it is such a one that would have to give last instructions respecting them. But, Ananda, the Tathagata has no such idea as that it is he who should lead the community of bhikkhus, or that the community depends upon him. So what instructions should he have to give respecting the community of bhikkhus?

"Now I am frail, Ananda, old, aged, far gone in years. This is my eightieth year, and my life is spent. Even as an old cart, Ananda, is held together with much difficulty, so the body of the Tathagata is kept going only with supports. It is, Ananda, only when the Tathagata, disregarding external objects, with the cessation of certain feelings, attains to and abides in the signless concentration of mind, 19 that his body is more comfortable.

33. "Therefore, Ananda, be islands unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves; with the Dhamma as your island, the Dhamma as your refuge, seeking no other refuge."

"And how, Ananda, is a bhikkhu an island unto himself, a refuge unto himself, seeking no external refuge; with the Dhamma as his island, the Dhamma as his refuge, seeking no other refuge?

34. "When he dwells contemplating the body in the body, earnestly, clearly comprehending, and mindfully, after having overcome desire and sorrow in regard to the world; when he dwells contemplating feelings in feelings, the mind in the mind, and mental objects in mental objects, earnestly, clearly comprehending, and mindfully, after having overcome desire and sorrow in regard to the world, then, truly, he is an island unto himself, a refuge unto himself, seeking no external refuge; having the Dhamma as his island, the Dhamma as his refuge, seeking no other refuge.

35. "Those bhikkhus of mine, Ananda, who now or after I am gone, abide as an island unto themselves, as a refuge unto themselves, seeking no other refuge; having the Dhamma as their island and refuge, seeking no other refuge: it is they who will become the highest, 20 if they have the desire to learn."

Part Three: Relinquishing the Will to Live

The Blessed One's Prompting

1. Then the Blessed One, getting ready in the forenoon, took bowl and robe and went into Vesali for alms. After the alms round and meal, on his return, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Take up a mat, Ananda, and let us spend the day at the Capala shrine."

"So be it, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda took up a mat and followed behind the Blessed One, step by step.
2. And the Blessed One went to the Capala shrine and sat down on the seat prepared for him. And when the Venerable Ananda had seated himself at one side after he had respectfully saluted the Blessed One, the Lord said to him: "Pleasant, Ananda, is Vesali; pleasant are the shrines of Udëna, Gotama, Sattambaka, Bahuputta, Sarandada, and Capala."

3. And the Blessed One said: "Whosoever, Ananda, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it. The Tathagata, Ananda, has done so. Therefore the Tathagata could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it."

4. But the Venerable Ananda was unable to grasp the plain suggestion, the significant prompting, given by the Blessed One. As though his mind was influenced by Mara, he did not beseech the Blessed One: "May the Blessed One remain, O Lord! May the Happy One remain, O Lord, throughout the world-period, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men!"

5. And when for a second and a third time the Blessed One repeated his words, the Venerable Ananda remained silent.

6. Then the Blessed One said to the Venerable Ananda: "Go now, Ananda, and do as seems fit to you."

"Even so, O Lord." And the Venerable Ananda, rising from his seat, respectfully saluted the Blessed One, and keeping his right side towards him, took his seat under a tree some distance away.

Mara's Appeal

7. And when the Venerable Ananda had gone away, Mara, the Evil One, approached the Blessed One. And standing at one side he spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Now, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away; let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the Parinibbana of the Lord.

"For the Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: 'I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until my bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen, have come to be true disciples — wise, well disciplined, apt and learned, preservers of the Dhamma, living according to the Dhamma, abiding by the appropriate conduct, and having learned the Master's word, are able to expound it, preach it, proclaim it, establish it, reveal it, explain it in detail, and make it clear; until, when adverse opinions arise, they shall be able to refute them thoroughly and well, and to preach this convincing and liberating Dhamma.'"

8. "And now, O Lord, bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen, have become the Blessed One's disciples in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away! The time has come for the Parinibbana of the Lord.

"For the Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: 'I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until this holy life taught by me has become successful, prosperous, far-renowned, popular, and widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and men.' And this too has come to pass in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away, let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the Parinibbana of the Lord."

The Blessed One Relinquishes His Will to Live

9. When this was said, the Blessed One spoke to Mara, the Evil One, saying: "Do not trouble yourself, Evil One. Before long the Parinibbana of the Tathagata will come about. Three months hence the Tathagata will utterly pass away."

10. And at the Capala shrine the Blessed One thus mindfully and clearly comprehending renounced his will to live on. And upon the Lord's renouncing his will to live on, there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astonishing, and thunder rolled across the heavens. And the Blessed One beheld it with understanding, and made this solemn utterance:
Eight Causes of Earthquakes

12. And the Venerable Ananda approached the Blessed One, and respectfully greeting him, sat down at one side. Then he spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Marvellous it is indeed, and most wonderful! The earth shakes mightily, tremendously! Dreadful and astonishing it is how the thunders roll across the heavens! What could be the reason, what the cause, that so mighty an earthquake should arise?"

13. Then the Blessed One said: "There are eight reasons, Ananda, eight causes for a mighty earthquake to arise. What are those eight?

14. "This great earth, Ananda, is established upon liquid, the liquid upon the atmosphere, and the atmosphere upon space. And when, Ananda, mighty atmospheric disturbances take place, the liquid is agitated. And with the agitation of the liquid, tremors of the earth arise. This is the first reason, the first cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

15. "Again, Ananda, when an ascetic or holy man of great power, one who has gained mastery of his mind, or a deity who is mighty and potent, develops intense concentration on the delimited aspect of the earth element, and to a boundless degree on the liquid element, he, too, causes the earth to tremble, quiver, and shake. This is the second reason, the second cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

16-21. "Again, Ananda, when the Bodhisatta departs from the Tusita realm and descends into his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the Bodhisatta comes out from his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the Tathagata becomes fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment; when the Tathagata sets rolling the excellent Wheel of the Dhamma; when the Tathagata renounces his will to live on; and when the Tathagata comes to pass away into the state of Nibbana in which no element of clinging remains — then, too, Ananda, this great earth trembles, quivers, and shakes.

"These, Ananda, are the eight reasons, the eight causes for a great earthquake to arise.

Eight Assemblies

22. "Now there are eight kinds of assemblies, Ananda, that is to say, assemblies of nobles, brahmans, householders, ascetics, of the Four Great Kings, of the Thirty-three gods, of Maras, and of Brahmas.

23. "And I recall, Ananda, how I have attended each of these eight kinds of assemblies, amounting to hundreds. And before seating myself and starting the conversation or the discussion, I made my appearance resemble theirs, my voice resemble theirs. And so I taught them the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened them. Yet while I was speaking to them thus, they did not know me, and they would enquire of one another, asking: 'Who is he that speaks to us? Is it a man or a god?'

"Then having taught them the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened them, I would straightaway vanish. And when I had vanished, too, they did not know me, and they would enquire of one another, asking: 'Who is he that has vanished? Is it a man or a god?'

"And such, Ananda, are the eight kinds of assemblies.
Eight Fields of Mastery

24. "Now there are eight fields of mastery, Ananda. What are those eight?

25. "When one, perceiving forms subjectively, sees small forms, beautiful or ugly, external to himself, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the first field of mastery.

26. "When one, perceiving forms subjectively, sees large forms, beautiful or ugly, external to himself, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the second field of mastery.

27. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees small forms, beautiful or ugly, external to himself, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the third field of mastery.

28. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees large forms, beautiful or ugly, external to himself, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the fourth field of mastery.

29. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees forms external to himself that are blue, blue in color, of a blue luster like the blossoms of flax, or like fine Benares muslin which, burnished on both sides, is blue, blue in color, of a blue luster — when such a one sees forms external to himself that are blue, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the fifth field of mastery.

30. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees forms external to himself that are yellow, yellow in color, of a yellow luster like the Kanikara blossom, or like fine Benares muslin which, burnished on both sides, is yellow, yellow in color, of a yellow luster — when such a one sees forms external to himself that are yellow, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the sixth field of mastery.

31. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees forms external to himself that are red, red in color, of a red luster like the Bandhujivaka blossom, or like fine Benares muslin which, burnished on both sides, is red, red in color, of a red luster — when such a one sees forms external to himself that are red, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the seventh field of mastery.

32. "When one, not perceiving forms subjectively, sees forms external to himself that are white, white in color, of a white luster like the morning star, or like fine Benares muslin which, burnished on both sides, is white, white in color, of a white luster — when such a one sees forms external to himself that are white, and mastering them, is aware that he perceives and knows them as they are — this is the eighth field of mastery.

"These, Ananda, are the eight fields of mastery.

Eight Liberations

33. "Now there are eight liberations, Ananda. What are those eight?

34. "Oneself having form, one perceives forms; this is the first liberation.

35. "Being unaware of one’s own form, one perceives forms external to oneself; this is the second liberation.

36. "Experiencing loveliness, one is intent upon it; this is the third liberation.

37. "By utterly transcending the perceptions of matter, by the disappearance of the perceptions of sense-reaction, and by giving no attention to diversity-perceptions, one becomes aware of, attains to, and abides in the sphere of infinite space; this is the fourth liberation.

38. "By utterly transcending the sphere of infinite space, one becomes aware of, attains to, and abides in the sphere of infinite consciousness; this is the fifth liberation.

39. "By utterly transcending the sphere of infinite consciousness, one becomes aware of, attains to, and abides in the sphere of nothingness; this is the sixth liberation.
40. "By utterly transcending the sphere of nothingness, one attains to and abides in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; this is the seventh liberation.

41. "By utterly transcending the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one attains to and abides in the cessation of perception and sensation; this is the eighth liberation.

"These, Ananda, are the eight liberations.

Mara's Former Temptation

42. "There was a time, Ananda, when I dwelt at Uruvela, on the bank of the Nerañjara River, at the foot of the goatherds' banyan-tree, soon after my supreme Enlightenment. And Mara, the Evil One, approached me, saying: 'Now, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away! Let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the Parinibbana of the Lord.'

43. "Then, Ananda, I answered Mara, the Evil One, saying: 'I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until my bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen, have come to be true disciples — wise, well disciplined, apt and learned, preservers of the Dhamma, living according to the Dhamma, abiding by appropriate conduct and, having learned the Master's word, are able to expound it, preach it, proclaim it, establish it, reveal it, explain it in detail, and make it clear; until, when adverse opinions arise, they shall be able to refute them thoroughly and well, and to preach this convincing and liberating Dhamma.

44. "'I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until this holy life taught by me has become successful, prosperous, far-renowned, popular, and widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and men.'

45. "And again today, Ananda, at the Capala shrine, Mara, the Evil One, approached me, saying: 'Now, O Lord, bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen, have come to be true disciples of the Blessed One — wise, well disciplined, apt and learned, preservers of the Dhamma, living according to the Dhamma, abiding in the appropriate conduct, and having learned the Master's word, are able to expound it, preach it, proclaim it, establish it, reveal it, explain it in detail, and make it clear; and when adverse opinions arise, they are now able to refute them thoroughly and well, and to preach this convincing and liberating Dhamma.

"'And now, O Lord, this holy life taught by the Blessed One has become successful, prosperous, far-renowned, popular and widespread, and it is well proclaimed among gods and men. Therefore, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away! Let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the Parinibbana of the Lord.'

46. "And then, Ananda, I answered Mara, the Evil One, saying: 'Do not trouble yourself, Evil One. Before long the Parinibbana of the Tathagata will come about. Three months hence the Tathagata will utterly pass away.'

47. "And in this way, Ananda, today at the Capala shrine the Tathagata has renounced his will to live on."

Ananda's Appeal

48. At these words the Venerable Ananda spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "May the Blessed One remain, O Lord! May the Happy One remain, O Lord, throughout the world-period, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men!"

49. And the Blessed One answered, saying: "Enough, Ananda. Do not entreat the Tathagata, for the time is past, Ananda, for such an entreaty."
50-51. But for a second and a third time, the Venerable Ananda said to the Blessed One: "May the Blessed One remain, O Lord! May the Happy One remain, O Lord, throughout the world-period, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men!"

52. Then the Blessed One said: "Do you have faith, Ananda, in the Enlightenment of the Tathagata?" And the Venerable Ananda replied: "Yes, O Lord, I do."

"Then how, Ananda, can you persist against the Tathagata even up to the third time?"

53. Then the Venerable Ananda said: "This, O Lord, I have heard and learned from the Blessed One himself when the Blessed One said to me: 'Whosoever, Ananda, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it. The Tathagata, Ananda, has done so. Therefore the Tathagata could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it.'"

54. "And did you believe it, Ananda?"

"Yes, O Lord, I did."

"Then, Ananda, the fault is yours. Herein have you failed, inasmuch as you were unable to grasp the plain suggestion, the significant prompting given by the Tathagata, and you did not then entreat the Tathagata to remain. For if you had done so, Ananda, twice the Tathagata might have declined, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ananda, the fault is yours; herein have you failed.

55. "At Rajagaha, Ananda, when dwelling at Vultures' Peak, I spoke to you, saying: 'Pleasant, Ananda, is Rajagaha; pleasant is Vultures' Peak. Whosoever, Ananda, has developed... Therefore the Tathagata could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it.'"

56. "So also at the Banyan Grove, at Robbers' Cliff, at the Sattapanni Cave on the Veḷuṭhārava Mountain, at the Black Rock of Isīligi, at the Serpents' Pool in the Cool Forest, at the Tapoda Grove, at the Bamboo Grove in the Squirrels' Feeding-ground, at Jivaka's Mango Grove, and at Small Nook in the Deer Park I spoke to you in the same words, saying: 'Pleasant, Ananda, is Rajagaha, pleasant are these places. Whosoever, Ananda, has developed... Therefore the Tathagata could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it.'"

"But you, Ananda, were unable to grasp the plain suggestion, the significant prompting given you by the Tathagata, and you did not entreat the Tathagata to remain. For if you had done so, Ananda, twice the Tathagata might have declined, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ananda, the fault is yours; herein have you failed.

57. "So also at Vesali, Ananda, at different times the Tathagata has spoken to you, saying: 'Pleasant, Ananda, is Vesali; pleasant are the shrines of Udena, Gotamaka, Sattambaka, Bahuputta, Sarandada, and Capala. Whosoever, Ananda, has developed... Therefore the Tathagata could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it.'"

"But you, Ananda, were unable to grasp the plain suggestion, the significant prompting, given you by the Tathagata, and you did not entreat the Tathagata to remain. For if you had done so, Ananda, twice the Tathagata might have declined, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, Ananda, the fault is yours; herein you have failed.

58. "Yet, Ananda, have I not taught from the very beginning that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, is compounded and subject to decay, how can one say: 'May it not come to dissolution!' There can be no such state of things. And of that, Ananda, which the Tathagata has finished with, that which he has relinquished, given up, abandoned, and rejected — his will to live on — the Tathagata's word has been spoken once for all: 'Before long the Parinibbāna of the Tathagata will come about. Three months hence the Tathagata will utterly pass away.' And that the Tathagata should withdraw his words for the sake of living on — this is an impossibility.
The Last Admonition

59. "So, then, Ananda, let us go to the hall of the Gabled House, in the Great Forest." And the Venerable Ananda replied: "So be it, Lord."

60. Then the Blessed One, with the Venerable Ananda, went to the hall of the Gabled House, in the Great Forest. And there he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Go now, Ananda, and assemble in the hall of audience all the bhikkhus who dwell in the neighborhood of Vesali."

"So be it, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda gathered all the bhikkhus who dwelt in the neighborhood of Vesali, and assembled them in the hall of audience. And then, respectfully saluting the Blessed One, and standing at one side, he said: "The community of bhikkhus is assembled, Lord. Now let the Blessed One do as he wishes."

61. Thereupon the Blessed One entered the hall of audience, and taking the seat prepared for him, he exhorted the bhikkhus, saying: "Now, O bhikkhus, I say to you that these teachings of which I have direct knowledge and which I have made known to you — these you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men.

62. "And what, bhikkhus, are these teachings? They are the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four constituents of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path. These, bhikkhus, are the teachings of which I have direct knowledge, which I have made known to you, and which you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men."

63. Then the Blessed One said to the bhikkhus: "So, bhikkhus, I exhort you: All compounded things are subject to vanish. Strive with earnestness. The time of the Tathagata's Parinibbana is near. Three months hence the Tathagata will utterly pass away."

64. And having spoken these words, the Happy One, the Master, spoke again, saying:

My years are now full ripe, the life span left is short. Departing, I go hence from you, relying on myself alone. Be earnest, then, O bhikkhus, be mindful and of virtue pure!

With firm resolve, guard your own mind! Whoso untiringly pursues the Dhamma and the Discipline Shall go beyond the round of births and make an end of suffering.

Part Four: The Last Meal

The Elephant's Look

1. Then the Blessed One, getting ready in the forenoon, took bowl and robe and went into Vesali for alms. After the alms round and meal, on his return, he looked upon Vesali with the elephant's look, 36 and said to the Venerable Ananda: "This, Ananda, is the last time that the Tathagata will look upon Vesali. Come, Ananda, let us go to Bhandagama."

"So be it, O Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode at Bhandagama together with a large community of bhikkhus.

2. And the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Bhikkhus, it is through not realizing, through not penetrating four principles that this long course of birth and death has been passed through and undergone by me as well as by you. What are those four? They are: noble virtue, noble concentration, noble wisdom, and noble emancipation. But now, bhikkhus, that these have been realized and penetrated, cut off is the craving for existence, destroyed is that which leads to renewed becoming, and there is no fresh becoming."
3. And having spoken these words, the Happy One, the Master, spoke again, saying:

"Virtue, concentration, wisdom, and emancipation unsurpassed —

These are the principles realized by Gotama the renowned;

And, knowing them, he, the Buddha, to his monks has taught the Dhamma.

He, the destroyer of suffering, the Master, the Seer, is at peace."

4. And also at Bhandagama the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

5. When the Blessed One had stayed at Bhandagama as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Hatthigama."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode at Hatthigama together with a large community of bhikkhus.

And when the Blessed One had stayed at Hatthigama as long as he pleased, he took up his abode at Ambagama, then at Jambugama. And at each of these places the Blessed One often gave counsel to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

6. And when the Blessed One had stayed at Jambugama as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Bhoganagara."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode at Bhoganagara together with a large community of bhikkhus, and stayed in the Ananda shrine.

The Four Great References 7. And there the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Now, bhikkhus, I shall make known to you the four great references. 37 Listen and pay heed to my words." And those bhikkhus answered, saying:

"So be it, Lord."

8-11. Then the Blessed One said: "In this fashion, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu might speak: 'Face to face with the Blessed One, brethren, I have heard and learned thus: This is the Dhamma and the Discipline, the Master's Dispensation'; or: 'In an abode of such and such a name lives a community with elders and a chief. Face to face with that community, I have heard and learned thus: This is the Dhamma and the Discipline, the Master's Dispensation'; or: 'In an abode of such and such a name live several bhikkhus who are elders, who are learned, who have accomplished their course, who are preservers of the Dhamma, the Discipline, and the Summaries. Face to face with those elders, I have heard and learned thus: This is the Dhamma and the Discipline, the Master's Dispensation'; or: 'In an abode of such and such a name lives a single bhikkhu who is an elder, who is learned, who has accomplished his course, who is a preserver of the Dhamma, the Discipline, and the Summaries. Face to face with that elder, I have heard and learned thus: This is the Dhamma and the Discipline, the Master's Dispensation.'

"In such a case, bhikkhus, the declaration of such a bhikkhu is neither to be received with approval nor with scorn. Without approval and without scorn, but carefully studying the sentences word by word, one should trace them in the Discourses and verify them by the Discipline. If they are neither traceable in the Discourses nor verifiable by the Discipline, one must conclude thus: 'Certainly, this is not the Blessed One's utterance; this has been misunderstood by that bhikkhu — or by that community, or by those elders, or by that elder.' In that way, bhikkhus, you should reject it. But if the sentences concerned are traceable in the Discourses and verifiable by the Discipline, then one must conclude thus: 'Certainly, this is the Blessed One's utterance; this has been well understood by that bhikkhu —
12. And also at Bhoganagara, at the Ananda shrine, the Blessed One often gave council to the bhikkhus thus: "Such and such is virtue; such and such is concentration; and such and such is wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed by virtuous conduct; great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed by concentration; utterly freed from the taints of lust, becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom."

13. When the Blessed One had stayed at Bhoganagara as long as he pleased, he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Pava."

"So be it, Lord." And the Blessed One took up his abode at Pava together with a great community of bhikkhus, and stayed in the Mango Grove of Cunda, who was by family a metalworker.

The Buddha's Last Meal

14. And Cunda the metalworker came to know: "The Blessed One, they say, has arrived at Pava, and is staying in my Mango Grove." And he went to the Blessed One, and having respectfully greeted him, sat down at one side. And the Blessed One instructed Cunda the metalworker in the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened him.

15. Then Cunda spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "May the Blessed One, O Lord, please accept my invitation for tomorrow's meal, together with the community of bhikkhus." And by his silence the Blessed One consented.

16. Sure, then, of the Blessed One's consent, Cunda the metalworker rose from his seat, respectfully saluted the Blessed One, and keeping his right side towards him, took his departure.

17. And Cunda the metalworker, after the night had passed, had choice food, hard and soft, prepared in his abode, together with a quantity of sukara-maddava, and announced it to the Blessed One, saying: "It is time, O Lord, the meal is ready."

18. Thereupon the Blessed One, in the forenoon, having got ready, took bowl and robe and went with the community of bhikkhus to the house of Cunda, and there sat down on the seat prepared for him. And he spoke to Cunda, saying: "With the sukara-maddava you have prepared, Cunda, you may serve me; with the other food, hard and soft, you may serve the community of bhikkhus."

"So be it, Lord." And with the sukara-maddava prepared by him, he served the Blessed One; and with the other food, hard and soft, he served the community of bhikkhus.

19. Thereafter the Blessed One spoke to Cunda, saying: "Whatever, Cunda, is left over of the sukara-maddava, bury that in a pit. For I do not see in all this world, with its gods, Maras, and Brahmans, among the host of ascetics and brahmans, gods and men, anyone who could eat it and entirely digest it except the Tathagata alone."

And Cunda the metalworker answered the Blessed One saying: "So be it, O Lord."And what remained over of the sukara-maddava he buried in a pit.

20. Then he returned to the Blessed One, respectfully greeted him, and sat down at one side. And the Blessed One instructed Cunda the metalworker in the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened him. After this he rose from his seat and departed.

21. And soon after the Blessed One had eaten the meal provided by Cunda the metalworker, a dire sickness fell upon him, even dysentery, and he suffered sharp and deadly pains. But the Blessed One endured them mindfully, clearly comprehending and unperturbed.

22. Then the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us go to Kusinara." And the Venerable Ananda answered: "So be it, Lord."
23. When he had eaten Cunda's food, I heard, With fortitude the deadly pains he bore. From the sukara-maddava a sore And dreadful sickness came upon the Lord. But nature's pangs he endured. "Come, let us go To Kusinara," was his dauntless word. The Clearing of the Waters 24. Now on the way the Blessed One went aside from the highway and stopped at the foot of a tree. And he said to the Venerable Ananda: "Please fold my upper robe in four, Ananda, and lay it down. I am weary and want to rest awhile."

"So be it, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda folded the robe in four and laid it down.

25. And the Blessed One sat down on the seat prepared for him and said to the Venerable Ananda: "Please bring me some water, Ananda. I am thirsty and want to drink."

26. And the Venerable Ananda answered the Blessed One: "But just now, Lord, a great number of carts, five hundred carts, have passed over, and the shallow water has been cut through by the wheels, so that it flows turbid and muddy. But the Kakuttha River, Lord, is quite close by, and its waters are clear, pleasant, cool, and translucent. It is easily approachable and delightfully placed. There the Blessed One can quench his thirst and refresh his limbs."

27-29. But a second time the Blessed One made his request, and the Venerable Ananda answered him as before. And then for a third time the Blessed One said: "Please bring me some water, Ananda. I am thirsty and want to drink."

30. Then the Venerable Ananda answered, saying: "So be it, Lord." And he took the bowl and went to the stream. And the shallow water, which had been cut through by the wheels so that it flowed turbid and muddy, became clear and settled down, pure and pleasant as the Venerable Ananda drew near.

31. Then the Venerable Ananda thought: "Marvellous and most wonderful indeed is the power and glory of the Tathagata!"

32. And he took up water in the bowl and carried it to the Blessed One, and said: "Marvellous and most wonderful indeed is the power and glory of the Tathagata! For this shallow water, which had been cut through by the wheels so that it flowed turbid and muddy, became clear and settled down, pure and pleasant as I drew near. Now let the Blessed One drink the water. Let the Happy One drink." And the Blessed One drank the water.

Pukkusa the Malla

33. Now it so happened that one Pukkusa of the Malla clan, who was a disciple of Alara Kalama, was passing by on his way from Kusinara to Pava.

34. And when he saw the Blessed One seated at the foot of a tree, he approached him, respectfully greeted him, and sat down at one side. And he spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Marvellous it is, Lord, most wonderful it is, O Lord, the state of calmness wherein abide those who have gone forth from the world.

35. "For at one time, Lord, Alara Kalama was on a journey, and he went aside from the highway and sat down by the wayside at the foot of a tree to pass the heat of the day. And it came about, Lord, that a great number of carts, even five hundred carts, passed by him, one by one. And then, Lord, a certain man who was following behind that train of carts, approached and spoke to him, saying: 'Did you, sir, see a great number of carts that passed you by?' And Alara Kalama answered him: 'I did not see them, brother.' 'But the noise, sir, surely you heard?' 'I did not hear it, brother.' Then that man asked him: 'Then, sir, perhaps you slept?' 'No, brother, I was not sleeping.' 'Then, sir, were you conscious?' 'I was, brother.' Then that man said: 'Then, sir, while conscious and awake you still did not see the great number of carts, even five hundred carts, that passed you by one after another, nor heard the noise? Why, sir, your very robe is covered with their dust!' And Alara Kalama replied, saying: 'So it is, brother.'

36. "And to that man, O Lord, came the thought: 'Marvellous it is, most wonderful indeed it is, the state of calmness wherein abide those who have gone forth from the world!' And there arose in him great faith in Alara Kalama, and he went his way."
37. "Now what do you think, Pukkusa? What is more difficult to do, more difficult to meet with — that a man, while conscious and awake, should not see a great number of carts, even five hundred carts, that passed him by one after another, nor hear the noise, or that one conscious and awake, in the midst of a heavy rain, with thunder rolling, lightning flashing, and thunderbolts crashing, should neither see it nor hear the noise?"

38. "What, O Lord, are five hundred carts — nay, six, seven, eight, nine hundred, or a thousand or even hundreds of thousands of carts — compared with this?"

39. "Now one time, Pukkusa, I was staying at Atuma, and had my abode in a barn there. And at that time there was a heavy rain, with thunder rolling, lightning flashing, and thunderbolts crashing. And two farmers who were brothers were killed close to the barn, together with four oxen, and a great crowd came forth from Atuma to the spot where they were killed.

40. "Now at that time, Pukkusa, I had come out of the barn and was walking up and down in thought before the door. And a certain man from the great crowd approached me, respectfully greeted me, and stood at one side.

41. "And I asked him: 'Why, brother, has this great crowd gathered together?' And he answered me: 'Just now, Lord, there was a heavy rain, with thunder rolling, lightning flashing, and thunderbolts crashing. And two farmers who were brothers were killed close by, together with four oxen. It is because of this that the great crowd has gathered. But where, Lord, were you?"

"I was here, brother.' 'Yet, Lord, did you not see it?' 'I did not see it, brother.' 'But the noise, Lord, you surely heard?' 'I did not hear it, brother.' Then that man asked me: 'Then, Lord, perhaps you slept?' 'No, brother, I was not sleeping.' 'Then, Lord, you were conscious?' 'I was, brother.' Then that man said: 'Then, Lord, while conscious and awake, in the midst of a heavy rain, with thunder rolling, lightning flashing, and thunderbolts crashing, you neither saw it nor heard the noise?' And I answered him, saying: 'I did not, brother.'"

42. "And to that man, Pukkusa, came the thought: 'Marvellous it is, most wonderful indeed it is, the state of calmness wherein abide those who have gone forth from the world!' And there arose in him great faith in me, and he respectfully saluted me, and keeping his right side towards me, he went his way."

43. When this had been said, Pukkusa of the Malla clan said to the Blessed One: "The faith, Lord, that I had in Alara Kalama I now scatter to the mighty wind, I let it be carried away as by a flowing stream! Excellent, O Lord, most excellent, O Lord! It is as if, Lord, one were to set upright what had been overthrown, or to reveal what had been hidden, or to show the path to one who has gone astray, or to light a lamp in the darkness so that those having eyes might see — even so has the Blessed One set forth the Dhamma in many ways. And so, O Lord, I take my refuge in the Blessed One, the Dhamma, and the Community of Bhikkhus. May the Blessed One accept me as his disciple, one who has taken refuge until the end of life."

44. Then Pukkusa of the Malla clan spoke to a certain man, saying: "Bring me at once, friend, two sets of golden-hued robes, burnished and ready for wear." And the man answered him: "So be it, sir."

45. And when the robes were brought, Pukkusa of the Malla clan offered them to the Blessed One, saying: "May the Blessed One, O Lord, out of compassion, accept this from me." And the Blessed One said: "Robe me, then in one, Pukkusa, and in the other robe Ananda."

"So be it, Lord." And he thereupon robed the Blessed One in one, and in the other he robed the Venerable Ananda.

46. And then the Blessed One instructed Pukkusa of the Malla clan in the Dhamma, and roused, edified, and gladdened him. And after that, Pukkusa rose from his seat, respectfully saluted the Blessed One, and keeping his right side towards him, went his way.

47. And soon after Pukkusa of the Malla clan had departed, the Venerable Ananda arranged the set of golden-hued robes, burnished and ready for wear, about the body of the Blessed One. But when the set of robes was arranged upon the body of the Blessed One, it became as though faded, and its splendor dimmed.

48. And the Venerable Ananda said to the Blessed One: "Marvellous it is, O Lord, most wonderful indeed it is, how clear and radiant the skin of the Tathagata appears! This set of golden-hued robes, burnished and ready for wear, Lord, now that it is arranged upon the body of the Blessed One seems to have become faded, its splendor dimmed."
49. "It is so, Ananda. There are two occasions, Ananda, when the skin of the Tathagata appears exceedingly clear and radiant. Which are these two? The night, Ananda, when the Tathagata becomes fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment, and the night when the Tathagata comes to his final passing away into the state of Nibbana in which no element of clinging remains. These, Ananda, are the two occasions on which the skin of the Tathagata appears exceedingly clear and radiant.

50. "And now today, in the last watch of this very night, Ananda, in the Mallas' Sala Grove, in the vicinity of Kusinara, between two sala trees, the Tathagata will come to his Parinibbana. So now, Ananda, let us go to the Kakuttha River."

51. Clad in Pukkusas gift, the robes of gold, The Master's form was radiant to behold. At the Kakuttha River 52. Then the Blessed One went to the Kakuttha River together with a great community of bhikkhus.

52. And he went down into the water and bathed and drank. And coming forth from the water again, he went to the Mango Grove, and there spoke to the Venerable Cundaka, saying: "Please fold my upper robe in four, Cundaka, and lay it down. I am weary and would rest awhile."

"So be it, Lord." And Cundaka folded the robe in four and laid it down.

53. And the Blessed One lay down on his right side, in the lion's posture, resting one foot upon the other, and so disposed himself, mindfully and clearly comprehending, with the time for rising held in mind. And the Venerable Cundaka sat down right in front of the Blessed One.

54. The Buddha to Kakuttha's river came, Where cool and limpid flows the pleasant stream; There washed in water clear his weary frame The Buddha — he in all the world supreme! And having bathed and drank, the Teacher straight Crossed over, the bhikkhus thronging in his wake. Discoursing holy truths, the Master great Towards the Mango Grove his path did take. There to the elder Cundaka he spoke: "Lay down my robe, please, folded into four." Then the elder, swift as lightning stroke, Hastened the Teacher's bidding to obey. Weary, the Lord then lay down on the mat, And Cunda on the ground before him sat.

Relieving Cunda's Remorse

56. Then the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "It may come to pass, Ananda, that someone will cause remorse to Cunda the metalworker, saying: 'It is no gain to you, friend Cunda, but a loss, that it was from you the Tathagata took his last alms meal, and then came to his end.' Then, Ananda, the remorse of Cunda should be dispelled after this manner: 'It is a gain to you, friend Cunda, a blessing that the Tathagata took his last alms meal from you, and then came to his end. For, friend, face to face with the Blessed One I have heard and learned: "There are two offerings of food which are of equal fruition, of equal outcome, exceeding in grandeur the fruition and result of any other offerings of food. Which two? The one partaken of by the Tathagata before becoming fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment; and the one partaken of by the Tathagata before passing into the state of Nibbana in which no element of clinging remains. By his deed the worthy Cunda has accumulated merit which makes for long life, beauty, well being, glory, heavenly rebirth, and sovereignty." Thus, Ananda, the remorse of Cunda the metalworker should be dispelled."

57. Then the Blessed One, understanding that matter, breathed forth the solemn utterance:

Who gives, his virtues shall increase; Who is self-curbed, no hatred bears; Whoso is skilled in virtue, evil shuns, And by the rooting out of lust and hate And all delusion, comes to be at peace.
Part Five: At Kusinara

Last Place of Rest

1. Then the Blessed One addressed the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Come, Ananda, let us cross to the farther bank of the Hiraññavati, and go to the Mallas' Sala Grove, in the vicinity of Kusinara."

"So be it, Lord."

2. And the Blessed One, together with a large company of bhikkhus, went to the further bank of the river Hiraññavati, to the Sala Grove of the Mallas, in the vicinity of Kusinara. And there he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying:

3. "Please, Ananda, prepare for me a couch between the twin sala trees, with the head to the north. I am weary, Ananda, and want to lie down."

"So be it, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda did as the Blessed One asked him to do.

Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side, in the lion's posture, resting one foot upon the other, and so disposed himself, mindfully and clearly comprehending.

4. At that time the twin sala trees broke out in full bloom, though it was not the season of flowering. And the blossoms rained upon the body of the Tathagata and dropped and scattered and were strewn upon it in worship of the Tathagata. And celestial mandarava flowers and heavenly sandalwood powder from the sky rained down upon the body of the Tathagata, and dropped and scattered and were strewn upon it in worship of the Tathagata. And the sound of heavenly voices and heavenly instruments made music in the air out of reverence for the Tathagata.

5. And the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Ananda, the twin sala trees are in full bloom, though it is not the season of flowering. And the blossoms rain upon the body of the Tathagata and drop and scatter and are strewn upon it in worship of the Tathagata. And celestial coral flowers and heavenly sandalwood powder from the sky rain down upon the body of the Tathagata, and drop and scatter and are strewn upon it in worship of the Tathagata. And the sound of heavenly voices and heavenly instruments makes music in the air out of reverence for the Tathagata.

6. "Yet it is not thus, Ananda, that the Tathagata is respected, venerated, esteemed, worshipped, and honored in the highest degree. But, Ananda, whatever bhikkhu or bhikkhuni, layman or laywoman, abides by the Dhamma, lives uprightly in the Dhamma, walks in the way of the Dhamma, it is by such a one that the Tathagata is respected, venerated, esteemed, worshipped, and honored in the highest degree. Therefore, Ananda, thus should you train yourselves: 'We shall abide by the Dhamma, live uprightly in the Dhamma, walk in the way of the Dhamma.'"

The Grief of the Gods

7. At that time the Venerable Upavana was standing before the Blessed One, fanning him. And the Blessed One rebuked him, saying: "Move aside, bhikkhu, do not stand in front of me."

8. And to the Venerable Ananda came the thought: "This Venerable Upavana has been in attendance on the Blessed One for a long time, closely associating with him and serving him. Yet now, right at the end, the Blessed One rebukes him. What now could be the reason, what the cause for the Blessed One to rebuke the Venerable Upavana, saying: 'Move aside, bhikkhu, do not stand in front of me'?"

9-10. And the Venerable Ananda told his thought to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said: "Throughout the tenfold world-system, Ananda, there are hardly any of the deities that have not gathered together to look upon the Tathagata. For a distance of twelve yojanas around the Sala Grove of the Mallas in the vicinity of Kusinara there is not a spot that could be pricked with the tip of a hair that is not filled with powerful deities. And these deities, Ananda, are complaining: 'From afar have we come to look upon the Tathagata. For rare in the world is the arising of Tathagatas, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones. And this day, in the last watch of the night, the Tathagata's Parinibbana will come about. But this bhikkhu of great powers has placed himself right in front of the Blessed One,
concealing him, so that now, at the very end, we are prevented from looking upon him.' Thus, Ananda, the deities
complain."

11. "Of what kind of deities, Lord, is the Blessed One aware?"

12-13. "There are deities, Ananda, in space and on earth, who are earthly-minded; with dishevelled hair they weep,
with uplifted arms they weep; flinging themselves on the ground, they roll from side to side, lamenting: 'Too soon
has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon will
the Eye of the World vanish from sight!'

14. "But those deities who are freed from passion, mindful and comprehending, reflect in this way: 'Impermanent are
all compounded things. How could this be otherwise?'"

Ananda's Concern

15. "Formerly, Lord, on leaving their quarters after the rains, the bhikkhus would set forth to see the Tathagata, and
to us there was the gain and benefit of receiving and associating with those very revered bhikkhus who came to
have audience with the Blessed One and to wait upon him. But, Lord, after the Blessed One has gone, we shall no
longer have that gain and benefit."

Four Places of Pilgrimage

16. "There are four places, Ananda, that a pious person should visit and look upon with feelings of reverence. What
are the four?

17. "Here the Tathagata was born!'This, Ananda, is a place that a pious person should visit and look upon with
feelings of reverence.

18. "Here the Tathagata became fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme Enlightenment!'This, Ananda, is a
place that a pious person should visit and look upon with feelings of reverence.

19. "Here the Tathagata set rolling the unexcelled Wheel of the Dhamma!'This, Ananda, is a place that a pious
person should visit and look upon with feelings of reverence.

20. "Here the Tathagata passed away into the state of Nibbana in which no element of clinging remains!' This,
Ananda, is a place that a pious person should visit and look upon with feelings of reverence.

21. "These, Ananda, are the four places that a pious person should visit and look upon with feelings of reverence.
And truly there will come to these places, Ananda, pious bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen, reflecting:
'Here the Tathagata was born! Here the Tathagata became fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme
Enlightenment! Here the Tathagata set rolling the unexcelled Wheel of the Dhamma! Here the Tathagata passed
away into the state of Nibbana in which no element of clinging remains!'

22. "And whoever, Ananda, should die on such a pilgrimage with his heart established in faith, at the breaking up of
the body, after death, will be reborn in a realm of heavenly happiness."

23. Then the Venerable Ananda said to the Blessed One: "How, Lord, should we conduct ourselves towards
women?"

"Do not see them, Ananda."

"But, Lord, if we do see them?"
"Do not speak, Ananda."

"But, Lord, if they should speak to us?"

"Then, Ananda, you should establish mindfulness."

24. Then the Venerable Ananda said: "How should we act, Lord, respecting the body of the Tathagata?"

"Do not hinder yourselves, Ananda, to honor the body of the Tathagata. Rather you should strive, Ananda, and be zealous on your own behalf, for your own good. Unflinchingly, ardently, and resolutely you should apply yourselves to your own good. For there are, Ananda, wise nobles, wise brahmans, and wise householders who are devoted to the Tathagata, and it is they who will render the honor to the body of the Tathagata."

25. Then the Venerable Ananda said: "But how, Lord, should they act respecting the body of the Tathagata?"

"After the same manner, Ananda, as towards the body of a universal monarch."

"But how, Lord, do they act respecting the body of a universal monarch?"

26. "The body of a universal monarch, Ananda, is first wrapped round with new linen, and then with teased cotton wool, and so it is done up to five hundred layers of linen and five hundred of cotton wool. When that is done, the body of the universal monarch is placed in an iron oil vessel, which is enclosed in another iron vessel, a funeral pyre is built of all kinds of perfumed woods, and so the body of the universal monarch is burned; and at a crossroads a stupa is raised for the universal monarch. So it is done, Ananda, with the body of a universal monarch. And even, Ananda, as with the body of a universal monarch, so should it be done with the body of the Tathagata; and at a crossroads also a stupa should be raised for the Tathagata. And whosoever shall bring to that place garlands or incense or sandalpaste, or pay reverence, and whose mind becomes calm there — it will be to his well being and happiness for a long time.

27. "There are four persons, Ananda, who are worthy of a stupa. Who are those four? A Tathagata, an Arahant, a Fully Enlightened One is worthy of a stupa; so also is a Paccekabuddha, and a disciple of a Tathagata, and a universal monarch.

28-31. "And why, Ananda, is a Tathagata, an Arahant, a Fully Enlightened One worthy of a stupa? Because, Ananda, at the thought: 'This is the stupa of that Blessed One, Arahant, Fully Enlightened One!' the hearts of many people will be calmed and made happy; and so calmed and with their minds established in faith therein, at the breaking up of the body, after death, they will be reborn in a realm of heavenly happiness. And so also at the thought: 'This is the stupa of that Paccekabuddha!' or 'This is the stupa of a disciple of that Tathagata, Arahant, Fully Enlightened One!' or 'This is the stupa of that righteous monarch who ruled according to Dhamma!' — the hearts of many people are calmed and made happy; and so calmed and with their minds established in faith therein, at the breaking up of the body, after death, they will be reborn in a realm of heavenly happiness. And it is because of this, Ananda, that these four persons are worthy of a stupa."

32. Then the Venerable Ananda went into the vihara and leaned against the doorpost and wept: "I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!"

33. And the Blessed One spoke to the bhikkhus, saying: "Where, bhikkhus, is Ananda?"

"The Venerable Ananda, Lord, has gone into the vihara and there stands leaning against the door post and weeping: 'I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!'"

34. Then the Blessed One asked a certain bhikkhu to bring the Venerable Ananda to him, saying: "Go, bhikkhu, and say to Ananda, 'Friend Ananda, the Master calls you.'"
"So be it, Lord." And that bhikkhu went and spoke to the Venerable Ananda as the Blessed One had asked him to. And the Venerable Ananda went to the Blessed One, bowed down to him, and sat down on one side.

35. Then the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Enough, Ananda! Do not grieve, do not lament! For have I not taught from the very beginning that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, compounded, and subject to decay, how can one say: 'May it not come to dissolution!'? There can be no such state of things. Now for a long time, Ananda, you have served the Tathagata with loving-kindness in deed, word, and thought, graciously, pleasantly, with a whole heart and beyond measure. Great good have you gathered, Ananda! Now you should put forth energy, and soon you too will be free from the taints."

Praise of Ananda

36. Then the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Bhikkhus, the Blessed Ones, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of times past also had excellent and devoted attendant bhikkhus, such as I have in Ananda. And so also, bhikkhus, will the Blessed Ones, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones of times to come.

37. "Capable and judicious is Ananda, bhikkhus, for he knows the proper time for bhikkhus to have audience with the Tathagata, and the time for bhikkhunis, the time for laymen and for laywomen; the time for kings and for ministers of state; the time for teachers of other sects and for their followers.

38. "In Ananda, bhikkhus, are to be found four rare and superlative qualities. What are the four? If, bhikkhus, a company of bhikkhus should go to see Ananda, they become joyful on seeing him; and if he then speaks to them of the Dhamma, they are made joyful by his discourse; and when he becomes silent, they are disappointed. So it is also when bhikkhunis, laymen, or laywomen go to see Ananda: they become joyful on seeing him; and if he then speaks to them of the Dhamma, they are made joyful by his discourse; and when he becomes silent, they are disappointed.

39. "In a universal monarch, bhikkhus, are to be found four rare and superlative qualities. What are those four? If, bhikkhus, a company of nobles should go to see the universal monarch, they become joyful on seeing him; and if he then speaks, they are made joyful by his talk; and when he becomes silent, they are disappointed. So it is also when a company of brahmans, of householders, or of ascetics goes to see a universal monarch.

40. "And in just the same way, bhikkhus, in Ananda are to be found these four rare and superlative qualities."

The Past Glory of Kusinara

41. When this had been said, the Venerable Ananda spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Let it not be, Lord, that the Blessed One should pass away in this mean place, this uncivilized township in the midst of the jungle, a mere outpost of the province. There are great cities, Lord, such as Campa, Rajagaha, Savatthi, Saketa, Kosambi, and Benares — let the Blessed One have his final passing away in one of those. For in those cities dwell many wealthy nobles and brahmans and householders who are devotees of the Tathagata, and they will render due honor to the remains of the Tathagata."

42. "Do not say that, Ananda! Do not say: 'This mean place, this uncivilized township in the midst of the jungle, a mere outpost of the province.' In times long past, Ananda, there was a king by the name of Maha Sudassana, who was a universal monarch, a king of righteousness, a conqueror of the four quarters of the earth, whose realm was established in security, and who was endowed with the seven jewels. And that King Maha Sudassana, Ananda, had his royal residence here at Kusinara, which was then called Kusavati, and it extended twelve yojanas from east to west, and seven from north to south.

43. "And mighty, Ananda, was Kusavati, the capital, prosperous and well populated, much frequented by people, and abundantly provided with food. Just as the royal residence of the deities, Alakamanda, is mighty, prosperous, and well populated, much frequented by deities and abundantly provided with food, so was the royal capital of Kusavati.
44. "Kusavati, Ananda, resounded unceasingly day and night with ten sounds — the trumpeting of elephants, the neighing of horses, the rattling of chariots, the beating of drums and tabours, music and song, cheers, the clapping of hands, and cries of 'Eat, drink, and be merry!'"  

Lamentation of the Mallas

45. "Go now, Ananda, to Kusinara and announce to the Mallas: 'Today, Vasetthas, in the last watch of the night, the Tathagata's Parinibbana will take place. Approach, O Vasetthas, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: 'In our township it was that the Tathagata's Parinibbana took place, but we failed to see him at the end!'"  

"So be it, Lord." And the Venerable Ananda prepared himself, and taking bowl and robe, went with a companion to Kusinara.  

46. Now at that time the Mallas had gathered in the council hall for some public business. And the Venerable Ananda approached them and announced: "Today, Vasetthas, in the last watch of the night, the Tathagata's Parinibbana will take place. Approach, Vasetthas, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: 'In our township it was that the Tathagata's Parinibbana took place, but we failed to see him at the end.'"

47. When they heard the Venerable Ananda speak these words, the Mallas with their sons, their wives, and the wives of their sons, were sorely grieved, grieved at heart and afflicted; and some, with their hair all dishevelled, with arms uplifted in despair, wept; flinging themselves on the ground, they rolled from side to side, lamenting: "Too soon has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon will the Eye of the World vanish from sight!"

48. And thus afflicted and filled with grief, the Mallas, with their sons, their wives, and the wives of their sons, went to the Sala Grove, the recreation park of the Mallas, to the place where the Venerable Ananda was.  

49. And the thought arose in the Venerable Ananda: "If I were to allow the Mallas of Kusinara to pay reverence to the Blessed One one by one, the night will have given place to dawn before they are all presented to him. Therefore let me divide them up according to clan, each family in a group, and so present them to the Blessed One thus: 'The Malla of such and such a name, Lord, with his wives and children, his attendants and his friends, pays homage at the feet of the Blessed One.'"

50. And the Venerable Ananda divided the Mallas up according to clan, each family in a group, and presented them to the Blessed One. So it was that the Venerable Ananda caused the Mallas of Kusinara to be presented to the Blessed One by clans, each family in a group, even in the first watch of the night.

The Last Convert

51. Now at that time a wandering ascetic named Subhadda was dwelling at Kusinara. And Subhadda the wandering ascetic heard it said: "Today in the third watch of the night, the Parinibbana of the ascetic Gotama will take place."

52. And the thought arose in him: "I have heard it said by old and venerable wandering ascetics, teachers of teachers, that the arising of Tathagatas, Arahants, Fully Enlightened Ones, is rare in the world. Yet this very day, in the last watch of the night, the Parinibbana of the ascetic Gotama will take place. Now there is in me a doubt; but to this extent I have faith in the ascetic Gotama, that he could so teach me the Dhamma as to remove that doubt."

53. Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda went to the Sala Grove, the recreation park of the Mallas, and drew near to the Venerable Ananda, and told the Venerable Ananda his thought. And he spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Friend Ananda, it would be good if I could be allowed into the presence of the ascetic Gotama."

54. But the Venerable Ananda answered him, saying: "Enough, friend Subhadda! Do not trouble the Tathagata. The Blessed One is weary."
55-56. Yet a second and a third time the wandering ascetic Subhadda made his request, and a second and a third time the Venerable Ananda refused him.

57. And the Blessed One heard the talk between them, and he called the Venerable Ananda and said: "Stop, Ananda! Do not refuse Subhadda. Subhadda, Ananda, may be allowed into the presence of the Tathagata. For whatever he will ask me, he will ask for the sake of knowledge, and not as an offence. And the answer I give him, that he will readily understand."

58. Thereupon the Venerable Ananda said to the wandering ascetic Subhadda: "Go then, friend Subhadda, the Blessed One gives you leave."

59. Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda approached the Blessed One and saluted him courteously. And having exchanged with him pleasant and civil greetings, the wandering ascetic Subhadda seated himself at one side and addressed the Blessed One, saying: "There are, Venerable Gotama, ascetics and brahmans who are heads of great companies of disciples, who have large retinues, who are leaders of schools, well known and renowned, and held in high esteem by the multitude, such teachers as Purana Kassapa, Makkhali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambali, Pakudha Kaccayana, Sāñjaya Belatthiputta, Nigantha Nataputta. Have all of these attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or has none of them, or is it that some have attained realization and others not?"

60. "Enough, Subhadda! Let it be as it may, whether all of them have attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or whether none of them has, or whether some have attained realization and others not. I will teach you the Dhamma, Subhadda; listen and heed it well, and I will speak."

"So be it, Lord."

The Lion's Roar

61. And the Blessed One spoke, saying: "In whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline, Subhadda, there is not found the Noble Eightfold Path, neither is there found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, or fourth degree of saintliness. But in whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline there is found the Noble Eightfold Path, there is found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Now in this Dhamma and Discipline, Subhadda, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; and in it alone are also found true ascetics of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Devoid of true ascetics are the systems of other teachers. But if, Subhadda, the bhikkhus live righteously, the world will not be destitute of arahats.

62. "In age but twenty-nine was I, Subhadda,

When I renounced the world to seek the Good; Fifty-one years have passed since then, Subhadda, And in all that time a wanderer have I been In the domain of virtue and of truth, And except therein, there is no saint (of the first degree). "And there is none of the second degree, nor of the third degree, nor of the fourth degree of saintliness. Devoid of true ascetics are the systems of other teachers. But if, Subhadda, the bhikkhus live righteously, the world will not be destitute of arahats."

63. When this was said, the wandering ascetic Subhadda spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Excellent, O Lord, most excellent, O Lord! It is as if, Lord, one were to set upright what had been overthrown, or to reveal what had been hidden, or to show the path to one who had gone astray, or to light a lamp in the darkness so that those with eyes might see — even so has the Blessed One set forth the Dhamma in many ways. And so, O Lord, I take my refuge in the Blessed One, the Dhamma, and the Community of Bhikkhus. May I receive from the Blessed One admission to the Order and also the higher ordination."

64. "Whoever, Subhadda, having been formerly a follower of another creed, wishes to receive admission and higher ordination in this Dhamma and Discipline, remains on probation for a period of four months. At the end of those four months, if the bhikkhus are satisfied with him, they grant him admission and higher ordination as a bhikkhu. Yet in this matter I recognize differences of personalities."
65. "If, O Lord, whoever, having been formerly a follower of another creed, wishes to receive admission and higher ordination in this Dhamma and Discipline, remains on probation for a period of four months, and at the end of those four months, if the bhikkhus are satisfied with him, they grant him admission and higher ordination as a bhikkhu — then I will remain on probation for a period of four years. And at the end of those four years, if the bhikkhus are satisfied with me, let them grant me admission and higher ordination as a bhikkhu."

66. But the Blessed One called the Venerable Ananda and said to him: "Ananda, let Subhadda be given admission into the Order." And the Venerable Ananda replied: "So be it, Lord."

67. Then the wandering ascetic Subhadda said to the Venerable Ananda: "It is a gain to you, friend Ananda, a blessing, that in the presence of the Master himself you have received the sprinkling of ordination as a disciple."

68. So it came about that the wandering ascetic Subhadda, in the presence of the Blessed One, received admission and higher ordination. And from the time of his ordination the Venerable Subhadda remained alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, and resolute. And before long he attained to the goal for which a worthy man goes forth rightly from home to ascetic life, the supreme goal of the holy life; and having by himself realized it with higher knowledge, he dwelt therein. He knew: "Destroyed is birth; the higher life is fulfilled; nothing more is to be done, and beyond this life nothing more remains." And the Venerable Subhadda became yet another among the arahats, and he was the last disciple converted by the Blessed One himself.

Part Six: The Passing Away

The Blessed One's Final Exhortation

1. Now the Blessed One spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "It may be, Ananda, that to some among you the thought will come: 'Ended is the word of the Master; we have a Master no longer.' But it should not, Ananda, be so considered. For that which I have proclaimed and made known as the Dhamma and the Discipline, that shall be your Master when I am gone.

2. "And, Ananda, whereas now the bhikkhus address one another as 'friend,' let it not be so when I am gone. The senior bhikkhus, Ananda, may address the junior ones by their name, their family name, or as 'friend'; but the junior bhikkhus should address the senior ones as 'venerable sir' or 'your reverence.'

3. "If it is desired, Ananda, the Sangha may, when I am gone, abolish the lesser and minor rules.

4. "Ananda, when I am gone, let the higher penalty be imposed upon the bhikkhu Channa."

"But what, Lord, is the higher penalty?"

"The bhikkhu Channa, Ananda, may say what he will, but the bhikkhus should neither converse with him, nor exhort him, nor admonish him."

5. Then the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "It may be, bhikkhus, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then question, bhikkhus! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'"

6. But when this was said, the bhikkhus were silent. And yet a second and a third time the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, bhikkhus, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then question, bhikkhus! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'"

And for a second and a third time the bhikkhus were silent. Then the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, bhikkhus, out of respect for the Master that you ask no questions. Then, bhikkhus, let friend communicate it to friend." Yet still the bhikkhus were silent.
7. And the Venerable Ananda spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Marvellous it is, O Lord, most wonderful it is! This faith I have in the community of bhikkhus, that not even one bhikkhu is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice."

"Out of faith, Ananda, you speak thus. But here, Ananda, the Tathagata knows for certain that among this community of bhikkhus there is not even one bhikkhu who is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. For, Ananda, among these five hundred bhikkhus even the lowest is a stream-enterer, secure from downfall, assured, and bound for enlightenment."

8. And the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Behold now, bhikkhus, I exhort you: All compounded things are subject to vanish. Strive with earnestness!"

This was the last word of the Tathagata.

How the Blessed One Passed into Nibbana

9. And the Blessed One entered the first jhana. Rising from the first jhana, he entered the second jhana. Rising from the second jhana, he entered the third jhana. Rising from the third jhana, he entered the fourth jhana. And rising out of the fourth jhana, he entered the sphere of infinite space. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of infinite space, he entered the sphere of infinite consciousness. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of infinite consciousness, he entered the sphere of nothingness. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of nothingness, he entered the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. And rising out of the attainment of the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained to the cessation of perception and feeling.

10. And the Venerable Ananda spoke to the Venerable Anuruddha, saying: "Venerable Anuruddha, the Blessed One has passed away."

"No, friend Ananda, the Blessed One has not passed away. He has entered the state of the cessation of perception and feeling."

11. Then the Blessed One, rising from the cessation of perception and feeling, entered the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he entered the sphere of nothingness. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of nothingness, he entered the sphere of infinite consciousness. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of infinite consciousness, he entered the sphere of infinite space. Rising from the attainment of the sphere of infinite space, he entered the fourth jhana. Rising from the fourth jhana, he entered the third jhana. Rising from the third jhana, he entered the second jhana. Rising from the second jhana, he entered the first jhana.

Rising from the first jhana, he entered the second jhana. Rising from the second jhana, he entered the third jhana. Rising from the third jhana, he entered the fourth jhana. And, rising from the fourth jhana, the Blessed One immediately passed away.

The World's Echo

12. And when the Blessed One had passed away, simultaneously with his Parinibbana there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astounding, and the thunders rolled across the heavens.

13. And when the Blessed One had passed away, simultaneously with his Parinibbana, Brahma Sahampati spoke this stanza:

All must depart — all beings that have life Must shed their compound forms. Yea, even one, A Master such as he, a peerless being, Powerful in wisdom, the Enlightened One, has passed away.
Transient are all compounded things, Subject to arise and vanish; Having come into existence they pass away; Good is the peace when they forever cease. 15. And when the Blessed One had passed away, simultaneously with his Parinibbana, the Venerable Anuruddha spoke this stanza:

No movement of the breath, but with steadfast heart, Free from desires and tranquil — so the sage Comes to his end. By mortal pangs unshaken, His mind, like a flame extinguished, finds release. 16. And when the Blessed One had passed away, simultaneously with his Parinibbana, the Venerable Ananda spoke this stanza:

Then there was terror, and the hair stood up, when he, The All-accomplished One, the Buddha, passed away. 17. Then, when the Blessed One had passed away, some bhikkhus, not yet freed from passion, lifted up their arms and wept; and some, flinging themselves on the ground, rolled from side to side and wept, lamenting: "Too soon has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Eye of the World vanished from sight!"

But the bhikkhus who were freed from passion, mindful and clearly comprehending, reflected in this way: "Impermanent are all compounded things. How could this be otherwise?"

18. And the Venerable Anuruddha addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Enough, friends! Do not grieve, do not lament! For has not the Blessed One declared that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, compounded and subject to decay, how can one say: 'May it not come to dissolution!'? The deities, friends, are aggrieved."

"But, venerable sir, of what deities is the Venerable Anuruddha aware?"

"There are deities, friend Ananda, in space and on the earth who are earthly-minded; with dishevelled hair they weep, with uplifted arms they weep; flinging themselves on the ground, they roll from side to side, lamenting: 'Too soon has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Eye of the World vanished from sight!' But those deities who are freed from passion, mindful and clearly comprehending, reflect in this way: 'Impermanent are all compounded things. How could this be otherwise?'"

19. Now the Venerable Anuruddha and the Venerable Ananda spent the rest of the night in talking on the Dhamma. Then the Venerable Anuruddha spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "Go now, friend Ananda, to Kusinara, and announce to the Mallas: 'The Blessed One, Vasetthas, has passed away. Do now as seems fitting to you.'"

"So be it, venerable sir." And the Venerable Ananda prepared himself in the forenoon, and taking bowl and robe, went with a companion into Kusinara.

20. At that time the Mallas of Kusinara had gathered in the council hall to consider that very matter. And the Venerable Ananda approached them and announced: "The Blessed One, Vasetthas, has passed away. Do now as seems fitting to you."

And when they heard the Venerable Ananda speak these words, the Mallas with their sons, their wives, and the wives of their sons, were sorely grieved, grieved at heart and afflicted; and some, with their hair all dishevelled, with arms upraised in despair, wept; flinging themselves on the ground, they rolled from side to side, lamenting: "Too soon has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Eye of the World vanished from sight!"

Homage to the Remains

21. Then the Mallas of Kusinara gave orders to their men, saying: "Gather now all the perfumes, flower-garlands, and musicians, even all that are in Kusinara." And the Mallas, with the perfumes, the flower-garlands, and the musicians, and with five hundred sets of clothing, went to the Sala Grove, the recreation park of the Mallas, and approached the body of the Blessed One. And having approached, they paid homage to the body of the Blessed One with dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and erecting canopies and pavilions, they spent the day showing respect, honor, and veneration to the body of the Blessed One. And then the thought came to them: "Now the day is too far spent for us to cremate the body of the Blessed One. Tomorrow we will do it."
And for the second day, and a third, fourth, fifth, and sixth day, they paid homage to the body of the Blessed One with dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and erecting canopies and pavilions, they spent the day showing respect, honor, and veneration to the body of the Blessed One.

But on the seventh day the thought came to them: "We have paid homage to the body of the Blessed One with dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and have shown respect, honor, and veneration; let us now carry the body of the Blessed One southward to the southern part of the town and beyond, and let us there cremate the body of the Blessed One south of the town."

And eight Mallas of the foremost families, bathed from the crown of their heads and wearing new clothes, with the thought: "We will lift up the body of the Blessed One," tried to do so but they could not.

22. Then the Mallas spoke to the Venerable Anuruddha, saying: "What is the cause, Venerable Anuruddha, what is the reason that these eight Mallas of the foremost families, bathed from the crown of their heads and wearing new clothes, with the thought: 'We will lift up the body of the Blessed One,' try to do so but cannot?"

"You, Vasetthas, have one purpose, the deities have another."

"Then what, venerable sir, is the purpose of the deities?"

"Your purpose, Vasetthas, is this: 'We have paid homage to the body of the Blessed One with dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and have shown respect, honor, and veneration; let us now carry the body of the Blessed One southward to the southern part of the town and beyond, and let us there cremate the body of the Blessed One south of the town.' But the purpose of the deities, Vasetthas, is this: 'We have paid homage to the body of the Blessed One with heavenly dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and have shown respect, honor, and veneration; let us now carry the body of the Blessed One northward to the northern part of the town; and having carried it through the northern gate, let us go through the center of the town, and then eastward to the east of the town; and having passed through the east gate, let us carry it to the cetiya of the Mallas, Makuta-bandhana, and there let us cremate the body of the Blessed One."

"As the deities wish, venerable sir, so let it be."

23. Thereupon the whole of Kusinara, even to the dust heaps and rubbish heaps, became covered knee-deep in mandarava flowers. And homage was paid to the body of the Blessed One by the deities as well as the Mallas of Kusinara. With dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, both divine and human, respect, honor, and veneration were shown. And they carried the body of the Blessed One northward to the northern part of the town; and having carried it through the northern gate, they went through the center of the town, and then eastward to the east of the town; and having passed through the east gate, they carried the body of the Blessed One to the cetiya of the Mallas, Makuta-bandhana, and there laid it down.

24. Then the Mallas of Kusinara spoke to the Venerable Ananda, saying: "How should we act, Venerable Ananda, respecting the body of the Tathagata?"

"After the same manner, Vasetthas, as towards the body of a universal monarch."

"But how, venerable Ananda, do they act respecting the body of a universal monarch?"

"The body of a universal monarch, Vasetthas, is first wrapped round with new linen, and then with teased cotton wool. And again it is wrapped round with new linen, and again with teased cotton wool, and so it is done up to five hundred layers of linen and five hundred of cotton wool. When that is done, the body of the universal monarch is placed in an iron oil-vessel, which is enclosed in another iron vessel and a funeral pyre is built of all kinds of perfumed woods, and so the body of the universal monarch is burned. And at a crossroads a stupa is raised for the universal monarch. So it is done, Vasetthas, with the body of a universal monarch.

"And even, Vasetthas, as with the body of a universal monarch, so should it be done with the body of the Tathagata; and at a crossroads also a stupa should be raised for the Tathagata. And whoever shall bring to that place garlands or incense or sandalwood paste, or pay reverence, and whose mind becomes calm there — it will be to his well being and happiness for a long time."
25. Then the Mallas gave orders to their men, saying: "Gather now all the teased cotton wool of the Mallas!" And the Mallas of Kusinara wrapped the body of the Blessed One round with new linen, and then with teased cotton wool. And again they wrapped it round with new linen, and again with teased cotton wool, and so it was done up to five hundred layers of linen and five hundred of cotton wool. When that was done, they placed the body of the Blessed One in an iron oil-vessel, which was enclosed in another iron vessel, and they built a funeral pyre of all kinds of perfumed woods, and upon it they laid the body of the Blessed One.

26. Now at that time the Venerable Maha Kassapa was journeying from Pava to Kusinara together with a large company of five hundred bhikkhus. And on the way, the Venerable Maha Kassapa went aside from the highway and sat down at the foot of a tree.

And a certain Ajivaka came by, on his way to Pava, and he had taken a mandarava flower from Kusinara. And the Venerable Maha Kassapa saw the Ajivaka coming from a distance, and as he drew close he spoke to him, saying: "Do you know, friend, anything of our Master?"

"Yes, friend, I know. It is now seven days since the ascetic Gotama passed away. From there I have brought this mandarava flower."

27. Thereupon some bhikkhus, not yet freed from passion, lifted up their arms and wept; and some, flinging themselves on the ground, rolled from side to side and wept, lamenting: "Too soon has the Blessed One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Happy One come to his Parinibbana! Too soon has the Eye of the World vanished from sight!"

28. Now at that time, one Subhadda, who had renounced only in his old age, was seated in the assembly. And he addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Enough, friends! Do not grieve, do not lament! We are well rid of that great ascetic. Too long, friends, have we been oppressed by his saying: 'This is fitting for you; that is not fitting for you.' Now we shall be able to do as we wish, and what we do not wish, that we shall not do."

But the Venerable Maha Kassapa addressed the bhikkhus, saying: "Enough friends! Do not grieve, do not lament! For has not the Blessed One declared that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, compounded, and subject to decay, how can one say: 'May it not come to dissolution!'?"

29. Now at that time four Mallas of the foremost families, bathed from the crown of their heads and wearing new clothes, with the thought: "We will set alight the Blessed One's pyre," tried to do so but they could not. And the Mallas spoke to the Venerable Anuruddha, saying: "What is the cause, Venerable Anuruddha, what is the reason that these four Mallas of the foremost families, bathed from the crown of their heads and wearing new clothes, with the thought: 'We will set alight the Blessed One's pyre,' try to do so but cannot?"

"You, Vasetthas, have one purpose, the deities have another."

"Then what, venerable sir, is the purpose of the deities?"

"The purpose of the deities, Vasetthas, is this: 'The Venerable Maha Kassapa is on his way from Pava to Kusinara together with a large company of five hundred bhikkhus. Let not the Blessed One's pyre be set alight until the Venerable Maha Kassapa has paid homage at the feet of the Blessed One.'"

"As the deities wish, venerable sir, so let it be."

30. And the Venerable Maha Kassapa approached the pyre of the Blessed One, at the cetiya of the Mallas, Makuta-bandhana, in Kusinara. And he arranged his upper robe on one shoulder, and with his clasped hands raised in salutation, he walked three times round the pyre, keeping his right side towards the Blessed One's body, and he paid homage at the feet of the Blessed One. And even so did the five hundred bhikkhus.

And when homage had been paid by the Venerable Maha Kassapa and the five hundred bhikkhus, the pyre of the Blessed One burst into flame by itself.

31. And it came about that when the body of the Blessed One had been burned, no ashes or particles were to be seen of what had been skin, tissue, flesh, sinews, and fluid; only bones remained. Just as when ghee or oil is
burned, it leaves no particles or ashes behind, even so when the body of the Blessed One had been burned, no ashes or particles were to be seen of what had been skin, tissue, flesh, sinews, and fluid; only bones remained. And of the five hundred linen wrappings, only two were not consumed, the innermost and the outermost.

32. And when the body of the Blessed One had been burned, water rained down from heaven and extinguished the pyre of the Blessed One, and from the sala trees water came forth, and the Mallas of Kusinara brought water scented with many kinds of perfumes, and they too extinguished the pyre of the Blessed One.

And the Mallas of Kusinara laid the relics of the Blessed One in their council hall, and surrounded them with a lattice-work of spears and encircled them with a fence of bows; and there for seven days they paid homage to the relics of the Blessed One with dance, song, music, flower-garlands, and perfume, and showed respect, honor, and veneration to the relics of the Blessed One.

**Partition of the Relics**

33. Then the king of Magadha, Ajatasattu, son of the Videhi queen, came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And he sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and I am too. I am worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. I will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

34. And the Licchavis of Vesali came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and we are too. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

35. And the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was the greatest of our clan. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

36. And the Bulis of Allakappa came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and we are too. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

37. And the Kolis of Ramagama came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and we are too. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

38. And the Vethadipa brahman came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And he sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and I am a brahman. I am worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. I will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

39. And the Mallas of Pava came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and we are too. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival in their honor."

40. But when they heard these words, the Mallas of Kusinara addressed the assembly, saying: "The Blessed One has passed away in our township. We shall not part with any portion of the relics of the Blessed One." Then the brahman Dona spoke to the assembly, saying:

One word from me, I beg you, sirs, to hear! Our Buddha taught us ever to forbear; Unseemly would it be should strife arise And war and bloodshed, over the custody Of his remains, who was the best of men! Let us all, sirs, in friendliness agree To share eight portions — so that far and wide Stupas may rise, and seeing them, mankind Faith in the All-Enlightened One will find! "So be it, brahman! Divide the relics into eight equal portions yourself."
And the brahman Dona said to the assembly: "So be it, sirs." And he divided justly into eight equal portions the relics of the Blessed One, and having done so, he addressed the assembly, saying: "Let this urn, sirs, be given to me. Over this urn I will erect a stupa, and in its honor I will hold a festival." And the urn was given to the brahman Dona.

41. Then the Moriyas of Pipphalivana came to know that at Kusinara the Blessed One had passed away. And they sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinara, saying: "The Blessed One was of the warrior caste, and we are too. We are worthy to receive a portion of the relics of the Blessed One. We will erect a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One and hold a festival." And the urn was given to the brahman Dona.

"There is no portion of the relics of the Blessed One remaining; the relics of the Blessed One have been divided. But take from here the ashes." And they took from there the ashes.

42. And the king of Magadha, Ajatasattu, son of the Videhi queen, erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Rajagaha, and in their honor held a festival. The Licchavis of Vesali erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Vesali, and in their honor held a festival. The Sakyas of Kapilavatthu erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Kapilavatthu, and in their honor held a festival. The Bulis of Allakappa erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Allakappa, and in their honor held a festival. The Kolis of Ramagama erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Ramagama, and in their honor held a festival. The Vethadipa brahman erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Vethadipa, and in their honor held a festival. The Mallas of Pava erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Pava, and in their honor held a festival. The Mallas of Kusinara erected a stupa over the relics of the Blessed One at Kusinara, and in their honor held a festival. The brahman Dona erected a stupa over the urn, and in its honor held a festival. And the Moriyas of Pipphalivana erected a stupa over the ashes at Pipphalivana, and in their honor held a festival.

So it came about that there were eight stupas for the relics, a ninth for the urn, and a tenth for the ashes.

And thus it was in the days of old.

43. Eight portions there were of the relics of him, The All-Seeing One, the greatest of men. Seven in Jambudipa are honored, and one in Ramagama, by kings of the Naga race. One tooth is honored in the Tavatimsa heaven, One in the realm of Kalinga, and one by the Naga kings. Through their brightness this bountiful earth With its most excellent gifts is endowed; For thus the relics of the All-Seeing One are best honored By those who are worthy of honor — by gods and Nagas And lords of men, yea, by the highest of mankind. Pay homage with clasped hands! For hard indeed it is Through hundreds of ages to meet with an All-Enlightened One!
Maha Sudassana Sutta (17)

Once the Lord was staying at Kusinara in the Mallas' sal-grove shortly before his final Nibbana between the twin sal-trees.

The Venerable Ananda came to the Lord, saluted him, sat down to one side and said: "Lord, may the Blessed Lord not pass away in this miserable little town of wattle-and-daub, right in the jungle in the back of beyond! Lord, there are other great cities such as Campa, Rajagaha, Savatthi, Saketa, Kosambi or Varanasi. In those places there are wealthy Khattiyas, Brahmins and householders who are devoted to the Tathagatha and they will provide for the Tathagatha's funeral in proper style."

"Ananda, don't call it a miserable little town of wattle-and-daub, right in the jungle in the back of beyond! Once upon a time, Ananda, King Mahasudassana was a wheel-turning monarch, a rightful and righteous king, who had conquered the land in four directions and ensured the security of his realm. And this King Mahasudassana had this very Kusinara, under the name of Kusavati, for his capital. And it was twelve yojanas long from east to west, and seven yojanas wide from north to south. Kusavati was rich, prosperous and well-populated, crowded with people and well-stocked with food. Just as the deva-city of Alakamanda is rich..., so was the royal city of Kusavati. And the city of Kusavati was never free of ten sounds by day or night: the sound of elephants, horses, carriages, kettle-drums, side-drums, lutes, singing, cymbals and gongs, with cries of 'Eat, drink and be merry' as tenth.

"The royal city of Kusavati was surrounded by seven encircling walls. One was of gold, one silver, one beryl, one crystal, one ruby, one emerald, and one of all sorts of gems.

"Kusavati was surrounded by seven rows of palm-trees, of the same materials. The gold trees had gold trunks with silver leaves and fruit, the silver trees had silver trunks with gold leaves and fruit. The ruby trees had beryl trunks with crystal leaves and fruit, the crystal trees had crystal trunks with beryl leaves and fruit. The ruby trees had ruby trunks and emerald leaves and fruit, the emerald trees had emerald trunks and ruby leaves and fruit, while the trees of all sorts of gems were the same as regards trunks, leaves and fruit. The sound of the leaves stirred by the wind was lovely, delightful, sweet and intoxicating, just like that of the five kinds of musical instruments played in concert by well-trained and skilful players. And, Ananda, those who were libertines and drunkards in Kusavati had their desires assuaged by the sound of the leaves in the wind.

"King Mahasudassana was endowed with the seven treasures and the four properties. What are the seven? Once, on a fast-day, the divine Wheel-Treasure appeared to him, thousand-spoked, complete with felloe, hub and all appurtenances. On seeing it, King Mahasudassana thought: 'I have heard that when a duly anointed Khattiya kings sees such a wheel on the fast-day of the fifteenth, he will become a wheel-turning monarch. May I become such a monarch!'

"Then, rising from his seat, covering one shoulder with his robe, the King took a gold vessel in his left hand, sprinkled the Wheel with his right hand, and said: 'May the noble Wheel-Treasure turn, may the noble Wheel-Treasure conquer!' The Wheel turned to the East, and King Mahasudassana followed it with his fourfold army. And in whatever country the Wheel stopped, the King took up residence with his fourfold army.

"And, those kings who faces him in the eastern region came and said: 'Come, Your Majesty, welcome! We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty!' And the King said: 'Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink strong drink. Be moderate in eating.' And those who had faced him in the eastern region became his subjects.

"And when the Wheel had plunged into the eastern sea, it emerged and turned south, and King Mahasudassana followed it with his fourfold army. And those Kings...became his subjects. Having plunged into the southern sea it turned west..., having plunged into the western sea it turned north, and King Mahasudassana followed it with his fourfold army...and those who had faced him in the northern region became his subjects.

"Then the Wheel-Treasure, having conquered the lands from sea to sea, returned to the royal capital of Kusavati and stopped before the King's palace as he was trying a case, as if to adorn the royal palace. And this is how the Wheel-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.
Then the Elephant-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana, pure white, of sevenfold strength, with the wonderful power of traveling through the air, a royal tusker called Upasatha. Seeing him, the King thought: 'What a wonderful riding-elephant, if only he could be brought under control!' And this Elephant-Treasure submitted to control just like a thoroughbred that had been trained for a long time. And once the King, to try him, mounted the Elephant-Treasure at crack of dawn and rode him from sea to sea, returning to Kusavati in time for breakfast. And that is how the Elephant-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.

Then the Horse-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana, with a crown's head, dark-maned, with the wondrous power of traveling through the air, a royal stallion called Valahaka. And the King thought: 'What a wonderful mount, if only he could be brought under control!' And this Horse-Treasure submitted to control just like a thoroughbred that had been trained for a long time...And that is how the Horse-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.

Then the Jewel-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana. It was beryl, pure, excellent, well-cut into eight facets, clear, bright, unflawed, perfect in every respect. The luster of this Jewel-Treasure radiated for an entire yojana round about. And once the King, to try it, went on night-maneuvers on a dark night with his four-fold army, with the Jewel-Treasure fixed to the top of his standard. And all who lived in the villages round about started their daily work, thinking it was daylight. And that is how the Jewel-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.

Then the Woman-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana, lovely, fair to see, charming, with a lotus-like complexion, not too tall or too short, not too thin or too fat, not too dark or too fair, of more than human, deva-like beauty. And the touch of the skin of the Woman-Treasure was like cotton or silk, and her limbs were cool when it was hot, and warm when it was cold. Her body smelt of sandal-wood and her lips of lotus. This Woman-Treasure rose before the King and retired later, and was always willing to do his pleasure, and she was pleasant of speech. And this Woman-Treasure was not unfaithful to the King even in thought, much less in deed. And that is how the Woman-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.

Then the Householder-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana. With the divine eye which, as the result of kamma, he possessed, he saw where treasure, owned and ownerless, was hidden. He came to the King and said: 'Have no fear, Your Majesty, I will look after your wealth properly.' And once, the King, to try him, went on board a ship and had taken to the current in the middle of the Ganges. Then he said to the Householder-Treasure: 'Householder, I want some gold coin!' 'Well then, Sire, let the ship be brought to one bank.' 'I want the gold coins here!' Then the householder touched the water with both hands and drew out a vessel full of gold coins, saying: 'Is that enough, Sire? Will that do, Sire?' and the King said: 'That is enough, householder, that will do, you have served me enough.' And that is how the Householder-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana.

Then the Counselor-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana. He was wise, experienced, clever and competent to advise the King on how to proceed with what should be proceeded with, and to withdraw from what should be withdrawn from, and to overlook what should be overlooked. He came to the King and said: 'Have no fear, Your Majesty, I shall advise you.' And that is how the Counselor-Treasure appeared to King Mahasudassana, and how he was equipped with all the seven treasures.

Again, Ananda, King Mahasudassana was endowed with the four properties. What are they? Firstly, the King was handsome, good to look at, pleasing, with a complexion like the finest lotus, surpassing other men.

Secondly, he was long-lived, outliving other men.

Thirdly, he was free from illness, free from sickness, with a healthy digestion, less subject to cold and heat than that of other men.

Fourthly, he was beloved and popular with Brahmans and householders. Just as a father is beloved by his children, so he was with Brahmans and householders. And they were beloved by the King as children are beloved by their father. Once the King set out for the pleasure-park with his fourfold army, and the Brahmans and householders came to him and said: 'Pass slowly by, Sire, that we may see you as long as possible!' And the King said to the charioteer: 'Drive the chariot slowly so that I can see these Brahmans and householders as long as possible.' Thus King Mahasudassana was endowed with these four properties.

Then King Mahasudassana thought: "Suppose I were to construct lotus-ponds between the palm-trees, a hundred bow-lengths apart." And he did so. The lotus-ponds were lined with four-colored tiles, gold, silver, beryl, and crystal, each pond being approached by four staircases, one gold, one silver, one beryl and one crystal. And the gold...
staircase had gold posts with silver railings and banisters, and so on. And the lotus-ponds were provided with two kinds of parapet, gold and silver—the gold parapets having gold posts, silver railings and banisters, and the silver parapets having silver posts, gold railings and banisters.

"Then the King thought: "Suppose I were to provide each pond with suitable flowers for garlands--blue, yellow, red and white lotuses which will last throughout all seasons without fading?" And he did so. Then he thought: 'Suppose I were to place bathmen on the banks of these ponds, to bathe those who come there?' And he did so. Then he thought: 'Suppose I were to establish charitable posts on the banks of these ponds, so that those who want food can get it, those who want drink can get it, those who want clothes can get it, those who want transport can get it, those who want a sleeping-place can get it, those who want a wife can get one, and those who want gold coin can get it?' And he did so.

"Then the Brahmins and householders took great wealth and went to the King, saying: 'Sire, here is wealth that we have gathered together especially for Your Majesty, please accept it!' 'Thank you, friends, but I have enough wealth from legitimate revenues. Let this be yours, and take away more besides!' Being thus refused by the King, they withdrew to one side and considered: 'It would not be right for us to take this wealth back home again. Suppose we were to build a dwelling for King Mahasudassana.' So they went to the King and said: 'Sire, we would build you a dwelling', and the King accepted by silence.

"Then Sakka, ruler of the gods, knowing in his mind King Mahasudassana's thought, said to the attendant-deva Vissakamma: 'Come, friend Vissakama, and build a dwelling for King Mahasudassana, a palace called Dhamma,' 'Very good, Lord', Vissakamma replied and, as swiftly as a strong man might stretch his flexed arm or flex it again, he at once vanished from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and appeared before King Mahasudassana, and said to him: 'Sire, I shall build you a dwelling, a palace called Dhamma.' The King assented by silence, and Vissakamma build him the Palace of Dhamma.

"The Palace of Dhamma, Ananda, was a yojana in length from east to west, and half a yojana wide from north to south. The whole palace was faced up to three times a man's height with tiles of four colors, gold, silver, beryl, and crystal, and it contained eighty-four thousand columns of the same four colors. It had twenty-four staircases of the same four colors, and the gold staircases had gold posts with silver railings and banisters...It also had eighty-four thousand chambres of the same colors. In the gold chamber was a silver couch, in the silver chamber a gold couch, in the beryl chamber an ivory couch, and in the crystal chamber a sandalwood couch. On the door of the gold chamber a silver palm-tree was figured, with silver stem, gold leaves and fruit...On the door of the silver chamber a golden palm-tree was figured, with golden trunk, leaves and fruit, on the door beryl chamber a crystal palm-tree was figured, with crystal trunk and beryl leaves and fruit, on the door of the crystal chamber a beryl palm-tree was figured, with crystal leaves and fruit.

"Then the King thought: 'Suppose I were to make a grove of palm-trees all of gold by the door of the great gabled chamber where I sit in the daytime?' and he did so.

"Surrounding the Dhamma Palace were two parapets, one of gold, one of silver. The gold one had gold posts, silver railings and banisters, and the silver one had silver posts, gold railings and banisters.

"The Dhamma Palace was surrounded by two nets of tinkling bells. One net was gold with silver bells, the other silver with gold bells. And when these nets of bells were stirred by the wind their sound was lovely, delightful, sweet and intoxicating, just like that of the five kinds of musical instruments played in concert by well-trained and skilful players. And those who were libertines and drunkards in Kusavati had their desires assuaged by the sound of those nets of bells.

"And when the Dhamma Palace was finished, it was had to look at, dazzling to the eyes, just as in the last month of the Rains, in autumn, when there is a clear and cloudless sky, the sun breaking thorough the mists is hard to look at, so was the Dhamma Palace when it was finished.

"Then the King thought: 'Suppose I were to make a lotus-lake called Dhamma in front of the Dhamma Palace?' so he did so. This lake was a yojana long from east to west, and half a yojana wide from north to south, and lined with four kings of tiles, gold, silver, beryl and crystal. There were twenty-four staircases to it of four different kinds: gold, silver, beryl and crystal. The gold staircases had gold posts with silver railings and banisters, the silver had gold railings and banisters...
"Then Dhamma Lake was surrounded by seven kinds of palm-trees. The sound of the leaves stirred by the wind was lovely, delightful, sweet and intoxicating, just like that of the five kinds of musical instruments played in concert by well-trained and skillful players. And, Ananda, those who were libertines and drunkards in Kusavati had their desires assuaged by the sound of the leaves in the wind.

"When the Dhamma Palace and the Dhamma Lake were finished, King Mahasudassana, having satisfied every wish of those who at the time were ascetics or Brahmins, or revered as such, ascended into the Dhamma Palace.

"Then, King Mahasudassana thought: 'Of what kamma is it the fruit, of what kamma is it the result, that I am now so mighty and powerful?' Then he thought: 'It is the fruit, the result of three kinds of kamma: of giving, self-control, and abstinence.'

"Then the King went to the great gabled chamber and, standing at the door, exclaimed: 'May the thought of lust cease! May the thought of ill-will cease! May the thought of cruelty cease! Thus far and no further the thought if lust, of ill-will, of cruelty!'

"Then the King went into the great gabled chamber, sat down cross-legged on the golden couch, and detached from all sense-desires, detached from unwholesome mental states, entered and remained in the first jhana, which is with thinking and pondering, born of detachment, filled with delight and joy. And with the subsiding and oneness of mind, he entered and remained in the second jhana, which is without thinking and pondering, born of concentration, filled with delight and joy. And with the fading away of delight, remaining imperturbable, mindful and clearly aware, he experienced in himself that joy of which the Noble-Ones say: 'Happy is he who dwells with equanimity and mindfulness', he entered and remained in the third jhana. And, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the disappearance of former gladness and sadness, he entered and remained in the fourth jhana which is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness.

"Then the King, emerging from the great gable chamber, went to the golden gabled chamber and, seated cross-legged on the silver couch, stayed pervading first one quarter, then the second, the third and the fourth quarter with a mind filled with loving-kindness. Thus he stayed, spreading the thought of loving-kindness above, below and across, everywhere, always with a mind filled with loving-kindness, abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will. And he did likewise with compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

"Of King Mahasudassana’s eighty-four thousand cities, his capital Kusavati was the chief; of his eighty-four thousand palaces Dhamma was the chief; of his eighty-four thousand gabled halls the great gabled chamber was the chief; his eighty-four thousand couches were of gold, silver, ivory, sandal-wood, covered with fleece, wool, spread with kadali-deer hide, with head-covers, with red cushions at both ends; of his eighty-four thousand elephants adorned with gold ornaments, with gold banners and spread with gold nets, Uposatha the royal tusker was chief; of his eighty-four thousand carriages, covered with lion-skins, tiger-skins, leopard-skins or with orange-colored cloth, adorned with gold ornaments, gold banners and spread with gold nets, the chariot Vejayanta was the chief; of his eighty-four thousand wives Queen Subhadda was the chief; of his eighty-four thousand householders the Householder-Treasure was the chief; of his eighty-four thousand Khattiya retainers the Counselor-Treasure was the chief; his eighty-four thousand cows had tethers of fine jute and milk-pails of silver; his eighty-four thousand bales of clothing were of the finest linen, cotton, silk and wool; his eighty-four thousand rice-offerings were there for the taking by those in need, evening and morning.

"And at the time, King Mahasudassana’s eighty-four thousand elephants waited on him evening and morning. And he thought: 'These eighty-four thousand elephants wait on me evening and morning. How if, at the end of each century, forty-two thousand elephants were to wait on me, turn and turn about?’ And he gave instructions accordingly to his Counselor-Treasure, and it was done.

"And, Ananda, after many hundred, many hundred thousand years, Queen Subhadda thought: 'It is a long time since I saw King Mahasudassana. Suppose I were to go and see him?' So she said to her women: 'Come now, wash your heads and put on clean clothes. It is long since we saw King Mahasudassana. We shall go see him.' 'Yes, Your Majesty', they said, and prepared themselves as ordered, then returned to the Queen. And Queen Subhadda said to the Counselor-Treasure: 'Friend Counselor, draw up the fourfold army. It is long since we saw King Mahasudassana. We shall go and see him.' 'Very good, Your Majesty', said the Counselor-Treasure and, having drawn up the fourfold army, he reported to the Queen: 'Now is the time to do as Your Majesty wishes.'
"Then Queen Subhadda went with the fourfold army and her womenfolk to the Dhamma Palace and, entering, went to the great gabled chamber and stood leaning against the door-post. And King Mahasudassana, thinking: 'What is this great noise, as of a crowd of people?' came out of the door and saw Queen Subhadda leaning against the door-post. And he said: 'Stay there, Queen! Do not enter!'

"Then King Mahasudassana said to a certain man: 'Here, fellow, go to the great gabled chamber, bring the gold couch out and lay it down along the gold palm-trees.' 'Very good, Sire,' said the man, and did so. Then King Mahasudassana adopted the lion-posture on his right side with one foot on the other, mindful and clearly aware.

"Then Queen Subhadda thought: 'King Mahasudassana's faculties are purified, his complexion is clear and bright, oh--I hope he is not dead!' So she said to him: 'Sire, of your eighty-four thousand cities, Kusavati is the chief. Make a wish, arouse the desire to live there!' Thus, reminding him of all his royal possessions she exhorted him to wish to stay alive.

"At this, King Mahasudassana said to the Queen: 'For a long time, Queen, you spoke pleasing, delightful, attractive words to me, but now at this last time your words have been unpleasing, un delightful, unattractive to me.' 'Sire, how then am I to speak to you?'

"This is how you should speak: 'All things that are pleasing and attractive are liable to change, to vanish, to become otherwise. Do not, Sire, die filled with longing. To die filled with longing is painful and blameworthy. Of your eighty-four thousand cities, Kusavati is the chief: abandon desire, abandon the longing to live with them...Of your eighty-four thousand palaces, Dhamma is the chief: abandon desire, abandon the longing to live there...'

"At this, Queen Subhadda cried out and burst into tears. Then, wiping away her tears, she said: 'Sire, all things that are pleasing and attractive are liable to change...Do not, Sire, die filled with longing...'"

"Soon after this, King Mahasudassana died; and just as a householder or his son might feel drowsy after a good meal, so he felt the sensation of passing away, and he had a favorable rebirth in the Brahma-world.

"King Mahasudassana indulged in boyish sports for eighty-four thousand years, for eighty-four thousand years he exercised the viceroyalty, for eighty-four thousand years he ruled as King, and for eighty-four thousand years, as a layman, he loved the holy life in the Dhamma Palace. And, having practiced the four divine abidings, at the breaking-up of the body he was reborn in the Brahma-world.

"Now, Ananda, you might think King Mahasudassana at that time was somebody else. But you should not regard it so, for I was King Mahasudassana then. Those eighty-four thousand cities of which Kusavati was the chief were mine,...the eighty-four thousand rice-offerings...were mine.

"And of those eighty-four thousand cities I dwelt in just one, Kusavati,...of the eighty-four thousand wives I had, just one looked after me, and she was called Khattiyani or Velamikani; of the eighty-four thousand bales of cloth I had just one...; of the eighty-four thousand rice offerings there was just one measure of choice curry that I ate.

"See, Ananda, how all those conditional states of the past have vanished and changed! Thus, Ananda, conditional states are impermanent, they are unstable, they can bring us no comfort, and such being the case, Ananda, we should not rejoice in conditioned states, we should cease to take an interest in them, and be liberated from them.

"Six times, Ananda, I recall discarding the body in this place, and at the seventh time I discarded it as a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king who had conquered the four quarters and established a firm rule, and who possessed the seven treasures. But, Ananda, I do not see any place in this world with its devas and maras and Brahmans, or in this generation with its ascetics and Brahmins, princes and people, where the Tathagata will for an eighth time discard the body."

So the Lord spoke. The Well-Farer having said this, the teacher said:

"Impermanent are compounded things, prone to rise And fall, Having risen, they're destroyed, their passing truest Bliss."
Thus have I heard:

1. The Exalted One was once staying in Nadika, at the Brick House. Now at that time the Exalted One was wont to make declarations as to the rebirths of such followers (of the doctrine) as had passed away in death among the tribes round about on every side — among the Kasis and Kosalans, the Vajjians and Mallas, the Chetis and Varnsas, the Kurus and Panchalas, the Macchas and Surasenas — saying: 'Such an one has been reborn there, and such an one there.' From Nadika upwards of fifty adherents, who passed away in death after having completely destroyed the Five Bonds that bind people to this world, have become inheritors of the highest heavens, there to pass utterly away, thence never to return. Full ninety adherents in Nadika, who have passed away in death after having completely destroyed the Three Bonds, and reduced to a minimum lust ill-will and delusion, have become Once-returners, and on their first return to this world shall make an end of pain. Over five hundred adherents of Nadika, who have passed away in death after having completely destroyed the Three Bonds, and become converted, cannot be reborn in any state of woe, but are assured of attaining to the Insight (of the higher stages of the Path).

2. Now the adherents at Nadika, when they heard these revelations, were pleased, gladdened and filled with joy and happiness at these solutions by the Exalted One of the problems that had been put to him.

3. Now the venerable Ananda heard [of these declarations made by the Exalted One, and of the satisfaction felt by the adherents at Nadika].

4. And this idea occurred to him: 'But there were also [202] adherents in Anga and in other places, many of them, and of long religious experience, who have passed away in death. One might think that Anga and were void of adherents who have passed away in death. For they too had entire faith in the Buddha the Law and the Order, they had fulfilled the moral precepts. And yet concerning them, since they passed away in death, nothing has been declared by the Exalted One. It were surely a good thing to evoke a response as to them; for much folk would believe, and would hereafter enter into bliss. Then too there was Seniya Bimbisara, king of Anga, righteous and ruling righteously, benign to priests and laymen, to town-folk and country-folk. His fame are men verily spreading abroad saying: "Dead is our so righteous king of righteous rule who made us so happy! How well have we lived in the kingdom of that righteous king!" Now he too had entire faith in the Buddha the Law and the Order, and fulfilled the moral precepts. And people verily have also said, "Seniya Bimbisara, king of Anga, who up to the day of his death was given to praises of the Exalted One, is dead." Concerning him who has passed away in death nothing has been declared by the Exalted One. It were surely a good thing to evoke a response as to him; for much folk would believe, and would hereafter enter into bliss. Moreover the Exalted One attained supreme Insight in Magadha. Now where that took place, how should there be no declaration from the Exalted One concerning adherents in Anga who have passed away in death? [203] If the Exalted One declare nothing concerning them they will be hurt. And since they would be hurt, how can the Exalted One keep silence?'

5. Having thus pondered, alone and privately, concerning the Magadhese adherents, the venerable Ananda rose up the next morning and came into the presence of the Exalted One, and being come, saluted him and sat down on one side. And so sitting, he told the Exalted One [all that he had heard and thought]. [204] And when he had made an end of thus speaking before the Exalted One, he rose from his seat, saluted the Exalted One rightwise, and went away.

6. Then the Exalted One, not long after the venerable Ananda had gone away, robed himself in the morning and, taking a bowl and cloak, went forth for alms to Nadika. And when he had walked through Nadika for alms, after his meal, when he had come back again from his round for alms and bathed his feet, he entered the Brick House and sat down on a seat made ready, thinking over and cogitating upon and concentrating his whole mind on the Magadhese adherents, saying to himself: 'I will find out their future, their fate after this life, whither these good men are bound, what their destiny is.' And he, the Exalted One, saw the Magadhese adherents, whither they were bound, [205] and what their destiny was. Then at eventide the Exalted One, arising from his mation, went out of the Brick House, and sat down on a mat spread in the shade behind the lodging place.

7. Then the venerable Ananda came into the presence of the Exalted One, saluted him and sat down on one side. Thus seated he said to the Exalted One: "My lord the Exalted One looks serene, his complexion shines forth, as it were, owing to the tranquillity of his faculties. Has the lord the Exalted One spent a pleasant day?"
9. 'When you had made that speech to me, Ananda, concerning the Magadhesa adherents and had gone away, I, when I had gone to Nadika for alms, had dined, returned, bathed my feet and entered the Brick House, sat me down on a mat spread there and thought over, cogitated upon, and concentrated my whole mind on those Magadhesa adherents, resolving to know their future, their fate after this life, whither these good men were bound, what their destiny would be. And I saw, Ananda, those Magadhesa adherents, whither the good men were bound, what their destiny would be. Thereupon an invisible spirit made himself heard, saying: — "I am Jana-vasabha, O Exalted One; I am jana-vasabha, O Welcome One! " Now do you allow, Ananda, that you have ever heard of any one bearing such a name as Jana-vasabha? I confess, lord, that I have never heard of one bearing such a name as Jana-vasabha. Moreover, lord, on hearing such a name as Jana-vasabha, I am thrilled with excitement 1 and I fancy [206] it can be no ordinary spirit who bears such a name as Jana-vasabha 2 .'

10. 'After those words had been spoken, Ananda, the spirit himself appeared before me, a splendid presence. And he made a second utterance: — "I am Bimbisara, O Exalted One! I am Bimbisara, O Welcome One! 'Tis now the seventh time, lord, that I am reborn into the communion of the great King Vessavāra. Deceased as a human king, I am in heaven become a non-human king.

Hence seven, thence seven, in all fourteen rebirths — So much I know of lives I've lived in the long past. Long, lord, have I, who am destined not to be reborn in states of woe, been conscious of that destiny, and now is there desire in me to become a Once-returner."

'Wonderful is this, marvellous is this that you, the venerable spirit Jana-vasabha, tell me: — "Long have I who am destined not to be reborn in states of woe, been conscious of that destiny; " and again: — "Now is there desire in me to become a Once-returner." How has it come about that Jana-vasabha the venerable spirit recognizes his attainment to a distinction so splendid?'

11. 'Nowise save through thy word, O Exalted One, nowise save through thy word, O Blessed One! From the moment when I had gone over, in absolute and entire faith to the Exalted One, from that moment, lord, [207] did I who am destined not to be reborn in states of woe, been conscious of that destiny; and I now desire to become a Once-returner. Now, lord, I have been sent on a message concerning some business by King Vessavāra to King Viru/haka; and on my way I saw the Exalted One entering the Brick House, and sitting down to think over, to cogitate upon, to concentrate his whole mind upon the deceased Magadhesa adherents, in the resolve to know their future, their fate after this life; whither the good men are bound, what their destiny is. Now it was only the moment before, lord, that I had heard face to face and had understood from his own mouth from King Vessavāra, how he had said to his assembly whither those good men were bound, and what their destiny was, so it occurred to me that I would visit the Exalted One, and I would announce it to him. These, lord, are the two reasons why I came forth to visit the Exalted One 1

12. In days gone by, lord, in days long long gone by, it came to pass that on the night of the feast of the fifteenth day at the full moon in the month for entering upon Retreat 3, the month Asa/hī, the whole of the gods in the retinue of the Thirty-Three were assembled together, seated in the hall of Good Counsel. And around them on every side a vast celestial company was seated; and at the four quarters of the firmament sat the Four Great Kings. There was Dhatara/thsā, king of the East, seated facing the west, presiding over his host; Viru/haka, king of the South, seated facing the north, presiding over his host; Virupakka, king of the West, seated facing the east, presiding over his host; and Vessavāram, king of the North, seated facing the south, presiding over his host. [208] Whenever, lord, all the gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three are assembled and seated in their hall of Good Counsel, with a vast celestial company seated around them on every side, and with the Four Great Kings at the four quarters of the firmament, this is the order of the seats of the Four. After that come our seats. And those gods, lord, who had been recently reborn in the hosts of the Thirty-Three because they had lived the higher life under the Exalted One, they outshone the other gods in appearance and in glory. And thereat, lord, the Thirty-Three were glad and of good cheer, were filled with joy and happiness, saying: — "Verily, sirs, the celestial hosts are waxing, the titanic hosts are waning."

13. Now, lord, Sakka, ruler of the gods, when he saw the satisfaction felt by the retinue of the Three- and-Thirty, expressed his approval in these verses:

The Three-and-Thirty, verily, both gods and lord, rejoice, Tathagata they honour and the cosmic law sublime 1, Whereas they see the gods new-risen, beautiful and bright, Who erst the holy life had lived, under the Happy One, The Mighty Sage's hearers, who had won to higher truths,

Come hither; and in glory all the other gods outshine.
This they behold right gladly, both lord and Thirty-Three,

Tathagata they honour and the cosmic law sublime.

Hereat [209], lord, the Three-and-Thirty Gods were even more abundantly glad and of good cheer and filled with joy and happiness, saying : — " Verily the celestial hosts are waxing, the titanic hosts are waning ! "

14. Then, lord, concerning the object for which the Three-and-Thirty gods were assembled in their seats in the Hall of Good Counsel, they took counsel and deliberated about it ; and with respect to that object the Four Great Kings were addressed, and with respect to that object the Four Great Kings were admonished, standing by their seats : — 

The uttered word th' admonished Kings accepted there, Serene in mind and calm they stood each at his place.

15. Then, lord, a splendid light came forth out of the North, and a radiance shone around surpassing the divine glory of the gods. And, lord, then did Sakka, king of the gods, say to the retinue of the Thirty- Three : — " According, friends, to the signs now seen, — the light that ariseth, the radiance that appeareth — Brahma will be manifested. For this is the herald sign of the manifestation of Brahma to wit, when the light ariseth and the glory shineth 1 " : —

The portents now are seen, so Brahma draweth nigh, For this is Brahma's sign, this glorious splendour vast.

16. Then, lord, the gods of the Thirty-Three sat down in their own places, saying : — " We will ascertain what shall be the result of this radiance, when we have realized it, we will go to meet him. The Four Great Kings also sat down in their own places, saying the same. [210] And when they had heard this, the gods of the Three-and-Thirty were all together agreed : — " We will ascertain what shall be the result of this radiance ; when we have realized it, we will go to meet him."

17. When, lord, Brahma Sanawzkumara I appears before the Thirty-Three gods, 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 Thirty-Three Gods. And, lord, when Brahma Sanarñkumara appears before the Thirty-Three Gods, he outshines the other gods in colour and in glory. Just, lord, as a figure made of gold outshines the human frame, so, when Brahma Sanarñkumara appears before the Thirty-Three Gods, does he outshine the other gods in colour and in glory. And when, lord, Brahma Sanarñkumara appears before the Thirty-Three Gods, there is no god in all that assembly that salutes him, or arises up, or invites him to be seated. They all sit in silence, with clasped hands and cross-legged, thinking- : — " Of whichever god Brahma Sanarñkumara now desires anything, he will sit down on that god's divan." And by whichever god he does sit down, that god is filled with a sublime satisfaction, a sublime happiness, even as a Kshatriya king newly anointed and crowned is filled with a sublime satisfaction, a sublime happiness.

18. [211] So, lord, Brahma Sana;;zkumara having created a grosser personality and become in appearance as the youth Five-crest 2 , manifested himself thus to the gods of the company of the Thirty-Three. Rising up into the air he sat down cross-legged in the sky. Just, lord, as easily as a strong man might sit down cross-legged on a well-spread divan or a smooth piece of ground, even so did Brahma Sanawzkumara, rising up into the air, sit down cross-legged in the sky. And seeing the tranquillity of the gods of the company of the Thirty-Three he expressed his pleasure in these verses : —

The Three-and-Thirty, verily, both gods and lord, rejoice,

Tathagata they honour and the cosmic law sublime,

Whereas they see these gods new-risen, beautiful and bright,

Who erst the holy life had lived, under the Happy One,

The Mighty Sage's hearers, who had won to higher truths,

Come hither ; and in glory all the other gods outshine.

This they behold right gladly, both lord and Thirty- Three,
19. This was the matter of Brahma Sanamkumara's speech. And he spoke it with a voice of eightfold characteristics — in a voice that was fluent, intelligible, sweet, audible, continuous, distinct, deep, and resonant. And whereas, lord, Brahma Sana/zkumara communicated with that assembly by his voice, the sound thereof did not penetrate beyond the assembly. He whose voice has these eight characteristics is said to be Brahma-voiced.

20. Then, lord, Brahma Sana/zkumara, having created thirty-three shapes of himself [212], sitting each on the couch of each of the Thirty-Three Gods, thus addressed the Gods:

"Now what think ye, my lord gods Thirty-and-Three? Inasmuch as the Exalted One hath acted for the welfare of the peoples, for the happiness of the peoples, out of pity for the world, for the advantage, for the welfare, for the happiness of gods and men, they, whoever they be, Sirs, who have taken the Buddha for their refuge, the Truth for their refuge, the Order for their refuge, they, on the dissolution of the body after death, have been reborn, some of them into the communion of the Paranimmita-Vasavatti gods, some of them into the communion of the Tusita gods, or of the crods in the retinue of Yama, or of the Thirty-Three Gods, or of the Four Great Kings. Those who fill the number of the lowest group, they go to fill the number of the Gandharva host."

21. This was the matter of Brahma Sanawkumara's speech. And he spoke it with such a voice, that each god fancied: "He who is on my divan, he alone hath spoken."

Speaks but one Brahma-shape, the Thirty-Three all speak; Silently sits one shape, they all in silence sit. Then all the Three-and-Thirty with their king too think, Pie who is on my couch, 'tis he alone that spake.

22. Then, lord, Brahma Sana^kumara betook himself to one end [of the Hall] and then [213] sitting down on the divan of Sakka, lord of the gods, addressed the Thirty-Three Gods:

"Now what think ye, my lord gods Thirty-and-Three, of the completeness wherewith the Exalted One, who knows, who sees, the Arahant, Buddha Supreme, hath revealed the Four Ways to Iddhi for the development, thereof, for proficiency therein, for the elaboration thereof? Which are the? In the first place a brother practises that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with desire. In the second place a brother practises that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with energy. In the third place a brother practises that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with a [dominant] idea. In the fourth place a brother practises that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with investigation. These, sir, are the Four Ways to Iddhi revealed by the Exalted One who knows, who sees, the Arahant, Buddha Supreme, for the development thereof, for proficiency therein, for the elaboration thereof. Now those recluses or brahmins who, in past times, have enjoyed Iddhi in one or more of its forms, they have all done so through practice and improvement in just these. And those recluses or brahmins who, in future times, will enjoy Iddhi in one or more of its forms, they will all do so through practice and improvement in just these. And those recluses or brahmins who, at the present time, enjoy Iddhi in one or more of its forms, they all do so through practice and improvement in just these.

Do ye see, my lord gods Thirty-and-Three, in me a potency of Iddhi like that?"

"Ye, Brahma."

"I too, Sirs, through practice and improvement in just these to Iddhi [214], have acquired such power and potency therein."

23. Such was the matter of Brahma Sanamkumara's speech. And having thus spoken he addressed the Thirty-Three Gods:

"Now what think ye, my lord gods Thirty-and-Three, of the Three Avenues for arriving at Bliss manifested by the Exalted One who knows, who sees, by the Arahant, Buddha Supreme? Which are the Three?

In the first place, Sirs, take a brother who is living in indulgence in the pleasures of sense, in association with bad conditions. He on a certain occasion hears the Aryan Truth, studies it and acquires both the main and the subsidiary doctrines. Having come to this hearing, studying and acquisition, he takes to a life detached from the pleasures of sense, not associated with bad conditions. Under these circumstances he experiences ease and more than ease, happiness. Just as a feeling of complacency may develop into gladness, so does for him, under those
24. In the next place, Sirs, take a brother in whom the grosser conditions precedent to action, speech and thought are not entirely calmed down. He on a certain occasion hears the Aryan Truth preached, studies it and acquires both the main and subsidiary doctrines. Having arrived at this hearing, studying and acquisition, he now really knows that 'This is good,' he really knows that 'This is bad,' 'This is wrong,' 'This is not wrong,' 'This is to be followed,' 'This is to be avoided,' 'This is base,' 'This is excellent,' 'This is of mixed dark and bright quality.' He on a certain occasion hears the Aryan Truth, studies it and acquires the main and subsidiary doctrines. Having arrived at this hearing, study and acquisition, he now really knows that 'This is good,' he really knows that 'This is bad,' 'This is wrong,' 'This is not wrong,' 'This is to be followed,' 'This is to be avoided,' 'This is base,' 'This is excellent,' 'This is of mixed dark and bright quality.' For him thus knowing, thus seeing, ignorance is put away, wisdom has arisen. From this extinction of ignorance, from the arising of wisdom, a sense of ease arises and, then more than ease, happiness. Just as a feeling of complacency may develop into gladness, so does for him, under these circumstances, first ease arise and then more than ease, happiness. [215] This, Sirs, is the for arriving at Bliss manifested by the Exalted One . . . Buddha Supreme.

25. In the third place, Sirs, take the case of a brother who does not really know that 'This is good,' 'This is bad,' 'This is wrong,' 'This is not wrong,' 'This is to be followed,' 'This is to be avoided,' 'This is base,' 'This is excellent,' 'This is of mixed dark and bright quality.' For him thus knowing, thus seeing, ignorance is put away, wisdom has arisen. From this extinction of ignorance, from the arising of wisdom, a sense of ease arises and, then more than ease, happiness. Just as a feeling of complacency may develop into gladness, so does for him, under these circumstances, first ease arise and then more than ease, happiness. This, Sirs, is now the for arriving at Bliss manifested by the Exalted One who knows, who sees, Arahant, Buddha Supreme.

These, Sirs, are [216] the Three Avenues for arriving at Bliss manifested by the Exalted One, who knows and sees, the Arahant, Buddha Supreme."

26. On this matter, lord, did Brahma Sanākmukara speak. And having so spoken he addressed the Thirty-Three Gods : —

"Now what think ye, my lord gods Thirty-and-Three, of the completeness wherewith the Exalted One, who knows, who sees, the Arahant, Buddha Supreme, hath revealed the Four Inceptions of Mindfulness 1 for attaining" to the Good. And which are the Four ? Take, Sirs, a brother who abides subjectively watchful over the body, ardent self-possessed mindful, that he may discern the unhappiness arising from coveting the things of the world. So, subjectively watchful, he attains to right concentration and right calm. He, having right concentration and right calm in his physical being, evokes knowledge of and insight into all other physical forms external to himself. So, again, he abides subjectively watchful over his feelings . . . over his heart, . . . over his ideas, ardent self-possessed mindful, that he may discern the unhappiness arising from coveting the things of the world. So, subjectively watchful, he attains to right concentration and right calm. He, having right concentration and right calm in his feelings . . . his heart . . . his ideas, evokes knowledge of and insight into the ideas of others external to himself.

These, Sirs, are the Four Inceptions of Deliberation for attaining to the Good completely revealed by the Exalted One who knows, who sees, the Arahant, Buddha Supreme."
For, Sirs, whosoever has unwavering faith in the Buddha, unwavering faith in the Truth, unwavering faith in the Order, and is endowed with the virtues pleasing to the Noble Ones; and whatsoever new gods have appeared in our midst, led hither by the Law, to wit more than twenty-four lacs of disciples now dead and gone; these all through complete destruction of the Three Bonds, have become converted, and cannot be reborn in any state of woe, but are assured of attaining to the Insight (of the highest stages of the Path). [218] Moreover there are here Once-returners;

"But of that other Breed to tell, Of higher merit, lo! the tale I cannot reckon, lest perchance I should offend against the truth."

28. This, lord, was the matter of Brahma Sanamkumara's speech. And concerning what he had spoken, the reflection arose in the mind of the Great King Vessavana: "Wonderful truly is it, Sirs, marvellous is it, that there should be so glorious a Teacher, so glorious a proclaiming of the Truth, and that such glorious avenues to distinction should be made known!"

Then, lord, Brahma Sanawkumara discerning this reflection in the mind of the Great King Vessavana, spake thus to him:—

"Now what thinks my lord, the Great King Vessavana? There both has been in past times, a Teacher so glorious, a proclaiming of the Truth so glorious, a making known such glorious avenues to distinction, and there will be also in future times a Teacher so glorious, a proclaiming of the Truth so glorious, a making known such glorious avenues to distinction."

29. This was the matter whereof Brahma Sanamkumara spoke to the Thirty-Three Gods. And this matter the Great King Vessavana, when he had, in his own person, heard it and assented to it, reported to his own following. And this matter the spirit Jana-vasabha, when he had in his own person heard it so reported by Vessavana, reported to the Exalted One. And this matter the Exalted One, when he had in his own person heard it and assented to it, and had also intuitively discerned it reported to Ananda. And this matter the venerable Ananda, when he had in his own person heard it from the Exalted One and assented to it, reported to the brethren and the sisterhood, to believing laymen and laywomen. And the System waxed influential and prosperous and expanded and broadened with the numbers that joined, so well was it spread abroad among men.

Here endeth the Jana-vasabha's Story.
Once the Lord was staying at Rajagha, on Vultures' Peak. And when the night was nearly over, Pancasikha of the gandhabbas, lighting up the entire Vultures' Peak with a splendid radiance, approached the Lord, saluted him, stood to one side and said: "Lord, I wish to report to you what I have personally seen and observed when I was in the presence of the Thirty-Three Gods." "Tell me then, Pancasikha", said the Lord.

"Lord, in the earlier days, long ago, on the fast-day of the fifteenth at the end of the Rains the Thirty-Three Gods assembled and rejoiced that the devas' hosts were growing, the asuras' hosts declining. Then Sakka uttered the verse:

"The gods of Thirty-Three rejoice, their leader too, Praising the Tathagata, and Dhamma's truth, Seeing new-come devas, fair and glorious Who've lived the holy life, now well reborn. Outshining all the rest in fame and splendor, The mighty Sage's pupils singled out. Seeing this, the Thirty-Three rejoice, their leader too, Praising the Tathagata, and Dhamma's truth.'

"At this, Lord, the Thirty-Three Gods rejoiced still more, saying: 'The devas' hosts are growing, the asuras' hosts are declining!'

"Then Sakka, seeing their satisfaction, said to the Thirty-Three Gods: 'Would you like, gentlemen, to hear eight truthful statements in praise of the Lord?' and on receiving their assent, he declared:

"What do you think, my lords of the Thirty-Three? As regards the way in which the Lord has striven for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, one of compassion for the world, for the welfare and happiness of devas and humans—we can find no teacher with such qualities, whether we consider the past or the present, other than the Lord.

"The Lord has well explained what is right and what is wrong, what is blameworthy and what is blameless, what is to be followed and what is not to be followed, what is base and what is noble, what is foul, fair and mixed in quality. And we can find none who is a proclaimer of such things...other than the Lord.

"Again, the Lord has well explained to his disciples the path leading to Nibbana, and they coalesce, Nibbana and the path, just as the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna coalesce and flow on together. And we can find no proclaimer of the path leading to Nibbana...other than the Lord.

"And the Lord has gained companions, both learners and those who, having lived the life, have abolished the corruptions, and the Lord dwells together with them, all rejoicing in the one thing. And we can find no such teacher...other than the Lord.

"The gifts given to the Lord are well-bestowed, his fame is well established, so much so that, I think, the Khattiyas will continue to be attached to him, yet the Lord takes him food-offering without conceit. And we can find no teacher who does this...other than the Lord.

"And the Lord acts as he speaks, and speaks as he acts. And we can find no teacher who does likewise, in every detail of doctrine...other than the Lord.

"The Lord has transcribed doubt, passed beyond all "how" and "why", he has accomplished his aim in regard to his goal and the supreme holy life. And we can find no teacher who has done the like, whether we consider the past or the present, other than the Lord.'

"And when Sakka had thus proclaimed these eight truthful statements in praise of the Lord, the Thirty-Three Gods were even more pleased, overjoyed and filled with delight and happiness at what they had heard in the Lord's praise.

"Then certain gods explained: 'Oh, if only four fully-enlightened Buddhas were to arise in the world and teach Dhamma just like the Blessed Lord! That would be for the benefit and happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of devas and humans!' And some said: 'Never mind the four fully-enlightened Buddhas--three would suffice!' and others said: 'Never mind three--two would suffice!'
"At this Sakka said: 'It is impossible, gentlemen, it cannot happen that two fully-enlightened Buddhas should arise simultaneously in a single-world system. That cannot be. May this Blessed Lord continue to live long, for many years to come, free from sickness and disease! That would be for the benefit and happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world it would be for the benefit and happiness of devas and humans!"

"Then the Thirty-Three Gods consulted and deliberated together about the matter concerning which they had assembled in the Sudhamma Hall, and the Four Great Kings were advised and admonished on this matter as they stood by their seats unmoving:

"The Kings instructed, marked the words they spoke, Standing calm, serene, beside their seats.

"A great radiance was seen, heralding the approach of Brahma. All took their proper seats each hoping Brahma would sit on the couch.

"Then Brahma Sanankumara, having descending from his heaven, and seeing their pleasure, uttered these verses:

""The gods of Thirty-Three rejoice, their leader too .'.

"Brahma Sanankumara's voice had eight qualities.

"Then the Thirty-Three Gods said to Brahma Sanankumara: 'It is well, Brahma! We rejoice at what we have heard. Sakka, lord of the devas, has also declared eight truthful statements to us about the Lord, at which we also rejoice.' Then Brahma said to Sakka: 'It is well, Lord of the devas. And we too would like to hear those eight truthful statements about the Lord.' 'Very well, Great Brahma', said Sakka, and he repeated those eight statements:

""What do you think, Lord Brahma...?' And Brahma Sanankumara was pleased, overjoyed and filled with delight and happiness at what he had heard in the Lord's praise.

"Brahma Sanankumara assumed a grosser form and appeared in the shape of Pancasikha. And sitting thus cross-legged, he said to the Thirty-Three Gods: 'For how long has the Blessed Lord been one of the mighty wisdom?'

"Once upon a time there was a king called Disampati. His chaplain was a Brahmin called the Steward. The King's son was a youth called Renu, and the Steward's son was called Jotipala. Prince Renu and Jotipala, together with six other Khattiyas, formed a band of eight friends. In the course of time the Steward died, and King Disampati mourned him, saying: 'Alas, at the very moment when we had entrusted all our responsibilities to the Steward, and were abandoning ourselves to the pleasures of the five senses, the Steward has passed away!'

"Hearing this, Prince Renu said: 'Sire, do not mourn the Steward's death overmuch! His son Jotipala is cleverer than his father was and has a better eye for what is advantageous. You should let Jotipala manage all the business you entrusted to his father.' 'Is that so, my boy?' 'Yes, Sire.'

"Then the King called a man and said: 'Come here, my good man, go to the youth Jotipala and say: "May the Reverend Jotipala be well! King Disampati sends for you, he would like to see you."' 'Very good, Your Majesty', said the man, and delivered the message. On receiving the message, Jotipala said, 'Very good, sir', and went to see the King. On entering the royal presence, he exchanged courtesies with the King, then sat down to one side. The King said: 'We wish the Reverend Jotipala to manage our affairs. Do not refuse. I will install you in your father's place and consecrate you as Steward.' 'Very good, Lord', replied Jotipala.

"So King Disampati appointed Jotipala as steward in his father's place. And once installed, Jotipala carried out the business his father had carried out, not doing any business his father had not done. He accomplished all the tasks his father had accomplished, and no others. And people said: 'This Brahmin is truly a steward! Indeed he is a great steward!' And that is how the young Brahmin Jotipala came to be known as the Great Steward.

"And one day the Great Steward went to the group of six nobles and said: 'King Disampati is aged, decrepit, stricken with age. His life is near its end and he cannot last much longer. Who can tell how long people will live? When King Disampati dies, the king-makers are bound to anoint Prince Renu as King. You should go, gentlemen, to Prince Renu and say: "We are the beloved, dear and favored friends of the Lord Renu, sharing his joys and his sorrows. Our Lord King Disampati is aged...When he dies, the king-makers are bound to anoint the Lord Renu as King. If the Lord Renu should gain the kingship, let him share it with us."'
"Very good, sir," said the six nobles, and they went to Prince Renu and spoke to him as the Great Steward had proposed: 'Well, gentlemen, who, apart from myself, ought to prosper but you? If, gentleman, I gain the kingship, I will share it with you.'

In due course King Disampati died, and the king-makers anointed Prince Renu King in his place. And having been made King, Renu abandoned himself to the pleasures of the five senses. Then the Great Steward went to the six nobles and said: 'Gentleman, now King Disampati is dead the Lord Renu, who has been anointed in his place, has abandoned himself to the pleasures of the five senses. Who knows what will come of this? The sense-pleasures are intoxicating. You should go to him and say: "King Disampati is dead and the Lord Renu has been anointed King. Do you remember your word, Lord?"'

They did so, and the King said: 'Gentlemen, I remember my word. Who is there who can divide this mighty realm of earth, so broad in the north and so narrow like the front of a cart in the south, into seven equal parts?' 'Who indeed, Lord, if not the Great Steward?'

So King Renu sent a man to the Great Steward to say: 'My lord, the King sends for you.' The man went, and the Great Steward came to the King, exchanged courtesies with him, and sat down to one side. Then the King said: 'My Lord Steward, go and divide this mighty realm of earth, so broad in the north and so narrow like the front of a cart in the south, into seven equal parts.' 'Very good, Sire', said the Great Steward, and he did so.

And King Renu's country was in the center:

"Dantapura to the Kaligas, Potaka to the Assakas, Mahissati to the Avantis, Roruka to the Soviras. Mithila to the Videhas, Campa to the Angas goes, Benares to the Kasi, thus did the Steward dispose.

"The six nobles were delighted with their respective gains and at the success of the plan: 'What we wanted, desired, aimed at and strove for, we have got!'

"Sattabhu, Brahmadatta, Vessabhu and Bharata, Renu and two Dhataratthas, these are the seven Bharat kings.

"Then the six nobles came to the Great Steward and said: 'Reverend Steward, just as you were a beloved, dear and faithful friend to King Renu, so you have been to us. Please manage our affairs for us! We trust you will not refuse.' So he administered the realms of seven anointed kings, and he also taught the mantras to seven distinguished Brahmins and seven hundred advanced pupils.

"In course of time good reports were spread about concerning the Great Steward: 'The Great Steward can see Brahma with his own eyes, talks with him face to face and consults with him!' And he thought: 'Now this good report is being spread about concerning me, that I can see Brahma with my own eyes,...but it not true. However, I have heard it said by aged and respectable Brahmins, the teachers of teachers, that anyone who withdraws into meditation for the four months of the Rains, developing the absorption on compassion, can see Brahma with his own eyes, talk with him face to face and consult with him. Suppose I were to do this!'

So the Great Steward went to King Renu and told him of the report, and of his wish to go into retreat and develop the absorption on compassion. 'And nobody is to come near me except to bring me food.' 'Reverend Steward, do as you think fit.'

The six nobles likewise replied: 'Reverend Steward, do as you think fit.'

"He went to the seven Brahmins and the seven hundred pupils and told them of his intentions, adding: 'So, gentlemen, you carry on with reciting the mantras you have heard and learnt, and teach them to each other.' 'Reverend Steward, do as you think fit', they replied.

"Then he went to his forty equal-ranking wives, and they said: 'Reverend Steward, do as you think fit.'

"So the Great Steward erected a new lodging to the east of the city and withdrew there for the four months of the Rains, developing the absorption on compassion, and nobody came near him except to being him food. But at the end of four months he felt nothing but dissatisfaction and weariness as he thought: 'I heard it said...that anyone who withdraws into meditation for the four months of the Rains, developing the absorption on compassion, can see Brahma with his own eyes...But I cannot see Brahma with my own eyes, and cannot talk, discuss or consult with him!'
Now Brahma Sanankumara read his thoughts and, as swiftly as a strong man might stretch out his flexed arm or flex it again, he disappeared from the Brahma world and appeared before the Great Steward. And the Great Steward felt fear and trembling, and his hair stood on end at such a sight as he had never seen before. And thus fearful, trembling, with hair standing on end, he addressed Brahma Sanankumara in these verses:

"O splendid vision, glorious and divine, Who are you, Lord? I fain would know your name.'

"In highest heaven I am know by all; Brahma Sanakumara--know me thus.'

"A seat, and water for the feet, and cakes Are fitting for a Brahma. Let the Lord Decide what hospitality he would.'

"We accept the gift that's offered: now declare What it is you wish from us--a boon Of profit in this very life, or in the next. Say, Lord, Steward, what it is you'd have.'

"Then the Great Steward thought: 'Brahma Sanankumara offers me a boon. What shall I choose--benefits in this life or in that to come?' Then he thought: 'I am an expert in matters of advantages in this life, and others consult me about this. Suppose I were to ask Brahma Sanankumara for something of benefit in the life to come?' And he addressed Brahma in these verses:

"I ask Brahma Sanankumara this, Doubting, him who has no doubts I ask (For others too I ask): By doing what Can mortals reach the deathless Brahma world?'

"That man who spurns all possessive thoughts, Alone, intent, compassion-filled, Aloof from stench, free from lust--Established thus, and training thus, Can mortals reach the deathless Brahma world.'

"I understand "Spurning possessive thoughts". This means that one renounces one's possessions, small or great, leaves one's relatives, few or many, and, shaving off hair and beard, goes forth from the household life into ascetic life. This is how I understand "Spurning possessive thoughts". I understand "Alone, intent". That means that one goes off on one's own and chooses a lodging in the forest, at the foot of a tree, in a mountain glen, in a rocky cave, a charnel-ground, in the jungle or on a heap of grass in the open...I understand "Compassion-filled". That means that one dwells suffusing one quarter with a mind filled with compassion, then a second, then a third and a fourth quarter. Thus one abides suffusing the whole world, up, down and across, everywhere, all around, with a mind filled with compassion, expanded, immeasurable, free from hatred and ill-will. That is how I understand "Compassion-filled". But the Lord's words about "Aloof from stench" I do not understand:

"What do you mean, Brahma, by "stench" among men? Pray lighten my ignorance, O wise one, on this. What hindrance causes man to stink and fester, Heading for hell, from Brahma-realm cut off?'

"Anger, lying, fraud and cheating, Avarice, pride and jealousy, Coveting, doubt and harming others, Greed and hate, stupor and delusion: The loathsome stench that these give off Heads man for hell, from Brahma-realm cut off.'

"As I understand the Lord's words about the stench, these things are not easy to overcome if one lives the household life. I will therefore go forth from the household life into the ascetic state.' 'Reverend Steward, do as you think fit.'

"So the Great Steward went to King Renu and said: 'My Lord, please appoint another minister to manage your affairs. I wish to go forth from the household life into ascetic life. After what Brahma has told me about the stench of the world, which cannot be easily overcome by one living the household life, I am going forth into ascetic life:

"King Renu, lord of this realm, I declare, You yourself must rule, I'll counsel you no more!'

"If anything you lack, I'll make it good, If any hurt you, my royal arms shall guard you. You my father, I your son, Steward, stay!'

"I lack nothing, none there is who harms me; No human voice I heard--at home I cannot stay.'

"Non-human"--what's he like who calls, that you At once abandon home and all of us?'
"Before I went on this retreat I thought of sacrifice, Lighting the sacred fire, strewing kusa-grass. But now—eternal Brahma from Brahma-realm's Appeared. I asked, he answered: I now can stay no more.'

"Reverend Steward, in your words I trust. Such words Once heard, you had no other course. We will follow: Steward, be our Master. Like a beryl-gem, clear, of finest water, So purified, we'll follow in your wake.'

"If the Reverend Steward goes forth from the household life into ascetic life, I will do the same. Wherever you go, we will follow.'

"Then the Great Steward went to the six nobles and said to them: 'My lords, please appoint another minister to manage your affairs. I wish to go forth from the household life into ascetic life...' And the six nobles went aside and consulted together: 'These Brahmins are greedy for money. Perhaps we can win the Great Steward round with money.' So they came back to him and said: 'Sir, there is plenty of wealth in these seven kingdoms. Take as much as you like.' 'Enough, gentlemen, I have received plenty of wealth from my lords already. That is the very thing that I am renouncing in order to go forth from the household life into ascetic life, as I have explained.'

"Then the six nobles went aside again and consulted together: 'These Brahmins are greedy for women. Perhaps we can win the Great Steward round with women.' So they came to him and said: 'Sir, there are plenty of women in these seven kingdoms. Take your pick!' 'Enough, gentleman, I already have forty equal wives, and I am leaving them in order to go forth from the household life into ascetic life, as I have explained.'

"If the Reverend Steward goes forth from the household life into ascetic life, we will do likewise. Wherever you go, we will follow:

"If you renounce those lusts that bind most men, Exert yourself, be strong and patiently endure! This is the path that's straight, the peerless path, The path of truth, guarded by the good, to Brahma's Realm.'

"And so, Lord Steward, just wait seven years, and then we too will go forth into ascetic life. Wherever you go, we will follow.'

"Gentlemen, seven years is far too long, I cannot wait for seven years! Who can tell how long people will live? We have to go on into the next world, we must learn by means of wisdom, we must do what is right and live the holy life, for nothing that is born is immortal. Now I am going forth as I have explained.'

"Well, Reverend Steward, just wait six years,...five years,...four years,...three years,...two years,...one year, and then we too will go forth into ascetic life. Wherever you go, we will follow.'

"Gentlemen, one year is far too long...' 'Then wait seven months...'

"Gentlemen, seven months is far too long... 'Then wait six months,...five months,...four months,...three months,...two months,...one month,...half a month...'

"Gentlemen, half a month is far too long...' 'Then, Reverend Steward, just wait seven days while we make over our kingdoms to our sons and brothers. At the end of seven days we will go forth into ascetic life. Wherever you go, we will follow.' 'Seven is not long, I agree, my lords, to seven days.'

"Then the Great Steward went to the seven Brahmins and their seven hundred advanced pupils, and said to them: 'Now, Your Reverences, you must seek another teacher to teach you the mantras. I mean to go forth from the household life into ascetic life. After what Brahma has told me about the stench of the world, which cannot be easily overcome by one living the household life, I am going forth into ascetic life.' ''Reverend Steward, do not do so! There is little power and profit in the ascetic life, and much power and profit in the life of a Brahmin!' 'Do not say such things, gentlemen! Besides, who has greater power and profit than I have? I have been like a king to kings, like Brahma to the Brahmins, like a deity to householders, and I am giving all this up in order to go forth from the household life into ascetic life, as I have explained.' 'If the Reverend Steward goes forth from the household life into ascetic life, we will do likewise. Wherever you go, we will follow.'

"Then the Great Steward went to his forty equal wives and said: 'Whichever of you ladies wishes to may go back to her own family and seek another husband. I mean to go forth into ascetic life...' 'You alone are the kinsman we could
wish for, the only husband we want. If the Reverend Steward goes forth into ascetic life, we will do likewise. Wherever you go, we will follow.'

"And the Great Steward, at the end of the seven days, shaved off his hair and beard, donned yellow robes and went forth from the household life into ascetic life. And with him went the seven anointed Khattiya kings, the seven wealthy and distinguished Brahmins with their seven hundred advanced pupils, his forty equal wives, several thousand Khattiyas, several thousand Brahmins, several thousand householders, even some harem-women.

"And so, followed by this company, the Great Steward wandered through villages, towns and royal cities. And whenever he came to a village or town, he was like a king to kings, like Brahma to the Brahmins, like a deity to householders. And in those days, whenever anyone sneezed or stumbled, they used to say: 'Praise be to the Great Steward! Praise be to the Minister of Seven!'

"And the Great Steward dwelt suffusing one quarter with a mind filled with loving-kindness, then a second, then a third and a fourth quarter. He dwelt suffusing the whole world, up, down and across, everywhere, all around, with a mind filled with compassion,...with a mind filled with sympathetic joy,...with a mind filled with equanimity,...free from hatred and ill-will. And thus he taught his disciples the way to union with the Brahma-world.

"And all those who had at that time been the Great Steward's pupils and had fully mastered his teaching, were after death at the breaking-up of the body reborn in a happy sphere, in the Brahma-world. And those who had not fully mastered his teaching were reborn either among the Paranimmita-Vasavatti devas, among the Nimmanarati devas, among the Tusita devas, among the Yama devas, among the devas of the Thirty-Three Gods, or among the devas of the Four Great Kings. And the very lowest realm that any of them attained was of the gandhabbas. Thus the going-forth of all those people was not fruitless or barren, but productive of fruit and profit.

"Do you remember this, Lord?" "I do, Pancasikha. At that time I was the Brahmin, the Great Steward, and I taught those disciples the path to union with the Brahma-world.

"However, Pancasikha, that holy life does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to super-knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbana, but only to birth in the Brahma-world, whereas my holy life leads unfailingly to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to super-knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbana. That is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

"And, Pancasikha, those of my disciples who have fully mastered my teaching have by their own super-knowledge realized, by the destruction of the corruptions in this very life, the uncorrupted freedom of heart and mind. And of those who have not fully mastered it, some by the destruction of the five lower fetters will be reborn spontaneously, attaining thence to Nibbana without returning to this world; some by the destruction of three fetters and the reduction of greed, hatred and delusion will become Once-Returners, who will return once to his world before making an end of suffering; and some by the destruction of three fetters will become Stream-Winners, incapable of falling into states of woe, assured of enlightenment. Thus the going-forth of all these people was not fruitless or barren, but productive of fruit and profit."

Thus the Lord spoke, and Pancasikha of the gandhabbas was delighted and rejoiced at the Lord's words. And, having saluted him, he passed him by on the right and vanished from the spot.
I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling among the Sakyans at Kapilavatthu in the Great Wood, together with a large Sangha of approximately five hundred bhikkhus, all of them arahants. And most of the devatas from ten world-systems had gathered in order to see the Blessed One and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Then the thought occurred to four devatas of the ranks from the Pure Abodes: "The Blessed One is dwelling among the Sakyans at Kapilavatthu in the Great Wood, together with a large Sangha of about five hundred bhikkhus, all of them arahants. And most of the devatas from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Blessed One and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Let us also approach the Blessed One and, on arrival, let us each speak a verse in his presence."

Then, just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, those devatas disappeared from among the devas of the Pure Abodes and reappeared before the Blessed One. Having paid homage to the Blessed One, they stood to one side. As they were standing there, one devata recited this verse in the Blessed One's presence:

A great meeting in the woods: The deva hosts have assembled. We have come to this Dhamma meeting To see the invincible Sangha.

The bhikkhus there are concentrated, Have straightened their own minds. Like a charioteer holding the reins, The wise ones guard their faculties.

Having cut through barrenness, cut the cross-bar, Having uprooted Indra's pillar, unstirred, They wander about pure, unstained, Young nagas well tamed by the One with Vision.

Those who have gone to the Buddha for refuge Will not go to the plane of woe. On discarding the human body, They will fill the hosts of the devas. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks, most of the devatas from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Tathagata and the Bhikkhu Sangha. Those who, in the past, were Pure Ones, Rightly Self-awakened, at most had their devata-gathering like mine at the present. Those who, in the future, will be Pure Ones, Rightly Self-awakened, will at most have their devata-gathering like mine at the present. I will detail for you the names of the deva hosts. I will describe to you the names of the deva hosts. I will teach you the names of the deva hosts. Listen and pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks replied. The Blessed One said:

I recite a verse of tribute. Those who live where spirits dwell, who live in mountain caves, resolute, concentrated, many, like hidden lions, who have overcome horripilation, white-hearted, pure, serene, and undisturbed: Knowing that more than 50,000 of them had come to the forest of Kapilavatthu, the Teacher then said to them, disciples delighting in his instruction, "The deva hosts have approached. Detect them, monks!" Listening to the Awakened One's instruction, they made a diligent effort. Knowledge appeared to them, vision of non-human beings. Some saw 100, some 1,000, some 70,000, some had vision of 100,000 non-human beings. Some gained vision of innumerable devas filling every direction. Realizing all this, the One-with-Vision felt moved to speak. The Teacher then said to them, disciples delighting in his instruction, "The deva hosts have approached. Detect them, monks, as I describe their glories, one by one.

7,000 yakkhas inhabiting the land of Kapilavatthu, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

6,000 yakkhas from the Himalayas, of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

From Mount Sata 3,000 yakkhas of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

These 16,000 yakkhas of varied hue powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.
500 yakkhas from Vessamitta, of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Kumbhira from Rajagaha, who dwells on Mount Vepulla, accompanied by more than 100,000 yakkhas — Kumbhira from Rajagaha: He, too, has come to the forest meeting.

And Dhatarattha, who rules as king of the Eastern Direction, as lord of the gandhabbas: A glorious, great king is he, and many are his sons named Indra, of great strength. Powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, they have approached the monks' forest meeting.

And Virulha, who rules as king of the Southern Direction, as lord of the kumbandas: A glorious, great king is he, and many are his sons named Indra, of great strength. Powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, they have approached the monks' forest meeting.

And Virupaksha, who rules as king of the Western Direction, as lord of the nagas: A glorious, great king is he, and many are his sons named Indra, of great strength. Powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, they have approached the monks' forest meeting.

And Kuvera, who rules as king of the Northern Direction, as lord of the yakkhas: A glorious, great king is he, and many are his sons named Indra, of great strength. Powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, they have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Dhatarattha from the Eastern Direction, Virulhaka from the South, Virupakkha from the West, Kuvera from the Northern Direction: These four Great Kings encompassing the four directions, resplendent, stand in the Kapilavatthu forest.

Their deceitful vassals have also come — deceptive, treacherous — Maya, Kutendu, vetendu, Vitu with Vituta, Candana, the Chief of Sensual Pleasure, Kinnugandu, Nighandu, Panada, the Mimic, Matali, the deva's charioteer, Cittasena the gandhabba, King Nala, the Bull of the People, Pañcasikha has come with Timbaru and his daughter, Suriyavachchasa. These and other kings, gandhabbas with their kings, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Then there have also come nagas from Lake Nabhasa, Vesali, and Tacchaka. Kambalas, Assataras, Payagas, and their kin. And from the River Yamuna comes the prestigious naga, Dhatarattha. The great naga Eravanna: He, too, has come to the forest meeting."

They who swoop down swiftly on naga kings, divine, twice-born, winged, their eyesight pure: (Garudas) came from the sky to the midst of the forest. Citra and Supanna are their names. But the Buddha made the naga kings safe, made them secure from Supanna. Addressing one another with affectionate words, the nagas and Supannas made the Buddha their refuge.

"Defeated by Indra of the thunderbolt hand, Asuras dwelling in the ocean, Vasava's brothers — powerful, prestigious — Greatly terrifying Kalakañjas, the Danaveghasa asuras Vepacitti and Sucitti, Paharada, with Namuci, and Bali's hundred sons, all named Veroca, arrayed with powerful armies have approached their honored Rahu [and said]: 'Now is the occasion, sir, of the monk's forest meeting.'

Devas of water, earth, fire, and wind have come here. Varunas, Varunas, Soma together with Yasa, the prestigious devas of the hosts of goodwill and compassion have come. These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Vendu (Visnu) and Sahali, Asama and the Yama twins, the devas dependent on the moon surrounding the moon have come. The devas dependent on the sun surrounding the sun have come. Devas surrounding the zodiac stars and the sprites of the clouds have come. Sakka, chief of the Vasus, the ancient donor, has come. These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Then come the Sahabhu devas, blazing like crests of fire-flame. The Arittakas, Rojas, cornflower blue. Varunas and Sahadhammas, Accutas and Anejakas, Suleyyas and Ruciras, and Vasavanesis have come. These ten ten-fold
hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

Samanas and Great Samanas, Manusas and Super Manusas, the devas corrupted by fun have come, as well as devas corrupted by mind. Then come green-gold devas and those wearing red. Paragas and Great Paragas, prestigious devas have come. These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

White devas, ruddy-green devas, dawn-devas have come with the Veghanas headed by devas totally in white. The Vicakkhanas have come. Sadamatta, Haragajas, and the prestigious multi-coloreds, Pajunna, the thunderer, who brings rain in all directions: These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

The Khemiyas, Tusitas, and Yamas, the prestigious Katthakas, Lambitakas, and Lama chiefs, the Jotinamas and Asavas, the Nimmanaratis have come, as have the Pananimmitas. These ten ten-fold hosts, all of varied hue, powerful, effulgent, glamorous, prestigious, rejoicing, have approached the monks' forest meeting.

These 60 deva groups, all of varied hue, have come arranged in order, together with others in like manner [thinking:] 'We'll see him who has transcended birth, who has no bounds, who has crossed over the flood, the Mighty One, beyond evil, like the moon released from a cloud.'

Subrahma and Paramatta Brahma, together with sons of the Powerful One, Sanankumara and Tissa: They too have come to the forest meeting. Great Brahma, who stands over 1,000 Brahma worlds, who arose there spontaneously, effulgent: Prestigious is he, with a terrifying body. And ten brahma sovereigns, each the lord of his own realm — and in their midst has come Harita Brahma surrounded by his retinue."

When all these devas with Indras and Brahmas had come, Mara came as well. Now look at the Dark One's foolishness! [He said:] "Come seize them! Bind them! Tie them down with passion! Surround them on every side! Don't let anyone at all escape!" Thus the great war-lord urged on his dark army, slapping the ground with his hand, making a horrendous din, as when a storm cloud bursts with thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain. But then he withdrew-angered, with none under his sway. Realizing all this, "Mara's army has approached. Detect them, monks!" Listening to the Awakened One's instruction, they made a diligent effort. The army retreated from those without passion, without raising even a hair on their bodies. Having all won the battle — prestigious, past fear — they rejoice with all beings: Disciples outstanding among the human race.
8. Sakkapanha Sutta (21)

(Questions of Shakra(Indra), The King of gods)

Thus have I heard. Once the lord was staying in Magadha, to the east of Rajagaha, by a Brahmin village called Ambasanda, to the north of the village on Mount Vediya, in the Indasala Cave. And at that time Sakka, Lord of the gods felt a strong desire to see the Lord. And Sakka thought: ‘Where is the Blessed Lord, the fully-enlightened Buddha, now staying? Then, perceiving where the Lord was, Sakka said to the thirty-three gods: ‘Gentlemen, the Blessed Lord is now staying Magadha, to the east of Rajagaha, by a Brahmin village called Ambasanda, to the north of the village on Mount Vediya, in the Indasala Cave. How would it be if we were to go and visit the lord?’

‘Very good, Lord, and may good fortune go with you,’ Replied the Thirty-Three Gods.

Then Sakka said to Pancasikha of the Gandhabbas: ‘The Blessed Lord is staying in Magadha, to the east of Rajagaha, by a Brahmin village called Ambasanda, to the north of the village on Mount Vediya, in the Indasala Cave. I propose to go visit him.’

‘Very good, Lord,’ said Pancasikha and, taking his yellow beluva-wood lute, he followed in attendance on Sakka. And, just as swiftly as a strong man might stretch forth his flexed arm, or flex it again, Sakka, surrounded by the Thirty-Three Gods and attended by Pancasikha, vanished from the heaven of the Thirty-Three and appeared in Magadha, to the east of Rajagaha, by a Brahmin village called Ambasanda, to the north of the village on Mount Vediya.

Then a tremendous light shone over Mount Vediya illuminating the village of Ambasanda – so great was the power of the gods – so that in the surrounding villages they were saying: ‘Look! Today, Mount Vediya is on fire! It’s Burning! It’s engulfed in flames! What is the matter, that Mount Vediya and Ambasanda are lit up like this?’ and they were so terrified that their hair stood on end.

Then Sakka said: ‘Pancasikha, it is hard for the likes of us to get near the Tathágata when they are enjoying the bliss of motion, and therefore withdrawn. But if you, Pancasikha, were first to attract the ear of the Blessed Lord, then we might afterwards be able to approach and see the Blessed Lord, the fully enlightened Buddha.’

‘Very good, Lord,’ said Pancasikha and, taking his yellow beluva-wood lute, he approached the Indasala Cave. Thinking: ‘As far as this is neither too far nor too near to the Lord, and he will hear my voice,’ he stood to one side. Then, to the strains of his lute, he sang these verses extolling the Buddha, the Dharma, the Arahants, and love:

‘Lady, your father Timbaru greet,
Oh sunshine fair, I give him honor due,
By whom was sired a maid as fair as you
Who is the cause of my heart’s delight.
Delightful as the breeze to one who sweats,
Or as cooling draught to one who thirsts,
Your radiant beauty is to me as dear
As the Dhamma is to Arahants.
Just as medicine to him who’s ill,
Or nourishment to one who’s starving still,
Bring me, gracious lady, sweet release
With water cool from my consuming flames.
The elephant, oppressed by summer heat,
Seeks out a lotus-pool upon which float
Petals and pollen of that flower
So into your bosom sweet I'd plunge.
As an elephant, urged by the goad,
Pays no heed to pricks of lance and spear,
So I, unheeding, know not what I do,
Intoxicated by your beauteous form.
By you my heart is tightly bound in bonds,
All my thoughts are quite transformed, and I
Can no longer find my former course:
I'm like a fish that's caught on baited hook.
Come, embrace me, maiden fair of thighs,
Seize and hold me with your lovely eyes,
Take me in your arms, it's all I ask!
My desire was slight at first, O maid
Of waving tresses, but it grew apace,
As grow the gifts that Arahants receive.
Whatever merit I have gained by gifts
To those Noble ones, may my reward
When it ripens, be your love, my Sun!
Just as that Sage would be rejoiced, if he
Were to gain supreme enlightenment,
So I'd rejoice to be made one with you.
If Sakka, Lord of Three and Thirty Gods
Were perchance to grant a boon to me,
It's you I'd crave, my love for you's so strong.
Your father, maid so wise, I venerate
Like a sal-tree fairly blossoming,
For his offspring’s sake, so sweet and fair.’

When he heard this, the Lord said: ‘Pancasikha, the sound of your strings blends so well with your song, and your song with the strings, that neither prevails excessively over the other. When did you compose these verses on the Buddha, the Dharma, the Arahants, and love?’

‘Lord, it was when the Blessed Lord was staying on the bank of the river Neranjara, under the goatherd’s banyan-tree prior to his enlightenment. At that time I fell in love with the Lady Bhadda, bright as the sun, the Daughter of King Timbaru of the Gandhabbas. But the lady was in love with somebody else. It was Sikhaddi, the son of Matali the Charioteer, whom she favored. And when I found out that I could not win the lady by any manner of means, I took my yellow Beluva-wood lute and went to the home of King Timbaru of the Gandhabbas, and there I sang those verses. And, Lord, having heard the verses the Lady Bhadda Suriyavaccasa said to me: ‘Sir, I have not personally seen that blessed Lord, though I heard of him when I went to the Sudhamma Hall of the Thirty Three Gods to dance. And since, sir, you praise that Blessed Lord so highly, let us meet today.’ And so, Lord, I met the Lady, not then but later.’

Then Sakka thought, ‘Pancasikha and the Lord are in friendly conversation,’ so he called to Pancasikha: ‘My dear Pancasikha, salute the Blessed Lord from me, saying, “Lord Sakka, king of the gods, together with his ministers and follows, pays homage at the feet of the Blessed Lord.”’

‘Very good, Lord,’ said Pancasikha, and did so.

‘Pancasikha, may Sakka, King of the gods, his ministers and followers be happy, for they all desire happiness: devas, humans, asuras, nagas, Gandhabbas, and whatever other groups of beings there are!’ for that is the way the Tathágatas greet such mighty beings. After this greeting, Sakka entered the Indasala Cave, saluted the Lord, and stood to one side, and the Thirty Three Gods, with Pancasikha, did the same.

Then in the Indasala Cave the rough passages became smooth, the narrow parts become wide, and the pitch-dark cavern became bright, owing to the power of the devas. Then the Lord said to Sakka: ‘It is wonderful, it is marvelous that the Venerable Kosiya, with so much, so many things to do, should come here! ‘Lord, I have long wished to visit the Blessed Lord, but I have always been so busy on behalf of the Thirty Three that I was unable to come. Once the Blessed Lord was staying at Savatthi in the Salala hut, and I went to Savatthi to see the Lord.

‘At that time the Blessed Lord was seated in some form of Mation, and King Vessavana’s wife Bhunjatu was waiting on him, venerating him with palms together. I said to her: “Lady, please salute the Blessed Lord for me and say: ‘Sakka, the King of Gods, with his ministers and followers, pays homage at the Lord’s feet.’”’ But she said: “Sir, it is not the right time to see the Blessed Lord, he is in retreat.” “Well then, Lady, when the Blessed Lord rises from his mation, please tell him what I have said.” Lord, did the lady salute you on my behalf and does the Lord remember what she said?’

‘She did salute me, King of the Gods, and I remember what she said. I also remember that it was Your Reverence’s chariot-wheels that roused me from my mation.’

‘Lord, those gods who arose in the heaven of the Thirty-Three before I did have told me and assured me that whenever a Tathágata, a fully enlightened Arahant Buddha arises in the world, the ranks of Devas increase, and those of asuras decline in numbers. In fact I have witnessed this myself. There was, Lord, right here in Kapilavatthu a Sakyan girl called Gopika who had faith in the Buddhas, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, and who observed the precepts scrupulously. She rejected the status of a woman and developed the thought of becoming a man. Then, after her death, at the breaking up of the body, she went to a happy destination, being reborn in a heaven state among the Thirty Three Gods, as one of our sons, becoming known as Gopaka the devas’ son. Also, there were three monks who, having observed the holy life under the Blessed Lord, had been reborn in the inferior condition of Gandhabbas. They lived indulging in the pleasures of the five senses, as our attendants and servants. At this, Gopaka rebuked them saying: “What were you about sirs, that you did not listen to the Blessed Lord’s teaching? I was a woman who had faith in the Buddha… I rejected the status of a woman…and was reborn among the Thirty-Three Gods and am Known as Gopaka the Deva’s son. But you, after having observed the Holy life under the Blessed Lord, have been reborn in the inferior life condition of Gandhabbas!” And being thus rebuked the two of those Devas immediately developed mindfulness, and so attained to the realm of the Retinue of Brahma. But one of them remained addicted to sensual pleasures.
Gopaka Spoke:

"Discipline once of Him-Who-Sees,
The Name I bore then Gopika.
The Buddha, Dhamma firmly trusting
I served the Sangha cheerfully.
For loyal service paid to him
See me now, a Sakka-son,
Mighty in the Threefold Heaven
Resplendent; Gopaka my name.
Then former monks I saw, who'd reached
No higher than Gandhabba's rank,
Who before had human birth
And led the life the Buddha taught.
We supplied their food and drink,
And waited on them in our homes.
Had they no ears, that they thus blest
Still could not grasp the Buddha's law?
Each for himself must understand
That Dhamma taught by him-who-sees,
And well-proclaimed. I, serving you,
Heard the Noble-One's good words,
And so I'm born, a Sakka Son,
Mighty in the Three-Fold Heaven,
And resplendent, whereas you,
Though you served the Prince of Men
And led the matchless life he taught,
Have re-appeared in humble state
And not attained your proper rank,
A sorry sight it is to see
One's Dhamma-fellows sunk so low
That, gandhabba-spirits, you
But come to wait upon the gods,
While as for me – I am transformed!
From household life, and female, I
Am now reborn a male, a god,
Rejoicing in celestial bliss!"
When thus rebuked by Gopaka,
Disciple true of Gotama,
In sore distress they all replied:
"Alas, let’s go, and strive amain,
And be no longer others’ slaves!"
And of the three, two struggled hard,
And bore in mind the Teacher’s word.
They purified their hearts of lust,
Perceiving peril in desires,
And like the elephant that bursts
All restraining bonds, they broke
The fetters and the bonds of lust,
Those fetters of the evil one
So hard to overcome – and thus
The very gods, the Thirty Three
With Indra and Pajapati,
Who sat enthroned in Council Hall,
These two heroes, passions purged,
Outstripped, and left them far behind.
On seeing which, Vasava, dismayed,
Chief amidst that throng of gods,
Cried: "See how these of lesser rank
outstrip the gods of the thirty three!"
Then hearing of his rulers fearsm
Gopaka said to Vasava:

Lord Indra, in the world of men
A Buddha, called the Sakyan Sage,
Has gained the mastery of lust,
And these his pupils, who had failed
In mindfulness when claimed by death,
Have now regained it with my help.
Though one of them is left behind
And still among Gandhabbas dwells,
These two, on highest wisdom set,
In deep absorption spurn the gods!
Let no disciple ever doubt
That truth may yet be realized
By those who dwell in these abodes.
To him who’s crossed the flood and made
an end of doubts, our homage due,
The Buddha, Victor, Lord, we give."

Even here, they gained the truth, and so
Have passed beyond greater eminence.
Those two have gained a higher place than this
In realms of Brahma’s Retinue. And we
Have come, O Lord, in hope that we may gain
That truth, and, if the Lord will give us leave,
To put our questions to the Blessed Lord.’

Then the Lord thought: ‘Sakka has lived a pure life for a long time. Whatever questions he may ask will be to the point and not frivolous, and he will be quick to understand my answers.’ So the Blessed Lord replied to Sakka in this verse:

‘Ask me, Sakka, all that you desire!
On what you ask, I’ll put your mind at rest.’

Being thus invited, Sakka, Ruler of the gods, put his first question to the Lord: ‘By what fetters, sir, are beings bound – gods, humans, asuras, nagas, Gandhabbas and whatever other kinds there may be – whereby, although they wish to live without hate, harming, hostility or malignity, and in peace, they yet live in hate, harming one another,
hostile and malign?’ This was Sakka’s first question to the Lord, and the Lord replied: ‘Ruler of the Gods, it is the
bonds of jealously and avarice that bind beings so that though they wish to live without hate… they yet live in hate,
harming one another, hostile and malign.’ This was the Lord’s reply, and Sakka, delighted, exclaimed: ‘So it is, Lord,
so it is, Well-Farer! Through the Lord’s answer I have overcome my doubt and uncertainty!’

Then Sakka, having expressed his appreciation, asked another question: ‘But sir, what gives rise to jealousy and
avarice, what is their origin, how are they born, how do they arise? Owing to the presence of what do they arose,
owing to the absence of what do they arise?’

‘Jealousy and avarice, Ruler of the Gods, take rise from like and dislike, this is their origin, this is how they are born,
how they arose. When these are present, they arise; when these are absent, they do not arise.’

‘But, sir, what gives rise to like and dislike?… Owing to the presence of what do they arise, owing to the absence of
what do they not arise?’

‘They arise, Ruler of the Gods, from desire … Owing to the presence of desire, they arise, owing to the absence of
desire they do not arise.’

‘But sir, what gives rise to desire?’

‘Desire, Ruler of the Gods, arises from thinking… when the mind thinks about something, desire arises; when the
mind thinks about nothing, desire does not arise.’

‘But, sir, what gives rise to thinking?’

‘Thinking arises from the tendency to proliferation… when this tendency is present, thinking arises; when it is
absent, thinking does not arise.’

‘Well, sir, what practice has that monk undertaken who has reached the right way which is needful and leading to
the cessation of the tendency to proliferation?’

‘Ruler of the Gods, I declare that there are two kinds of happiness: the kind to be pursued, and the kind to be
avoided. The same applied to unhappiness and equanimity.

‘Why have I declared this in regard to happiness? This is how I understood happiness: When I observed that in the
pursuit of such happiness, unwholesome factors increased and wholesome factors decreased, then that happiness
was to be avoided. And when I observed the pursuit of such happiness unwholesome factors decreased and
wholesome ones increased, then that happiness was to be sought after. Now, of such happiness as is accompanied
by thinking and pondering, and of that which is not so accompanied, the latter is the more excellent. The same
applies to unhappiness and to equanimity. And this, Ruler of Gods, is the practice that monk has undertaken who
has reached the right way… leading to the cessation of the tendency to proliferation.’ And Sakka expressed his
delight at the Lord’s answer.

Then Sakka, having expressed his appreciation, asked another question: ‘Well, sir, what practice has that monk
undertaken who has acquired the restraint required by the rules?’

‘Ruler of the Gods, I declare that there are two kinds of bodily conduct: the kind to be pursued and the kind to be
avoided. The same applied to conduct of speech and to the pursuit of goals. Why have I declared this in regard to
bodily conduct? This is how I understood bodily conduct: When I observed that by the performance of certain
actions, unwholesome factors decreased and wholesome ones increased, then such bodily action was to be
followed. That is why I make this distinction. The same applies conduct of speech and the pursuit of goals. And this,
Ruler of the Gods, is the practice that monk has undertaken who has acquired the restraint required by the rules.’
And Sakka expressed his delight at the Lord’s answer.

Then Sakka asked another question: ‘Well, sir, what practice has that monk undertaken who has acquired control of
his sense faculties?’

‘Ruler of the Gods, I declare that things perceived by the eye are of two kinds: the kind to be pursued, and the kind
to be avoided. The same applied to the things perceived by the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind.’
At this, Sakka said, "Lord, I understand in full the true meaning of what the Blessed Lord has outlined in brief. Lord, whatever object perceived by the eye, if its pursuit leads to the increase of unwholesome factors and the decrease of wholesome ones, that is not to be sought after; if its pursuit leads to the decrease of unwholesome factors and the increase of wholesome ones, such an object is to be sought after. After the same applied to things perceived by the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind. Thus I understand in full the true meaning of what the Blessed Lord has outlined in brief, and thus through the Lord's answer I have overcome my doubt and got rid of uncertainty.'

Then Sakka asked another question: 'Sir, do all ascetics and Brahmins teach the same doctrine, practice the same discipline, want the same thing and pursue the same goal?'

'No, Ruler of the Gods, they do not.'

'But why, sir, do they not do so?'

'The world, Ruler of the Gods, is made up of many and various elements. Such being the case, beings adhere to one or other of these various things, and whatever they adhere to they become powerfully addicted to, and declare: 'This alone is the truth, everything else is false!' Therefore, they do not all teach the same thing, pursue the same goal.'

'Sir, are all ascetics and Brahmins fully proficient, freed from bonds, perfect in the holy life, have they perfectly reached the goal?'

'No, ruler of the Gods.'

'Why is that sir?'

'Only those who are liberated by the destruction of craving are fully proficient, freed from the bonds, perfect in the holy life and have perfectly reached the goal.'

Then Sakka, having delighted in and expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, said to him: "Yearning is a disease, yearning is a boil, yearning is an arrow. It seduces one, drawing one into this or that state of being, which is why one is reborn in high states and low. Whereas other outside priests and contemplatives gave me no chance to ask them these questions, the Blessed One has answered at length, so that he has removed the arrow of my uncertainty and perplexity."

"Ruler of the Gods, do you recall having asked other priests and contemplatives these questions?"

"Yes, lord, I recall having asked other priests and contemplatives these questions."

"If it's no inconvenience, could you tell me how they answered?"

"It's no inconvenience when sitting with the Blessed One or one who is like him."

"Then tell me, Ruler of the Gods."

"Having gone to those whom I considered to be priests and contemplatives living in isolated dwellings in the wilderness, I asked them these questions. But when asked by me, they were at a loss. Being at a loss, they asked me in return, 'What is your name?'

"Being asked, I responded, 'I, dear sir, am Sakka, the Ruler of the Gods.'

"So they questioned me further, 'But what kamma did you do to attain to this state?'

"So I taught them the Dhamma as far as I had heard and mastered it. And they were gratified with just this much: 'We have seen Sakka, the Ruler of the Gods, and he has answered our questions! So, instead of my becoming their disciple, they simply became mine. But I, lord, am the Blessed One's disciple, a stream-winner, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening.'

"Ruler of the Gods, do you recall ever having previously experienced such happiness and joy?" "Yes, lord, I do."
"And how do you recall ever having previously experienced such happiness and joy?" "Once, lord, the devas and asuras were arrayed in battle. And in that battle the devas won, while the asuras lost. Having won the battle, as the victor in the battle, this thought occurred to me: 'Whatever has been the divine nourishment of the asuras, whatever has been the divine nourishment of the devas, the devas will now enjoy both of them.' But my attainment of happiness and joy was in the sphere of violence and weapons. It didn't lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge to self-awakening, to Unbinding. But my attainment of happiness and joy on hearing the Blessed One's Dhamma is in the sphere of no violence, the sphere of no weapons. It leads to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge to self-awakening, to Unbinding.'

'And, Ruler of the Gods, what things do you call to mind when you amid experiencing such satisfaction and happiness as this?' 'Lord, at such a time, six things come to mind at which I rejoice:

"I who merely as a god exist, have gained
The chance, by kamma, of another earthly life.'

That, Lord, is the first thing that occurs to me.

'Leaving this non-human realm of gods behind,
Unerringly I'll seek the womb I wish to find.'

That lord is the second thing…

'My problems solved, I'll gladly live by Buddha's law,
Controlled and mindful, and with clear awareness filled.'

That lord is the third thing…

'And should thereby enlightenment arise in me,
As one who knows I'll dwell, and there await my end.'

That lord, is the fourth thing…

'Then when I leave the human world again, I'll be
Once more a god, and one of highest rank.'

That lord, is the fifth thing…

'More glorious than devas are the peerless gods,
Among whom dwelling I shall make my final home.'

That lord, is the sixth thing that occurs to me, and these are the six things at which I rejoice:
'Long I wandered, unfulfilled, in doubt,
In quest of the Tathāgata. I thought
Hermits who lived in seclusion and austere
Must surely be enlightened: I'll seek them.
"What must I do to gain success, and what
Course but leads to failure?" – But thus asked,
They could not tell me how to tread the path.
Instead, when they found out that I am king
Of gods, they asked me why I’d come t them,
And I it was who taught them what I knew
Of Dhamma, and at that, rejoicing, they
Cried: "It’s Vasava, the Lord, we’ve seen!"
But now – I’ve seen the Buddha, and my doubts
Are all dispelled, my fears are allayed,
And now to the Enlightened One I pay
Homage due, to him who’s drawn the dark
Of Craving, to the Buddha, peerless Lord,
Mighty hero, Kinsman of the Sun!
Just as Brahma’s worshipped by the gods,
So likewise today we worship you,
Enlightened One, and Teacher unsurpassed,
Whom none can equal in the human world,
Or in the heavens, dwelling of the gods!

Then Sakka, the Ruler of the Gods, said to Pancasikha of the Gandhabbas: ‘My dear Pancasikha, you have been of great help to me for gaining the ear of the Blessed Lord. For it was through your gaining his ear that we were admitted to the presence of the Blessed Lord, the Arahant, the supremely enlightened Buddha. I will be a father to you, you shall be king of the Gandhabbas, and I will give you Bhadda Suriyacaccasa, whom you desired.’ Then Sakka, the Ruler of the Gods, touched the earth with his hand and said three times,

Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One!

Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One!

Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One!
While this explanation was being given, there arose to Sakka the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye -- "Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation" -- as it also did to his following of devas.

Such were the questions that the Blessed One answered at Sakka's bidding.
The Setting

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammasadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks."

"Lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said this: "This is the only path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and distress, for the attainment of the right method, and for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?

"There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings... mind... mental qualities in and of themselves — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.

Body

"And how does a monk remain focused on the body in and of itself?

[1] "There is the case where a monk — having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building — sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect and setting mindfulness to the fore [lit: the front of the chest]. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"Breathing in long, he discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, he discerns that he is breathing out long. Or breathing in short, he discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short. He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the entire body and to breathe out sensitive to the entire body. He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication. Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, discerns that he is making a long turn, or when making a short turn discerns that he is making a short turn; in the same way the monk, when breathing in long, discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short... He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication, and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or externally on the body in and of itself, or both internally and externally on the body in and of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

[2] "Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns that he is walking. When standing, he discerns that he is standing. When sitting, he discerns that he is sitting. When lying down, he discerns that he is lying down. Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

[3] "Furthermore, when going forward and returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward and looking away... when bending and extending his limbs... when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe and his bowl... when eating, drinking, chewing, and savoring... when urinating and defecating... when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert.
In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

Furthermore... just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain — wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice — and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, 'This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice,' in the same way, monks, a monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: 'In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.'

In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

Furthermore... just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads cutting it up into pieces, the monk contemplates this very body — however it stands, however it is disposed — in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property.'

In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

Furthermore, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground — one day, two days, three days dead — bloated, livid, and festering, he applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate'...

Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, picked at by crows, vultures, and hawks, by dogs, hyenas, and various other creatures... a skeleton smeared with flesh and blood, connected with tendons... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons... a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons... bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions — here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there a breast bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a tooth, here a skull... the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells... piled up, more than a year old... decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or externally on the body in and of itself, or both internally and externally on the body in and of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself.

Feelings

And how does a monk remain focused on feelings in and of themselves? There is the case where a monk, when feeling a painful feeling, discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling. When feeling a pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.

When feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling of the flesh. When feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh. When feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh. When feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.
In this way he remains focused internally on feelings in and of themselves, or externally on feelings in and of themselves, or both internally and externally on feelings in and of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to feelings, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to feelings, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to feelings. Or his mindfulness that 'There are feelings' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on feelings in and of themselves.

Mind

And how does a monk remain focused on the mind in and of itself? There is the case where a monk, when the mind has passion, discerns that the mind has passion. When the mind is without passion, he discerns that the mind is without passion. When the mind has aversion, he discerns that the mind has aversion. When the mind is without aversion, he discerns that the mind is without aversion. When the mind has delusion, he discerns that the mind has delusion. When the mind is without delusion, he discerns that the mind is without delusion.

When the mind is restricted, he discerns that the mind is restricted. When the mind is scattered, he discerns that the mind is scattered. When the mind is enlarged, he discerns that the mind is enlarged. When the mind is not enlarged, he discerns that the mind is not enlarged. When the mind is surpassed, he discerns that the mind is surpassed. When the mind is unsurpassed, he discerns that the mind is unsurpassed. When the mind is concentrated, he discerns that the mind is concentrated. When the mind is not concentrated, he discerns that the mind is not concentrated. When the mind is released, he discerns that the mind is released. When the mind is not released, he discerns that the mind is not released.

In this way he remains focused internally on the mind in and of itself, or externally on the mind in and of itself, or both internally and externally on the mind in and of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the mind, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the mind, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to the mind. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a mind' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the mind in and of itself.

Mental Qualities

And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves?

[1] "There is the case where a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five hindrances. And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five hindrances? There is the case where, there being sensual desire present within, a monk discerns that 'There is sensual desire present within me.' Or, there being no sensual desire present within, he discerns that 'There is no sensual desire present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen sensual desire. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of sensual desire once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no further appearance in the future of sensual desire that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining hindrances: ill will, sloth and drowsiness, restlessness and anxiety, and uncertainty.)

In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or both internally and externally on mental qualities in and of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five hindrances.

[2] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates? There is the case where a monk [discerns]: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance. Such is feeling... Such is perception... Such are fabrications... Such is consciousness, such its origination, such its disappearance.'
"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in and of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates.

[3] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal and external sense media. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal and external sense media? There is the case where he discerns the eye, he discerns forms, he discerns the fetter that arises dependent on both. He discerns how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of a fetter once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no further appearance in the future of a fetter that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining sense media: ear, nose, tongue, body, and intellect.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in and of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal and external sense media.

[4] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening? There is the case where he discerns, as it is actually present, that 'Mindfulness as a factor for Awakening is present within me.' Or, there being no mindfulness as a factor for Awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for Awakening is not present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen mindfulness as a factor for Awakening. And he discerns how there is the culmination of the development of mindfulness as a factor for Awakening once it has arisen. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining factors for Awakening: analysis of qualities, persistence, rapture, serenity, concentration, and equanimity.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening.

[5] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the four noble truths. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the four noble truths? There is the case where he discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.'

[a] "Now what is the noble truth of stress? Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair are stressful; association with the unbeloved is stressful; separation from the loved is stressful; not getting what one wants is stressful. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are stressful.

"And what is birth? Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates, and acquisition of [sense] spheres of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.

"And what is aging? Whatever aging, decrepitude, brokenness, graying, wrinkling, decline of life-force, weakening of the faculties of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called aging.

"And what is death? Whatever deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, dying, death, completion of time, break up of the aggregates, casting off of the body, interruption in the life faculty of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called death.

"And what is sorrow? Whatever sorrow, sorrowing, sadness, inward sorrow, inward sadness of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called sorrow.

"And what is lamentation? Whatever crying, grieving, lamenting, weeping, wailing, lamentation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called lamentation.

"And what is pain? Whatever is experienced as bodily pain, bodily discomfort, pain or discomfort born of bodily contact, that is called pain.
"And what is distress? Whatever is experienced as mental pain, mental discomfort, pain or discomfort born of mental contact, that is called distress.

"And what is despair? Whatever despair, despondency, desperation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called despair.

"And what is the stress of association with the unbeloved? There is the case where undesirable, unpleasing, unattractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations occur to one; or one has connection, contact, relationship, interaction with those who wish one ill, who wish for one's harm, who wish for one's discomfort, who wish one no security from the yoke. This is called the stress of association with the unbeloved.

"And what is the stress of separation from the loved? There is the case where desirable, pleasing, attractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations do not occur to one; or one has no connection, no contact, no relationship, no interaction with those who wish one well, who wish for one's benefit, who wish for one's comfort, who wish one security from the yoke, nor with one's mother, father, brother, sister, friends, companions, or relatives. This is called the stress of separation from the loved.

"And what is the stress of not getting what one wants? In beings subject to birth, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to birth, and may birth not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what one wants. In beings subject to aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair, and may aging... illness... death... sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what one wants.

"And what are the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are stress? Form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling as a clinging-aggregate, perception as a clinging-aggregate, fabrications as a clinging-aggregate, consciousness as a clinging-aggregate: These are called the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are stress.

"This is called the noble truth of stress.

[b] "And what is the noble truth of the origination of stress? The craving that makes for further becoming — accompanied by passion and delight, relishing now here and now there — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming.

"And where does this craving, when arising, arise? And where, when dwelling, does it dwell? Whatever is endearing and alluring in terms of the world: that is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"And what is endearing and alluring in terms of the world? The eye is endearing and alluring in terms of the world. That is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect...

"Forms... Sounds... Smells... Tastes... Tactile sensations... Ideas...

"Eye-consciousness... Ear-consciousness... Nose-consciousness... Tongue-consciousness... Body-consciousness... Intellect-consciousness...

"Eye-contact... Ear-contact... Nose-contact... Tongue-contact... Body-contact... Intellect-contact...

"Feeling born of eye-contact... Feeling born of ear-contact... Feeling born of nose-contact... Feeling born of tongue-contact... Feeling born of body-contact... Feeling born of intellect-contact...

"Perception of forms... Perception of sounds... Perception of smells... Perception of tastes... Perception of tactile sensations... Perception of ideas...

"Intention for forms... Intention for sounds... Intention for smells... Intention for tastes... Intention for tactile sensations... Intention for ideas...
"Craving for forms... Craving for sounds... Craving for smells... Craving for tastes... Craving for tactile sensations...
Craving for ideas...

"Thought directed at forms... Thought directed at sounds... Thought directed at smells... Thought directed at tastes...
Thought directed at tactile sensations... Thought directed at ideas...

"Evaluation of forms... Evaluation of sounds... Evaluation of smells... Evaluation of tastes... Evaluation of tactile
sensations... Evaluation of ideas is endearing and alluring in terms of the world. That is where this craving, when
arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"This is called the noble truth of the origination of stress.

[c] "And what is the noble truth of the cessation of stress? The remainderless fading and cessation, renunciation,
relinquishment, release, and letting go of that very craving.

"And where, when being abandoned, is this craving abandoned? And where, when ceasing, does it cease?
Whatever is endearing and alluring in terms of the world: that is where, when being abandoned, this craving is
abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"And what is endearing and alluring in terms of the world? The eye is endearing and alluring in terms of the world.
That is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect...

"Forms... Sounds... Smells... Tastes... Tactile sensations... Ideas...

"Eye-consciousness... Ear-consciousness... Nose-consciousness... Tongue-consciousness... Body-consciousness...
Intellect-consciousness...

"Eye-contact... Ear-contact... Nose-contact... Tongue-contact... Body-contact... Intellect-contact...

"Feeling born of eye-contact... Feeling born of ear-contact... Feeling born of nose-contact... Feeling born of tongue-
contact... Feeling born of body-contact... Feeling born of intellect-contact...

"Perception of forms... Perception of sounds... Perception of smells... Perception of tastes... Perception of tactile
sensations... Perception of ideas...

"Intention for forms... Intention for sounds... Intention for smells... Intention for tastes... Intention for tactile
sensations... Intention for ideas...

"Craving for forms... Craving for sounds... Craving for smells... Craving for tastes... Craving for tactile sensations...
Craving for ideas...

"Thought directed at forms... Thought directed at sounds... Thought directed at smells... Thought directed at tastes...
Thought directed at tactile sensations... Thought directed at ideas...

"Evaluation of forms... Evaluation of sounds... Evaluation of smells... Evaluation of tastes... Evaluation of tactile
sensations... Evaluation of ideas is endearing and alluring in terms of the world. That is where, when being
abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"This is called the noble truth of the cessation of stress.

[d] "And what is the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress? Just this very noble
eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right
concentration.

"And what is right view? Knowledge with regard to stress, knowledge with regard to the origination of stress,
knowledge with regard to the cessation of stress, knowledge with regard to the way of practice leading to the
cessation of stress: This is called right view.
"And what is right resolve? Aspiring to renunciation, to freedom from ill will, to harmlessness: This is called right resolve.

"And what is right speech? Abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter: This is called right speech.

"And what is right action? Abstaining from taking life, from stealing, and from illicit sex. This is called right action.

"And what is right livelihood? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones, having abandoned dishonest livelihood, keeps his life going with right livelihood: This is called right livelihood.

"And what is right effort? There is the case where a monk generates desire, endeavors, arouses persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen... for the sake of the abandoning of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen... for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen... (and) for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, and culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen: This is called right effort.

"And what is right mindfulness? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in and of themselves... the mind in and of itself... mental qualities in and of themselves — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. This is called right mindfulness.

"And what is right concentration? There is the case where a monk — quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities — enters and remains in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought and evaluation, he enters and remains in the second jhana: rapture and pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation — internal assurance. With the fading of rapture he remains in equanimity, mindful and alert, physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters and remains in the third jhana, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous and mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' With the abandoning of pleasure and pain — as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress — he enters and remains in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is called right concentration.

"This is called the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or both internally and externally on mental qualities in and of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge and remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves with reference to the four noble truths...

**Conclusion**

"Now, if anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here and now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone seven years. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for six years... five... four... three... two years... one year... seven months... six months... five... four... three... two months... one month... half a month, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here and now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone half a month. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here and now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance — non-return.
"This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and distress, for the attainment of the right method, and for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference.' Thus was it said, and in reference to this was it said."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words
Prince Payasi disputes existence of rebirth (reincarnation) principle (& resultant of actions i.e. Karma), but experiences it first hand.

Thus Have I Heard: Once the Venerable (Elder Monk) Kumara-Kassapa was touring around Kosala with a company of, perhaps, five hundred monks, and he came to a town called Setavya, where he decided to stay. He chose a dwelling in the northernmost area of the town, a forest called Simsapa. Prince Payasi was also living in Setavya, for it had been a gift to him from King Pasenadi, Ruler of Kosala. It was lush and had a large populace, with an abundant supply of food and water. This Prince Payasi, as it turned out, was infected with a corrupted view – he believed, "There is no life beyond death, no world beyond our own. There are no angels or demons. Good and evil actions do not have consequences."

Now, word had begun to spread among the people of Setavya in every chaste that the ascetic Kumara-Kassapa had come to stay in their fair town, and that he was a disciple of the Buddha. Good words were spread from ear to ear about Kumara, to the effect of: ‘That Kumara, he is intelligent and experienced.’ ‘That Kumara, he is wise beyond his years.’ ‘That Kumara, he is an elegant speaker – he could answer our questions.’ ‘Did you hear? Kumara, the ascetic in the northern forest – he is a holy Arahant! It is always good to see such men.’ As this news spread around, people went to the forest to go see Kumara.

Prince Payasi, sitting in his veranda, saw these people making their way to the forest. Needless to say, this made him curious and he asked one of his rangers what they were doing. The ranger told him that Kumara-Kassapa was staying the forest and that very good words were being circulated about him, with people in every chaste declaring him a saint. ‘The people going into the forest want to see this Kumara for themselves,’ finished the Ranger.

‘Hmm. This could prove to be very interesting. Go and stop them, have them wait for me, for I, too, will attend. This Kumara has been spreading false things about, filling the minds of the people with things like life after death, other worlds, angels and demons, and he makes the claim that actions all have consequences. Folly!"

"Yes, my lord" said the ranger, and he delivered the message.

So Prince Payasi went with the people into the forest, where he came to Kumara’s dwelling. He exchanged greetings with Kumara, and sat down to a side, while he observed the others in the group doing the same. Some were very reverent, and bowed to Kumara with joined palms. Others greeted him as an equal, or as one who is almost equal, or a little ‘more equal.’ Some merely nodded, or did nothing at all, and just took a seat.

Once everyone was seated, Prince Payasi said, "Reverend Kumara, I maintain that kamma(karma/actions) does not have effects. I believe that there is no life after death, no world beyond our own. I think that angels and demons are things from a child’s dream."

"Hmm. Well, prince" Replied Kumara, sounding rather like a doctor diagnosing a patient, "Your point of view is unique, for I’ve never encountered one who bandied about so. Hmm. I think I should put some questions about this to you. What do you think, Prince? Does the Sun and Moon exist in this world, or apart from it? Are they humans? Or are they some celestial non-human beings?"

"Reverend Kumara, they exist outside of this world, and they are celestial and non human."

"Well then, Prince, should you not then consider that other worlds can exist, that angels and demons are not the things of dreams, and that kamma(karma/actions) bears effects?"

"Whatever you say about this, Kumara, my viewpoint remains unchanged."

"Why? Do you have a reason?"

"Naturally."

"Perhaps, Prince, you could share it with me?"
"Reverend Kumara, Among my friends, colleagues and relatives there are those who commit murder, steal, misbehave sexually; there are those who lie, who speak with abusive and harsh words, who engage in frivolous gossip, who are filled with hate and prejudice, who are filled to overflowing with wrong views. On several occasions, while they were on their deathbeds, sick and suffering, when they were far beyond recovering, I said to them: "Certain holy men say that persons such as yourself will meet with misfortune in another world after you die, that you will be born in a horrid place, a place of sorrow, a torture chamber of a world: a hell realm. If what they say is true, you, my friend, will most certainly end up in such a world. If you do, and if they are correct in there being angels and demons, another world, and consequences for your actions, do me a favor and inform me, or send a messenger to inform me. You have always been trustworthy and dependable to me; and if you say you have seen these things, it is proof enough for me." Reverend Kumara, they agreed to this, and to date not a single word has come from them, nor have they sent a messenger. That is my reason for maintaining my view."

"Hmm. I think, Prince, that we should investigate this further. Consider this scenario: A thief is captured and brought to you, and his captor says, "This man is a thief Lord, caught in the act, with twenty score witnesses! What is to be his punishment?"

"Now suppose that you said, "Make an example of him: march him through town with arms bound together, shave him bald of both beard and hair and then sever his head from his shoulders and display it in front of the town."

"Now suppose, Prince, that the thief interrupted and said, "Nay. I must go and visit my friends and relatives in such-and-such a village before you punish me. Let me go see them, and then I shall return." What do you think? Would you grant his wish, and trust him to return to the headsman's block? Or would you have his gabby head rent off his shoulders?"

"He would be ignored, Kumara, and his head would be removed post-haste."

"Prince, consider this: Your friend is dragged into hell by demons to an Arch-demon, bound and tied with burning chains, bloodied and scathed from spiky rocks in the crag-covered ground – and before being led to the implements of torture, he says to the Arch-demon, "Excuse me? Demon? Let me go back – I promised to deliver a message to my friend, Prince Payasi..." Just as you would ignore the thief and have his head removed, so would the Arch-demon ignore your friend."

"Bah. Whatever you say, Reverend Kumara, you cannot convince me. My views hold firm!"

"Again? Why?"

"Reverend Kumara, I also have friends on the other side of the spectrum, who refrain from doing all manner of evil things, who engaged in doing good, and who are filled to overflowing with correct views. On several occasions, they too were on their deathbeds, sick, suffering, with no hope of recovery, and I said to them: "Certain holy men say that men such as yourself will go to a place of great bliss upon death. You have always been trustworthy and dependable, so when you die, if you go to such a realm, return, or send a messenger, and tell me whether it is true or not." They agreed to this, and to date, they have neither come, nor have they sent a messenger. That is why my view still stands firm."

"Hmm. Prince, consider this: Suppose a man where to trip on a stone and fall head first into a deep pit. In this pit there is fresh manure and the bile excreted from unpleasant things – there is also the ends of worms, gadflies, parasites, and creatures that love the smell of dung. There is also mucus mixed with this excrement, and puss comes steadily out of the pores of everything that inhabits this pit. Then, seeing this, you say to your men, " Quickly! Pull him out of there!" and they do so. Having rescued him, you have his body scrubbed clean of the mucus, bile, and other myriad filths. Then, making him your guest, you adorn him in a new silken garb, perfumes, jewels, and all manner of other fine accessories. Then, he indulges in myriad pleasures with you in the palace. What do you think, Prince? Would he ever willingly return to the pit you had had him pulled from?"

"Ugh. No. Disgusting..."

"Oh? Why not?"

"Because no one sane would ever step willingly into such a pit! It is disgusting, and I think everyone here would agree with that!"
"Well, prince, just as you find the ends of worms, and creatures that produce mucus from their pores to be disgusting, so do angels find humans, and to them, the world of humans is like a pit filled with dung. Why then, would you expect your friends to willingly dive into this pit of bile merely to convey a message to you? Admit, Prince, that your view is mistaken!"

"Bah! It doesn’t matter what you say – My views stand firm."

"Well, do you have another reason?"

"Yes, Reverend Kumara."

"Share it with me that we may get to the bottom of this." Kumara-Kassapa said, meaning the root of the prince’s mistaken views, though the Prince believed that he meant the mystery of whether or not other worlds exist.

"Well, Reverend Kumara, I had friends who followed the right path, who were very good people and citizens in every respect. By any right, as certain Holy men have said, they should have gone to the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods. Yet, when one of them died, I said to him, “You have always been trustworthy and dependable. Certain Holy men say that, because of your lifestyle and because you followed the right path, you will be reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods. If this is so, please come and tell me if it is true, or send a messenger to tell me if it is true. To date, they have neither contacted me nor sent a messenger.”

"Hmm. Well, Prince… Consider this. In the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods, time passes at a different pace, and people live much longer. In the period of our century, one hundred years, only a single day, twenty four hours would have passed for them. Thirty of these hundred year days make up one of their months, twelve such months make a year and a thousand such years is roughly the life span of those born into the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods. Suppose your friend decided, “I will go back to that unclean world just long enough to deliver my message to the Prince – I shall set out tomorrow. Or perhaps, after I have seen some more of this place, in two or three days, I will set out to go see him.” – would he have been able to?"

"Of course not, Reverend Kumara, because, by the reasoning you have given, we should all be long dead by the time he had spent three days there. However, I do not think that those born in the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods would be so long lived, or that time has a different pace. How do you know about their lifespan or their time?"

"Ahh. Prince, imagine a man who was born without sight. He had never experienced Light and Dark, Blue and Red, Moon and Sun. This man might very well say, “Light and Dark are an unreal thing, they cannot exist, they are the things of a child’s dream.” Or “Color? The very idea is completely beyond the realm of possibility! I am not aware of these things, therefore, they cannot exist.” Would he be correct, Prince?"

"What? No. There is light and darkness in the very room we’re in now. Color exists all around us. Such a man would be incorrect."

"You, Prince, are like that Blind man. The other worlds cannot be seen as you believe, through the physical eye. It is those Holy men, the ascetics who go into retreat and develop themselves spiritually who gain access to the Purified Eye. This purified eye is stronger than the physical eye, for with it they can see the other worlds with their demons and angels. That is how we holy men can see into the other world. It is how we know about demons and angels, and about those who dwell in the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods. It is how we know that actions have consequences.”

"My view still stands firm, Reverend Kumara, no matter what you say."

"Why do you not believe?"

"Hah! Holy men such as yourself can wax quite poetically about the wonderful life they will have after death – about the myriad comforts that await them in some other realm. But notice this, Reverend Kumara: not a single one of them desires pain, nor death. They all strive for comfort and to live for as long as possible. If such heaven worlds exist and these holy men can see them, why don’t they take a knife to themselves, or drink poison, or jump off of a cliff, and hasten their journey to these heavens? They don’t! That is another reason that I do not believe in other worlds, in angels and demons, or in Kamma(actions resultant)."
"Hmm. Take this parable and consider it carefully: There is a rich man with two wives. One wife is pregnant, and the other has a son of ten or twelve years. This rich man's heir would be the son. This father then died, and the son went to claim his inheritance, but the pregnant mother pleaded, "Wait! Wait until my child is born! If the child is a boy, he gets half of this wealth, but if she is a girl, she becomes your servant." Desiring to have half of the wealth for herself and her child, she made this same plea whenever the heir came to claim his inheritance. Then, she took a knife and tried to cut open her womb, wanting to hasten the arrival of the child, and thus her wealth. However, in doing so, she destroyed both herself, and the unborn baby.

"Likewise, if a man ends his life to seek the fortune of other worlds, he will not only have destroyed this life, but the next as well. You do not eat pasta before it has finished boiling, or you will hurt your teeth and stomach. The merit that holy men create grows only better as they live longer. Now, Prince, admit that you are in error."

"No. I am steadfast in my views, what you said has not altered them."

"Oh? Do you have yet another reason?"

"Yes, and many more."

"Well, don't be shy. Tell me your reason."

"Venerable Kumara, once a man was brought to me, a thief, caught in the act, and needing to be punished. When it came time to sentence him, I said, "Take this man and put him into a large pot, bound and gagged. Then, seal over the top of the pot with damp skin and then cover it with unheated clay. Then place the pot in an oven, and light a large fire." So they did. Once he was dead, the pot was removed and opened. Then, removing the gag, we looked to see if his spirit, his soul, his essence - would come out and finally escape. But it did not, there was no soul, no spirit, no essence. This is why I think there is no other world."

"Charming. Well, Prince, when you are taking a nap, or sleeping, do you admit to seeing other places? Ponds and beautiful forests, or perhaps castles in the clouds? Or perhaps deep caverns?"

"Something like that, but yes, I have dreams, Reverend Kumara."

"And are you not watched over and attended by servants and concubines?"

"Yes, I am."

"And have they ever seen your soul coming or going while you slept?"

"Erm… no."

"Well, prince, if they cannot see your soul while you are alive, how can you expect to see a man's soul after he is dead."

"Whatever. I still hold firm that other worlds do not, nay, cannot exist."

"Oh? But why?"

The prince went on to talk of various methods he used to try an observe an escaping soul, all of them foolish, and each time, Kumara gave him a parable explaining why it would not work, and why it does not prove that other worlds, kamma(actions resultant), and ethereal beings do not exist. Finally, Kumara, seeing that there would always be just one more reason why he cannot accept this, attempted something new. He gave a parable to the prince of a man and an orphaned child.

"Once," Began Kumara, "there was a grimy hermit, a fire worshipper, with unclean hair and unclean body, who went to an abandoned dwelling and discovered a tiny child. The fire-worshipper decided that it would be wrong to leave the child for the wild animals to eat, so he took him up, and reared him as his own son. On one occasion, when the boy was twelve, the man needed, for one reason or another, to go to a nearby village. However, he did not want his fire to die while he was gone, so he instructed the boy to keep it burning. "If it does burn out" said the man to the child, "Take this ax, take these sticks, and with this tinder, make a new one." – The man was gone for a long while,
and the boy, being absorbed in his play, let the fire die. When he noticed this, he misremembered the man’s words, and tried to make a fire by whacking the tinder with the ax. He tried this over and over again, and was still doing it when the man returned. "Why" said the bewildered man, "Are you hitting the tinder with the ax, and why have you let the fire die?" The boy explained, and the man chided him, saying, "Don’t be foolish - you can never make a fire that way! Here, I will show you." And saying so, he showed him how to make a fire.

"In the same exact way, Prince, just as the child used a foolish way to seek fire, you use foolish ways to seek proof of other worlds! Give up these evil views, Prince, or it will cause you great grief in the future!"

"Nay, Venerable sir, I cannot give up these views, despite your words. My liege, King Pasenadi, knows my views, and so do all the other kings in other places. If I were to give them up, after defending them so long and hard, they would all think me a fool!"

"Hmm. Well, Prince, consider this. Once there was a gigantic caravan, with thousands of carts and pack animals. Everywhere this caravan went, they dried up all the supplies, the wood, the grass, the fruit, and the herbs. There were two leaders to this group, each in charge of half, and they came to the decision that it would be wise to split up, and go to separate ways, lest they use up everything and make the route impossible for other travelers.

The first leader went on, having gathered enough supplies, and he and his men came across a sneaky demon, who had disguised himself as a man. The demon wore a wreath of fresh flowers, and he had all the signs of having passed through a lush area. He said to the leader, "There are more than enough supplies on the path ahead, you will only slow yourselves if you keep the ones you have collected. Abandon them and you will make better time." The Caravan Leader agreed, and he cast off his extra water, wood, food, and herbs. However, there were no supplies on the way, and they went on for days without finding anything to eat or drink. Finally, they died from lack of nutrients, and the sneaky demon came and ate their bodies, leaving nothing but the bones.

The second leader, having taken a longer path, came across this sneaky demon some weeks later, and the demon said the same thing to him. But the leader was wise, and, having consulted his men, decided to keep his supplies, even if they were a burden. Sure enough, the path ahead was desolate, but his men and his animals ate well all the same. Then they came across the bones and the abandoned goods of the first caravan. The leader thought, "He must have been tricked by that man into abandoning his supplies. What a shame. I must remain wise – I should leave behind any goods that I have that are of little value, and take the ones he left behind that are expensive." And he did so, and passed safely through to his destination.

"You, Prince, are like that first leader- you abandon that which will help you, and yet still move forward. This will only lead to trouble and misfortune! Be instead like the second leader – keep what is good for you, and abandon what is useless! Cast aside your evil view, and accept the view that will be of benefit!"

"I cannot, I will not. I won’t have the King and the other rulers all thinking I am a fool."

"Prince! Consider a farmer who, while traveling, sees a huge pile of dry dung and thinks, "I can use this as fuel." So he takes his cloak, wraps the gigantic pile of dung with it, and carries it off. However, on the way back home, it begins to rain heavily, and the dung becomes moist. Being moist, it starts to ooze and drip down onto the farmer, besmearing him with excrement and making him stink. Passerby’s saw him, and said, "You should cast that aside, and then the rain will help to clean you, instead of covering you with bile." But the farmer replied, "No, I must keep it for fuel!" and went on.

"You are like that farmer, Prince! You believe your evil views are fuel of sorts, and you cling to them – but all they do is cover you in dung and filth! You must abandon them."

"Oh, Ugh! But no, I cannot. I have already told you that I can’t have the royalty thinking me a fool!"

"Prince, consider this: Suppose two men decide that the best way to make their fortune is to go and have a treasure hunt in an old, forgotten city. Doing so they find a large pile of reeds, and having made their cloaks into sacks, they carry the reeds. However, a while later they came across a pile of flax. "Hey, now, what luck!" said one friend, "We were going to make these reeds into flax anyway! So now we can throw away the reeds and carry flax instead!" – and he casts out his reeds and fills his cloak with flax. But the other man keeps the reeds, thinking, "I’ve tied them up good and tight, it would be foolish to untie my sack, just to end up tying it up again."
Then, a while later, still exploring, they find some fine silk clothes, and the same thing happens. One friend takes the silks, while the other still keeps his reeds. And then the same thing happens again, except with a pile of golden coins.

"Well, we wanted the reeds and silken clothes to sell anyway, so why not carry the gold instead?"

"No, friend, I am content with my reeds."

"Suit yourself, if it makes you happy!"

However, when they got back home, the man with the pile of gold became very rich, for he used the gold to invest and trade – and it supported him and his wife, his children, and his parents for a long time to come. The man with the reeds, however, was no richer for his reeds because, in the end, he never did take them out of that sack, and they ended up rotting in there and smelling bad."

"Prince, you are like this man with a sack of reeds! Give up your evil views! Let them not harm you!"

"Such words… Venerable, nay, Holy Arahant Kumara-Kassapa, your words touch me, and your parables have shown me that I am using foolish means to try to find the truth. It is as if you set upright that which had been toppled. I came today to hear your quick witted replies, because I wanted sport in the field of debate, but today I shall leave having learned something very valuable – as if traveling and suddenly finding a hidden diamond. You expound your teachings and make them easy to hear, easy to understand, and what you say indeed makes sense. I, sire Kumara, take my refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. Take me as this: as a lay follower from now until the day that I perish. Pray, sir, grant us a teaching!"

So Kumara the Ascetic, the disciple of the Buddha, gave a teaching on generosity and the value of giving.

This inspired Prince Payasi to establish a charity for the needy – and anyone in need, be they merely ‘down on their luck’ or an ascetic hermit could go to his charity and receive clothing and food, though the food was of poor quality and the clothes made from rough burlap. Thus suited him fine, and it suited those in need fine too, but a concerned Noble named Uttara, who had been in charge of running the charity, commented, "Through this Charity, I think, Myself and Prince Payasi will have very different rewards."

The Prince heard this and said to Uttara, "I expect a reward for my charity and I see nothing wrong with doing so."

"Yes, but Lord, the food and the clothes you give… I would not feign to touch them, and you, yourself, would not even walk on them with your thickest boots!"

"Hmm… well…"

"Sire, how can you expect a good reward from a half-hearted charity?"

The Prince sighed, and then said, "As you wish. Discard the poor quality food and clothes, and instead give out food and clothes as I myself, or as you yourself would make use of."

"Yes, sire." And he did just that.

Upon death, Prince Payasi was born in a middling heaven, with middling angels because, though he was very generous, he was half-hearted about it, and begrudged that which he gave. Uttara, however, was reborn in the heaven of the Thirty Three Gods, for he was unconditionally, and un-begrudgingly generous.

As it turned out, one of the Buddha’s disciples, Gavampati, was accustomed to take his midday nap in the very heaven where Prince Payasi was reborn, and when he went there next, he recognized the Prince.

"Are you not the man who clung to false views?"

"Yes, but I have long abandoned them, thanks to the wonderful Venerable Kumara."

"Oh. Good to see you, and that is good to hear. Whatever became of that Uttara, who ran your charity for you?"
"He was reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods—this is because he gave without begrudging a single thing, and had unlimited generosity."

"Hmm. Interesting."

"Venerable sir?"

"Yes, Prince?"

"Do me a kindness—When you go back, tell everyone of my fate, and of Uttara’s fate, that they may know not to make my mistake!"

Gavampati did as he was asked, and said this to his fellows:

"Prince Payasi was reborn in a middling heaven with middling angels, because, though he gave charity, he was begrudging of it. Uttara, who merely managed the charity, went to the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods, because he did not begrudge. Learn you a lesson of this! Never be begrudging of that which you give!"