

THE DISCOURSE ABOUT THE GREAT EMANCIPATION

DN 16

TRANSLATED BY

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The Discourse about the Great Emancipation

A Translation of Mahāparinibbānasutta (DN 16)

by

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Table of Contents

[The First Chapter for Recitation].....	7
[The Second Chapter for Recitation].....	47
[The Third Chapter for Recitation].....	72
[The Fourth Chapter for Recitation].....	113
[The Fifth Chapter for Recitation].....	140
[The Sixth Chapter for Recitation].....	172

Preface

In preparing this text and translation for publication I have divided it into a number of versions. In the Buddhist Texts and Studies section will be found the Pāḷi text together with the variant readings. This is a more technical work dealing with the establishment of the text, and considers the text from the point of view of its grammar, prosody, and how the material has been collected.

In the Texts and Translations section I present the full text and translation with annotations which help to explain matters that may not be clear from the text itself. I have therefore translated sections from the Commentary, added notes on the history and geography, and explained points of doctrine whenever it seemed necessary.

In the English section there is the translation only, with somewhat less notes than in the Text and Translations section, which is intended for the casual reader who wants a reliable translation but is not interested in the technical matters concerning the original text itself.

I am very grateful to Dhammacārī Chittapāla for reading through the translation and making many valuable corrections and suggestions for improvement, his knowledge of Pāḷi and the teaching, and his willingness to help with this work, are greatly appreciated. If anyone else has any corrections please let me know at anandajoti@gmail.com.

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Map of the Realised One's Last Tour



The Discourse about the Great Emancipation

[The First Chapter for Recitation]

[1: King Ajātasattu]

Thus I heard:

At one time the Gracious One was living near Rājagaha on the Vultures' Peak Mountain.¹

Now at that time the Magadhan King Ajātasattu,² the son of Lady Wisdom, had a desire to attack the Vajjians.³ He said this: “I will annihilate these Vajjians, who are so successful, so powerful, I will

¹ The discourse opens about one year before the Parinibbāna. Rājagaha was the capital of the Magadhan State, and Vulture's Peak was one of the 7 mountains surrounding the city.

² Ajātasattu came to power in Magadha about 7 years before the Parinibbāna. His name is an epithet meaning *one with no born enemy*; but after he had starved his Father to death, the good King Bimbisāra, the name was re-interpreted to mean *one who was an enemy (to his Father even) before being born*.

³ The Kingdom of Magadha and the Vajjian Republic were neighbouring countries. According to the Commentary they seem to have been in dispute about control of the trade along the Ganges river. The period the Buddha was living in saw the gradual rise of the Monarchies to power, displacing the Republics until a couple of centuries later the whole of India was eventually united under King Asoka.

The First Chapter for Recitation

destroy the Vajjians, I will bring about the downfall and destruction of the Vajjians”.

Then the Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom,⁴ addressed the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra, (saying):⁵

“Go, brahmin, and approach the Gracious One, and after approaching worship the Gracious One's feet in my name, and ask whether he is free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably, (and say): ‘The Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, reverend Sir, worships with his head at the Gracious One's feet, and asks whether you are free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably.’

And say this: ‘The Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, reverend Sir, desires to attack the Vajjians. He says this: “I will annihilate these Vajjians, who are so successful, so powerful, I will destroy the Vajjians, I will bring about the downfall and destruction of the Vajjians.” And just what the Gracious One says to you, after learning it well, you must inform me, for the Realised Ones do not speak falsely.’”

⁴ The lady in question was the daughter of a King of Kosala.

⁵ We find later on in this discourse that there were two chief ministers under Ajātasattu: Sunīdha and Vassakāra.

The First Chapter for Recitation

“Very well, dear Sir,” and the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra, after replying to the Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, and having (many) great and august vehicles prepared, and mounting (those) great and august vehicles, departed with those great and august vehicles from Rājagaha, and after approaching by vehicle to the Vultures' Peak Mountain as far as the ground for vehicles (would allow), and descending from the vehicles, he approached the Gracious One by foot, and after approaching, he exchanged greetings with the Gracious One, and after exchanging courteous talk and greetings, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side, the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra said this to the Gracious One:

“The Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, dear Gotama, worships with his head at dear Gotama's feet, and asks whether you are free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably.⁶

The Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, dear Gotama, desires to attack the Vajjians. He says this: ‘I will annihilate these Vajjians, who are so successful, so powerful, I will destroy the

⁶ This is an example of what is called elsewhere: *courteous talk and greetings*. Notice he doesn't wait for a reply because it is a formality, and a reply was not expected.

Vajjians, I will bring about the downfall and destruction of the Vajjians’ ”.

[2: Seven Things which Prevent Decline in the Vajjians]⁷

Now at that time venerable Ānanda was stood behind the Gracious One fanning the Gracious One.⁸ Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying):⁹

- 1) “Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians assemble regularly and assemble frequently?’ ”¹⁰ “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians assemble regularly and assemble frequently.’ ” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will assemble regularly and assemble frequently surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.

⁷ The seven things which prevent decline for the Vajjians are echoed later in the first of the seven things that prevent decline for the Saṅgha.

⁸ For the past 25 years Ānanda had been the Buddha's main attendant, *upaṭṭhāka*, which literally means: *one who stands near*.

⁹ The Buddha doesn't reply directly to Vassakāra, but speaks to Ānanda with Vassakāra within listening range, so he can hear and understand.

¹⁰ The Commentary explains the importance of meeting regularly and frequently by saying when that is the case they will hear reports affecting the security of the country as they happen and will be able to deal with it there and then.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 2) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians assemble unanimously, rise unanimously, and carry out their Vajjian duties unanimously?’ ” “I have heard this, reverend Sir, that the Vajjians assemble unanimously, rise unanimously, and carry out their Vajjian duties unanimously.” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will assemble unanimously, rise unanimously, and carry out their Vajjian duties unanimously, surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.
- 3) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians do not establish (new) laws that were not established, (or) cut off (old) laws that were established, and carry on with such laws as were accepted in the Ancient Vajjian Constitution?’ ” “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians do not establish (new) laws that were not established, (or) cut off (old) laws that were established, and they carry on with such laws as were accepted in the Ancient Vajjian Constitution.’ ” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians do not establish (new) laws that were not established, (or) cut off (old) laws that were established, and they carry on with such laws as were accepted in the Ancient Vajjian Constitution surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.
- 4) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians honour the elders of the Vajjians, respect, revere, worship and think them worth listening to?’ ” “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians honour the elders of the Vajjians, respect, revere, worship and think them worth listening to.’ ” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will

The First Chapter for Recitation

honour the elders of the Vajjians, respect, revere, worship and think them worth listening to, surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.

- 5) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians do not coerce and force their women and girls to dwell (with them) against their will?’ ”¹¹ “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians do not coerce and force their women and girls to dwell (with them) against their will.’ ” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will not coerce and force their women and girls to dwell (with them) against their will, surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.
- 6) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians honour the Vajjian shrines amongst the Vajjians, both within and without (the city), respect, revere, and worship (them), and do not allow the righteous sacrifices that were formerly given, formerly made, to be neglected?’ ” “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians honour the Vajjian shrines amongst the Vajjians, both within and without (the city), respect, revere, and worship (them), and do not allow the righteous sacrifices that were formerly given, formerly

¹¹ The parallel to this in the following section reads: For as long as the monks do not come under the influence of craving which has arisen for continued existence; which seems a bit tenuous.

The First Chapter for Recitation

made, to be neglected.” “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will honour the Vajjian shrines amongst the Vajjians, both within and without (the city), respect, revere, and worship (them), and do not allow the righteous sacrifices that were formerly given, formerly made, to be neglected surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.¹²

- 7) Have you heard, Ānanda: ‘The Vajjians have made good arrangements in regard to the lawful protection, safety, and guarding of the Worthy Ones, so that Worthy Ones in the future can enter the realm, and having entered the Worthy Ones can live comfortably in the realm?’ “I have heard this, reverend Sir: ‘The Vajjians have made good arrangements in regard to the lawful protection, safety, and guarding of the Worthy Ones, and that the Worthy Ones in the future can enter the realm, and having entered the Worthy Ones can live comfortably in the realm.’ “For as long, Ānanda, as the Vajjians will make good arrangements in regard to the lawful protection, safety, and guarding of the Worthy Ones, and that the Worthy Ones in the future can enter the realm, and having entered, the Worthy Ones can live comfortably in the

¹² This gives the lie to the belief that the Buddha opposed all forms of sacrifice. It would seem he was only opposed to those that were against moral principles, like animal sacrifices and the like. Similarly with rites and rituals, it was clinging to them and the mistaken notion that these are sufficient in themselves that the Buddha opposed, not their performance entirely.

The First Chapter for Recitation

realm, surely growth, Ānanda, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.”

Then the Gracious One addressed the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra, (saying): “At one time, brahmin, I was living near Vesālī near to the Sārandada Shrine and there I taught the Vajjians these seven things which prevent decline.¹³ For as long, brahmin, as the Vajjians maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the Vajjians agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, brahmin, is to be expected for the Vajjians not decline.”

After this was said, the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra addressed the Gracious One, (saying): “If the Vajjians, dear Gotama, were endowed with even one or the other of these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth is to be expected not decline, what to say about having seven things which prevent decline? The Vajjians cannot be overcome, dear Gotama, by the Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, by war, but only through diplomacy, or through the breaking of an alliance.¹⁴ And now, dear

¹³ This discourse is preserved at AN Bk 7.21. The Buddha often seems to have stayed at or near Shrines, as we will see later in this discourse.

¹⁴ According to the Commentary King Ajātasattu and his chief minister concocted an elaborate plan and did in fact manage to destroy the Vajjians three years after the Buddha's *parinibbāna*, by sowing dissension and breaking up their unity.

The First Chapter for Recitation

Gotama, we shall go, as we have many duties, and there is much which ought to be done.”

“Now is the time, brahmin, for whatever you are thinking.”¹⁵ Then the Magadhan chief minister the brahmin Vassakāra, after greatly rejoicing and gladly receiving this word of the Gracious One, rose from his seat and departed.

[3: Seven Things which Prevent Decline in the Community (1-7)]

Then the Gracious One, not long after the Magadhan chief minister, the brahmin Vassakāra, had gone, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Go, Ānanda, and whatever monks there are living in dependence on Rājagaha,¹⁶ assemble them in the Attendance Hall.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, and assembling whatever monks there were living in dependence on Rājagaha in the Attendance Hall, he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he stood on one side.

¹⁵ This is a polite way of giving permission to leave.

¹⁶ *Living in dependence* is an idiom which means *subsisting on alms food* (in the city).

The First Chapter for Recitation

While standing on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “The Community of monks have assembled, reverend Sir, now is the time, Gracious One, for whatever you are thinking.”

Then the Gracious One after rising from his seat approached the Attendance Hall, and after approaching he sat down on the prepared seat. While sitting the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying):

“I will teach you seven things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”¹⁷ “Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks will assemble regularly and assemble frequently, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.”¹⁸
- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks will assemble unanimously, rise unanimously, and carry out their Community duties unanimously, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

¹⁷ Here and throughout this discourse we see the Buddha's concern for the future welfare of the Community after his passing away, it very much looks like the Buddha was spontaneously applying the teaching about the Vajjis to the Saṅgha here.

¹⁸ The Commentary explains that when they assemble regularly and frequently they will hear of faults in the Community and quickly correct them, and lax monks will soon leave the Community.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks do not establish (new) laws that were not established, (or) cut off (old) laws that were established,¹⁹ and they carry on with such training-rules as have been accepted, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks will honour the elder monks, those of long-standing, a long time gone-forth, the Fathers of the Community, the Leaders of the Community, respect, revere, worship and think them worth listening to, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks will not come under the influence of craving which has arisen for continued existence, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks will have desire for forest dwellings, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

¹⁹ The Commentary gives as an example of the latter the 10 practices that the Vesālī monks tried to change which eventually caused the 2nd Council (see Vin. II, p. 293ff). However, later in the discourse the Buddha will allow the monks to abrogate the minor rules (see 39: The Final Advice, below).

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 7) For as long, monks, as the monks individually will attend to the ways of mindfulness, so that their fellow celibates, who are well-behaved, in the future can come, and having come to their fellow celibates, who are well-behaved, can live comfortably, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

[4: Seven Further Things which Prevent Decline in the Community (8-14)]

I will teach you a further seven things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks are not devoted to the pleasure in work, the delight in work, and are not attached to work, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.”²⁰

²⁰ The Commentary explains that the monks should, of course, do their duties at the proper time, and devote themselves to study and meditation at other times.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks are not devoted to the pleasure in speech, the delight in speech, and are not attached to speech, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²¹
- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks are not devoted to the pleasure in sleep, the delight in sleep, and are not attached to sleep, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks are not devoted to the pleasure of company, the delight in company, and are not attached to company, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks do not have evil wishes, do not go under the influence of evil wishes, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks do not have wicked friends, do not have wicked companions, do not have wicked comrades, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²²

²¹ The sort of speech meant is frivolous talk. Talking about Dhamma is encouraged. In the Udāna the Buddha said monks should either talk about the Dhamma or maintain noble silence (e.g. Ud. 2-2).

²² Having a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade (*kalyāṇamitta*, *kalyāṇasahāyo*, *kalyāṇasampavaṅko*) is said to be helpful for those who are not yet mature in the monk's life (Ud. 4-1).

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 7) For as long, monks, as the monks do not achieve only mundane or incomplete attainment,²³ surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

[5: Seven Further Things which Prevent Decline in the Community (15-21)]

I will teach you a further seven things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

²³ Any attainments that fall short of *Arahatta*.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks will have faith, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁴
- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks will have a conscientious mind, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks will have a sense of shame, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks will be learned, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁵
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks will be strenuous, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks will attend to mindfulness, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

²⁴ This and the following things which prevent decline are known as the Seven Good Qualities (*Sattasaddhammā*), see Saṅgītisuttam (DN 33).

²⁵ The Commentary explains that learning here means specifically *pariyatti* (knowledge of scripture).

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 7) For as long, monks, as the monks will possess wisdom, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

[6: Seven Further Things which Prevent Decline in the Community (22-28)]

I will teach you a further seven things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Mindfulness, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁶
- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Investigation of (the nature of) things, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Energy, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Rapture, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Calm, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Concentration, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 7) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the factor of Perfect Awakening that is Equanimity, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

²⁶ These are known as the Seven Factors of Complete Awakening (*Sattasambojjhaṅga*) see Saṅgītisuttaṃ (DN 33), and Bojjhaṅgasamyuttaṃ continued on next page

**[7: Seven Further Things which
Prevent Decline in the Community (29-35)]**

I will teach you a further seven things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of impermanence, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁷
- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of non-self, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁸

(SN 46) for more details.

²⁷ These are known as the Seven Perceptions (*Sattasaññā*), see Saṅgītisuttam (DN 33). Compare it with the 10 perceptions that were taught to Ven. Girimānanda (AN 10.60), which include these seven, and add: *the perception of non-delight in the whole world (sabbaloke anabhiratasaññā), the perception of impermanence in all processes (sabbasaṅkhāresu aniccasaññā), mindfulness while breathing (ānāpānasati)*.

²⁸ The teaching of non-self may be said to be the most characteristic thing about the Buddha's teaching, which sets it apart from the other religions both then and now.

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of the unattractive, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.²⁹
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of danger, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.³⁰
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of giving up, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.³¹
- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of dispassion, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.³²
- 7) For as long, monks, as the monks will develop the perception of cessation, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

²⁹ *The perception of the unattractive* is defined as reflecting on the 32 parts of the body, such as the hairs of the head, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin.

³⁰ *The perception of danger* means seeing how the body is subject to all sorts of diseases and other ailments.

³¹ *The perception of giving up* means giving up wrong intention and establishing right intention (*sammāsāṅkappa*).

³² *The perception of dispassion* and the following *perception of cessation* are defined as retiring to a quiet place and attaining *nibbāna*.

The First Chapter for Recitation

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these seven things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these seven things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

[8: Six Things which Prevent Decline in the Community (36-41)]

I will teach you a further six things which prevent decline, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “For as long, monks, as the monks with friendly actions by way of the body will serve (their) fellow celibates, both in public and in private, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.³³
- 2) For as long, monks, as the monks with friendly actions by way of speech will serve (their) fellow celibates, both in public and in private, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

³³ These are known as the Six Things to be Remembered (*Chasāraṇīyādhammā*), see Saṅgītisuttaṃ (DN 33).

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 3) For as long, monks, as the monks with friendly actions by way of the mind will serve (their) fellow celibates, both in public and in private, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.³⁴
- 4) For as long, monks, as the monks (in regard to) those righteous gains, received in accordance with the Teaching - whatever amount has been received in the bowl - will divide and share such gains with those who are virtuous, fellow celibates, and share (them) in common, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.
- 5) For as long, monks, as the monks (are endowed with) those virtues which are unbroken, faultless, unspotted, unblemished, productive of freedom, praised by the wise, not clung to, leading to concentration, (and) will live endowed with virtue amongst their fellow celibates who (themselves) possess such virtue, both in public and in private, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

³⁴ The Commentary defines friendly acts by way of the body as referring to the rules of etiquette recorded in the Khandakas, such as the reciprocal duties between teachers and students, etc.; friendly acts by way of speech as giving instruction in the Discipline, meditation, and the Teaching; and friendly acts by way of the mind as developing friendliness meditation (*mettabhāvanā*).

The First Chapter for Recitation

- 6) For as long, monks, as the monks (are endowed with) that which is Ariyan View, which leads out, which leads to the complete destruction of suffering for one who acts thus, (and) will live endowed with (Right) View amongst those who (themselves) possess such (Right) View, both in public and in private, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.

For as long, monks, as the monks will maintain these six things which prevent decline, and the monks will agree with these six things which prevent decline, surely growth, monks, is to be expected for the monks, not decline.”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living near Rājagaha on the Vultures' Peak Mountain, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom,³⁵ when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when

³⁵ Comm: *ettha catupārisuddhisīlam sīlam, cītekaggatā samādhī, vipassanāpaññā paññā ti veditabbā; here it should be understood that sīla is the fourfold purification virtue* [Pātimokkha restraint, sense-restraint, pure livelihood, requisites purity], *samādhī is one-pointedness of mind, and paññā is insight-wisdom.*

The First Chapter for Recitation

wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[9: The Story of the Teaching at Ambalaṭṭhikā]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Rājagaha for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Ambalaṭṭhikā.”³⁶

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Ambalaṭṭhikā. There the Gracious One lived near Ambalaṭṭhikā in the King's Rest House.

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living in Ambalaṭṭhikā in the King's Rest House, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in

³⁶ The name means the Place of the Mango Sapling. The Buddha often stayed there while on tour, and on other occasions preached e.g. the Brahmajālasuttam (DN 1), and Ambalaṭṭhika-Rāhulovādasuttam (MN 61) there.

The First Chapter for Recitation

regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[10: Sāriputta's Lion's Roar]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Ambalaṭṭhikā for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Nāḷandā.”³⁷

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Nāḷandā. There the Gracious One lived near Nāḷandā in Pāvārika's Mango Wood.³⁸

Then venerable Sāriputta approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side venerable Sāriputta said this to the Gracious One: “I have confidence, reverend Sir, in the Gracious One in

³⁷ Nāḷandā was only a league away from Rājagaha (about 7 - 10 kilometres). At other times it was the setting for the Kevaṭṭasuttam (DN 11) and Upālisuttam (MN 56) amongst others. It became the seat of the largest Buddhist University in India.

³⁸ This was a monastery built for the Buddha by Pāvārika, a rich merchant from Kosambī (see DPPN).

The First Chapter for Recitation

this way: that neither in the past, the future, or at present is there found another ascetic or brahmin who has more deep knowledge in regard to Perfect Awakening than the Gracious One.”

“You have spoken this great and imposing speech, Sāriputta, a definite, (well-)grasped, lion's roar that was roared, (saying): ‘I have confidence, reverend Sir, in the Gracious One in this way: that neither in the past, the future, or at present is there found another ascetic or brahmin who has more deep knowledge in regard to Perfect Awakening than the Gracious One.’

But have you, Sāriputta, understood those who, in past times, were Worthy and Perfect Sambuddhas, and known with your mind the minds of those Gracious Ones? (Or that) those Gracious Ones had such and such virtues, those Gracious Ones had such and such qualities, those Gracious Ones had such and such wisdom, those Gracious Ones had such and such lifestyles, those Gracious Ones had such and such liberations?”

“No, reverend Sir.”

“But have you, Sāriputta, understood those who, in the future times, will be Worthy and Perfect Sambuddhas, and known with your mind the minds of those Gracious Ones? (Or that) those Gracious Ones will have such and such virtues, those Gracious Ones will have such and such qualities, those Gracious Ones will have such and such wisdom, those Gracious Ones will have such and such lifestyles, those Gracious Ones will have such and such liberations?”

The First Chapter for Recitation

“No, reverend Sir.”

“But have you understood I, who am, at present, a Worthy and Perfect Sambuddha, and known with your mind (my) mind? (Or that) the Gracious One has such and such virtues, the Gracious One has such and such qualities, the Gracious One has such and such wisdom, the Gracious One has such and such a lifestyle, the Gracious One has such and such a liberation?”

“No, reverend Sir.”

“Here then, Sāriputta, in regard to those past, future, and present Worthy and Perfect Sambuddhas you have no full and exact knowledge with (your own) mind. Then how is it, Sāriputta, at present that you have spoken (such) a great and imposing speech, a definite, (well-)grasped, lion's roar that was roared, (saying): ‘I have confidence, reverend Sir, in the Gracious One in this way: that neither in the past, the future, or at present is there found another ascetic or brahmin who has more deep knowledge in regard to Perfect Awakening than the Gracious One?’”

“I do not, reverend Sir, in regard to those past, future, and present Worthy and Perfect Sambuddhas have full and exact knowledge with (my own) mind. However, I understand (what I said) is in conformity with the Teaching.

It is like a King's city, reverend Sir, near the border areas, having strong foundations, strong walls and gateways, and a single door, and

The First Chapter for Recitation

there is a watchman, wise, accomplished, and intelligent, warding off those unknown, and letting through those well-known. While going around the road on inspection through the whole of that city he may not see (such) fissures in the wall or openings in the wall that even a cat could go out through, it may be so, (but he knows): ‘Whatever grosser beings enter or depart from this city all of them surely enter or depart through this door.’

Similarly, reverend Sir, I understand it is in conformity with the Teaching, that whoever, reverend Sir, in the past times, are Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas, all those Gracious Ones, after giving up the five hindrances,³⁹ have penetrated with wisdom the corruptions of the mind that make one feeble, have established their minds in the four ways of attending to mindfulness,⁴⁰ and after developing just as it is the Seven Factors of Awakening,⁴¹ have awakened to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening.

³⁹ The five hinderances (*pañcānīvaraṇa*) are sensuality (*kāmacchanda*), ill-will (*byāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thīnamiddha*), worry (*kukkucca*), and doubt (*vicikicchā*).

⁴⁰ Attending to mindfulness of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), feelings (*vedānānupassanā*), mind (*cittānupassanā*), and (the nature of various) things (*dharmānupassanā*). See my text and translation of Mahāsatiṭṭhānasuttaṃ elsewhere on this website.

⁴¹ The Seven Factors of Awakening (*sattabhojjaṅgā*) are mindfulness (*sati*), investigation of (the nature of) things (*dharmavicaya*), energy (*virīya*), joyful-interest (*pīti*), calmness (*passaddhi*), concentration (*samādhi*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The First Chapter for Recitation

That whoever, reverend Sir, in the future times, are Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas all those Gracious Ones, after giving up the five hindrances, and penetrating with wisdom the corruptions of the mind that make one feeble, and establishing their minds in the four ways of attending to mindfulness, and developing just as it is the Seven Factors of Awakening, will awaken to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening.

And the Gracious One, reverend Sir, in the present time, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, (also) after giving up the five hindrances, has penetrated with wisdom the corruptions of the mind that make one feeble, has established his mind in the four ways of attending to mindfulness, and after developing just as it is the Seven Factors of Awakening, has awoken to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening.”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living near Nāḷandā in Pāvārika's Mango Wood, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[11: The Advantages of Virtue]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Nāḷandā for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Pāṭaligāma.”⁴²

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Pāṭaligāma.

The laymen of Pāṭaligāma heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, had reached Pāṭaligāma.” Then the laymen of Pāṭaligāma approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, they sat down on one side. While sitting on one side, the laymen of Pāṭaligāma said this to the Gracious One: “May the Gracious One

⁴² The modern Patna, it was also known as Pāṭaliputta and Pāṭaliputra. It became the capital of the Magadhan state some time after the Buddha's Parinibbāna, and before King Asoka's reign.

The First Chapter for Recitation

consent, reverend Sir, to (stay in) our rest house.”⁴³ The Gracious One consented by maintaining silence.

Then the laymen of Pāṭaligāma, having understood the Gracious One's consent, after rising from their seats, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, approached their rest house, and after approaching, and spreading (the mats) so that the rest house was spread all over, and preparing the seats, setting up the water-pot, and lighting the oil-lamp, they approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, they stood on one side. While standing on one side, the laymen of Pāṭaligāma said this to the Gracious One:

“The rest house is spread with mats all over, reverend Sir, the seats are prepared, the water-pot is set up, and the oil-lamp is lit, now is the time, reverend Sir, for whatever the Gracious One is thinking.”

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the evening time, after picking up his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the rest house, and after approaching, washing his feet, and entering the rest house, he sat down near to the middle pillar,

⁴³ The Commentary to the Udāna explains that this rest house had never been used before and they wanted the Buddha to bless it by being the first person to stay there. Even now in Buddhist countries it is quite common to ask monks to bless a new house by staying there first before the owners move in.

The First Chapter for Recitation

facing the East, and the Community of monks, after washing their feet, and entering the rest house, sat down (behind the Gracious One) near the West wall, facing the East, having the Gracious One in front (of them). Also the laymen of Pāṭaligāma, after washing their feet, and entering the rest house, sat down (in front of the Gracious One) near the East wall, facing the West, having the Gracious One in front (of them).

Then the Gracious One addressed the laymen of Pāṭaligāma, (saying): “There are these five dangers, householders, for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.

What are the five?

- 1) Here, householders, one lacking in virtue, one who has lost his virtue, because of being heedless undergoes a great loss of riches. This is the first danger for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.
- 2) Furthermore, householders, for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue, a bad report goes round. This is the second danger for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.
- 3) Furthermore, householders, one lacking in virtue, one who has lost his virtue, whatever assembly he approaches, whether an assembly of Nobles, or an assembly of brahmins, or an assembly of householders, or an assembly of ascetics, he approaches without

The First Chapter for Recitation

confidence, with confusion. This is the third danger for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.

- 4) Furthermore, householders, one lacking in virtue, one who has lost his virtue, dies bewildered. This is the fourth danger for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.
- 5) Furthermore, householders, one lacking in virtue, one who has lost his virtue, at the break-up of the body, after death, arises in the lower world, in an unfortunate destiny, in the fall, in the nether regions. This is the fifth danger for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.

These are the five dangers, householders, for one lacking in virtue, for one who has lost his virtue.

There are these five advantages, householders, for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.⁴⁴

What are the five?

- 1) Here, householders, one who is virtuous, one accomplished in virtue, because of being heedful obtains a great mass of riches.

⁴⁴ The dangers (*ādinavā*) and advantages (*ānisamsā*) are often mentioned as antonyms in the discourses; what follows are the exact opposite of the dangers listed above.

The First Chapter for Recitation

This is the first advantage for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.

- 2) Furthermore, householders, of one who is virtuous, of one accomplished in virtue, a good report goes round. This is the second advantage for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.
- 3) Furthermore, householders, one who is virtuous, one accomplished in virtue, whatever assembly he approaches, whether an assembly of Nobles, or an assembly of brahmins, or an assembly of householders, or an assembly of ascetics, he approaches with confidence, without confusion. This is the third advantage for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.
- 4) Furthermore, householders, one who is virtuous, one accomplished in virtue, dies without bewilderment. This is the fourth advantage for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.
- 5) Furthermore, householders, one who is virtuous, one accomplished in virtue, at the break-up of the body, after death, arises in a fortunate destiny, in a Heavenly world. This is the fifth advantage for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.

These are the five advantages, householders, for one who is virtuous, for one accomplished in virtue.”

The First Chapter for Recitation

Then the Gracious One, after instructing, rousing, enthusing, and cheering the laymen of Pāṭaligāma for most of the night with a talk about the Teaching,⁴⁵ dismissed them, (saying): “The night has passed, householders, now is the time for whatever you are thinking.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said those laymen of Pāṭaligāma, and after replying to the Gracious One, rising from their seats, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, went away.

Then the Gracious One, not long after the laymen of Pāṭaligāma had gone, entered an empty place.⁴⁶

[12: Building up Pāṭaligāma]

Now at that time the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra⁴⁷ were building up a city at Pāṭaligāma to ward off the

⁴⁵ The Commentary explains that this was a teaching and a blessing that was not recorded by the elders at the First Council.

⁴⁶ The Commentary explains that the monks screened off an area of the rest house, and the Buddha lay down in the lion's posture (*sīhāsana*) to rest for a while.

⁴⁷ Other versions of this discourse do not mention Sunīdha. According to the Commentary they were both brahmins, not nobles, which shows that the class system was not strictly applied at this time.

The First Chapter for Recitation

Vajjians.⁴⁸ Then at that time a great many Divinities, thousands upon thousands, were taking possession of grounds at Pāṭaligāma.

In that place where the great Divinities took possession of grounds, there the powerful rulers and great royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

In that place where the middling Divinities took possession of grounds, there the middling rulers and middling royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

In that place where the lower Divinities took possession of grounds, there the lower rulers and lower royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

The Gracious One saw with his Divine-eye, which is purified, and surpasses that of (normal) men, that those Divinities, thousands upon thousands, were taking possession of grounds at Pāṭaligāma.

Then towards the time of dawn, having risen from his seat, the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Now who, Ānanda, is building a city at Pāṭaligāma?”

⁴⁸ Remember the dispute between the Magadhans and the Vajjīs mentioned above was over control of the trade along the River Ganges. Pāṭaligāma stood just across the waters from the Vajjī territories, and was strategically placed on the bank of that great River. Later the capital of Magadha was to move from Rājagaha (which was somewhat inland) to Pāṭaligāma (a.k.a. *Pāṭaliputta*).

The First Chapter for Recitation

“The Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra, reverend Sir, are building up a city at Pāṭaligāma to ward off the Vajjians.”

“It is just as though, Ānanda, (they are building) after consulting with the Tāvatiṃsa Divinities, so, Ānanda, are the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra building up a city at Pāṭaligāma to ward off the Vajjians.

Here, Ānanda, I saw with my Divine-eye, which is purified, and surpasses that of (normal) men, that a great many Divinities, thousands upon thousands, were taking possession of grounds at Pāṭaligāma.

In that place where the great Divinities took possession of grounds, there the powerful rulers and great royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

In that place where the middling Divinities took possession of grounds, there the middling rulers and middling royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

In that place where the lower Divinities took possession of grounds, there the lower rulers and lower royal ministers' minds inclined to building up residences.

For as long, Ānanda, as there is an Ariyan sphere (of influence), for as long as there is trade, this basket-opening Pāṭaliputta will be the chief

The First Chapter for Recitation

city. For Pāṭaliputta, Ānanda, there will be three dangers: from fire and from water and from the breaking of an alliance.”⁴⁹

Then the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra approached the Gracious One, and after approaching, they exchanged greetings with the Gracious One, and after exchanging courteous talk and greetings, they stood on one side.

While standing on one side the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra said this to the Gracious One: “May dear Gotama consent to us (offering him) a meal today, together with the Community of monks.” The Gracious One consented by maintaining silence.

Then the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra having understood the Gracious One's consent, approached their own dwelling, and after approaching, in their own dwellings, having had excellent foodstuffs made ready,⁵⁰ had the time announced to the Gracious One, (saying): “It is time, dear Gotama, the meal is ready.”

⁴⁹ The Commentary explains that *vā* here has the sense of *and* rather than the usual *or* meaning (*ca-kārattho vā-saddo*).

⁵⁰ Using the plural *foodstuffs* to translate the two words in Pāḷi *khādanīyaṃ* and *bhojanīyaṃ*. We might say in English *had excellent food and drink made ready*, but that doesn't translate the Pāḷi accurately, and there is hardly a synonym for food in English that doesn't sound quaint these days. Ajahn Ṭhānissaro argues that the words mean staple and non-staple food, but it sounds awkward when used in these contexts.

The First Chapter for Recitation

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the morning time, after picking up his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the dwelling of the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra, and after approaching, he sat down on the prepared seat.

Then the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra with their own hands served and satisfied the Community of monks with the Buddha at its head with excellent foodstuffs. Then the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra, when the Gracious One had eaten and washed his hand and bowl, having taken a low seat, sat down on one side.

While sitting on one side the Gracious One rejoiced the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra with these verses:

“In that place where he makes his dwelling, having entertained
The wise and virtuous here, the restrained, who live the spiritual
life,
He should dedicate a gift (of merit) to those Divinities who were in
that place.
Honoured, they pay honour, revered, they revere him.

Thereafter they have compassion on him, as a mother on her own
son,

A man whom the Divinities has compassion on always sees what is
auspicious.”

Then the Gracious One after rejoicing the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra with these verses, after rising from his seat, went away.

The First Chapter for Recitation

Now at that time the Magadhan chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra were following close behind the Gracious One, (thinking): “That gate by which the ascetic Gotama leaves will get the name the Gotama Gate, and that ford by which he crosses the river Ganges will get the name the Gotama Ford.”

Then that gate by which the Gracious One left got the name the Gotama Gate. Then the Gracious One approached the river Ganges. Now at that time the river Ganges was full to the brim, and could be drunk from by crows (perched on the bank). Some of the people were seeking boats, some were seeking floats, and some were binding rafts, desiring to go from this shore to the shore beyond.

Then the Gracious One, just as a strong man might stretch out a bent arm, or bend in an outstretched arm, so did he vanish from the near bank of the river Ganges, and reappeared on the far bank,⁵¹ together with the Community of monks.

The Gracious One saw those people, some seeking boats, some seeking floats, and some binding rafts, desiring to go from this shore to the shore beyond.

Then the Gracious One, having understood the significance of it, on that occasion uttered this exalted utterance:

⁵¹ This would have been in Vajjian territory probably near to Ukkācelā which was just across the waters from Pāṭaligāma.

The First Chapter for Recitation

“Those who cross over a sea or a river,⁵²

(Do so) after making a bridge, and leaving the marshes behind.

(While) people are still binding together a raft,

Intelligent people have crossed over.”

The First Chapter for Recital (is Finished)

⁵² Comm: *Saran-ti idha nadī adhippetā*; *sara* here is a designation for a river. It normally means *lake*.

[The Second Chapter for Recitation]

[13: The Four Noble Truths]

Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Koṭigāma.”⁵³ “Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Koṭigāma. There the Gracious One lived near Koṭigāma.

There the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of Four Noble Truths⁵⁴ both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.

Which four?

- 1) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of the Noble Truth of Suffering both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.

⁵³ Koṭigāma literally means the village at the corner, explained by the Commentary as meaning at the corner of a palace built by Mahāpanāda, a former king of Mithilā.

⁵⁴ The Commentarial definition here is worth noting: *Ariyasaccānan-ti Ariyabhāvakarāṇaṃ saccānaṃ; Noble Truths means Truths that produce a state of Nobility.* Maybe we should translate: Four Ennobling Truths.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

- 2) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of the Noble Truth of the Arising of Suffering both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.
- 3) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.
- 4) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of the Noble Truth of the Practice going to the Cessation of Suffering both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.

(But now) the Noble Truth of Suffering has been understood and penetrated, the Noble Truth of the Arising of Suffering has been understood and penetrated, the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been understood and penetrated, the Noble Truth of the Practice going to the Cessation of Suffering has been understood and penetrated. Craving for continued existence has been cut off, what leads to rebirth has been exhausted, there is no continuation in existence.”

The Second Chapter for Recitation

The Gracious One said this, and after saying this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, said something more:⁵⁵

“Because of not seeing as it really is the Four Noble Truths we have run along for a long time through various births. (Now) these have been seen, what leads to rebirth is uprooted, the root of suffering has been cut off, there is no continuation in existence.”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living in Koṭṭigāma, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

⁵⁵ Normally this phrase, as here, introduces a verse summary of whatever precedes.

[14: The Mirror of (the True Nature of) Things]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Koṭṭigāma for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach the Nādikas.”⁵⁶

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at the Nādikas. There the Gracious One lived near (one of) the Nādikas in the Brick House.

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:

“The monk named Sāḷha, reverend Sir, has died in Nādikā, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The nun named Nandā, reverend Sir, has died in Nādikā, what was her destination? What was her future state?

⁵⁶ Comm: *Nādikā ti ekaṃ taḷākaṃ nissāya dvinnam Cūḷapitumahāpituputtānam dve gāmā; the Nādikas, near a lake were two villages belonging to the sons of an uncle and a grandfather.* Rhys-Davids (p. 97) thinks that the plural form is referring to a clan, the singular form to a village, but the Commentary is saying that there were two villages which the Buddha approached, giving the plural form, but of course he only stayed in one of them.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

The layman named Sudatta, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The laywoman named Sujātā, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was her destination? What was her future state?

The layman named Kakudha, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Kāliṅga, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Nikaṭa, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Kaṭissaha, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Tuṭṭha, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Santuṭṭha, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Bhadda, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?

The layman named Subhadda, reverend Sir, has died in Nādika, what was his destination? What was his future state?"

The Second Chapter for Recitation

“The monk Sāḷha, Ānanda, through the destruction of the pollutants, without pollutants, freed in mind, freed through wisdom, dwelt having known, having directly experienced, and having attained (Nibbāna) himself in this very life.⁵⁷

The nun Nandā, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.⁵⁸

The layman Sudatta, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of three fetters, and the diminuation of passion, hatred, and delusion, is a Once-Returner, and will return only once more to this world, and (then) will make an end to suffering.

The laywoman Sujātā, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of three fetters, is a Stream-Enterer, is no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and has a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening.

The layman Kakudha, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

⁵⁷ This and the following are stock descriptions. Here it is referring to a Worthy One (*Arahatta*).

⁵⁸ She was a Non-Returner (to birth in a womb) (*Anāgāmi*).

The Second Chapter for Recitation

The layman Kāliṅga, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Nikāṭa, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Kaṭṭissaha, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Tuṭṭha, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Santuṭṭha, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Bhadda, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and

The Second Chapter for Recitation

will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

The layman Subhadda, Ānanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters has arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

More than fifty laymen, Ānanda, have died in Nāḍika who, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters have arisen spontaneously (in the Brahmā worlds), and will attain Final Emancipation there, without returning from that world.

In excess of ninety laymen, Ānanda, have died in Nāḍika who, through the complete destruction of three fetters, and the diminution of passion, hatred, and delusion are Once-Returners, and will return only once more to this world, and (then) will make an end to suffering.

In excess of five-hundred laymen, Ānanda, have died in Nāḍika who, through the complete destruction of three fetters, are Stream-Enterers, no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and have a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening.

But it is not such a wonder, Ānanda, that those who have become human should die, but if (every time) there is a death in this place,

The Second Chapter for Recitation

after approaching the Realised One, you were to ask about it, Ānanda, that would be troublesome⁵⁹ to the Realised One.

Therefore, Ānanda, I will teach (this) presentation of the Teaching called the Mirror of (the True Nature of) Things, endowed with which a Noble Disciple desiring to do so may declare about himself: ‘Exhausted is (birth in) Hell, exhausted is (birth in) an animal's womb, exhausted is (birth in) the realm of the Fallen Spirits, exhausted is falling into an unfortunate destiny in the lower realms, I am a Stream-Enterer, no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and have a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening.’

And what, Ānanda, is (this) presentation of the Teaching called the Mirror of (the True Nature of) Things, endowed with which a Noble Disciple desiring to do so may declare about himself: ‘Exhausted is (birth in) Hell, exhausted is (birth in) an animal's womb, exhausted is (birth in) the realm of the Fallen Spirits, exhausted is falling into an unfortunate destiny in the lower realms, I am a Stream-Enterer, no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and have a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening’?

Here, Ānanda, a Noble Disciple is endowed with perfect confidence in the Buddha (thinking):

⁵⁹ The Commentary says cautiously: *kāyakilamatho va.cittavihesā pana Buddhānam natthi; (would get) tired in body.but for Buddhas there is no trouble in the mind.*

The Second Chapter for Recitation

‘Such is he, the Gracious One, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha,
the one endowed with understanding and good conduct, the Fortunate One, the One who understands the worlds,
the unsurpassed guide for those people who need taming,
the Teacher of Divinities and men, the Buddha, the Gracious One.’

He is endowed with perfect confidence in the Teaching (thinking):

‘The Teaching has been well-proclaimed by the Gracious One,
it is visible, not subject to time, inviting inspection, onward leading,
and can be understood by the wise for themselves.’

He is endowed with perfect confidence in the Community (thinking):

‘The Gracious One's Community of disciples
are good in their practice,
the Gracious One's Community of disciples
are straight in their practice,
the Gracious One's Community of disciples
are systematic in their practice,
the Gracious One's Community of disciples
are correct in their practice,
that is to say, the four pairs of persons,
the eight individual persons,
this is the Gracious One's Community of disciples,
they are worthy of offerings, of hospitality, of gifts,

The Second Chapter for Recitation

and of reverential salutation,
they are an unsurpassed field of merit for the world.’

He is endowed with the lovely Ariyan virtue,⁶⁰ unbroken, faultless, unspotted, unblemished, productive of freedom, praised by the wise, not adhered to, leading to concentration.

This is the presentation of the Teaching, Ānanda, called the Mirror of (the True Nature of) Things endowed with which a Noble Disciple desiring to do so may declare about himself: ‘Exhausted is (birth in) Hell, exhausted is (birth in) an animal's womb, exhausted is (birth in) the realm of the Fallen Spirits, exhausted is falling into an unfortunate destiny in the lower realms, I am a Stream-Enterer, no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and have a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening.’ ”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living near Nādika in the Brick House, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

⁶⁰ Comm: *Pañca sīlani hi Ariyasāvakaṇaṃ kantāni honti, bhavantare pi avijahitabbato; the five virtuous (precepts) are lovely to the Noble disciples, and will not be given up even in a future life* (for this meaning s.v. PED, *bhava*). This must be the meaning here, and not *in-between lives*, which is another possible translation, but wouldn't fit in with the texts or the Commentaries.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[15: The Courtesan Ambapālī]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Nādika for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Vesālī.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Vesālī. There the Gracious One lived near Vesālī in Ambapālī’s Wood. There the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying):

“Mindfully and with full awareness, monks, a monk should live, this is our advice to you.⁶¹

⁶¹ Comm: *sato bhikkhave ti Bhagavā Ambapālidassane satipaccupaṭṭhānattham visesato idha satipaṭṭhānadesanaṃ ārabhi; mindful, monks, the Gracious One began the teaching of mindfulness specially here, so that they would be attending to mindfulness when they saw Ambapālī.*

The Second Chapter for Recitation

And how, monks, is a monk mindful?⁶²

Here, monks, a monk dwells contemplating (the nature of) the body in the body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world; he dwells contemplating (the nature of) feelings in feelings, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world; he dwells contemplating (the nature of) the mind in the mind, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world; he dwells contemplating (the nature of) things in (various) things, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

Thus, monks, a monk is mindful. And how, monks, does a monk have full awareness?⁶³

Here, monks, a monk in going forwards, in going back, is one who practises with full awareness, in looking ahead, or in looking around, he is one who practises with full awareness, in bending or in stretching, he is one who practises with full awareness, in bearing his double-robe, bowl, and (other) robes, he is one who practises with full awareness, in eating, in drinking, in chewing, in tasting, he is one who

⁶² What follows is the summary of the ways of attending to mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), a translation of which is found elsewhere on this website.

⁶³ This now forms of section in the Satipaṭṭhānasutta.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

practises with full awareness, in passing stool and urine, he is one who practises with full awareness, in going, in standing, in sitting, in sleeping, in waking, in talking, and in maintaining silence, he is one who practises with full awareness.

Thus, monks, a monk has full awareness. Mindfully and with full awareness, monks, a monk should live, this is our advice to you.”

* * *

The courtesan Ambapālī heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has reached Vesālī and is living near Vesālī in my Mango Wood.”⁶⁴

Then the courtesan Ambapālī, after having (many) great and august vehicles prepared, and mounting (those) great and august vehicles, departed with those great and august vehicles from Vesālī, and after approaching by vehicle to her pleasure garden as far as the ground for vehicles (would allow), and descending from the vehicles, she approached the Gracious One by foot, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, she sat down on one side. While the courtesan Ambapālī was sitting on one side the Gracious One

⁶⁴ Ambapālī's name means '*daughter of the Mango Keeper*', though according to the Commentary she was born spontaneously in a mango wood (perhaps this one?), and hence acquired the name. Courtesans like Ambapālī were often very rich as we can see from the description of her vehicles and pleasure garden.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered her with a talk about the Teaching.

Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having been instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered by the Gracious One with a talk about the Teaching, said to the Gracious One: “May the Gracious One consent, reverend Sir, to me (offering him) a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.”

The Gracious One consented by maintaining silence. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having understood the Gracious One's consent, after rising from her seat, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, went away.

The Licchavīs from Vesālī heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, had reached Vesālī and is living near Vesālī in Ambapālī's Wood.”

Then those Licchavīs, after having (many) great and august vehicles prepared, and mounting (those) great and august vehicles, departed with those great and august vehicles from Vesālī. There some of the Licchavīs were blue, having a blue appearance, with blue clothes and blue decorations; some of the Licchavīs were yellow, having a yellow appearance, with yellow clothes and yellow decorations; some of the Licchavīs were red, having a red appearance, with red clothes and red decorations; some of the Licchavīs were white, having a white appearance, with white clothes and white decorations.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

Then the courtesan Ambapālī rolled alongside the Licchavī youths axle by axle, wheel by wheel, and yoke by yoke. Then those Licchavīs said this to the courtesan Ambapālī: “Why do you, Ambapālī, roll alongside the Licchavī youths axle by axle, wheel by wheel, and yoke by yoke?”

“Because I have invited the Gracious One, noble sirs, for a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.”

“Give (us) this meal, Ambapālī, for a hundred thousand (kahapanas).”

“If, noble sirs, you would give Vesālī and its revenues⁶⁵ still I would not give this meal (to you).”

Then the Licchavīs snapped their fingers, (thinking): “We have surely been defeated by a woman, we have surely been defeated by a woman.”⁶⁶

Then the Licchavīs entered Ambapālī's Wood. The Gracious One saw those Licchavīs coming from afar, and having seen (them), he addressed the monks, (saying): “Let those monks who have not seen the Tāvātimsa Divinities, monks, look at the Licchavī troupe, monks,

⁶⁵ Lit: *with its means (of existence) (sāhāram)*.

⁶⁶ This is a play on Ambapālī's name. *Ambaka*, means *a woman*.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

look upon the Licchavī troupe, monks, contemplate the Licchavī troupe, monks, who are like the Tāvatiṃsa (Divinities).”⁶⁷

Then after the Licchavīs had gone as far as the ground for vehicles (would allow), and had descended from the vehicles, they approached the Gracious One by foot, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, they sat down at one side.

While the Licchavīs were sitting on one side the Gracious One instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching. Then the Licchavīs, having been instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered by the Gracious One with a talk about the Teaching, said to the Gracious One: “Please consent to us (offering) a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.”

“I have (already) consented to the courtesan Ambapālī’s meal on the morrow.”

Then the Licchavīs snapped their fingers, (thinking): “We have surely been defeated by a woman, we have surely been defeated by a woman.”

⁶⁷ The Commentary says that the Buddha urged the monks to look on the splendour of the Licchavī princes so that they would remember it and realise the nature of impermanence when they were destroyed by the Magadahan King Ajātasattu.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

Then the Licchavīs, after greatly rejoicing and gladly receiving this word of the Gracious One,⁶⁸ rising from their seats, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, went away.

Then the courtesan Ambapālī after the night had passed, having had excellent foodstuffs made ready in her own pleasure park, had the time announced to the Gracious One, (saying): “It is time, reverend Sir, the meal is ready.”

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the morning time, after picking up his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached the courtesan Ambapālī's residence, and after approaching he sat down on the prepared seat. Then the courtesan Ambapālī with her own hand served and satisfied the Community of monks with the Buddha at its head with excellent foodstuffs.

Then the courtesan Ambapālī, when the Gracious One had eaten and washed his hand and bowl, having taken a certain low seat, sat down on one side. While sitting on one side the courtesan Ambapālī said this to the Gracious One: “I donate this pleasure park, reverend Sir, to the Community of monks with the Buddha at its head.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ This stock phrase seems out of place here, given the circumstances.

⁶⁹ *Ārāma* (from °*ram*) originally meant a *pleasure park*, but they were ideal places for monks, and many were given over for that purpose, and the name eventually came to mean *monastery*.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

The Gracious One accepted the pleasure park. Then the Gracious One, after instructing, rousing, enthusing, and cheering the courtesan Ambapālī with a talk about the Teaching, having risen from the seat, went away.⁷⁰

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living in Vesālī in Ambapālī's Wood, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

⁷⁰ Unfortunately the Commentary gives us no idea what the Buddha taught to Ambapālī on this occasion.

[16: The Gracious One’s Sickness]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Ambapālī’s Wood for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach the little village of Beluva.”⁷¹

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at the little village of Beluva. There the Gracious One lived near the little village of Beluva.

There the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “Go, monks, and undertake the Rains Retreat in the vicinity of Vesālī (living) like friends, like companions, like comrades, and I will spend the Rains Retreat right here at the little village of Beluva.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” and those monks, after replying to the Gracious One, undertook the Rains Retreat in the vicinity of Vesālī (living) like friends, like companions, like comrades. But the Gracious One spent the Rains Retreat right there at the little village of Beluva.

Then while dwelling for the Rains Retreat, a heavy affliction arose for the Gracious One, and continued with strong and death-like feelings. There the Gracious One dwelt mindfully, with full awareness, and

⁷¹ According to the Commentary the village was just south of Vesālī. The village is named after the Beluva tree (*Aegle Marmelos*).

The Second Chapter for Recitation

without being troubled. Then this occurred to the Gracious One: “It is not suitable that I, without having addressed my attendants, without having given notice to the Community of monks, should attain Final Emancipation. Having energetically dismissed this affliction, I could live on after determining the lifespan.”

Then the Gracious One having energetically dismissed that affliction lived on after determining⁷² the lifespan.⁷³ Then the Gracious One's affliction abated. Then, the Gracious One, having risen from that sickness, not long after rising, departed from the Sick Room and sat down on the prepared seat in front of that Room.

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one

⁷² Comm: *samāpattivikkhambhitā vedanā dasamāse na uppajji yeva; the feelings suppressed by the attainment did not arise again for a further 10 months*. From the beginning of the Rains Retreat in July until just before his Final Emancipation in May the following year is 10 months, so we can infer that the Commentary believes the illness occurred at the beginning of the retreat.

⁷³ Comm: *ettha jīvitam-pi jīvitasāṅkhāro .phalasangāhāro pi jīvitasāṅkhāro, so idha adhippeto; here the lifespan means life .the lifespan (can) also mean the attainment of fruition, this is the designation here*. This seems contradictory, and I know of no other place where *jīvitasāṅkhāra* is defined as fruition attainment. The latter is probably meant to guard against the idea that the Buddha had determined the length of life, before the temptation by Māra, which comes later in the story, where he gives up the life-process (*ayusāṅkhāra*).

side. While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:

“I have seen, reverend Sir, the Gracious One comfortable, I have seen, reverend Sir, the Gracious One bearing up (while sick),⁷⁴ and my body, reverend Sir, became faint as it were, and although I could not see (straight), and things were not clear,⁷⁵ it appeared to me, reverend Sir, that the Gracious One was sick, (but) it was some small comfort that the Gracious One would not attain Final Emancipation until the Gracious One had spoken regarding the Community of monks.”

“But what, Ānanda, does the Community of monks expect of me? The Teaching has been taught by me, Ānanda, without having made (a distinction between) esoteric and exoteric, for the Realised One there is nothing, Ānanda, of a (closed) teacher's fist in regard to the Teaching.

⁷⁴ I am not sure about the translation here, it maybe that we should parse *Bhagavato 'phāsū* (= *aphāsu*), and translate: *I have seen.the Gracious One uncomfortable .(and) bearing up (while sick)*. Neither the Commentary nor the Sub-commentary help here.

⁷⁵ Comm: *satipaṭṭhānādidhammā mayhaṃ pākaṭā na hontī ti dīpeti. Tantidhammā pana Therassa supagunā; he explains: (such) things as the ways of attending to mindfulness were not well-known to me. But the texts were still familiar to the Elder*. This comment seems to guard against any doubt as to Ven. Ānanda's ability to remember the texts, which might put their reliability into question.

The Second Chapter for Recitation

To whoever, Ānanda, this (thought) occurs: 'I will lead the Community of monks' or 'I am the instructor of the Community of monks' let him speak, Ānanda, regarding the Community of monks. But to the Realised One, Ānanda, this (thought) does not occur: 'I will lead the Community of monks' or 'I am the instructor of the Community of monks'. Then why, Ānanda, should the Realised One speak regarding the Community of monks?⁷⁶

I, Ānanda, at present, am old, elderly, of great age, far gone, advanced in years, I am eighty years old. It is like, Ānanda, an old cart, which (only) keeps going when shored up with bamboo, just so, Ānanda, I think the Realised One's body (only) keeps going when shored up with bamboo.

When the Realised One doesn't pay attention, Ānanda, to any of the signs, when all feelings have ceased, he lives having established the

⁷⁶ I cannot understand this section which seems so out of keeping with the discourses elsewhere. The Buddha was the recognised leader of the Community, and in the previous section, has himself said: *It is not suitable that I, without having addressed my attendants, without having given notice to the Community of monks, should attain Final Emancipation*, and yet here he is denying that he is their leader and declaring he has nothing to say to them!

The Second Chapter for Recitation

signless mind-concentration,⁷⁷ and at that time, Ānanda, the Realised One's body is most comfortable.

Therefore, Ānanda, live with yourself as an island, yourself as a refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge. And how, Ānanda, does a monk live with himself as an island, himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge?

Here, Ānanda, a monk dwells contemplating (the nature of) the body in the body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world;⁷⁸ he dwells contemplating (the nature of) feelings in feelings, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world; he dwells contemplating (the nature of) the mind in the mind, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world; he dwells contemplating (the nature of) things in (various) things, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

⁷⁷ In Paṭisambhidāmagga and Visuddhimagga this is known as *animittācetovimutti*, which is the fruition of Worthiness, it arises for one who applies his mind to impermanence as the predominant sign of existence.

⁷⁸ This is the summary of the ways of attending to mindfulness again (see above, section 15).

The Second Chapter for Recitation

Thus, Ānanda, a monk lives with himself as an island, himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge. For whoever, Ānanda, whether at present or after my passing, lives with himself as an island, himself as a refuge, with no other refuge, with the Teaching as an island, the Teaching as a refuge, with no other refuge, those monks of mine, Ānanda, will go from darkness to the highest⁷⁹ - whoever likes the training.”

The Second Chapter for Recital (is Finished).

⁷⁹ Commentary paraphrases: *evam sabbam tamayogam chinditvā, ativiya agge uttamabhāve ete, Ānanda, mama bhikkhū bhavissanti; having in this way cut off all connection with the darkness, these monks of mine, Ānanda, will be at the absolute top of supreme existence.*

[The Third Chapter for Recitation]⁸⁰

[17: Ānanda's Failure]

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the morning time, after picking up his bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for alms. After walking for alms in Vesālī, and returning from the alms-round after the meal, he addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Take up the sitting mat, Ānanda, we will approach the Cāpāla shrine to dwell for the day.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, and taking the sitting mat, he followed along close behind the Gracious One.

Then the Gracious One approached the Cāpāla shrine, and after approaching, he sat down on the prepared seat, and also venerable Ānanda, after worshipping the Gracious One, sat down on one side. While sitting on one side the Gracious One said this to venerable Ānanda: “Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine,

⁸⁰ There is a gap in the record here of 7 months, if the traditional date for the Final Emancipation is correct. This is discussed in the Introduction to the Texts and Translation of this discourse.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

delightful is the Many Sons' shrine, delightful is the Sārandada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine.⁸¹

Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power,⁸² could, if he wanted, Ānanda, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.⁸³ The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.”

⁸¹ All these Shrines were in the Vajjī Territories, and it very much looks like they were being used as (temporary) monasteries for *samaṇas* residing there. If this is correct then it throws some light on the 6th condition which prevents decline for the Vajjīs listed in Chapter 2 above. According to Pāthikasuttaṃ (DN 24), the *Udena* Shrine was to the east of Vesālī; *Gotamaka* to the south, *Sattamba* to the west, and *Bahuputta* to the north of the city.

⁸² The Four Paths to Power are concentration of desire accompanied by the process of striving (*chandasaṃādhipadhānasaṅkhārasaṃannāgata*); concentration of energy accompanied by the process of striving (*virīya*-); concentration of mind accompanied by the process of striving (*citta*-), and concentration of investigation accompanied by the process of striving (*vimāṃsa*-). They form one section of the 37 Things on the Side of Awakening (*Bodhipakkhiyadharmā*), see below Chapter 26.

⁸³ Commentary: *Ettha ca kappan-ti āyukappaṃ .idam-eva aṭṭhakathāyam niyamitaṃ; herein span means life-span.this is fixed by the Commentary.* There has been some dispute about whether *kappa* here means life-span or aeon. However it seems quite incredible to me that the Buddha, when his body was already broken down and falling ill, should have made such a nonsensical claim as to be able to live for an aeon!

The Third Chapter for Recitation

But venerable Ānanda, despite such a gross hint being made by the Gracious One, such a gross suggestion being made, was unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Gracious One, (saying): “May the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men,” like one whose mind was possessed by Māra.

For a second time the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine, delightful is the Many Sons' shrine, delightful is the Sārandada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine.

Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power, could, if he wanted, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan. The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.”

But venerable Ānanda, despite such a gross hint being made by the Gracious One, such a gross suggestion being made, was unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Gracious One, (saying): “May the

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men,” like one whose mind was possessed by Māra.

For a third time the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka shrine, delightful is the Sattamba shrine, delightful is the Many Sons' shrine, delightful is the Sārandada shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla shrine.

Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power, could, if he wanted, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan. The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.”

But venerable Ānanda, despite such a gross hint being made by the Gracious One, such a gross suggestion being made, was unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Gracious One, (saying): “May the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the

The Third Chapter for Recitation

welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men,” like one whose mind was possessed by Māra.

Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Go, Ānanda, now is the time for whatever you are thinking.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, rising from his seat, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, he sat down not far away at the root of a certain tree.

[18: The Relinquishment of the Life Process]

Then the Wicked Māra, not long after venerable Ānanda had gone, approached the Gracious One, and after approaching, he stood on one side. While standing on one side the Wicked Māra said this to the Gracious One:

“May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

‘I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my monks are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare,

The Third Chapter for Recitation

reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.⁸⁴

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's monks are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

‘I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my nuns are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the

⁸⁴ There are 3 types of miracles (*pāṭihāriya*): miraculous powers (*iddhipāṭihāriya*), prophecy (*ādesanāpāṭihāriya*), and the miracle of instruction (*anusāsanīpāṭihāriya*); it is the last which is intended here. It does not mean *the Teaching accompanied by miracles*.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.'

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's nuns are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

'I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laymen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.'

The Third Chapter for Recitation

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's laymen are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

'I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laywomen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.'

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's laywomen are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it

The Third Chapter for Recitation

from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

‘I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as this spiritual life of mine has not become successful and prosperous, well spread-out, possessed by many, become great, until it is well-explained amongst Divinities and men.’

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's spiritual life is successful and prosperous, well spread-out, possessed by many, become great, it is well-explained amongst Divinities and men. May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation.”

When that was said the Gracious One said this to the Wicked Māra: “You should have little concern, Wicked One, in no long time the Realised One will be Finally Emancipated, after three months have passed from now, the Realised One will attain Final Emancipation.”

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Then at the Cāpāla shrine the Gracious One, mindfully, with full awareness, relinquished the life-process. With the relinquishment of the life-process by the Gracious One there was a great earthquake, and a fearful, horrifying crash of the Divinities' (thunder) drum.

Then the Gracious One, having understood the significance of it, on that occasion uttered this exalted utterance:

“Measurable and immeasurable continuity,
And the continuation-process the Sage relinquished.
Content in himself, and concentrated,
He broke continuity of self like a coat of mail.”

[19: Eight Reasons for Earthquakes]

Then it occurred to venerable Ānanda: “Surely it is wonderful, surely it is marvellous, this great earthquake, this very great earthquake, and (this) awful, hair-raising, crash of the Divinities' (thunder) drum. What was the reason, what was the cause, for the occurrence of this great earthquake?”

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down at one side. Sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “Surely it is wonderful, reverend Sir, surely it is marvellous, reverend Sir, this great earthquake, this very great earthquake, and (this) awful, hair-raising, crash of the Divinities' (thunder) drum. What

The Third Chapter for Recitation

was the reason, reverend Sir, what was the cause, for the occurrence of this great earthquake?”

“There are these eight reasons, eight causes, Ānanda, for the occurrence of a great earthquake.

Which eight?

- 1) This great Earth, Ānanda, stands in the water, the water stands in the atmosphere, the atmosphere stands in space.⁸⁵ There comes a time, Ānanda, when great winds blow, with the great winds blowing, the waters move, the waters having moved, the Earth moves. This is the first reason, the first cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.
- 2) Furthermore, Ānanda, when an ascetic or a brahmin or a Divinity, one of great power, one of great majesty, has, through spiritual power, attained (complete) mastery of the mind, and has then developed even a trifling perception of the Earth, or an unlimited perception of water, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the second reason, the second cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.

⁸⁵ I interpret *vāta* (normally *wind*) here as *atmosphere*. This is quite an accurate description of the facts, especially given the time it was made.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

- 3) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Buddha-to-be falls away from the Tusita hosts,⁸⁶ and mindfully, with full awareness, enters his mother's womb, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the third reason, the third cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.
- 4) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Buddha-to-be mindfully, with full awareness, exits his mother's womb, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the fourth reason, the fourth cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.
- 5) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Realised One perfectly awakens to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the fifth reason, the fifth cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.
- 6) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Realised One sets the unsurpassed wheel of the Teaching rolling, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the sixth reason, the sixth cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.
- 7) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Realised One mindfully, with full awareness gives up the life-process, this Earth moves, wavers,

⁸⁶ A Buddha-to-be is said to always spend his penultimate life amongst the Gods in Tusita Heaven, and from there to descend to Earth for the last time.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

flutters, and shakes. This is the seventh reason, the seventh cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake.

- 8) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Realised One is Finally Emancipated in the Emancipation-element which has no basis for attachment remaining, this Earth moves, wavers, flutters, and shakes. This is the eighth reason, the eighth cause for the occurrence of a great earthquake. These are the eight reasons, the eight causes, Ānanda, for the occurrence of a great earthquake.

[20: The Eight Assemblies]

There are, Ānanda, eight assemblies.

Which eight?

The assembly of Nobles, the assembly of brahmins, the assembly of householders, the assembly of ascetics, the assembly of the Four Great Kings, the assembly of the Tāvatiṃsa (Divinities), the assembly of Māra, the assembly of the Brahmā Divinities.⁸⁷

- 1) I know, Ānanda, after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of Nobles, that there, before settling down, before

⁸⁷ There appears to be a correlation between these two sets of four assemblies: Nobles on Earth, Kings in Heaven; brahmins on Earth, Divinities in Heaven; householders on Earth, the sensual gods in Heaven; ascetics on Earth, Brahmā Divinities in Heaven.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become,⁸⁸ whatever their voice was, my voice would become,⁸⁹ and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’

- 2) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of brahmins, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed,

⁸⁸ Comm: *na pana Bhagavā milakkhusadiso hoti nāpi āmuttamaṇikuṇḍalo, Buddhaveseneva nisīdati, te pana attano samānasaṅghānam-eva passanti; it is not that the Gracious One (looks) like a barbarian, or is adorned with jewelled earirngs, he is surely sitting in the Buddha's clothes, but they see him having the same features as themselves.*

⁸⁹ Comm: *idaṃ.bhāsantaraṃ sandhāya kathitaṃ; this is said in regard to the different languages (he is able to speak).*

The Third Chapter for Recitation

roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’

- 3) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of householders, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’
- 4) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of ascetics, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching,

The Third Chapter for Recitation

I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’

- 5) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of the Four Great Kings, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’
- 6) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of the Tāvatiṃsa (Divinities), that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared

The Third Chapter for Recitation

they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’

- 7) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of Māra, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’
- 8) I know, Ānanda, that after approaching countless hundreds of assemblies of the Brahmā Divinities, that there, before settling down, before conversing, and before entering upon discussion, whatever their appearance was, my appearance would become, whatever their voice was, my voice would become, and I instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, and while I was speaking they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this speaking, a Divinity or a man?’ and having instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered them with a talk about the Teaching, I disappeared. And when I had disappeared

The Third Chapter for Recitation

they did not know me (and would ask): ‘Who is this who disappeared, a Divinity or a man?’

These, Ānanda, are the eight assemblies.

[21: The Eight Means of (Mind) mastery]

There are, Ānanda, eight means of (mind) mastery.⁹⁰

Which eight?

- 1) Perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, limited, beautiful or ugly, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: ‘I know, I see’. This is the first means of (mind) mastery.⁹¹
- 2) Perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, unlimited, beautiful or ugly, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: ‘I know, I see’. This is the second means of (mind) mastery.

⁹⁰ The Commentary to MN 77 paraphrases this with *abhibhavanakāraṇāni*, which gives the translation here.

⁹¹ The Commentary explains that these are means for mastering absorption (*jhāna*). If one takes a preliminary object (*parikamma*) internally but sees a limited sign (*nimitta*) externally, then the first means of (mind) mastery applies. With the second he sees an unlimited sign.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

- 3) Without perceiving forms internally, ⁹² someone sees forms externally, limited, beautiful or ugly, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: 'I know, I see'. This is the third means of (mind) mastery.
- 4) Without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, unlimited, beautiful or ugly, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: 'I know, I see'. This is the fourth means of (mind) mastery.
- 5) Without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, ⁹³ blue, blue-coloured, of blue appearance, shiny blue, just as the flower called Ummā is blue, blue-coloured, of blue appearance, shiny blue, or just as there is Banaras cloth smoothed on both sides that is blue, blue-coloured, of blue appearance, shiny blue, so, without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, blue, blue-coloured, of blue appearance, shiny blue, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: 'I know, I see'. This is the fifth means of (mind) mastery.

⁹² Comm: *alābhiṭṭāya vā anattikatāya vā ajjhatarūpe parikkammasaññāvirahito*; *without perception of the preliminary object on an internal form, either because he did not obtain it or because he did not need it.*

⁹³ This and what follows refers to the kasiṇa excercises, whereby one focuses on a specific colour and obtains absorption that way.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

- 6) Without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, yellow, yellow-coloured, of yellow appearance, shiny yellow, just as the flower called Kaṇikāra is yellow, yellow-coloured, of yellow appearance, shiny yellow, or just as there is Banaras cloth smoothed on both sides that is yellow, yellow-coloured, of yellow appearance, shiny yellow, so, without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, yellow, yellow colour, of yellow appearance, shiny yellow, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: 'I know, I see'. This is the sixth means of (mind) mastery.
- 7) Without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, red, red-coloured, of red appearance, shiny red, just as the flower called Bandhujīvaka is red, red-coloured, of red appearance, shiny red, or just as there is Banaras cloth smoothed on both sides that is red, red-coloured, of red appearance, shiny red, so, without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, red, red-coloured, of red appearance, shiny red, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: 'I know, I see'. This is the seventh means of (mind) mastery.
- 8) Without perceiving forms internally, someone sees forms externally, white, white-coloured, of white appearance, shiny white, just as the Osadhī star, is white, white-coloured, of white appearance, shiny white, or just as there is Banaras cloth smoothed on both sides that is white, white-coloured, of white appearance, shiny white, so, without perceiving forms internally, someone sees

The Third Chapter for Recitation

forms externally, white, white-coloured, of white appearance, shiny white, and having mastered them, he is one who perceives thus: ‘I know, I see’. This is the eighth means of (mind) mastery.

These, Ānanda, are the eight means of (mind) mastery.

[22: The Eight Liberations]

There are, Ānanda, eight liberations.

Which eight?

- 1) One having form sees forms. This is the first liberation.⁹⁴
- 2) Not perceiving forms internally, he sees forms externally. This is the second liberation.⁹⁵
- 3) One is intent on endless beauty.⁹⁶ This is the third liberation.
- 4) Having completely transcended perceptions of form, with the disappearance of perceptions of (sensory) impact, not attending to perceptions of variety, (understanding): ‘This is endless space’, he

⁹⁴ These liberations refer to the progress through the states of meditative absorption (*jhāna*). The first three listed are attained through developing the first four meditative absorptions.

⁹⁵ These first two are like a summary of the *Abhibhāyatanā*.

⁹⁶ Through developing one of the Brahmāvihāra (*mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā*) meditations to absorption level.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

abides in the sphere of endless space.⁹⁷ This is the fourth liberation.

- 5) Having completely transcended the sphere of endless space, (understanding): 'This is endless consciousness', he abides in the sphere of endless consciousness. This is the fifth liberation.
- 6) Having completely transcended the sphere of endless consciousness, (understanding): 'This is nothing', he abides in the sphere of nothingness. This is the sixth liberation.
- 7) Having completely transcended the sphere of nothingness, he abides in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This is the seventh liberation.
- 8) Having completely transcended the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he abides in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is the eighth liberation.

These, Ānanda, are the eight liberations.

[23: Ānanda's Fault]

At one time Ānanda I was living at Uruvelā, on the bank of the river Nerañjarā, at the root of the Goatherd's Banyan tree, in the first

⁹⁷ This and the three that follow are the spheres of concentration developed through refinement of the fourth absorption.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

(period) after attaining Awakening.⁹⁸ Then, Ānanda, the Wicked Māra approached me, and after approaching he stood on one side. While standing to one side, Ānanda, the Wicked Māra said this to me:

“May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation.”

After this was said, Ānanda, I said this to the Wicked Māra: “I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my monks are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my nuns are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare,

⁹⁸ The Commentary explains that this was in the eighth week after attaining the Final Awakening in the vicinity of the Bodhi Tree (*Sambodhipattiya atthame sattāhe Bodhimaṇḍe*).

The Third Chapter for Recitation

reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laymen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laywomen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as this spiritual life of mine has not become successful and prosperous, well spread-out, possessed by many, become great, until it is well-explained amongst Divinities and men.”

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Now today, Ānanda, at the Cāpāla Shrine the Wicked Māra approached me, and after approaching he stood on one side. While standing on one side the Wicked Māra said this to me:

‘May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For these words, reverend Sir, were spoken by the Gracious One:

“I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my monks are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.”

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's monks are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For the Gracious One has said these words:

“I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my nuns are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.”

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's nuns are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For the Gracious One has said these words:

The Third Chapter for Recitation

“I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laymen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.”

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's laymen are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For the Gracious One has said these words:

“I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as my laywomen are not (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, will declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.”

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's laywomen are (true) disciples, accomplished, disciplined, confident, learned, bearers of the Teaching, practising in conformity with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, and having learned it from their own teacher, do declare, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, make plain - after giving a good rebuke with reason to the doctrines of others that have arisen - and teach the miraculous Teaching.

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation. For the Gracious One has said these words:

“I will not attain Final Emancipation, Wicked One, for as long as this spiritual life of mine has not become successful and prosperous, well spread-out, possessed by many, become great, until it is well-explained amongst Divinities and men.”

But at present, reverend Sir, the Gracious One's spiritual life is successful and prosperous, well spread-out, possessed by many, become great, it is well-explained amongst Divinities and men.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

May the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation now, reverend Sir, may the Fortunate One attain Final Emancipation, now is the time, reverend Sir, for the Gracious One's Final Emancipation.'

When that was said, Ānanda, I said this to the Wicked Māra: 'You should have little concern, Wicked One, in no long time the Realised One will be Finally Emancipated, after three months have passed from now, the Realised One will attain Final Emancipation.' Now today, Ānanda, at the Cāpāla Shrine the Realised One mindfully, with full awareness, gave up the life-process."

When this was said venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: "Let the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, let the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, having compassion on the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men."

"Enough, Ānanda, do not beg the Realised One, now is the wrong time, Ānanda, for begging the Realised One."

For a second time venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:

"Let the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, let the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, having compassion on the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men."

The Third Chapter for Recitation

“Enough, Ānanda, do not beg the Realised One, now is the wrong time, Ānanda, for begging the Realised One.”

For a third time venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:

“Let the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan, let the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, having compassion on the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.”

“Do you, Ānanda, have faith in the Realised One's Awakening?”

“Yes, reverend Sir,”

“Then why do you, Ānanda, harrass the Realised One up and till the third time?”

“Face to face with me, reverend Sir, face to face I have heard (you say): ‘Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power, could, if he wanted, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan. The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.’ ”

“Do you have faith, Ānanda?”

The Third Chapter for Recitation

“Yes, reverend Sir,”

“Then, Ānanda, there is this wrong-doing for you, there is this fault for you, in that you, despite such a gross hint being made by the Realised One, such a gross suggestion being made, was unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Realised One, (saying):

‘May the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan; may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.’

If you, Ānanda, had begged the Realised One twice the Realised One might have rejected your speech, but would have accepted it on the third occasion. So, Ānanda, there is this wrong-doing for you, there is this fault for you.

[24: Ānanda's Fault at Rājagaha]

At one time, Ānanda, I was living at Rājagaha⁹⁹ on the Vulture's Peak Mountain,¹⁰⁰ I was living right there at Rājagaha near the Gotama Banyan Tree, I was living right there at Rājagaha near the Thieves' Precipice, I was living right there at Rājagaha on the side of the Vebhāra (mountain) in the Seven Leaves Cave,¹⁰¹ I was living right there at Rājagaha on the side of the Isigili (mountain) on Black Rock, I was living right there at Rājagaha in the Cool Wood, at the Snake Tank Slope, I was living right there at Rājagaha in the (River) Tapodā Monastery, I was living right there near Rājagaha, at Jīvaka's Mango Wood, I was living right there near Rājagaha, in the Deer Park at (the place called) Crushing Womb, in that place, Ānanda, I addressed you, (saying):

⁹⁹ Most editions write out the first section (*Gijjakūte*) in full, then the next section (*Gotamanigrodhe*) as ellipsis, and the rest without ellipsis. When we get to the repetition though, just below, it appears that it is summarising the whole sequence at one go, which implies that the way I have edited it here must be correct. The same applies to the Vesālī section below.

¹⁰⁰ This is where this discourse began, but it does not appear to have been on that occasion as there are many other places mentioned subsequently which do not appear earlier, therefore it must be referring to a period more than one year before the parinibbāna.

¹⁰¹ CPED: *Sattapaṇṇī*, m., the tree *Alstonia Scholaris*. This is a tree much used in Ayurveda medicine for skin diseases and the like. Its leaves have seven points to them, hence the name. It was here that the First Council was held a few months after the parinibbāna.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Rājagaha, delightful is the Vulture's Peak Mountain, delightful is the Gotama Banyan Tree, delightful is the Thieves' Precipice, delightful is the side of the Vebhāra (mountain) in the Seven Leaves Cave, delightful is the side of the Isigili (mountain) on Black Rock, delightful is the Cool Wood, at the Snake Tank Slope, delightful is the (River) Tapodā Monastery, delightful is the Squirrel's Feeding Place in Bamboo Wood, delightful is Jīvaka's Mango Wood, delightful is the Deer Park at (the place called) Crushing Womb.

Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power, could, if he wanted, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan. The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.’

But despite such a gross hint being made by the Realised One, such a gross suggestion being made, you were unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Realised One, (saying):

‘May the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan; may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.’

The Third Chapter for Recitation

If you, Ānanda, had begged the Realised One twice the Realised One might have rejected your speech, but would have accepted it on the third occasion. So, Ānanda, there is this wrong-doing for you, there is this fault for you.

[25: Ānanda's Fault at Vesālī]

At one time, Ānanda, I was living right here near Vesālī, in the Udena Shrine, I was living right here near Vesālī, in the Gotamaka Shrine, I was living right here near Vesālī, in the Seven Mangos Shrine, I was living right here near Vesālī, in the Many Sons Shrine, I was living right here near Vesālī, in the Sārandada Shrine, and here today, Ānanda, at the Cāpāla Shrine I addressed you, (saying):

‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena Shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine, delightful is the Seven Mangos Shrine, delightful is the Many Sons Shrine, delightful is the Sārandada Shrine, delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine.

Whoever has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power, could, if he wanted, remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan. The Realised One has developed, Ānanda, made much of, carried on, established, maintained, augmented, and properly instigated the Four Paths to Power. If he wanted, Ānanda, the Realised One could remain for the lifespan or for what is left of the lifespan.’

The Third Chapter for Recitation

But despite such a gross hint, Ānanda, being made by the Realised One, such a gross suggestion being made, you were unable to penetrate it, and did not beg the Realised One, (saying):

‘May the Gracious One remain, reverend Sir, for the lifespan; may the Fortunate One remain for the lifespan, for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.’

If you, Ānanda, had begged the Realised One twice the Realised One might have rejected your speech, but would have accepted it on the third occasion. So, Ānanda, there is this wrong-doing for you, there is this fault for you.

* * *

Were you not warned by me when I declared: ‘There is alteration in, separation from, and changeability in all that is dear and appealing’?¹⁰² How can it be otherwise, Ānanda, for that which is obtained, born, become, conditioned, subject to dissolution? It is not possible (to say) this: ‘It should not dissolve’. But this has been relinquished, cast out, let loose, abandoned by the Realised One, forsaken, the life-process that has been given up. For sure this word was spoken by the Realised One:

¹⁰² As far as I can see outside of this context this warning only appears in two other places, once towards the end of the Mahāsuddasanasuttaṃ (DN 17), and also in the Abhiṅhapaccavekkhitabbaṭṭhānasuttaṃ (AN Bk 5.57).

‘Not long now there will be the Realised One's Final Emancipation, after the passing of three months the Realised One will attain Final Emancipation.’ The Realised One cannot for the sake of life go back on that, it is not possible.

[26: The Thirty-Seven Things on the Side of Awakening]

Come Ānanda let us approach the Gabled House Hall in Great Wood.”¹⁰³

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One with venerable Ānanda approached the Gabled House Hall in Great Wood, and after approaching he addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying):

“Go, Ānanda, and whatever monks are living in dependance on Vesālī assemble them in the Attendance Hall.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One and assembling whatever monks were living in dependance on Vesālī in the Attendance Hall, he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he stood at one side. While standing on one side, venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “The Community of monks has

¹⁰³ This is still in the vicinity of Vesālī.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

assembled, reverend Sir, now is the time, Gracious One, for whatever you are thinking.”

Then the Gracious One approached the Attendance Hall, and after approaching he sat down on the prepared seat. While sitting the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying):

“Therefore,¹⁰⁴ monks, whatever Teachings have, with deep knowledge, been taught by me, after grasping them well, you should practise, develop, and make a lot of them, so that the Spiritual Life may last long, and may endure for a long time, and that will be for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.

And what are those Teachings that have, with deep knowledge, been taught by me, which after grasping them well, you should practise, develop, and make a lot of them, so that the Spiritual Life may last long, and may endure for a long time, that will be for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men?

¹⁰⁴ This is a funny way to begin a Teaching, it looks like it has been extracted from a longer section somewhere, where *Therefore...* might be more in place.

The Third Chapter for Recitation

They are as follows:¹⁰⁵

- The Four Ways of Attending to Mindfulness,¹⁰⁶
- the Four Right Strivings,¹⁰⁷
- the Four Paths to Power,¹⁰⁸
- the Five Faculties,¹⁰⁹
- the Five Strengths,¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ These are collectively known as the 37 Things on the Side of Awakening (*Bodhipakkhiyadhammā*). They are mentioned in many places, e.g. Sampasādanīyasuttaṃ (DN 28); Kintisuttaṃ (MN 103); Pahārādasuttaṃ (AN 8:19), etc. etc.

¹⁰⁶ Contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), contemplation of feelings (*vedānānupassanā*), contemplation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*), and contemplation of (the nature of) things (*dhammānupassanā*). See the text and translation of the Mahāsatiṭṭhānasuttaṃ elsewhere on this website.

¹⁰⁷ These are the same as the Right Endeavours (*Sammāvāyāma*, part of the Eightfold Noble Path). The striving 1. not to take up bad and unwholesome things that have not yet arisen, 2. to give up bad and unwholesome things that have already arisen, 3. to take up wholesome things that have not yet arisen, 4. for the endurance of wholesome things that have arisen.

¹⁰⁸ These were explained above Chapter 17. They are concentration of desire accompanied by the process of striving (*chandasaṃādhipadhānasaṅkhārasamannāgata*); concentration of energy accompanied by the process of striving (*virīya-*); concentration of mind accompanied by the process of striving (*citta-*), and concentration of investigation accompanied by the process of striving (*vimāṃsa-*).

¹⁰⁹ Faith (*saddhā*), energy (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*).

¹¹⁰ The same as the above brought to fulfilment. Faith finds fulfilment in the 4 factors of the Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpannaṅgāni*), energy in the four Right Endeavours (*Sammāvāyāma*), mindfulness in the four ways of attending to
continued on next page

The Third Chapter for Recitation

the Seven Factors of Awakening,¹¹¹
the Noble Eight-Fold Path.¹¹²

These, monks, are those Teachings that have, with deep knowledge, been taught by me, after grasping them well, you should practise, develop, and make a lot of them, so that the Spiritual Life may last long, and may endure for a long time, and that will be for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of Divinities and men.”

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying):

“Come now, monks, for I tell you (all) conditioned things are subject to decay, strive on with heedfulness! Not long now there will be the Realised One's Final Emancipation, after the passing of three months the Realised One will attain Final Emancipation.”

mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), concentration in the four absorptions (*jhāna*), and wisdom in understanding the Four Noble Truths (*Ariyasacca*).

¹¹¹ Mindfulness (*satisambojjhaṅga*), investigation of the (nature of) things (*dhammavicaya*-), energy (*virīya*-), joyful-interest (*pīti*-), tranquillity (*passaddhi*-), concentration (*samādhi*-), and equanimity (*upekkhā*-).

¹¹² Right View (*Sammādiṭṭhi*), Right Thought (*Sammāsaṅkappa*), Right Speech (*Sammāvācā*), Right Action (*Sammākammaṅga*), Right Livelihood (*Sammā-ājīva*), Right Endeavour (*Sammāvāyāma*), Right Mindfulness (*Sammāsati*), Right Concentration (*Sammāsamādhi*).

The Third Chapter for Recitation

The Gracious One said this, and after saying this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, said something more:¹¹³

[“Youths and also the old, fools and also the wise,
Rich and also the poor - all end in death.
Like an earthen vessel made by a potter
Small and great, that which is baked and unbaked,
All end in breakage, just so life (ends) in death.”

Then the Teacher, said something more:]

“Well-matured, decayed, with little of my life remaining,
Having abandoned (rebirth) I will go, having made myself a refuge.
Be heedful, mindful, and virtuous, monks,
With well-reasoned thoughts, protect your minds.

¹¹³ The lines within square brackets only appear in the Thai edition. These lines look like variations of the verses now found in the Sallasuttam of the Suttanipāta (Sn. 3.8 v. 5 & 4).

The Third Chapter for Recitation

Whoever in this Teaching and Discipline will live heedful,¹¹⁴
Having given up the round of rebirths, he will put an end to
suffering.”

The Third Chapter for Recital (is Finished).

¹¹⁴ *Dhammavinaya* is the original name for theory and practice taught by the Buddha.

[The Fourth Chapter for Recitation]

[27: The Four Noble Things]

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the morning time, after picking up his bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for alms. After walking for alms in Vesālī, when he was returning from the alms-round after the meal, after looking at Vesālī with an elephant's look,¹¹⁵ he addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “This is the last time, Ānanda, there will be sight of Vesālī for the Realised One. Come Ānanda let us approach Bhaṇḍagāma.”¹¹⁶

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Bhaṇḍagāma. There the Gracious One lived near Bhaṇḍagāma.

There the Gracious One said this to the monks: “Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration, monks, of four things both

¹¹⁵ Comm: *Buddhānaṃ saṅkhalikāni viya ekābaddhāni hutvā ʃhitāni, tasmā pacchato apalokanakāle na sakkā hoti gīvaṃ parivattetuṃ; the Buddhas' (bones) are bound together like a chain, therefore at the time they look behind, they are unable to turn the neck.*

¹¹⁶ *Bhaṇḍa* means *goods, wares, merchandise*, so the village was probably a market-town.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.¹¹⁷

Which four?

- 1) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration of Noble Virtue¹¹⁸ both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra)¹¹⁹ for a long time.
- 2) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration of Noble Concentrated (Development)¹²⁰ both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.

¹¹⁷ Compare this with section 13 above, which is almost identical, but the four things there are the Four Noble Truths. Compare also with the summary of the teaching given at the end of most sections.

¹¹⁸ The Commentary doesn't comment on this section and this and the next 3 terms do not seem to have been defined elsewhere either. Perhaps *Ariyasīla* would mean the Virtue section of the Eightfold Noble Path (Right Speech, Action and Livelihood); *Ariyasamādhi* the Concentrated (Development) section (Right Endeavour, Mindfulness and Concentration), *Ariyapaññā* the Wisdom section (Right View and Thought). Then *Ariyavimutti* would refer to Right Freedom (*Sammāvimutti*) and Right knowledge and Insight into Freedom (*Sammāvimuttiñāṇadassana*) in the extended Tenfold formula.

¹¹⁹ *Saṃsarita* and *Saṃsāra* are both derived from the verb *saṃsarati*, *to run on, run along*. *Saṃsāra* implies *running on from birth to birth*.

¹²⁰ If the note above is correct then *Ariyasamādhi* refers to Right Endeavour, Mindfulness and Concentration, which means that *Samādhi* here must mean something more than simply concentration, being a concentrated development of the mind in various spheres.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

- 3) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration of Noble Wisdom both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.
- 4) Because of a lack of understanding and a lack of penetration of Noble Freedom both you and I have been wandering and running along (in Saṃsāra) for a long time.

(But now) this Noble Virtue has been understood and penetrated, this Noble Concentrated (Development) has been understood and penetrated, this Noble Wisdom has been understood and penetrated, this Noble Freedom has been understood and penetrated. Craving for continued existence has been cut off, what leads to rebirth has been exhausted, there is no continuation in existence.”

The Gracious One said this, and after saying this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, said something more:

“Virtue, Concentrated (Development), Wisdom, and unsurpassed Freedom,

These things have been understood by the Famous Gotama,¹²¹

Thus after knowing it deeply the Buddha declared the Teaching to the monks,

¹²¹ This verse seems to have been spoken about the Buddha, not by him (it also occurs, however, with the same ascription, at AN Bks. 4.1 and 7.66).

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

The Suffering-Ender, the Teacher, the Visionary One¹²² who is Emancipated.”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living in Bhaṇḍagāma, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[28: The Four Great Referalls]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Bhaṇḍagāma for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying):

“Come Ānanda let us approach Hatthigāma (Elephant Village), Ambagāma (Mango Village), Jambugāma (Rose-Apple Village), Bhoganagara (Wealthy Village).”

¹²² *Cakkhumā*, the Buddha has the physical-eye (*mamsacakkhu*), the divine-eye (*dibbacakkhu*), the wisdom-eye (*paññācakkhu*), the Buddha-eye, and the All-Round-eye (*samantacakkhu*).

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Bhoganagara. There the Gracious One lived near Bhoganagara at the Joyous Shrine.

There the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “I will teach these Four Great Referrals,¹²³ monks, listen to it, apply your minds well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

- 1) “Here, monks, a monk might speak like this: ‘I have heard this directly from the Gracious One, friends, directly I learned it: “This is the Teaching, this is the Discipline, this is the Teacher's Dispensation.”’ That monk's speech, monks, is not to be rejoiced over, not to be scorned at. Without having rejoiced over it, without having scorned it, after learning those words and syllables

¹²³ Parse as *mahā + apadesa*. It should not be translated as authority, the authorities are actually stated below to be the Teaching and the Discipline (*Dhammavinaya*).

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

well, they should be laid alongside the Discourses, they should be compared with the Discipline.¹²⁴

If, when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do not fit in with the Discourses, they do not compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is not the Gracious One's word, it is not well learned by that monk,’ and, monks, you should abandon it. If when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do fit in with the Discourses, they do compare (well) with the Discipline, you may come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is the Gracious One's word, it is well-learned by that monk.’ This, monks, is the first Great Referral you should bear in mind.

- 2) Here, monks, a monk might speak like this: ‘In a certain dwelling place lives a Community with elders and leaders, I have heard this directly from that Community, directly I learned it: “This is the Teaching, this is the Discipline, this is the Teacher's Dispensation.”’ Those monks' speech, monks, is not to be rejoiced over, not to be

¹²⁴ The Commentary has a hard time here explaining what is comprehended by Sutta and Vinaya, because the Abhidhamma is not mentioned explicitly. Eventually it settles on the following definition: *Sutte ti Tepiṭake Buddhavacane oṭāretabbāni. Vinaye ti etasmiṃ rāgādivinayakāraṇe saṃsandetabbānī ti; alongside the Discourses, they should be laid alongside the Buddha's word in the Three Baskets. With the Discipline, they should be compared with the means of disciplining passion.*

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

scorned at. Without having rejoiced over it, without having scorned it, after learning those words and syllables well, they should be laid alongside the Discourses, they should be compared with the Discipline.

If, when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do not fit in with the Discourses, they do not compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is not the Gracious One's word, it is not well learned by that Community,’ and, monks, you should abandon it. If when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do fit in with the Discourses, they do compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is the Gracious One's word, it is well-learned by that Community.’ This, monks, is the second Great Referral you should bear in mind.

- 3) Here, monks, a monk might speak like this: ‘In a certain dwelling place live many elders, very learned, who have learned the traditions, who are bearers of the Teaching, bearers of the Discipline, bearers of the Tabulation,¹²⁵ I have heard this directly from those elders, directly I learned it: “This is the Teaching, this

¹²⁵ Commenting on this phrase the Commentary to AN (PTS 2:189) says: *Dhammadharā ti Suttantapiṭakadharā, Vinayadharā ti Vinayapiṭakadharā, Mātikādhārā ti Dvēmātikādhārā*. The last item is defined therefore as being bearers of both the Bhikkhu- and Bhikkhuṇī-Pātimokkhā.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

is the Discipline, this is the Teacher's Dispensation.” Those monks' speech, monks, is not to be rejoiced over, not to be scorned at. Without having rejoiced over it, without having scorned it, after learning those words and syllables well, they should be laid alongside the Discourses, they should be compared with the Discipline.

If, when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do not fit in with the Discourses, they do not compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is not the Gracious One's word, it is not well learned by those elders,’ and, monks, you should abandon it. If when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline they do fit in with the Discourses, they do compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is the Gracious One's word, it is well-learned by those elders.’ This, monks, is the third Great Referral you should bear in mind.

- 4) Here, monks, a monk might speak like this: ‘In a certain dwelling place lives one elder, very learned, who has learned the traditions, a bearer of the Teaching, a bearer of the Discipline, a bearer of the Tabulation, I have heard this directly from that elder, directly I learned it: “This is the Teaching, this is the Discipline, this is the Teacher's Dispensation.” That monk's speech, monks, is not to be rejoiced over, not to be scorned at. Without having rejoiced over it, without having scorned it, after learning those words and

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

syllables well, they should be laid alongside the Discourses, they should be compared with the Discipline.

If, when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline they do not fit in with the Discourses, they do not compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is not the Gracious One's word, it is not well learned by that elder,’ and, monks, you should abandon it. If when these are laid alongside the Discourses, compared with the Discipline, they do fit in with the Discourses, they do compare (well) with the Discipline, you may here come to this conclusion: ‘Certainly this is the Gracious One's word, it is well-learned by that elder.’ This, monks, is the fourth Great Referral you should bear in mind. These, monks, are the Four Great Referrals you should bear in mind.”

* * *

There also the Gracious One, while living near Bhoganagara at the Joyful Shrine, spoke frequently to the monks about the Teaching, (saying):

“Such is virtue, such is concentration, such is wisdom, when virtue is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to concentration, when concentration is well-developed it yields great fruit and brings great advantages in regard to wisdom, when wisdom is well-developed the mind is completely liberated from the

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

pollutants, that is to say: the pollutant of sensuality, the pollutant of (craving for) continued existence, the pollutant of ignorance.”

[29: The Last Meal]

Then the Gracious One, after living near Bhoganagara for as long as he liked, addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda let us approach Pāvā.”¹²⁶

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks arrived at Pāvā. There the Gracious One lived near Pāvā in Cunda the Smith's¹²⁷ mango wood.

Cunda the Smith heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has arrived at Pāvā, and is dwelling near Pāvā, in my mango wood.” Then Cunda the Smith approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While Cunda the Smith was sitting on one side the Gracious One instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered him with a talk about the Teaching. Then Cunda the Smith, having been instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered by

¹²⁶ When we trace the last leg of this tour on a map it very much looks like the Buddha was actually heading for Kapilavatthu, where he had grown up and where his kinsfolk were, but attained parinibbāna before he could reach his destination.

¹²⁷ Comm: *Suvaṇṇakāraputtassa*, the Gold Smith, I take *-putta* here as pleonastic, otherwise it would mean *son of the (Gold-)Smith*.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

the Gracious One with a talk about the Teaching, said this to the Gracious One: “May the Gracious One consent, reverend Sir, to me (offering him) a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.”

The Gracious One consented by maintaining silence. Then Cunda the Smith, having understood the Gracious One's consent, after rising from his seat, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, went away.

Then after the night had passed, Cunda the Smith, in his own residence, having had excellent foodstuffs made ready, and an abundance of tender pork,¹²⁸ had the time announced to the Gracious One, (saying): “It is time, reverend Sir, the meal is ready.”

Then the Gracious One, having dressed in the morning time, after picking up his bowl and robe, together with the Community of monks, approached Cunda the Smith's residence, and after approaching, he sat down on the prepared seat. Having sat down, the Gracious One addressed Cunda the Smith, (saying):

¹²⁸ *Sūkaramaddavan-ti nātitaruṇassa nātijīṇṇassa ekajeṭṭhakasūkarassa pavattamaṃsam*; tender pork means fresh meat from a great pig that is not too young nor too old. Elsewhere in the Commentaries there are some further suggestions: that it was made of soft rice cooked with the five products of a cow; an elixer of life (*rasāyanavidhi*); bamboo shoots trampled by pigs; or mushrooms.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

“Serve me with the tender pork you have prepared, Cunda, but serve the Community of monks with the other foodstuffs which have been prepared.”

“Very well, reverend Sir”, said Cunda the Smith, and after replying to the Gracious One, he served the Gracious One with the tender pork that had been prepared, but served the Community of monks with the other foodstuffs which had been prepared. Then the Gracious One addressed Cunda the Smith, (saying):

“Throw that left over tender pork into a pit, Cunda, (for) I do not see, Cunda, in the world with its Divinities, Māra, and Brahmā, in this generation with its ascetics and brahmins, princes and men, one who, having eaten it, could completely digest it, except for a Realised One.”¹²⁹

“Very well, reverend Sir”, said Cunda the Smith, and after replying to the Gracious One, and throwing what was left over of that tender pork into a pit, he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side.

¹²⁹ It is presumably this passage which makes people think that the last meal was the cause of the Buddha's illness, however the Commentary denies this: *bhuttassa udapādi, na pana bhuttapaccayā; it occurred when he had eaten, but not because he had eaten.*

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

While sitting on one side Cunda the Smith having been instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered by the Gracious One with a talk about the Teaching, having risen from the seat, went away.

Then for the Gracious One, after eating Cunda the Smith's food, a painful affliction arose, bloody dysentery, and strong feelings occurred, such as end in death. There the Gracious One, mindfully, with full awareness, bore (those pains) without being troubled. Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come, Ānanda, let us approach Kusinārā.”

“Very well, reverend Sir”, venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One.

“Having eaten Cunda the Smith's food, so I have heard,
The Firm One experienced a very strong affliction, such as ends in death.

For the Teacher, who had eaten tender pork,
A very strong sickness arose.

While (still) purging the Gracious One said:

‘I (will) go to the town of Kusinārā.’ ”¹³⁰

¹³⁰ The Commentary notes: *Imā gāthāyo Saṅgītikāle saṅgītikārakehi vuttā - these verses were spoken by the recitors at the time of the (first) Council.*

[30: Bringing Drinking Water]

Then the Gracious One, having gone down from the road, approached the root of a certain tree, and after approaching, he addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come now, Ānanda, prepare the outer robe folded in four for me, I am weary, Ānanda, and will sit down.”

“Very well, reverend Sir”, said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, he prepared the outer robe folded in four, and the Gracious One sat down on the prepared seat.¹³¹ While sitting the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come now, Ānanda, bring drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, and will drink.”

After that was said, venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “Just now, reverend Sir, five hundred wagons have passed by, and the little water that flows, having been churned by the wheels, is stirred up and disturbed. The Kakutthā river is not far away, with transparent water, agreeable water, cool water, pure water, with beautiful banks, a delightful (place), there the Gracious One can drink drinking water, and can cool his limbs.”

For a second time the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come now, Ānanda, bring drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, and will drink.”

¹³¹ The Commentary tells us that the Buddha had to sit down like this 25 times on the way from Pāvā to Kusinārā.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

For a second time venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “Just now, reverend Sir, five hundred wagons have passed by, and the little water that flows, having been churned by the wheels, is stirred up and disturbed. The Kakutthā river is not far away, with transparent water, agreeable water, cool water, pure water, with beautiful banks, a delightful (place), there the Gracious One can drink drinking water, and can cool his limbs.”

For a third time the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come now, Ānanda, bring drinking water, I am thirsty, Ānanda, and will drink.”

“Very well, reverend Sir”, said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, and taking the bowl, he approached the little river. Then that little river that was flowing, which had been churned by the wheels, and was stirred up and disturbed, as venerable Ānanda was approaching, flowed transparent, clear, and undisturbed.

Then it occurred to venerable Ānanda: “Surely it is wonderful, surely it is marvellous, the Realised One's great power and great majesty, in that that little river that is flowing, which has been churned by wheels, and is stirred up and disturbed, as I was approaching, flowed transparent, clear, and undisturbed.”

After taking a bowl of drinking water he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching, he said this to the Gracious One: “It is wonderful, reverend Sir, it is marvellous, reverend Sir, the Realised One's great power and great majesty, in that that little river that is

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

flowing, which has been churned by wheels, and is stirred up and disturbed, as I was approaching, flowed transparent, clear, and undisturbed. Please drink the drinking water, Gracious One! Please drink the drinking water, Fortunate One!” Then the Gracious One drank the water.

[31: The Story concerning Pukkusa Mallaputta]

Now at that time Pukkasa Mallaputta, a disciple of Āḷāra Kālāma, was travelling along the highway from Pāvā to Kusinārā. Pukkasa Mallaputta saw the Gracious One sitting at the root of a certain tree. And having seen (him) he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side Pukkasa Mallaputta said this to the Gracious One: “It is wonderful, reverend Sir, it is marvellous, reverend Sir, that those who have gone forth, reverend Sir, live such a peaceful living.

Formerly, reverend Sir, Āḷāra Kālāma¹³² descended from the highway he was travelling along, and was dwelling for the day sat not far away at the root of a certain tree. Then, reverend Sir, about five hundred

¹³² Āḷāra Kālāma had been one of the Gotama's early teachers, who taught him the attainment of the sphere of nothingness (*ākāṅkamaññāyatana*). The Bodhisatta wasn't satisfied with this though, and sought out another teacher, Udaka Rāmaputta. Nothing more is known about Āḷāra, but he was evidently an adept at absorption (*jhāna*), as the following story shows.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

waggons passed by very close to Āḷāra Kālāma. Then, reverend Sir, a certain man who was traveling along behind those waggons approached Āḷāra Kālāma, and after approaching he said this to Āḷāra Kālāma:

‘Did you not see, reverend Sir, about five hundred waggons pass by?’

‘I did not see, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, did you not hear the sound?’

‘I did not hear the sound, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, were you sleeping?’

‘I was not sleeping, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, were you conscious?’

‘Yes, friend.’

‘So you, reverend Sir, though conscious and awake, when about five hundred waggons passed by very close neither saw (them) nor heard a sound! Why, reverend Sir, even your double-robe is covered with dust!’

‘Yes, friend.’

Then this occurred to that man: ‘It is wonderful, it is marvellous, that those who have indeed gone forth live such a peaceful living. Because though conscious and awake, when about five hundred waggons passed

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

by very close he did not see (them) or hear a sound!”¹³³ And having gained great confidence in Āḷāra Kālāma, he left.”

“Now what do you think, Pukkusa, which is the more difficult to do or the more difficult to come by: that someone though conscious and awake, when about five hundred waggons passed by very close should neither see (them) nor hear a sound, or that someone, though conscious and awake, when the Divinities rain down, when the Divinities throw it down, and the lightning flashes, and the thunder crashes forth, should neither see (it) nor hear a sound?”

“Why, reverend Sir, what to make of five-hundred waggons, six-hundred waggons, seven-hundred waggons, eight-hundred waggons, nine-hundred waggons, one thousand waggons, or one-hundred thousand waggons? This is the more difficult to do or the more difficult to come by: that someone, though conscious and awake, when the Divinities rain down, when the Divinities throw it down, and the lightning flashes, and the thunder crashes forth, should neither see (it) nor hear a sound.”

“One day, Pukkusa, I was living near Ātumā at the Decorated House. Now at that time the Divinities rained down, the Divinities threw it

¹³³ Comm: *neva dakkhiṭi ti na addasa. Yatra saddayuttattā panetamī anāgatavasena vuttamī; he did not see, he didn't see. He used the future (tense) because of the connection with yatra.* However, it appears *dakkhiṭi* is continued on next page

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

down, and the lightning flashed, and the thunder crashed forth, and not far away from the Decorated House two brothers who were farmers died, along with four oxen. Then, Pukkusa, a great crowd of people having departed from Ātumā, went to the place where the brothers who were farmers and the four oxen had died.

Then, Pukkusa, at that time, after leaving the Decorated House, I was walking in the open air near the gate to the Decorated House. Then, Pukkusa, a certain man from that crowd approached me, and after approaching and worshipping me, he stood on one side. While standing there, Pukkusa, I said to that man:

‘Why, friend, has that great crowd of people assembled?’

‘Just now, reverend Sir, the Divinities rained down, the Divinities threw it down, and the lightning flashed, and the thunder crashed forth, and two brothers who were farmers died, along with four oxen, and that great crowd of people assembled here. But where were you, reverend Sir?’

‘I was right here, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, did you see (it)?’

‘I did not see, friend.’

also used as a present tense verb. See PED **Dassati* p. 316 where examples are given.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

‘But, reverend Sir, did you hear the sound?’

‘I did not hear the sound, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, were you sleeping?’

‘I was not sleeping, friend.’

‘But, reverend Sir, were you conscious?’

‘Yes, friend.’

‘So, reverend Sir, though conscious and awake when the Divinities rained down, when the Divinities threw it down, and the lightning flashed, and the thunder crashed forth, you neither saw (it), nor heard a sound!’

‘Yes, friend.’

Then, Pukkusa, this occurred to that man: ‘It is wonderful, it is marvellous, that those who have indeed gone forth live such a peaceful living. Because though conscious and awake when the Divinities rained down, when the Divinities threw it down, and the lightning flashed, and the thunder crashed forth, he did not see (it) or hear a sound!’ And after gaining great confidence in me, worshipping and circumambulating me, he left.”

After this was said, Pukkusa Mallaputta said this to the Gracious One: “That faith, reverend Sir, I have in Āḷāra Kālāma, I clear away as with a great wind, I wash (it) away as with a fast-flowing river:

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

Excellent, reverend Sir! Excellent, reverend Sir! Just as, reverend Sir, one might set upright what has been overturned, or open up what has been closed, or show a path to one who is lost, or bear an oil lamp in the darkness so that one who has eyes can see forms, just so has the Teaching been made clear by the Gracious One in more than one way. I go to the Gracious One, reverend Sir, for refuge, and to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. Please bear it in mind, Gracious One, that I am a lay disciple who has gone for refuge from today forward for as long as I am furnished with life.”

Then Pukkusa Mallaputta addressed a certain man, (saying): “Come, my man, bring me a pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said that man, and after replying to Pukkusa Mallaputta, he brought a pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear. Then Pukkusa Mallaputta offered that pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear, to the Gracious One, (saying): “Please accept, reverend Sir, this pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear out of compassion for me, Gracious One.”

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

“Then, Pukkusa, clothe me with one, and Ānanda with the other.”¹³⁴

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said Pukkusa Mallaputta, and after replying to the Gracious One clothed the Gracious One with one, and Ānanda with the other. Then the Gracious One instructed Pukkusa Mallaputta roused, enthused, and cheered (him) with a talk about the Teaching. Then Pukkusa Mallaputta, having been instructed, roused, enthused, and cheered by the Gracious One with a talk about the Teaching, after rising from his seat, worshipping and circumambulating the Gracious One, departed.

Then, venerable Ānanda, not long after Pukkusa Mallaputta had departed, offered that pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear, to the Gracious One, and when placed on the Gracious One's body they appeared to have lost their gleam.

Then venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “It is wonderful, reverend Sir, it is marvellous, reverend Sir, how pure and clean is the Realised One's skin-colour, reverend Sir! This pair of polished gold-coloured (robes), ready to wear, reverend Sir, when placed on the Gracious One's body have lost their gleam!”

¹³⁴ This is curious as Ānanda had made it a condition of his serving as attendant to the Buddha that he would not receive robes from him. The Commentary, quite embarrassed, has a weak explanation of the event, saying that his service to the Buddha had now come to an end.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

“Just so, Ānanda, on two occasions, Ānanda, the Realised One's skin-colour becomes exceedingly pure and clean.

On which two occasions?

That night, Ānanda, the Realised One perfectly awakens to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening, and that night the Realised One is Finally Emancipated in the Emancipation-element which has no basis for attachment remaining. On these two occasions the Realised One's skin-colour is exceedingly pure and clean. Today, Ānanda, during the last watch of the night, near to Kusinārā, in the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana, between a pair of Sal trees will be the Realised One's Final Emancipation.

“Come Ānanda let us approach River Kakutthā.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One.

“A pair of polished gold-coloured (robes) was offered by Pukkusa, Once clothed with it the Teacher's golden (skin) colour shone forth.”¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Comm: *Siṅgīvaṇṇan-ti gāthā Saṅgūtikāle ṭhapitā; gold-coloured, this verse was placed (here) at the time of the (First) Council.*

[32: Cunda's Great Gain]

Then the Gracious One with a great Community of monks went to the river Kakutthā, and after going, and entering into the river Kakutthā, bathing, and drinking, and coming back out, he approached the mango wood, and after approaching, he addressed venerable Cundaka, (saying): “Come now, Cundaka, prepare the outer robe folded in four for me, I am weary, Cundaka, and will lie down.”¹³⁶

“Very well, reverend Sir”, said venerable Cundaka, and after replying to the Gracious One, he prepared the outer robe folded in four. Then the Gracious One, lay down on his right side in the lion's posture, after placing one foot on the top of the other, mindfully, with full awareness, having applied his mind to the thought of rising. And venerable Cundaka sat down right there in front of the Gracious One.

“The Awakened One, having gone to the little river Kakutthā,
Which had water that was transparent, pleasant, and clear,
The Teacher, very weary, entered (the river),
the Realised One, who is unmatched here in the world.

¹³⁶ The Commentary explains that Ānanda was still wringing out his bathing robe (*udakasāṭakamī*), so the Buddha asked Cundaka to help. We can see from this and other references that it was normal for the monks to spread their robes on the floor and to sit or lie down on them.

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

After washing and drinking, the Teacher came out,
And in the middle of the Community of monks, at the front,
The Teacher, the Gracious One, having taught the Teaching here,
The Great Sage went to the mango wood.

He addressed the monk called Cundaka, (saying):
“Spread out (the robe) folded in four for me to lie down on,”
Cunda, urged by the One with Developed Mind,
Very quickly spread (the robe) folded in four.
The Teacher, very weary, lay down,
With Cunda sat right there at the front.”¹³⁷

Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “It may be, Ānanda, that someone might cause remorse for the smith Cunda, (saying): ‘There is no gain for you, friend Cunda, it is a poor gain for you, in that the Realised One, after eating his last almsfood from you, attained Final Emancipation.’

If there is remorse for Cunda the Smith, Ānanda, drive it out in this way, (saying): ‘There is a gain for you, friend Cunda, it is a good gain for you, in that the Realised One, after eating his last almsfood from you, attained Final Emancipation. I heard this face to face with the Gracious One, friend Cunda, I learned it face to face: ‘There are these two almsfoods which have the very same excellent fruit, have the very

¹³⁷ Comm: *imā pi gāthā Saṅgītikāle yeva ṭhapitā; these verses were placed (here) at the time of the (First) Council.*

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

same excellent result, that is a greater fruit, a greater result than other almsfood.

Which two?

That almsfood which, after eating, the Realised One awakens to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening; and that almsfood which, after eating, the Realised One attains Final Emancipation in the Emancipation-element which has no basis for attachment remaining. These are the two almsfoods which have the same fruit, have the same result, that is an exceedingly greater fruit, a greater result than other almsfood.

Friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to long life, friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to beauty, friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to happiness, friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to fame, friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to heaven, friend Cunda the Smith has accumulated a (good) deed that is conducive to sovereignty.’ (If there is remorse for Cunda the Smith, Ānanda, it should be driven out in this way!”

Then the Gracious One, having understood the significance of it, on that occasion uttered this exalted utterance:

The Fourth Chapter for Recitation

“For the one who gives merit is increased,
From restraint hatred is not accumulated.
The skilful one gives up what is bad,
Through the destruction of passion, hatred, and delusion, he is
emancipated.”

The Fourth Chapter for Recital (is Finished).

[The Fifth Chapter for Recitation]

[33: Worshipping the Realised One]

Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come Ānanda, let us approach the further shore of the Golden river, to Kusinārā, and to the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One together with a great Community of monks went to the further shore of the Golden river, to Kusinārā, and the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana, and after going he addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Come, Ānanda, prepare a couch with the head facing north between the Twin Sal Trees for me, I am weary, Ānanda, and will lie down.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, he prepared a couch with the head facing north between the Twin Sal Trees. Then the Gracious One, lay down on his right side in the lion's posture, after placing one foot on the top of the other, mindfully, with full awareness.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Now at that time the Twin Sal Trees were full of flowering blossoms, outside of flowering time,¹³⁸ and they were sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also the Divine Coral Tree flowers were falling from the sky, and they were sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also Divine sandalwood powder was falling from the sky, and was sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also Divine music played in the sky in worship of the Realised One. Also Divine songs played in the sky in worship of the Realised One.

Then the Gracious One said this to venerable Ānanda: “The Twin Sal Trees are full of flowering blossoms, outside of flowering time, and they are sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also the Divine Coral Tree flowers are falling from the sky, and they are sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also Divine sandalwood powder is falling from the sky, and is sprinkling down on the Realised One's body, showering down, pouring down on the Realised One in worship. Also

¹³⁸ According to Ven. S. Dhammika the Sal tree normally blossoms in March or April (see <http://sdhammika.blogspot.com/2008/05/sal-tree.html>), but here we must be in May and maybe the middle of May.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Divine music plays in the sky in worship of the Realised One. Also Divine songs play in the sky in worship of the Realised One.

But it is not in this way, Ānanda, that the Realised One is honoured, respected, revered, worshipped, or esteemed. But that monk, nun, layman, or laywoman, Ānanda, who lives practising the Teaching in accordance with the Teaching, correct in their practice, living in conformity with the Teaching, he honours, respects, reveres, worships, and esteems the Realised One with the highest worship. Therefore, Ānanda, thinking: ‘Let us live practising the Teaching in accordance with the Teaching, correct in our practice, living in conformity with the Teaching,’ this is how you are to train, Ānanda.”

[34: The Visit of the Divinities]

Now at that time venerable Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Gracious One, fanning the Gracious One. Then the Gracious One dismissed venerable Upavāṇa, (saying): “Depart, monk, do not stand in front of me.”

Then venerable Ānanda thought: “This venerable Upavāṇa has been the Gracious One’s attendant for a long time,¹³⁹ living near to him,

¹³⁹ Ven. Upavāṇa was one of the monks attending on the Buddha in the first twenty years after the Awakening, before Ānanda was appointed full-time to that position, so he had been attending on the Buddha for a very long time indeed.

within proximity. Then at the last moment the Gracious One dismisses venerable Upavāṇa, (saying): ‘Depart, monk, do not stand in front of me.’ What was the reason, what was the cause, for the Gracious One dismissing venerable Upavāṇa, (saying): ‘Depart, monk, do not stand in front of me?’”

Then venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “This venerable Upavāṇa has been the Gracious One's attendant for a long time, living near to him, within proximity. Then at the last moment the Gracious One dismisses venerable Upavāṇa, (saying): ‘Depart, monk, do not stand in front of me.’ What is the reason, reverend Sir, what is the cause, for the Gracious One dismissing venerable Upavāṇa, (saying): ‘Depart, monk, do not stand in front of me?’”

“Almost all of the Divinities,¹⁴⁰ Ānanda, from the ten world-elements¹⁴¹ have assembled to see the Realised One, everywhere around Kusinārā and the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana for as far as twelve leagues there is no place, even so much as a tip of a pricking hair, unpervaded by powerful Divinities, and the Divinities, Ānanda, are complaining, (saying): ‘We have come from afar to see the

¹⁴⁰ The Commentary explains that *almost* is said because beings without perception (*asaññasattā*), and those in the formless worlds (*arūpadevatā*) didn't come.

¹⁴¹ BJT adds *sahasīsū*, which would mean: *from the ten thousand world-elements*.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Realised One, only occasionally, infrequently, do Realised Ones, Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas arise in the world, and today during the last watch of the night will be the Realised One's Final Emancipation, and this powerful monk is stood in front concealing the Realised One,¹⁴² and we are not able to see the Realised One at the last moment.' ”

“But what beings and Divinities is the Gracious One thinking of?”

“There are, Ānanda, Divinities in the sky, perceiving the Earth, who, having dishevelled hair, are weeping, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, they are crying: ‘Too quickly the Gracious One will attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One will attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world will disappear!’

There are, Ānanda, Divinities on the Earth, perceiving the Earth, who, having dishevelled hair, are weeping, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, they are crying: ‘Too quickly the Gracious One will attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One will

¹⁴² Comm: *Thero kira pakatiyāpi mahāsarīro hatthipotakasadiṣo, so paṃsukūlacīvaraṃ pārupitvā atimahā viya ahoṣi; the Elder was naturally big in body, like a young elephant, and after donning his rag-robe he was like someone exceedingly big.*

attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world will disappear!” ”

But those Divinities who have cut off passion, mindfully, with full awareness, they endure, (thinking): ‘Impermanent are (all) processes, how can it be otherwise?’ ”

[35: The Four Places that Produce Enthusiasm]

“Formerly, reverend Sir, the monks, having dwelt for the Rains Retreat used to come to see the Realised One, and we would receive those meditating monks for assembling and seeing (the Realised One).¹⁴³ But after the Gracious One has passed way, reverend Sir, we will not receive those meditating monks for assembling and seeing (the Realised One).”

“There are these four places that can be seen, that produce enthusiasm, Ānanda, for a faithful man of good family.

Which four?

¹⁴³ The Commentary mentions that it was customary for monks to come and see the Buddha before the Rains Retreat began to get a meditation subject (*kammaṭṭhāna*), and again after the Retreat had ended to announce their attainments.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

- 1) (Thinking): 'Here the Realised One was born',¹⁴⁴ Ānanda, (that) is a place to be seen that produces enthusiasm for a faithful man of good family.
- 2) (Thinking): 'Here the Realised One awoke to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening',¹⁴⁵ Ānanda, (that) is a place to be seen that produces enthusiasm for a faithful man of good family.
- 3) (Thinking): 'Here the Realised One set rolling the Wheel of the Teaching',¹⁴⁶ Ānanda, (that) is a place to be seen that produces enthusiasm for a faithful man of good family.
- 4) (Thinking): 'Here the Realised One was completely Emancipated in the Emancipation-element which has no basis for attachment remaining',¹⁴⁷ Ānanda, (that) is a place to be seen that produces enthusiasm for a faithful man of good family.

These are the four places, Ānanda, that are to be seen that produce enthusiasm for a faithful man of good family.

¹⁴⁴ At Lumbinī, just north-east of Kapilavatthu, now just inside Nepal.

¹⁴⁵ At Uruvelā in Magadhā, south of Rājagaha, on the banks of the River Nerañjanā.

¹⁴⁶ At Isipatana, just north of Bārāṇasī (modern Varanasi).

¹⁴⁷ At Kusiṇārā, somewhat south of the Buddha's home town of Kapilavatthu.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Faithful monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen will come, (thinking): ‘Here the Realised One was born’, ‘Here the Realised One awoke to the unsurpassed and Perfect Awakening’, ‘Here the Realised One set rolling the Wheel of the Teaching’, ‘Here the Realised One was Finally Emancipated in the Emancipation-element which has no basis for attachment remaining’, and whoever, Ānanda, will die while on pilgrimage to the Shrines with a confident mind they will all, at the break-up of the body, after death, re-arise in a fortunate destiny, in a heavenly world.”¹⁴⁸



¹⁴⁸ This is still a popular pilgrimage that every Buddhist tries to make at least once during his lifetime.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

* * *

“How, reverend Sir, are we to act in regard to women?”

“(As though they were) not seen, Ānanda.”

“(But) when seeing them, reverend Sir, how are we to act?”

“Without conversing, Ānanda.”

“(But) when conversing, reverend Sir, how are we to act?”

“You should attend to mindfulness, Ānanda.”¹⁴⁹

* * *

“How should we act, reverend Sir, in regard to the Realised One's body?”

“Do not worry, Ānanda, about how you are to worshipfully (dispose of) the Realised One's body. Come, Ānanda, live striving for the highest good, being devoted to the highest good, being heedful of the highest good, ardent, and resolute. There are, Ānanda, wise Nobles, wise brahmins, wise householders who have faith in the Realised One.

¹⁴⁹ cf. the Buddha's teaching the monks mindfulness just before they were going to see Ambapālī above.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

They will worshipfully (dispose of) the Realised One's body.”¹⁵⁰

* * *

“How should we act, reverend Sir, in regard to the Realised One's body?”

“As you act in regard to the Universal Monarch's body, so you should act in regard to the Realised One's body.”

“But how do they act, reverend Sir, in regard to the Universal Monarch's body?”

“They wrap the Universal Monarch's body, Ānanda, with clean cloth, and after wrapping with clean cloth, they wrap with carded cotton, and after wrapping with carded cotton, they wrap with clean cloth, by this means after wrapping the Universal Monarch's body with five-hundred pairs (of cloth and cotton), enclosing it in an oil tub made of

¹⁵⁰ This seems to record a different tradition to the one just below, which is presumably inserted here to give authority for the cremation procedure that follows later.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

iron,¹⁵¹ and enclosing it in another iron tub, and putting it on a scented funeral pyre, they burn the Universal Monarch's body, and they build a Shrine for the Universal Monarch at the crossroads.

So they act in regard to a Universal Monarch's body, and as they act in regard to a Universal Monarch's body so should they act in regard to a Realised One's body, and a Shrine should be made for the Realised One at the crossroads. Whoever there prepares flowers, incense, or powder, or worships or establishes confidence in his mind, that will be for their benefit and happiness for a long time.

* * *

These four (persons), Ānanda, are worthy of a Shrine.

Which four?

- 1) A Realised One, a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha is worthy of a Shrine,
- 2) an Individual Sambuddha is worthy of a Shrine,

¹⁵¹ The Commentary defines iron as gold here: *āyasāyā ti sovaṇṇāya, sovaṇṇañ-hi idha ayaśan-ti adhippetam; made of iron means made of gold, because here gold is meant when iron (is said)*. It may be, as Rhys-Davids believes (p. 155 n.4), that iron was not thought of as being a sufficiently valuable metal by the time the Commentaries were being written. I can find nowhere else where *āyasa* is defined as gold, and so let the translation as *iron* stand.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

3) a Realised One's disciple is worthy of a Shrine,¹⁵²

4) a Universal Monarch is worthy of a Shrine.

And for what reason or cause is a Realised One, a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha worthy of a Shrine? (Thinking): ‘This is the Shrine of a Realised One, a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha’, Ānanda, many people purify their mind, and after purifying their mind, at the break-up of the body, after death, they arise in a fortunate destiny, in a Heavenly world. This is the reason or cause, Ānanda, why a Realised One, a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha is worthy of a Shrine.

And for what reason or cause is an Individual Sambuddha worthy of a Shrine? (Thinking): ‘This is the Shrine of a Gracious One, an Individual Sambuddha’, Ānanda, many people purify their mind, and after purifying their mind, at the break-up of the body, after death, they arise in a fortunate destiny, in a Heavenly world. This is the reason or cause, Ānanda, why an Individual Sambuddha is worthy of a Shrine.

And for what reason or cause is a Realised One's disciple worthy of a Shrine? (Thinking): ‘This is the Shrine of a disciple of a Gracious One, a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha’, Ānanda, many people purify

¹⁵² From the Commentary on the next line where a *puthujjana* monk is mentioned it is clear that a disciple here means one who is a Noble Disciple (*Ariyasāvaka*).

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

their mind, and after purifying their mind, at the break-up of the body, after death, they arise in a fortunate destiny, in a Heavenly world. This is the reason or cause, Ānanda, why a Realised One's disciple is worthy of a Shrine.

And for what reason or cause is a Universal Monarch worthy of a Shrine? (Thinking): ‘This is the Shrine of a Righteous Monarch, a Righteous King’, Ānanda, many people purify their mind, and after purifying their mind, at the break-up of the body, after death, they arise in a fortunate destiny, in a Heavenly world. This is the reason or cause, Ānanda, why a Universal Monarch is worthy of a Shrine. These, Ānanda, are the four (persons) worthy of a Shrine.’”

[36: Ānanda's Marvellous Qualities]

Then venerable Ānanda, after entering the living place,¹⁵³ and leaning against the door-lintel, stood there crying: “The Teacher will attain Final Emancipation while I am still a Trainee with much to do,¹⁵⁴ he who has compassion for me!”

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “Where, monks, is Ānanda?”

¹⁵³ The Commentary defines living place (*vihāram*) here as a circular pavilion (*maṇḍalamālo*).

¹⁵⁴ A Trainee (*Sekha*) is one who is at least a Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*), but has not become a Worthy One (*Arahanta*).

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

“This venerable Ānanda, reverend Sir, after entering the living place, and leaning against the door-lintel, stands there crying: ‘The Teacher will attain Final Emancipation while I am still a Trainee with much to do, he who has compassion for me!’ ”

Then the Gracious One addressed a certain monk, (saying): “Go, monk, and in my name address Ānanda, (saying): ‘The Teacher, friend Ānanda, is calling you.’ ”

“Very well, reverend Sir, and after replying to the Gracious One, he approached venerable Ānanda, and after approaching he said this to venerable Ānanda: “The Teacher, friend Ānanda, is calling you.”

“Very well, friend,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to that monk, he approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side the Gracious One said this to venerable Ānanda:

“Enough, Ānanda, don't grieve, don't lament, were you not warned by me when I declared: ‘There is alteration in, separation from, and changeability in all that is dear and appealing.’ How can it be otherwise, Ānanda, for that which is obtained, born, become, conditioned, subject to dissolution? It is not possible (to say) this: ‘The Realised One’s body should not dissolve’.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

For a long time, Ānanda, you dwelt near to the Realised One with beneficial, pleasant, trustworthy,¹⁵⁵ and limitlessly friendly bodily actions, with beneficial, pleasant, trustworthy, and limitlessly friendly speech actions, with beneficial, pleasant, trustworthy, and limitlessly friendly mental actions, you have done meritorious deeds, Ānanda, you should devote yourself to quickly striving to be one who is pollutant-free!”

* * *

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “Whoever were Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas in the past, monks, for those Gracious Ones also there were such superior attendants, just as Ānanda is for me; whoever will be Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas in the future, monks, for those Gracious Ones also there will be such superior attendants, just as Ānanda is for me.

Ānanda is wise, monks, Ānanda is intelligent, monks, he knows: ‘This is the time for monks to approach and see the Realised One, this is the time for monks, this is the time for nuns, this is the time for laymen, this is the time for laywomen, this is the time for kings, for kings’ ministers, for outside teachers, for the disciples of outside teachers.’

* * *

¹⁵⁵ One of the meanings of *dvaya* is *duplicitous*; therefore *a-dvaya* means *trustworthy*.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

There are four wonderful and marvellous things, monks, about Ānanda.

Which four?

- 1) If, monks, a group of monks approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome,¹⁵⁶ their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of monks are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.
- 2) If, monks, a group of nuns approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of nuns are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.
- 3) If, monks, a group of laymen approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of laymen are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.

¹⁵⁶ The Commentary defines *dhamma* here as *paṭisanthāradhammā*, and gives examples of the way he greets the various people he meets with appropriate speech.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

If, monks, a group of laywomen approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of laywomen are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.

These are the four wonderful and marvellous things about Ānanda.

There are four wonderful and marvellous things, monks, about the Universal Monarch.

Which four?

- 1) If, monks, a group of Nobles approach to see the Universal Monarch their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if the Universal Monarch speaks, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of nobles are dissatisfied if then the Universal Monarch remains silent.
- 2) If, monks, a group of brahmins approach to see the Universal Monarch their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if the Universal Monarch speaks, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of brahmins are dissatisfied if then the Universal Monarch remains silent.
- 3) If, monks, a group of householders approach to see the Universal Monarch their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if the Universal Monarch speaks, their minds are uplifted with the

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

speech, but that group of householders are dissatisfied if then the Universal Monarch remains silent.

- 4) If, monks, a group of ascetics approach to see the Universal Monarch their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if the Universal Monarch speaks, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of ascetics are dissatisfied if then the Universal Monarch remains silent.

In the same way there are four wonderful and marvellous things, monks, about Ānanda.

- 1) If, monks, a group of monks approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of monks are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.
- 2) If, monks, a group of nuns approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of nuns are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.
- 3) If, monks, a group of laymen approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of laymen are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

- 4) If, monks, a group of laywomen approach to see Ānanda their minds are uplifted through seeing (him), and if Ānanda speaks words of welcome, their minds are uplifted with the speech, but that group of laywomen are dissatisfied if at that time Ānanda remains silent.

There are the four wonderful and marvellous things, monks, about Ānanda.”

[37: Kusinārā's History]¹⁵⁷

After this was said, venerable Ānanda addressed the Gracious One, (saying): “Reverend Sir, may the Gracious One not attain Final Emancipation in this small town, this barren town, this branch town. There are, reverend Sir, other great towns, such as: Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvattihī, Sāketa, Kosambī, Bārāṇasī¹⁵⁸ - let the Gracious One attain Final Emancipation there. There are many wealthy Nobles there, wealthy brahmins, wealthy householders, who are devoted to the Realised One, and will worshipfully (dispose of) the Realised One's body.”

¹⁵⁷ cf. the opening of Mahāsudassanasuttaṃ (DN 17). According to Yang-Gyu An (p. 167) in the other versions of this discourse the whole of Mahāsudassanasuttaṃ is included at this point.

¹⁵⁸ These are all major cities of their various countries. Campā in Aṅgā, Rājagaha in Magadhā, Sāvattihī in Northern Kosala, Sāketa in Southern Kosala, Kosambī in Vaṃsā, Bārāṇasī in Kāsī.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

“Do not say that, Ānanda, do not say that, Ānanda: ‘(This) small town, this barren town, this branch town’. Formerly, Ānanda, there was a King by the name of Mahāsudassana, a Righteous Monarch, a Righteous King, who was victorious over the four quarters, one who had established a stable country, endowed with the seven jewels.¹⁵⁹

This Kusinārā, was then named Kusāvātī, and was King Mahāsudassana's capital city. Stretching for twelve leagues from East to West, and seven leagues from North to South, the capital city Kusāvātī was prosperous, Ānanda, successful, populous, full of people, with much food, just as, Ānanda, the capital city of the Divinities named Āḷakamandā is prosperous, successful, populous, full of people, with much food, so the capital city Kusāvātī was prosperous, Ānanda, successful, populous, full of people, with much food.

The capital city Kusāvātī was never separated from the ten sounds, by day or by night, that is to say: the sound of elephants, the sound of horses, the sound of chariots, the sound of drums, the sound of tabours, the sound of lutes, the sound of songs, the sound of cymbals, the sound of hand bells, (and with) ‘eat, drink, chew!’ as the tenth sound.

¹⁵⁹ Gold, silver, pearls, jewels, lapis lazuli, diamonds, and coral.

[38: The Mallas Worship the Gracious One]

“Go, Ānanda, and after entering into Kusinārā, announce to the Mallas: ‘Today, Vāseṭṭhas,¹⁶⁰ in the last watch of the night, will be the Realised One's attainment of Final Emancipation, come along, Vāseṭṭhas, come along, Vāseṭṭhas, do not regret it afterwards (thinking): ‘In the area of our village, was the Realised One's attainment of Final Emancipation, and we did not, in the last watch of the night, get to see the Realised One’”.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to the Gracious One, dressing, and taking his robes and bowl, he entered Kusinārā with a companion.

Now at that time the Mallas from Kusinārā were assembled in the Council Hall having some business or other. Then venerable Ānanda went to where the Mallas from Kusinārā were assembled in the Council Hall, and after approaching he said this to the Mallas: “Today, Vāseṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, will be the Realised One's attainment of Final Emancipation, come along, Vāseṭṭhas, come along, Vāseṭṭhas, do not regret it afterwards (thinking): ‘In the area of our village, was the Realised One's attainment of Final Emancipation, and we did not, in the last watch of the night, get to see the Realised One.’”

”

¹⁶⁰ This is their clan name.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

After hearing this from venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas became miserable, depressed, with their minds given over to suffering. Some, having dishevelled hair, were weeping, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, they were crying: “Too quickly the Gracious One will attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One will attain Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world will disappear!”

Then the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas, miserable, depressed, with their minds given over to suffering, approached the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana, and approached venerable Ānanda.

Then this occurred to venerable Ānanda: “If I make the Mallas of Kusinārā worship the Gracious One one by one before the Gracious One has been worshipped by the Mallas of Kusinārā the night will end.¹⁶¹ Now what if I, having segregated the Mallas family by family, made them worship the Gracious One, (saying): ‘A Malla named so and so, together with his children, wife, dependents, and councillors worships the Gracious One's feet with his head?’”

¹⁶¹ Literally: *the night will become bright*.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Then venerable Ānanda having segregated the Mallas family by family, made them worship the Gracious One, (saying): “A Malla named so and so, together with his children, wife, dependents, and councillors worships the Gracious One's feet with his head.”

Then venerable Ānanda, in this way, during the first watch of the night, made the Mallas of Kusinārā worship the Gracious One.

[39: Subhadda, the Last Direct Disciple]

Now at that time a wanderer named Subhadda¹⁶² had arrived at Kusinārā. The wanderer Subhadda heard: “Today, it seems, in the last watch of the night, will be the ascetic Gotama's attainment of Final Emancipation.”

Then this occurred to the wanderer Subhadda: “I have heard this from old, elderly wanderers, who are teachers and teachers' teachers, when they said: ‘Only occasionally, rarely, do Realised Ones, Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas arise in the world.’ Today, in the last watch of the night, will be the ascetic Gotama's attainment of Final Emancipation.

¹⁶² The Commentary says he was a clothed wanderer (*channaparibbājaka*) born into a brāhmaṇa family, and gives an interesting story telling how there were two brothers in a previous life who made offerings (to Paccakabuddhas, it seems, though it is not stated). The elder brother gave offerings 9 times from each crop and was reborn as the person who became Aññāta Koṇḍañña (the first disciple to attain), and the younger one also gave an offering and was later reborn as Subhadda (the last direct disciple to attain).

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

There is a doubt that has arisen for me, and I have confidence in the ascetic Gotama thus: ‘The ascetic Gotama is able to teach the Teaching in such a way that I will be able to abandon that doubt.’ ”

Then the wanderer Subhadda approached the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana, and approached venerable Ānanda, and after approaching he said to venerable Ānanda: “I have heard this from old, elderly wanderers, dear Ānanda, who are teachers and teachers' teachers, when they said: ‘Only occasionally, rarely, do Realised Ones, Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas arise in the world.’ Today, in the last watch of the night, will be the ascetic Gotama's attainment of Final Emancipation. There is a doubt that has arisen for me, and I have confidence in the ascetic Gotama thus: ‘The ascetic Gotama is able to teach the Teaching in such a way that I will be able to abandon that doubt’. It would be well, dear Ānanda, if I was allowed to see the ascetic Gotama.”

After this was said, venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda: “Enough, friend Subhadda, do not trouble the Realised One, the Gracious One is exhausted.”

For a second time the wanderer Subhadda said this to venerable Ānanda: “I have heard this from old, elderly wanderers, dear Ānanda, who are teachers and teachers' teachers, when they said: ‘Only occasionally, rarely, do Realised Ones, Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas arise in the world.’ Today, in the last watch of the night, will be the Realised One's attainment of Final Emancipation. There is

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

a doubt that has arisen for me, and I have confidence in the ascetic Gotama thus: ‘The ascetic Gotama is able to teach the Teaching in such a way that I will be able to abandon that doubt’. It would be well, dear Ānanda, if I was allowed to see the ascetic Gotama.

For a second time venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda: “Enough, friend Subhadda, do not trouble the Realised One, the Gracious One is exhausted.”

For a third time the wanderer Subhadda said this to venerable Ānanda: “I have heard this from old, elderly wanderers, dear Ānanda, who are teachers and teachers' teachers, when they said: ‘Only occasionally, rarely, do Realised Ones, Worthy Ones, Perfect Sambuddhas arise in the world.’ Today, in the last watch of the night, will be the ascetic Gotama's attainment of Final Emancipation. There is a doubt that has arisen for me, and I have confidence in the ascetic Gotama thus: ‘The ascetic Gotama is able to teach the Teaching in such a way that I will be able to abandon that doubt’. It would be well, dear Ānanda, if I was allowed to see the ascetic Gotama.”

For a third time venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda: “Enough, friend Subhadda, do not trouble the Realised One, the Gracious One is exhausted.”

The Gracious One heard venerable Ānanda having this conversation with the wanderer Subhadda. Then the Gracious One said this to

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

venerable Ānanda: “Enough, Ānanda, do not obstruct Subhadda allow Subhadda to see the Realised One.¹⁶³ Whatever Subhadda will ask of me all of it he will ask of me seeking for deep knowledge, and not to trouble me. Whatever question is put I will answer, and he will quickly understand it.”

Then venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda: “Go, friend Subhadda, the Gracious One has given you permission.”

Then the wanderer Subhadda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching, he exchanged greetings with the Gracious One, and after exchanging courteous talk and greetings, he sat down on one side.

While sitting on one side the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Gracious One: “Those ascetics and brahmins, dear Gotama, who have a community, a group, who teach a group, well-known, famous, religious founders, agreed upon as good for the people, such as: Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta,¹⁶⁴ have they all understood, according to their own avowal? Have they all not understood? Or, have some understood? Or, have some not understood?”

¹⁶³ It is curious that the Buddha has to intervene here as he has just been praising Ānanda for knowing the right time for letting people see him!

¹⁶⁴ These are six famous teachers of Lord Buddha's time. The Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta at least had died some time before this.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

“Enough, Subhadda, stop this:¹⁶⁵ ‘Have they all understood, according to their own avowal? Have they all not understood? Or, have some understood? Or, have some not understood?’ I will teach the Teaching to you, Subhadda, listen to it, apply your mind well, and I will speak.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” the wanderer Subhadda replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this: “Wherever, Subhadda, the Noble Eightfold Path is not found in a Teaching and Discipline there a (true) ascetic is not found,¹⁶⁶ there a second (true) ascetic is not found, there a third (true) ascetic is not found, there a fourth (true) ascetic is not found.

But wherever, Subhadda, the Noble Eightfold Path is found in a Teaching and Discipline there a (true) ascetic is found, there a second (true) ascetic is found, there a third (true) ascetic is found, there a fourth (true) ascetic is found.

In this Teaching and Discipline, Subhadda, the Noble Eightfold Path is found, here a (true) ascetic is found, here a second (true) ascetic is

¹⁶⁵ The Commentary notes that it was neither profitable nor opportune for the Buddha to refute the various sectarians at this point in time, so he simply taught his own Teaching.

¹⁶⁶ A (true) ascetic here refers to one who has reached the first path of Awakening, and is an *Ariya Sotāpanna*. Similarly with the second (*Sakadāgāmi*) third (*Anāgāmi*), and fourth (*Arahatta*) ascetics below.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

found, here a third (true) ascetic is found, here a fourth (true) ascetic is found.

Void are the outside doctrines of these other ascetics,¹⁶⁷ Subhadda, (but) if monks should live well,¹⁶⁸ the world will not be void of Worthy Ones.

(At) twenty-nine years, Subhadda,
I went forth a seeker of what is good,¹⁶⁹
More than fifty years ago,¹⁷⁰
Wherefore I am (truly) gone forth, Subhadda.

¹⁶⁷ Subcomm: *Parappavādā ti paresaṃ aññatitthiyānaṃ nānappakārā vādā titthāyatanāni*; **outside doctrines** means the various doctrines and belief systems of the other sectarians.

¹⁶⁸ Comm: *sammā vihareyyun-ti ettha sotāpanno attano adhigataṭṭhānaṃ aññassa kathetvā taṃ sotāpannaṃ karonto sammā viharati nāma*, **should live well**, here a stream-enterer, having spoken about his attainment to another, (thereby) making him a stream-enterer, then this is known as living well. The same for those with the other attainments, or practising for the other attainments.

¹⁶⁹ The Commentary says *yaṃ* here is merely a particle (without meaning), and continues: *kiṃ kusalan-ti sabbaññutaññānaṃ adhippetāṃ*; **what is good** means omniscient knowledge.

¹⁷⁰ This is counting from the time of his going forth from the household life, after which he spent 6 years as an ascetic before Awakening, and forty-five years thereafter teaching.

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

Existing in the realm of the right Teaching¹⁷¹

Outside of this there is no (true) ascetic,¹⁷²

a second (true) ascetic is not found, a third (true) ascetic is not found, a fourth (true) ascetic is not found. Void are the outside doctrines of these other ascetics, Subhadda, (but) if monks should live well, the world will not be void of Worthy Ones.”

After this was said, the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Gracious One: “Excellent, reverend Sir! Excellent, reverend Sir! Just as, reverend Sir, one might set upright what has been overturned, or open up what has been closed, or show a path to one who is lost, or bear an oil lamp in the darkness, so that one who has eyes can see forms, just so has the Teaching been made clear by the Gracious One in more than one way. I go to the Gracious One for refuge, reverend Sir, and to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. May I receive the going-forth, reverend Sir, in the presence of the Gracious One, may I receive the full ordination.”

“Those who were formerly of another sect who in this Teaching and Discipline desire the going-forth, who desire full ordination, live on

¹⁷¹ Comm: *padēsavattī ti padēse vipassanāmagge pavattanto; existing in the realm means continuing along the path of insight.*

¹⁷² Comm: *padēsavattivipassako pi natthi, paṭhamasamaṇo sotāpanno pi natthī ti vuttam hoti; no one practising in the realm of insight, also no first ascetic who is a stream-enterer, this is what is said.*

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

probation for four months, and at the end of four months, the minds of the monks being satisfied, they give the going-forth and the full ordination into the monkhood. But I understand there is a distinction between persons in this case.”

“If, reverend Sir, those who were formerly of another sect who in this Teaching and Discipline, desire the going-forth, who desire full ordination, live on probation for four months, and at the end of four months, the minds of the monks being satisfied, they give the going-forth and the full ordination into the monkhood, then I will live on probation for four years, and at the end of four years, the minds of the monks being satisfied, they can give the going-forth and the full ordination into the monkhood.”

Then the Gracious One said this to venerable Ānanda: “Then, Ānanda, give the going-forth to Subhadda.”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” venerable Ānanda replied to the Gracious One.

Then the wanderer Subhadda said this to venerable Ānanda: “There are certainly gains for you, friend Ānanda, it is certainly a good gain

The Fifth Chapter for Recitation

for you, friend Ānanda, that here, face to face with the Teacher, you have been consecrated with an attendant's consecration.”¹⁷³

The wanderer Subhadda received the going forth in the presence of the Gracious One, received full ordination.

Then not long after ordination, venerable Subhadda, while dwelling solitary, secluded, heedful, ardent, and resolute, after no long time (attained) that good for which young gentlemen rightly go forth from the house to the houseless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, and dwelt having known, experienced, and attained it himself in this very life.

Destroyed is (re)birth
accomplished is the spiritual life
done is what ought to be done
there is no more of this mundane state - this he knew.

And venerable Subhadda became another of the Worthy Ones. He was the last direct disciple of the Gracious One.¹⁷⁴

The Fifth Chapter for Recital (is Finished)

¹⁷³ Or: *you have been sanctified with an attendant's sanctification*, meaning: *you have been blessed with the blessing of being an attendant*.

¹⁷⁴ Commentary: *Saṅgītikārakānaṃ vacanaṃ*; (these are) the words of those who held the (First) Council.

[The Sixth Chapter for Recitation]

[40: The Last Instructions of the Realised One]

Then the Gracious One addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “It may be, Ānanda, that some of you may think in this way: ‘Past is the Teacher's word, there is now no Teacher for us.’ But it should not be seen like that, Ānanda, whatever Teaching and Discipline has been taught by me or laid down, Ānanda, that is your Teacher after my passing away.

* * *

At present, Ānanda, the monks address each other with the word ‘friend’, (but) after my passing away they are not to address (one another) thus. The elder monk, Ānanda, should address the younger monk by his name or by his clan (name) or by the word ‘friend’. (But) the younger monk should address the elder monk as reverend Sir or venerable Sir.

* * *

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Desiring (to do so), Ānanda, the Community after my passing away, can abolish the minor and subsidiary training rules.¹⁷⁵

* * *

The highest penalty, Ānanda, after my passing away, is to be handed out to the monk Channa.” “But what is the highest penalty, reverend Sir?” “The monk Channa, Ānanda, may say whatever he wishes but he is not to be spoken to or advised or instructed by the monks.”¹⁷⁶

* * *

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “It may be, monks, that for one of the monks there is doubt or confusion about the Buddha, or about the Teaching, or about the Community, or about the Path, or about the practice. Ask, monks, do not be regretful later (thinking): ‘The Teacher was face to face with us and we didn't ask the Gracious One directly about the training.’ ” After this was said those monks were silent.

¹⁷⁵ Ānanda was greatly blamed at the First Council for not asking the Buddha what the minor and subsidiary training rules were. As there was no agreement as to the range of rules included here the decision was made at the Council not to abolish any of them.

¹⁷⁶ When he found out the Brahmaḍaṇḍa punishment had been decreed by the Buddha before he died, Channa was humbled, and later, striving in solitude, he became a Worthy One, at which point the penalty lapsed.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

For a second time the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “It may be, monks, that for one of the monks there is doubt or confusion about the Buddha, or about the Teaching, or about the Community, or about the Path, or about the practice. Ask, monks, do not be regretful later (thinking): ‘The Teacher was face to face with us and we didn't ask the Gracious One directly about the training.’ ” For a second time those monks were silent.

For a third time the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “It may be, monks, that for one of the monks there is doubt or confusion about the Buddha, or about the Teaching, or about the Community, or about the Path, or about the practice. Ask, monks, do not be regretful later (thinking): ‘The Teacher was face to face with us and we didn't ask the Gracious One directly about the training.’ ” For a third time those monks were silent.

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “It may be, monks, that out of respect for the Teacher you do not ask, then one friend, monks, can inform another friend (about his doubts).” After this was said those monks were silent.

Then venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “It is wonderful, reverend Sir, it is marvellous, reverend Sir, I am confident, reverend Sir, that in this Community of monks there is not one of the monks in this Community of monks who has doubt or confusion about the Buddha, or about the Teaching, or about the Community, or about the Path, or about the practice.”

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

“Out of confidence, Ānanda, you speak, but the Realised One, Ānanda, has knowledge that there is not one of the monks in this Community of monks who has doubt or confusion about the Buddha, or about the Teaching, or about the Community, or about the Path, or about the practice. For amongst these five hundred monks, Ānanda, he who is the last monk, is a Stream-Enterer, no longer subject to falling (into the lower realms), and has a fixed destiny ending in Final Awakening.”¹⁷⁷

* * *

Then the Gracious One addressed the monks, (saying): “Come now, monks, for I tell you (all) conditioned things are subject to decay, strive on with heedfulness!” These were the last words of the Realised One.¹⁷⁸

[41: The Final Emancipation]

Then the Gracious One attained the first absorption, and after emerging from the first absorption he attained the second absorption, and after emerging from the second absorption he attained the third absorption, and after emerging from the third absorption he attained

¹⁷⁷ According to the Commentary the *last monk* the Buddha was referring to was Ānanda himself, and this was said to encourage his efforts.

¹⁷⁸ Commentary: *Saṅgītikāraḱānaṁ vacanaṁ; the words of those who held the (First) Council.*

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

the fourth absorption,¹⁷⁹ and after emerging from the fourth absorption he attained the sphere of endless space, and after emerging from the sphere of endless space he attained the sphere of endless consciousness, and after emerging from the sphere of endless consciousness he attained the sphere of nothingness, and after emerging from the sphere of nothingness, he attained the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and after emerging from the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he attained the cessation of perception and feeling.

Then venerable Ānanda said this to venerable Anuruddha: “(Has) the Gracious One, reverend Anuruddha, attained Final Emancipation?”¹⁸⁰

“The Gracious One, reverend Ānanda, has not attained Final Emancipation, he has attained the cessation of perception and feeling.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ The first 4 absorptions are referred to as the form absorptions (*rūpajhāna*), the next 4 are called formless absorptions (*arūpajhāna*).

¹⁸⁰ From here onwards until the arrival of Ven. Mahākassapa, Ven. Anuruddha is the monk everyone turns to for guidance.

¹⁸¹ The difference between being in this state and being dead is described in Mahāvedallasuttaṃ (MN 43), where it says in both the bodily, verbal, and mental processes (*kāya-*, *vacī-*, *cittasaṅkhārā*) have stopped and subsided; but in one who is dead the lifespan (*āyu*) has ended, the vital heat (*usmā*) has cooled down, and the faculties (*indriya*) have dispersed. Not so in one with this attainment, though from the outside it must be difficult to tell the difference.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Then the Gracious One, after emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling, attained the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and after emerging from the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception he attained the sphere of nothingness, and after emerging from the sphere of nothingness he attained the sphere of endless consciousness, and after emerging from the sphere of endless consciousness he attained the sphere of endless space, and after emerging from the sphere of endless space he attained the fourth absorption, and after emerging from the fourth absorption he attained the third absorption, and after emerging from the third absorption he attained the second absorption, and after emerging from the second absorption he attained the first absorption, and after emerging from the first absorption he attained the second absorption, and after emerging from the second absorption he attained the third absorption, and after emerging from the third absorption he attained the fourth absorption, and after emerging from the fourth absorption, immediately the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation.

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation along with the Emancipation there was a great earthquake, and an awful, horrifying crash of the Divinities' (thunder) drum.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation along with the Emancipation Brahmā Sahampati spoke this verse:¹⁸²

“All beings in the world will surely lay aside the body,
In the same way the Teacher, Such-like, unmatched in the world,

the Realised One, attained to (the ten) strengths, the Sambuddha,
has attained Final Emancipation.”

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation along with the Emancipation Sakka, the Lord of the Divinities, spoke this verse:

“Impermanent, indeed, are (all) processes, arisen they have the
nature to decay,
After arising they come to cessation, the stilling of them is
blissful.”¹⁸³

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation along with the Emancipation venerable Anuruddha spoke these verses:

“There is no more breathing for that Such-like one of steady mind,
Freed from lust, the Sage who has died, has entered the peace (of
Nibbāna).

¹⁸² It was Brahmā Sahampati who had requested the newly Awakened Buddha to preach some 45 years previously.

¹⁸³ This famous verse is normally chanted by monks at a funeral.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

With an unshaken heart, he endured the painful feelings,
Like a flame (when it goes out) so his mind was liberated in
Nibbāna.”¹⁸⁴

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation along with the Emancipation venerable Ānanda spoke this verse:

“With that there was fear, with that there was horror,
When the Sambuddha, endowed with all noble qualities, attained
Emancipation.”

When the Gracious One attained Final Emancipation those monks there who were not free from passion, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, were crying: ‘Too quickly the Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world has disappeared!’ But those monks who were free from passion, mindfully, with full awareness, endured, (thinking): ‘Impermanent are (all) processes, how can it be otherwise?’

¹⁸⁴ In Aggivacchasuttam (MN 72) the Buddha tells Vaccha that as with a fire that has gone out you cannot say it has gone to the East, West, North or South, similarly with the mind of someone who is fully released you cannot say that it will arise or not arise. The question simply doesn't apply.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Then venerable Anuruddha said this to the monks: “Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament, were you not warned by the Gracious One when he declared: ‘There is alteration in, separation from, and changeability in all that is dear and appealing.’ How can it be otherwise, friends, for that which is obtained, born, become, in process, subject to dissolution? It is not possible (to say) this: ‘It should not dissolve’. The Divinities, friends, are complaining.”

“But what beings and Divinities is the venerable Anuruddha thinking of?”

“There are, friend Ānanda, Divinities in the sky, perceiving the Earth, who, having dishevelled hair, are weeping, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, crying: ‘Too quickly the Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world has disappeared!’

There are, friend Ānanda, Divinities on the Earth, perceiving the Earth, who, having dishevelled hair, are weeping, throwing up their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, crying: ‘Too quickly the Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world has disappeared!’

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

But those Divinities, who have cut off passion, they mindfully, with full awareness, endure, (thinking): ‘Impermanent are (all) processes, how can it be otherwise?’ ”

[42: The Preparation of the Body]

Then venerable Anuruddha and venerable Ānanda spent the rest of the night in talk about the Teaching. Then venerable Anuruddha addressed venerable Ānanda, (saying): “Go, Ānanda, and after entering Kusinārā inform the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): ‘The Gracious One has attained Emancipation, Vāseṭṭhas, now is the time for whatever you are thinking.’ ”

“Very well, reverend Sir,” said venerable Ānanda, and after replying to venerable Anuruddha, dressing in the morning time, and taking his robes and bowl, he entered Kusinārā with a companion.

Now at that time the Mallas from Kusinārā were assembled in the Council Hall having some business (or other). Then venerable Ānanda approached the Mallas from Kusinārā in the Council Hall, and after approaching he informed the Mallas of Kusinārā (saying): “The Gracious One has attained Emancipation, Vāseṭṭhas, now is the time for whatever you are thinking.”

After hearing this word from venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas became miserable, depressed, with their minds given over to suffering. Some, having dishevelled hair, were weeping, throwing up

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

their arms, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, they were crying: “Too quickly the Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world has disappeared!”

Then the Mallas from Kusinārā ordered (their) men, (saying): “Now, friends, gather together perfume and flowers, and all the musicians in Kusinārā.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, having taken perfumes and garlands, and all the musicians, and five-hundred pairs of clothes, approached the Mallas' Sal Wood at Upavattana, and the Gracious One's body, after approaching the Gracious One's body, through honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping (the body), with dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, and making cloth canopies, and preparing circular pavillions, they made the day pass.

Then this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: “Today it is too late to burn the Gracious One's body, tomorrow we will burn the Gracious One's body.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, through honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping the Gracious One's body, with dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, and making cloth canopies, and preparing circular pavillions, they made the second day pass, they made the third

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

day pass, they made the fourth day pass, they made the fifth day pass, they made the sixth day pass.¹⁸⁵

Then on the seventh day this occurred to the Mallas of Kusiṇārā: “While honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping the Gracious One's body, with dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, after taking it out of the city by the South, on the outside of the City to the South we will burn the Gracious One's body.”

Now at that time eight leaders of the Mallas, having washed their heads and put on clean clothes, (said): “Let us lift the Gracious One's body,” but they were not able to lift (it).

Then the Mallas of Kusiṇārā said this to venerable Anuruddha: “What is the reason, Anuruddha, what is the cause why eight leaders of the Mallas, having washed their heads and put on clean clothes, (and saying): ‘Let us lift the Gracious One's body,’ are not able to lift (it)?”

“You Vāseṭṭhas have one intention, and the Divinities have another intention.”

“But what is the Divinities' intention, reverend Sir?”

¹⁸⁵ Although this looks like a repetition passage, no ellipsis is marked in any of the editions.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

“Your intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is: ‘We, while honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping the Gracious One's body, with dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, after taking it out of the City by the South, on the outside of the City to the South, will burn the Gracious One's body.’

The Divinities' intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is: ‘We, while honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping the Gracious One's body, with the Divinities' dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, after carrying it to the North of the City by the North, and re-entering the City by the North Gate, and carrying it to the middle of the City by the middle, and going out by the Eastern Gate, to the East of the City, at the Mallas' Shrine called the Bonded Coronet, there let us burn the Gracious One's body.’”

“Let us do according to the Divinities' intention, reverend Sir.”

* * *

Now at that time the whole of Kusinārā, including the dirty rubbish heaps, was covered knee-deep with (Divine) Coral Tree flowers. Then the Divinities and the Mallas of Kusinārā while honouring, respecting, revering, and worshipping the Gracious One's body with the Divinities' and mens' dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes, after carrying it to the North of the City by the North, and re-entering the City by the North Gate, and carrying it to the middle of the City by the middle, and going out by the Eastern Gate, to the East of the City, at the

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Mallas' Shrine called the Bonded Coronet there set down the Gracious One's body.

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to venerable Ānanda: “How do we act, reverend Ānanda, in regard to the Realised One's body?”

“As you act, Vāseṭṭhas, in regard to the Universal Monarch's body, so you should act in regard to the Realised One's body.”

“But how do we act, reverend Ānanda, in regard to the Universal Monarch's body?”

“They wrap the Universal Monarch's body, Vāseṭṭhas, with clean cloth, and after wrapping with clean cloth, they wrap with carded cotton, and after wrapping with carded cotton, they wrap with clean cloth, by this means after wrapping the Universal Monarch's body with five-hundred pairs (of cloth and cotton), enclosing it in an oil tub made of iron, and enclosing it in another iron tub, and putting it on a scented funeral pyre, they burn the Universal Monarch's body, and they build a Shrine for the Universal Monarch at the crossroads.

So they act, Vāseṭṭhas, in regard to a Universal Monarch's body. Just as they act, Vāseṭṭhas, in regard to a Universal Monarch's body, so should they act in regard to a Realised One's body, and a Shrine should be made for the Realised One at the crossroads. Whoever there prepares flowers, incense, or powder, or worships or establishes confidence in his mind, that will be for their benefit and happiness for a long time.”

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā gave orders to (their) men, (saying): “If it is so (then) wrap (the body) with the Mallas' carded cloth, friends.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā wrapped the Gracious One's body with clean cloth, and after wrapping with clean cloth, they wrapped with carded cotton, and after wrapping with carded cotton, they wrapped with clean cloth, and by this means, after wrapping the Gracious One's body with five-hundred pairs (of cloth and cotton), enclosing it in an oil tub made of iron, and enclosing it in another iron tub, and putting it on a scented funeral pyre, they put the Gracious One's body on the funeral pyre.

[43: The Story concerning Mahākassapa]¹⁸⁶

Now at that time venerable Mahākassapa was travelling along the highway from Pāvā to Kusinārā, together with a great Community of monks, around five-hundred monks. Then venerable Mahākassapa, after descending from the path, sat down at the root of a certain tree.

Now at that time a certain Ājīvaka¹⁸⁷ while holding a Mandārava flower¹⁸⁸ from Kusinārā was travelling along the highway to Pāvā.

¹⁸⁶ cf. Pañcasatikakkhandhakam, opening (Cullavagga, 11).

¹⁸⁷ Sometimes translated as naked ascetic. The Ājīvakas were followers of Makkhali Gosāla, and held that there was no result of action (*akriyavāda*).

¹⁸⁸ Mandārava flowers were believed to grow in the Tusita heaven and only fall on special occasions.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Venerable Mahākassapa saw that Ājīvaka approaching from afar, and after seeing (him), he said this to that Ājīvaka: “Do you know our Teacher, friend?”

“Certainly, friend, I know. Today is seven days since the Final Emancipation of the ascetic Gotama, therefore I am holding this Mandārava flower.”

Then those monks there who were not free from passion, some, throwing up their arms, were weeping, falling down (as though) cut down, rolling backwards and forwards as though with their feet cut off, they were crying: “Too quickly the Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Fortunate One has attained Final Emancipation, too quickly the Visionary in the world has disappeared!”

But those monks who were free from passion, mindfully, with full awareness, endured, (thinking): “Impermanent are (all) processes, how can it be otherwise?”

Now at that time one who had gone forth in old age, named Subhadda was sitting in that group.¹⁸⁹ Then Subhadda, who had gone forth in old age, said this to those monks: “Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament, we are now freed from that troublesome Great Ascetic,

¹⁸⁹ This is a different Subaddha than the one mentioned earlier.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

(saying): ‘This is allowable for you, this is not allowable for you.’ But now we will do whatever we wish, and we will not do whatever we do not wish.”¹⁹⁰

Then venerable Mahākassapa addressed the monks, (saying):¹⁹¹ “Enough, friends, do not grieve, do not lament, were you not warned by the Gracious One, friends, when he declared this: ‘There is alteration in, separation from, and changeability in all that is dear and appealing.’ How can it be otherwise, friends, for that which is obtained, born, become, in process, subject to dissolution? It is not possible (to say) this: ‘It should not dissolve’.

Now at that time four leaders of the Mallas, having washed their heads and put on clean clothes, (said): “Let us burn the Gracious One’s funeral pyre,” but they were not able to burn (it). Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to venerable Anuruddha: “What is the reason, venerable Anuruddha, what is the cause, why four leaders of the

¹⁹⁰ The Commentary relates a long story here telling how Subhadda after ordaining had once prepared a meal for the Buddha and the Community, but had been rebuked by the Buddha for breaking Vinaya rules in its preparation. He thereafter held a grudge against the Buddha and against the Vinaya.

¹⁹¹ Note that here Ven. Mahākassapa does not answer what was said by Subhadda at all, but instead exhorts the monks. One can’t help feeling that the narrative has been poorly stitched together here. In the Vinaya account of this story Cullavagga 11, beginning), Subhadda’s outburst comes *after* Ven. Mahākassapa’s exhortation, which is much more fitting.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Mallas, having washed their heads and put on clean clothes, (and saying): ‘Let us burn the Gracious One's funeral pyre,’ are not able to burn (it)?”

“The Divinities¹⁹² have another intention, Vāseṭṭhas.”

“But what is the Divinities' intention, reverend Sir?”

“The Divinities' intention, Vāseṭṭhas, (is): ‘The venerable Mahākassapa is travelling along the highway from Pāvā to Kusinārā together with a great Community of monks, around five-hundred monks, the Gracious One's funeral pyre will not burn while venerable Mahākassapa has not worshipped the Gracious One's feet with his head.’ ”

“Let us do according to the Divinities' intention, reverend Sir.”

Then venerable Mahākassapa approached Kusinārā, and the Mallas' Shrine called the Bonded Coronet, and the Gracious One's funeral pyre, and after approaching and arranging his robe on one shoulder, extending (his hands) in respectful salutation, and circumambulating

¹⁹² The Commentary says these Divinities were Ven. Mahākassapa's supporters, like Sakka. See Ud. 1-6 and 3-7 for instances of the Divinities waiting on Ven. Mahākassapa.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

the funeral pyre three times, and uncovering the feet he worshipped the Gracious One's feet with his head.¹⁹³

Also five-hundred monks, after arranging their robes on one shoulder, extending (their hands) in respectful salutation, and circumambulating the funeral pyre three times, worshipped the Gracious One's feet with their heads. After (the Gracious One's feet) had been worshipped by venerable Mahākassapa and by five-hundred monks the funeral pyre caught fire by itself.

Now while the Gracious One's body was burning, of the outer skin, the inner skin, the flesh, the sinews, the synovial fluid, neither charcoal was evident, nor was ash of the body left over. Just as while ghee or oil is burning there is no charcoal and no ash evident, so when the Gracious One's body was burning, of the outer skin, the inner skin, the flesh, the sinews, the synovial fluid, neither charcoal was evident, nor was ash of the body left over. Only two of those five-hundred pairs of clothes were not consumed, that on the inside and that on the outside.

When the Gracious One's body was burnt a shower of water appeared in the sky, and the Gracious One's funeral pyre was extinguished. Also

¹⁹³ The Commentary takes this a bit more literally than necessary, and says that Ven. Mahākassapa attained fourth jhāna and made a determination that the Buddha's feet should break through their five hundred layers of wrapping, before he worshipped them.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

after water rose from a well,¹⁹⁴ the Gracious One's funeral pyre was extinguished. Also the Mallas from Kusinārā extinguished the Gracious One's funeral pyre with all types of fragrant water.¹⁹⁵

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā, after making an enclosure of spears in the Council Hall,¹⁹⁶ and surrounding the Gracious One's bodily relics with bows, honoured, respected, revered, and worshipped (it) with dance, song, music, garlands, and perfumes.

[44: The Distribution of the Relics]

The Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a

¹⁹⁴ The Commentary first says the water came from the Sāla trees, which is hard to understand, but in the same comment continues: *samantā pathaviṃ bhinditvā pi naṅgalasīsamattā udakavaṭṭi phalikavaṭṭamsakasadisā uggantvā citakam-eva gaṇhanti; having broken through the earth all round like the head of a plough, a jet of water, like a crystal crown, having risen caught hold of the pyre.* This makes me think that the water may have come from a well (lit: [water]-hall), and I translate it as such. However, I have not found the expression used in this way elsewhere, so the meaning remains doubtful.

¹⁹⁵ These lines seem to record three disparate accounts of how the pyre was eventually extinguished.

¹⁹⁶ Comm: *tattha sattipaṅjaram katvā ti sattihatthehi purisehi parikkhipāpetvā; here after making an enclosure of spears means having made an enclosure of people with spears in their hands.*

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Noble, and I also am a Noble, I am worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, I will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the Licchavīs of Vesālī heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Licchavīs of Vesālī sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a Noble, and we also are Nobles, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Sakyas of Kāpilavatthu sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was our foremost relative, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the Bulas of Allakappa heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Bulas of Allakappa sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a Noble, and we also are Nobles, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the Koliyas of Rāmagāma heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Koliyas of Rāmagāma sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Gracious One was a Noble, and we also are Nobles, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the brahmin Veṭhadīpaka heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the brahmin Veṭhadīpaka sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a Noble, and I am a brahmin, I am worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, I will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

Then the Mallas of Pāvā heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Mallas of Pāvā sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a Noble, and we also are Nobles, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

After this was said, the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to their community and group: “The Gracious One has attained Final Emancipation in the area of our village, (but) we will not see a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics.”

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

After this was said, the brahmin Doṇa said this to their community and group:¹⁹⁷

“Listen, dear Sirs, to a sentence of mine:

Our Buddha was one who spoke about forbearance

It is not good that there should be a battle

About sharing the relics of the Best Man.

Let us united, in concord, dear Sirs,

With joyful minds, make eight shares (of the relics),

And set up Shrines in every direction

(So that) many people may gain faith in the Visionary One.”

“Now, brahmin, you must divide the Gracious One's bodily relics in eight equal divisions.”

“Certainly, dear Sir,” said Doṇa the brahmin, after replying to that community and group, and dividing the Gracious One's bodily relics in eight equal divisions, he said this to that community and group: “Please give me this urn, dear Sirs, and I also will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the urn.”¹⁹⁸ They gave the urn to Doṇa the brahmin.

¹⁹⁷ The name *Doṇa* means *Measurer*, and is therefore a mythical name. The Commentary records that before he spoke the verses below, he recited another (spontaneous?) poem, which became known as Doṇagajjitaṃ, Doṇa's Roar. It is said to have been 500 verses long (*dvibhāṇavāra*). Unfortunately there appears to be no record of this poem.

¹⁹⁸ The Commentary tells a rather embarrassing story here. It says that Doṇa stole the right eye-tooth of the Buddha while the others were distracted and

continued on next page

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Then the Moriyā of Pepper Wood heard: “The Gracious One, it seems, has attained Final Emancipation in Kusinārā.” Then the Moriyā of Pepper Wood sent a message to the Mallas of Kusinārā, (saying): “The Gracious One was a Noble, and we also are Nobles, we are worthy of a share of the Gracious One's bodily relics, we will make a Shrine and hold a festival for the bodily relics.”

“There are no more portions of the Gracious One's relics, (instead) take the ashes from the Gracious One's body.” Therefore they took away the ashes.

Then the Magadhan King Ajātasattu, the son of Lady Wisdom, made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Rājagaha and held a festival.¹⁹⁹

The Licchavīs from Vesālī made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Vesālī and held a festival.

The Sakyas from Kapilavatthu made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Kapilavatthu and held a festival.

put it into his turban, but Sakka then stole it and enshrined it in the Cūḷāmaṇi shrine in Tāvātimsa Heaven. Realising that it had gone Doṇa then asked for the urn!

¹⁹⁹ Comm: *Kusinārato yāva Rājagahaṃ pañcavīsati yojanāni .evam dhātuyo gahetvā āgacchantānam sattavassānisatta māsāni sattadivasāni vītivattāni; from Kusināra to Rājagaha is 25 leagues .while the relics were being brought, 7 years, 7 months, and 7 days passed by.*

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

The Bulas of Allakappa made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Allakappa and held a festival.

The Koliyas of Rāmagāma made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Rāmagāma and held a festival.

The Veṭṭhadīpaka brahmin made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Veṭṭhadīpa and held a festival.

The Mallas of Pāvā made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Pāvā and held a festival.

The Mallas of Kusinārā made a Shrine for the Gracious One's bodily relics at Kusinārā and held a festival.

Doṇa the brahmin made a Shrine for the urn and held a festival.

The Moriyās of Pepper Wood made a Shrine for the ashes at Pepper Wood and held a festival.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Thus there were eight Shrines for the bodily relics, the Urn Shrine was the ninth, and the Ashes Shrine was the tenth, and so it was in former times.²⁰⁰



²⁰⁰ The Commentary says these words were added at the 3rd Council. It also tells how Ven. Mahākassapa later collected most of the relics together again and that King Ajātasattu built a shrine for them. This was rediscovered by King Asoka who had them enshrined in the 84,000 monasteries he built throughout Jambudīpa. The story is obviously told to try to reconcile the two traditions.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

(There were) eight measures of the Visionary's relics,²⁰¹

Seven measures are honoured in Jambudīpa,

One measure of the most Noble Man

The King of the Dragons honours in Rāmagāma.

One tooth is worshipped in the Heavens,

And one is honoured in the city of Gandhāra,

A further one in the realm of the Kalinga King,

And the King of the Dragons honours one more.

Through the power (of these relics) this Lovely Earth

Is decorated like a most excellent hall.

Thus this body of the Visionary One,

(Is) well esteemed by those who respect the respectable.

Honoured by Lords of Divinities, Lords of Dragons, and Kings,

(The relics are) honoured by true Lords of Men,

Worship those (relics) after holding up your hands,

A Buddha is rare even in a hundred aeons.

²⁰¹ The following verses, which the Commentary says were added in Tambapaṇṇi (Śri Laṅkā), also record the growing dispersion of the relics. They should be compared with the even more advanced last chapter of Buddhavaṃsa, one of whose verses is quoted verbatim below and another of which seems to be paraphrased.

The Sixth Chapter for Recitation

Altogether forty even teeth, the hair, and body hair (relics) were
Carried off successively by the Divinities to the (various) Universes.

*The Discourse about the Great Emancipation,
The Third (in the Mahāvagga section of the Long Discourses) is
Finished.*

The Discourse about the Great Emancipation is one of the longest discourses in the Pāḷi Canon, and relates the story of the last year of the Buddha's life, as his health declines and he makes preparations for the preservation of his Teaching.

<http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net>