

A Manual Of Buddhism

By Venerable Narada Maha Thera

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About This Book

This is a fairly comprehensive book enabling the reader to appreciate and understand certain important finer aspects of Theravada Buddhism. This book would also serve as a reference, for both Teachers and Students alike, gain a good insight into the fundamentals of Buddhism.

The author, the late Venerable Narada Maha Thera was a well-known Buddhist Missioner. He is also the author of many other Buddhist Publications. We are grateful to him for his kind permission, enabling; this reprint to be effected in Malaysia.

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Chapter 1

The Life Of The Buddha

The Birth

On the full-moon day of May in the year 623 B.C. there was born, in the Lumbini Park at Kapilavatthu, on the borders of Nepal, a noble Prince of aristocratic Sakya clan. His father was King Suddhodana and his mother Queen Maha Maya. Seven days after the birth of the child, the mother died, and Maha Pajapati Gotami, her younger sister, who was also married to King Suddhodana, became his foster mother.

Great was the rejoicing of the people over the birth of this illustrious prince. A certain ascetic, named Asita, also known as Kaladevala, was particularly pleased to hear this happy news and, being a tutor of the King, visited the palace to see the royal baby. The overjoyed King brought the child, to pay him due reverence, but, to the surprise of all, his feet turned and planted themselves in the matted locks of the ascetic. Instantly the ascetic rose from his seat and foreseeing the child's future greatness, saluted him with joined hands. When he thus honored him, the royal father too saluted him in the same way.

The great ascetic at first smiled and then was sad. Questioned as to his mixed feelings, he replied that he smiled because the Prince would, eventually become a Buddha; and that he was sad because he, owing to his prior death and rebirth in a Formless Plane - Arupaloka, could not benefit by the superior wisdom of the Enlightened One.

The Naming Ceremony

On the fifth day after the Prince's birth, he was named Siddhattha Gotama, which means 'wish fulfilled'. His family name was Gotama.' In accordance with the ancient custom, many learned Brahmins were invited to the palace for this naming ceremony. Amongst them were eight distinguished men. Examining the characteristics of the child, seven of them raised two fingers and gave a double interpretation, saying that he would either become a Universal Monarch or a Buddha.

But the youngest Kondanna, who excelled the others in knowledge, raised only one finger and firmly declared that he would definitely retire from the world and become a Buddha.

The Plowing Festival

A very remarkable incident took place in his childhood. It was an unprecedented mental experience, which, in later life, during his search for Truth, served as a key to his Enlightenment. As an encouragement to agriculture the King arranged for a Plowing Festival. It was indeed a festive occasion for all, as both nobles and commoners decked in gala dress participated in the ceremony.

On the appointed day the King, accompanied by his courtiers, went to the field taking with him, the young Prince together with the nurses. Placing the child on a screened and canopied couch under the cool shade of a rose-apple tree to be watched by the nurses, the King took an active part in the Plowing Festival.

When the festival was at its climax, the nurses stole away from the Prince's presence to catch a glimpse of the wonderful spectacle. The thoughtful child, mature in intellect though young in age, seeing none by him, sat cross-legged, and intently concentrating on inhalation and exhalation, gained one-pointed-ness of the mind and developed the First Ecstasy - Jhana.

In the midst of their enjoyment the neglectful nurses suddenly remembered their duty, and when they saw the Prince absorbed in meditation, were struck with awe and immediately reported the matter to the King. He hastened to the scene and beholding the Prince in meditative posture, saluted him saying: "This, dear child is my second salutation."

Prince Siddhattha's Youth

As a royal child Prince Siddhattha no doubt received a good education, although the books give no details about his schooling. Being a scion of the warrior race, he must have been specially trained in the art of warfare.

At the early age of sixteen, he married his beautiful cousin Princess Yasodhara who was of equal years. After his happy marriage, he led a luxurious life, blissfully unaware of the vicissitudes of life, outside the palace gates.

Of his luxurious life as a prince he states: -"I was delicate, excessively delicate. In my father's dwelling three lotus ponds were made purposely for me. Blue lotuses bloomed in one, red in another, and white in the third. I used no sandalwood that was not of Kasi. My turban, tunic, dress and cloak were all from Kasi. Night and day a white parasol was held over me so that I might not be touched by heat or cold, dust, leaves or dew."

"There were three palaces built for me - one for the cold season, one for the hot season, one for the rainy season. During the four rainy months, I lived in the palace for the rainy season, entertained by female musicians, without coming down from the palace. Just as in the houses of others, food from the husks of rice together with sour gruel is given to the slaves and workmen, even so, in my father's dwelling, food with rice and meat was given to the slaves and workmen."

Renunciation

With the march of time truth gradually dawned upon him. His contemplative nature and boundless compassion did not permit him to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of a royal household. He knew no woe, but he felt deep pity for sorrowing humanity. Amidst comfort and prosperity he realized the universality of sorrow.

One glorious day, as he went out of the palace to see the world outside, he came into direct contact with the stark realities of life. Within the narrow confines of the palaces, he saw only the rosy side of life; but the dark side, the common lot of mankind was veiled from him. His observant eyes met the strange sight of a decrepit old man, a diseased person, a corpse, and a dignified hermit.

The first three sights convinced him of the inexorable nature of life and the universal sickness of humanity. The fourth signified the means to overcome the ills of life and attain calm and peace. Realizing the worthlessness of sensual pleasures highly prized by ordinary men, and the value of renunciation in which the wise seek delight, he decided to leave the world in search of Truth and Peace.

When this final decision was made after much deliberation, the seemingly happy news of the birth of a son was conveyed to him. Contrary to expectation he was not overjoyed but regarded the first and only offspring as an impediment. Normally an ordinary father would have welcomed the joyful tidings, but Prince Siddhattha, extra-ordinary father as he was, exclaimed, "An impediment - rahu, has been born; a fetter has arisen". The infant son was accordingly named Rahula by his grandfather.

The palace was no longer a congenial place for the destined Buddha. The time was ripe for him to depart.

He ordered his favorite charioteer Channa to saddle the horse Kanthaka, and went to the suite of apartments occupied by the Princess. Opening the door of the chamber, he stood on the threshold and cast his dispassionate glance on the wife and child who were fast asleep. His compassion for his two dear ones as well as for the whole world dominated him at the moment of parting. He was not worried about the future worldly comforts and happinesses of the mother and child as they had everything in abundance and were well protected.

Leaving all behind with a light heart, he stole away from the palace at midnight and rode into the dark on his horse, attended only by his loyal charioteer. As a penniless wanderer he went forth in search of Truth and Peace.

It was in his twenty-ninth year, the turning point of his career, that Prince Siddhattha made this historic journey. He journeyed far, and crossing the river Anoma, rested on the bank. Here he shaved his hair and beard and, handing over his garments and ornaments to Channa with instructions to return to the

palace, adopted the simple yellow garb of an ascetic and led a life of voluntary poverty. The ascetic Siddhattha, who as a Prince had lived in the lap of luxury, became a penniless and homeless wanderer living on what little the charitable gave of their own accord.

He had no permanent abode. A shady tree or a lonely cave sheltered him day and night. Barefooted and bareheaded, he walked in the scorching sun and in the piercing cold. His humble dress was made of cast-off, worthless, coarse rags.

With no possession to call his own except a bowl to collect his food and robes just sufficient to cover the body, he concentrated all his time and energies upon discovering the Truth.

The Search

As a seeker after what is good (kim kusala-gavesi) searching for the unsurpassed peaceful state most excellent, he approached Alara Kalama an ascetic of repute, and speedily learnt his doctrine and developed the seventh Arupa Jhana, the Realm of Nothingness, (Akincannayatana), an advanced stage of concentration.

The un-envious teacher, delighted to hear of the success of his distinguished pupil, honored him by placing him on a level with himself and admiringly said:-

"Happy, friend, are we; yea, extremely happy, in that we look up to a respected ascetic like you! The doctrine, which I know, that also do you know; and the doctrine, which you know, that I know also. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come, friend, let both of us lead the company of ascetics."

The ascetic Gotama was not satisfied with mere mental concentration and an ordinary system, which did not lead to Nibbána. Dissatisfied with Kalama's system, he left him, and approached one Uddaka Ramaputta, who readily admitted him as a pupil.

Before long the intelligent ascetic Gotama mastered his doctrine and attained the final stage of mental concentration, The Realm of Neither Perception nor Non-perception - Neva sañña nasannayatana. This is the highest stage in worldly concentration when consciousness becomes so subtle and refined that it cannot be said that a consciousness either exists or not. Ancient sages could not proceed any further in mental development.

His teacher then honored the ascetic Gotama further by inviting him to take full charge of all disciples as their teacher. He said:-

"Happy, friend, are we; yea, extremely happy in that we see such a venerable ascetic as you! The doctrine, which Rama knew, you know; the doctrine, which

you know, Rama knew. As was Rama, so are you; as you are, so was Rama. Come, friend, henceforth you shall lead this company of ascetics."

Still he felt that his quest of life was not achieved. He was seeking Nibbána, the complete cessation of suffering. Dissatisfied with Ramapuna's system too, he departed. He found that nobody was competent to teach him what he sought as all were enmeshed in ignorance. He gave up seeking external help, for Truth and Peace are to be found within.

His Struggle For Enlightenment

Meeting with disappointment but not discouraged, the ascetic Gotama, seeking for the incomparable state of Peace Supreme, wandered in the district of Magadha and arrived in due course at Uruvela, the market town of Senani. There he spied a lovely spot of ground, a charming forest grove, a flowing river with pleasant sandy fords, and near by was a village where he could beg for his food.

The place was congenial for his meditation. The atmosphere was peaceful, the surroundings were pleasant, the scenery charming. He resolved to settle down there alone to achieve his desired object.

Hearing of his renunciation Kondanna, the youngest Brahmin who predicted his future, and four sons of the other sages - Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama, and Assaji - also renounced the world, and joined his company.

In ancient India great importance was attached to rites, ceremonies, penances, and sacrifices. It was then a popular belief that no salvation could be gained unless one led a life of strict asceticism. Accordingly for six long years he made a super-human struggle practicing all forms of severe austerity, with the result that his delicate body was reduced almost to a skeleton. The more he tormented his body, the farther his goal receded from him.

Temptation Of Mara The Evil One

His prolonged painful austerities proved utterly futile. They only resulted in the exhaustion of his energy. Though physically a superman, on account of his delicate nurture as a prince, he could not possibly stand the great strain. His graceful form faded almost beyond recognition. His golden-colored skin turned pale, blood dried up, sinews and muscles shriveled, and his eyes were sunk and blurred.

At this critical stage, Mara approached the ascetic Gotama and said:-

"You are lean and deformed. Near to you is death. A thousand parts (of you belong) to death; to life (there remains) but one. Live, O good sir; life is better. Living you could perform merit. By leading a life of celibacy and making fire sacrifices, much merit could be acquired. What will you do with this striving? Hard is the path of striving, difficult and not easily accomplished."

He replied:

"O Evil One, kinsman of the heedless! You have come here for your own sake. Even an iota of merit is of no avail. To them who are in need of merit it behooves you, Mara, to speak thus. Confidence - Saddha, self-control - Tapo, energy - Viriya, and wisdom - Paññā are mine. Why do you question me, who am thus intent, about life?"

"Even the streams of rivers will this wind dry up. Why should not the blood of one who is thus striving dry up? When the blood dries up, the bile and phlegm also dry up. When my flesh wastes away, more and more does my mind get clarified. Still more do my mindfulness, wisdom, and concentration become firm."

"While I live thus, experiencing the utmost pain, my mind does not long for lust. Behold the purity of a being!"

Sense-desires - Kama, is your first enemy,

The second is called Aversion - Arati,

The third is Hunger and Thirst- Khuppipasa,

The fourth is called Craving- Tanha,

The fifth is Sloth and Torpor- Thina-Middha,

The sixth is called Fear- Bhaya,

The seventh is Doubt - Vicikiccha, and

The eighth is Detraction and Obstinacy- Makkha-Thambha,

The ninth is Profit - Labha, Praise- Siloka, Honour- Sakkara, and that ill-gotten Fame-Yasa.

The tenth is the extolling of oneself and the contempt of others.

"This is your army, the opposing host of the Evil One. That army the coward does not over-come, but he who overcomes obtains happiness."

"This Munja do I display! What boots life in this world! Better for me is death in the battle than that one should live on, vanquished!". With these words the ascetic Gotama dismissed Mara and made a firm determination to attain his goal, Buddhahood.

The Middle Path

The ascetic Gotama was now fully convinced, through personal experience, of the utter futility of self-mortification. Abandoning it forever, he adopted an independent course - the Majjhima Patipada - the Middle Path.

He recalled how when his father was engaged in plowing, he sat in the cool shade of the rose-apple tree, having attained to the first Ecstasy. He thought - well, this is the Path to Enlightenment!

He realized that Enlightenment could not be gained with an exhausted body. So he decided to take some food. The five ascetics who attended on him, disappointed at this unexpected change of method, deserted him and went to Isipatana, saying that "the ascetic Gotama had become indulgent, had ceased from striving, and had returned to a life of comfort."

At a crucial time when help would have been most welcome, his only companions left him, but he was not discouraged. After a substantial meal offered by Sujata, a generous lady, he made a firm resolve not to rise from his seat until he attained Buddhahood.

The Enlightenment

One happy Vesak night, as he was seated under the famous Pippala tree at Buddha Gaya, with mind tranquillized and purified, in the first watch he developed that supernormal knowledge which enabled him to remember his past lives Pubbenivasanussati Nana - Reminiscence of Past Births. In the middle watch he developed the clairvoyant supernormal vision dealing with the death and rebirth of beings Cutupapata Nana - Perception of the Disappearing and Reappearing of Beings.

In the last watch of the night he developed the supernormal knowledge with regard to the destruction of passions - Asavakkhaya Nana, and comprehending things as they truly are, attained Perfect Enlightenment - Samma Sambodhi.

Having in his 35th year attained Buddhahood, that supreme state of Perfection, He devoted the remainder of that precious life to serve humanity both by example and precept, dominated by no personal motive.

The Buddha was a human being. As a man He was born, as a man He lived, and as a man His life came to an end. Though human, He became an extraordinary man - Acchariya Manussa. The Buddha laid stress on this fact and left no room for anyone to fall into the error of thinking that He was an immortal being. There is no deification in the case of the Buddha.

Nor does the Buddha claim to be an incarnation of Vishnu, nor does He call himself a "Savior" who freely saves others by His personal salvation. The Buddha exhorts His disciples to depend on themselves for their salvation, for both defilement and purity depend on oneself.

"You yourselves should make the exertion. The Tathágatas are only teachers," says the Buddha. The Buddhas point out the path, and it is left for us to follow that path to save ourselves.

"To depend on others for salvation is negative, but to depend on oneself is positive." Dependence on others means a surrender of one's effort. Furthermore, the Buddha does not claim a monopoly of Buddhahood, which as matter of fact is not the prerogative of any specially graced, chosen person. He reached the highest possible state of perfection any person could aspire to; and without the closed fist of a teacher, He revealed the only straight path that leads thereto.

According to the teachings of the Buddha anybody may aspire to that supreme state of perfection if he makes the necessary aspiring determination and necessary exertion. As a man He attained Buddhahood and proclaimed to the world the latent possibilities and the creative power of man. Instead of placing an unseen almighty God over man, and making him subservient to such a belief, He raised the worth of mankind.

It was He who taught that man could obtain his Deliverance from sorrow by his own exertion, without depending on a God and mediating priests or on sacrifices and prayers. It was He who taught the egocentric world the noble ideal of selfless service. It was He who revolted against the degrading caste system and taught the equality of mankind. He declared that the gates of success and prosperity were open to all, in every condition of life, high and low, saint and sinner, who would care to turn over a new leaf and aspire to Perfection.

Irrespective of caste, color or rank, he established for both deserving men and women a celibate order, which was "democratic in constitution and communistic in distribution." He gave complete freedom of thought and wanted us to open our eyes to see things as they truly are. He comforted the bereaved by His consoling words.

He ministered to the sick that were deserted. He helped the poor who were neglected.

He ennobled the lives of sinners and purified the corrupted lives of criminals. He encouraged the feeble, united the divided, enlightened the ignorant, clarified the mystic, guided the deluded, elevated the base, and dignified the noble. Rich and poor, saint and sinner, loved Him alike. Despotic and righteous kings, glorious and obscure princes and nobles, generous and miserly millionaires, haughty and humble scholars, destitute paupers, downtrodden scavengers, wicked murderers, despised courtesans all benefited by His words of wisdom and compassion.

His noble example was a source of inspiration to all. His Message of Peace was hailed by all with indescribable joy, and was of eternal benefit to everyone who had the fortune to come under its benign influence.

Soon After The Enlightenment:

A Paean of Joy - Udana Gatha

Thro' many a birth in Samsara wandered I,
 Seeking but not finding, the builder of this house.
 Sorrowful is repeated birth.
 O house-builder! Thou art seen.
 Thou shalt build no house again,
 All thy rafters are broken,
 thy ridge-pole is shattered.
 The Mind attains the Unconditioned.
 Achieved is the End of Craving.

Dhammapada w. 153, 154

The Seven Weeks after the Enlightenment

On the auspicious day preceding the Enlightenment, the Bodhisatta ate some milk-porridge offered by a generous lady named Sujata. After the Enlightenment for seven weeks the Buddha fasted, and spent His time under the Bodhi tree and in its neighborhood.

The whole of the first week the Buddha sat under the Bodhi tree in one posture, experiencing the Bliss of Emancipation - Vimutti Sukha.

At the end of the seven days the Buddha emerged from that state of concentration, and in the first watch of the nights thoroughly reflected on Dependent Arising - Paticca Samuppada, in direct order thus: When this (cause) exists, this (effect) is; with the arising of this (cause), this (effect) arises. In the middle watch of the night the Buddha thoroughly reflected on "Dependent

Arising" in reverse order thus: "When this (cause) does not exist, this (effect) is not; with the cessation of this (cause), this (effect) ceases."

In the third watch of the night the Buddha reflected on "Dependent Arising" in direct and reverse order thus:- "When this (cause) exists, this (effect) is, with the arising of this (cause) this (effect) arises; when this (cause) does not exist this (effect) is not; with the cessation of this (cause), this (effect) ceases." Throughout the second week, as a mark of gratitude to the Bodhi tree that sheltered Him during His struggle for Enlightenment, the Buddha stood gazing at it with motionless eyes. During the third week the Buddha paced up and down on a jeweled promenade - Ratana Cankamana near the Bodhi tree.

The fourth week He spent in a jeweled chamber" - Ratanaghara meditating on the Abhidhamma. During the fifth week He dwelt under the Ajapala Banyan tree in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree. Here the Buddha sat in one posture for seven days enjoying this Bliss of Emancipation. When He emerged from that state of concentration, a certain conceited Brahmin approached the Buddha and questioned Him thus:-"In what respect, O Venerable Gotama, does one become a Brahmin, and what are the conditions that make a Brahmin?"

Then the Blessed One uttered this paean of joy: -

"That Brahmin who has discarded evil, without conceit - huhunka, free from defilements, self-controlled, versed in knowledge, who has led the Holy Life - rightly would call himself a Brahmin. For him there is no elation anywhere in this world." According to the Jataka Commentary it was during His stay at the foot of this tree that the three daughters of Mara - Tanha, Arati, and Raga - came to tempt the Buddha.

From the Ajapala Banyan tree the Buddha proceeded to the Mucalinda tree where He spent the sixth week. Here, too, the Buddha sat for seven days enjoying the Bliss of Emancipation. At that time there arose an unexpected great shower. Rain and gloomy weather with cold winds prevailed for seven days.

Thereupon Mucalinda, the serpent-king, came out of his abode and coiling round the body of the Blessed One seven times, remained keeping his large hood over the head of the Blessed One so that the Blessed One may not be touched by cold, heat, gadflies, gnats, wind, sun or reptiles.

At the close of seven days Mucalinda seeing the clear, cloudless sky, uncoiled himself from around the body of the Blessed One, and leaving his own form, took the guise of a young man, and stood in front of the Blessed One with joined hands.

Thereupon the Buddha uttered this paean of joy: "Happy is seclusion to him who is contented, to him who has heard the Truth, and to him who sees. Happy is

goodwill in this world, and so is restraint towards all beings. Happy in this world, is non-attachment, the passing beyond sense-desires. The suppression of the 'I am' conceit is indeed the highest happiness."

The seventh week the Buddha spent at the Rajayatana tree. Here too the Buddha sat in one posture for seven days enjoying the Bliss of Emancipation.

The First Two Converts

At that time two merchants, Tapassu and Bhalluka, from Ukkala (Orissa) were traveling to their native town. Then a Devata's who was a blood-relative of these two merchants, spoke to them as follows: - "The Blessed One, good sirs, is dwelling at the foot of the Rajayatana tree, soon after His Enlightenment. Go and serve the Blessed One with flour and honeycomb. It will conduce to your well-being and happiness for a long time."

Thereupon the two merchants, Tapassu and Bhalluka, took with them flour and honeycomb, and approaching the Buddha said: -

"O Lord, may the Blessed One accept this flour and honeycomb so that it may long tend to our well-being and happiness!" Then it occurred to the Blessed One: "The Tathágatas do not accept food with their hands. How shall I accept this flour and honeycomb?"

Forthwith the four Great Kings understood the thoughts of the Blessed One and from the four directions offered Him four stone bowls, saying: -

"O Lord may the Blessed One accept in these the flour and honeycomb!"

The Blessed One accepted the new bowls, received the flour and honeycomb in them, and ate thereof.

When the Buddha finished His meal the two merchants prostrated themselves before His feet and said:-

"We, O Lord, seek refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. May the Blessed One treat us as lay disciples who have sought refuge from today till death!"

They were the first disciples who took the twofold formula."

Chapter 3

The Buddha Propounds His Dhamma

Invitation To Teach The Dhamma

The close of the fasting period, as the Buddha was engaged in solitary meditation, He thought: -

"With difficulty have I apprehended the Dhamma. There is no need to proclaim it now. This Dhamma is not easily understood by those who are overcome by lust and hatred. The lust-ridden, shrouded by the mass darkness, do not see this Dhamma, which goes against the stream, abstruse, profound, difficult to perceive, and subtle."

Eventually His mind turned into inaction, and not to the teaching of the Dhamma. Thereupon a celestial being named Brahma Sahampati read the thoughts of the Blessed One, and fearing that the world might perish through not hearing the Dhamma, approached the Buddha and invited Him to teach the Dhamma.

He wisely remarked:

"In ancient times there arose in Magadha a Dhamma, impure, evolved by the corrupted. Open this Door to the Deathless. May they hear the Dhamma, understood by the Stainless! Just as one standing on the summit of a rocky mountain would behold the people around, even so may the All-Seeing Wise One ascend this palace of Dhamma!

May the Sorrow less One look upon the people, plunged in grief and overcome by birth and decay."

"Rise, O Hero, the victor in battle, the caravan-leader, the debt-free One, and wander in the world! May the Blessed One propound the Dhamma! There will be those who will understand the Doctrine!"

When Brahma Sahampati entreated the Buddha for the third time, He surveyed the world with His Buddha Vision.

On surveying the world He perceived beings with little as well as much dust in their eyes, with keen and dull intellect, with good and bad characteristics, who are easy and difficult to be taught, and a few others who live perceiving the dangers of evil and of a future life.

The Buddha, therefore, accepted the invitation of Brahma Sahampati and said:

"Opened to them are the Doors to the Deathless. Let those who have ears repose confidence. Being aware of the weariness of it, O Brahma, I did not preach amongst men this glorious and excellent Dhamma."

The delighted Brahma, thinking - "I made myself the occasion for the Blessed One to expound the Dhamma," respectfully saluted Him and straightaway disappeared.

On the Way to Benares to Teach the Dhamma

"To whom shall I teach the Dhamma first? Who will understand the Dhamma quickly?" was the first thought that occurred to the Buddha before He embarked on His noble Mission.

"Well, there is Alara Kalama, who is learned, clever, wise, and has for long been with little dust in his eyes. How if I were to teach the Dhamma to him first? He will understand the Dhamma quickly."

Then a deity appeared before the Blessed One and said:-

"Lord! Alara Kalama died a week ago." With His Divine Eye He perceived that it was so. Then He thought of Uddaka Ramaputta. Instantly a deity informed Him that he died the evening before. With His Divine Eye the Buddha perceived this to be true.

Ultimately He thought of the five Bhikkhus who attended on Him during His struggle for Enlightenment. With His superhuman Divine Eye He perceived that they were residing in the Deer Park at Isipatana in Benares. So the Buddha stayed at Uruvela as long as He wished and set out for Benares.

Between Gaya and the Bodhi, Upaka, a wandering ascetic, saw the Buddha traveling on the highway, and said:-

"Extremely clear are your senses, friend! Pure and clean is your complexion. On account of whom have you renounced, friend? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?"

The Buddha replied:

"All have I overcome, all do I know.
 From all am I detached, all have I renounced.
 Wholly absorbed am I in the destruction of craving (Arahantship)
 Having comprehended all by myself who shall I call my teacher?
 No teacher have I
 An equal to me there is not.
 In the world, including the gods, there is no rival to me.
 Indeed an Arahant am I in this world.
 An unsurpassed teacher am I.
 Alone am I the All-Enlightened.

Cool and appeased am I.
To establish the wheel of Dhamma I go to the city of Kasi
In this blind world
I shall beat the drum of Deathlessness."

"Then, friend, you do admit that you are an Arahant, a limitless Conqueror?" queried Upaka. "Like me are conquerors who have attained to the destruction of Defilements. All the evil conditions have I conquered. Hence, Upaka, I am called a Conqueror," replied the Buddha.

"It may be so, friend!" Upaka curtly remarked, and nodding his head, turned into a by-road and departed. Unperturbed by the first rebuff the Buddha received, He wandered from place to place and arrived in due course at the Deer Park in Benares.

The five monks who saw Him coming from a far resolved not to pay Him due respect as they misconstrued His change of effort during His struggle for Enlightenment. But as the Buddha drew near, His august personality was such that they were compelled to receive Him with due honor. Nevertheless, they addressed Him by name and by the title 'Avuso' (friend) a form of address applied generally to juniors. The Blessed One advised them not to address Him thus as He had attained Buddhahood. But the skeptical monks refused to believe Him. For the second and third time the Buddha advised them. Yet the monks refused to acknowledge His superiority.

Finally the Buddha said:

"Do you know, O Bhikkhus, of an occasion when I ever spoke to you thus before?"

"Nay, indeed, Lord!"

"The Tathágata, O Bhikkhus, is not luxurious, has not given up striving, and has not adopted a life of abundance. An Exalted One, O Bhikkhus, is the Tathágata: a Fully Enlightened One is He. Give ear, O Bhikkhus! Immortality has been attained. I shall instruct and teach the Dhamma.

If you act according to my instructions, you will before long realize, by your own intuitive wisdom, and thereafter continue attaining in this life itself, that supreme state of the Holy Life, for the sake of which sons of noble families rightly renounce the household for the homeless life."

It was a frank utterance, issuing from the sacred mouth of the Buddha. The cultured monks, though adamant in their views, were now fully convinced of the great achievement of the Buddha and of His competence to act as their spiritual Guide.

Two of the Bhikkhus the Buddha instructed, whilst three went out for alms. With what they brought, all the six sustained themselves. Three of the Bhikkhus He instructed, whilst two Bhikkhus went out for alms. With what they brought, all the six sustained themselves.

The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta was the first discourse the Buddha delivered to them. Hearing it Kondanna, the eldest, attained Sotapatti, the first stage of Sainthood. The other four attained Sotapatti later. It was after hearing the Anattalakkhana Sutta, which deals with soul-less-ness, that they all attained Arahantship, the final stage of Sainthood.

The Five Monks

The five Bhikkhus who thus attained Arahantship and became His first disciples were Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama and Assaji. Kondanna was the youngest of the eight Brahmins invited for the naming ceremony, and who alone foretold that the prince would definitely become the Buddha. The other four disciples were sons of four of the other seven Brahmins.

These five Brahmin's had retired to the forest as ascetics in anticipation of the renunciation of Prince Siddhattha, and at Uruvela they had attended on him when he was striving to attain Buddhahood. But when he gave up fasting and penance, they left him and went to Isipatana. Soon after their departure, he attained Buddhahood. It was seven weeks after His Enlightenment that the Buddha visited Isipatana and expounded the doctrine to them.

The Venerable Kondanna became the first Arahant and the senior member of the Sangha. It was the Venerable Assaji, one of the five, who converted the great Sariputta, the first chief disciple of the Buddha.

Chapter 4

The First Discourse

Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was residing at the Deer Park in Isipatana, near Benares. Thereupon the Blessed One addressed the five Bhikkhus as follows:-

"There are two extreme (Anta) which should be avoided by a recluse."

"(The) constant attachment to Sensual Pleasures- Kamasukhallikanuyoga which is base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and profitless; and (the) constant addiction to Self Mortification - Attaki Jamathanuyoga which is a painful ignoble, and profitless."

"Avoiding these two extremes, O Bhikkhus, the Tathágata has discovered the Middle Path - Majjhima Patipada which promotes sight, knowledge, Peace- Vupasamaya, Higher Wisdom - Abhinnaya, Enlightenment - Sambodhaya, and Nibbanaya."

"What, O Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path the Tathágata has discovered which promotes sight, knowledge, peace, Higher Wisdom, Enlightenment, and Nibbána?"

"It is this Noble Eightfold Path - namely, Right Understanding - Samma Ditthi, Right Thoughts - Samma Sankappa, Right Speech - Samma Vaca, Right Action- Samma Kammanta, Right Livelihood - Samma Ajiva, Right Effort - Samma Vayama, Right Mindfulness - Samma Sati, and Right Concentration - Samma Samadhi. This, O Bhikkhus, is the Middle Path which the Tathágata has found out."

(1) "Now this, O Bhikkhus, is The Noble Truth of suffering: Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to receive what one desires is suffering, in brief, the five Aggregates of Attachment are suffering."

(2) "Now this, O Bhikkhus, is The Noble Truth of the cause of suffering:- It is the craving which produces rebirth, accompanied by passionate clinging, welcome this and that (life). It is the craving for sensual pleasures Kamatanha, craving for becoming Bhavatanha' and craving for annihilation Vibhavatanha"

(3) "Now this, O Bhikkhus, is The Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering: It is the complete separation from, and destruction of, this very craving, its forsaking, renunciation, liberation, and detachment."

(4) "Now this, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of The path leading to the cessation of suffering:-

It is this Noble Eightfold Path namely, Right Understanding, Right Thoughts, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration."

(1)

i) "This is the Noble Truth of Suffering - Dukkha Ariya Sacca.

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight, and the light.

ii. "This Noble Truth of Suffering should be Comprehended - Parinneyya".

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light,

iii. "This Noble Truth of Suffering has been comprehended-Parinnata."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

(2)

i. "This is The Noble Truth of the cause of suffering - Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Sacca."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

ii "This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering should be eradicated - Pahatabba."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eyes...the light.

iii "This Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering has been eradicated-Pahinam."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

(3)

i. "This is The Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering - Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eyes...the light.

ii. "This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering should be realized -Sacchika tabbam."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

iii. "This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been realized- Sacchikatam."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eyes...the light.

(4)

i. "This is The Noble Truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering - Dukkha Nirodhagamini Patipada Ariya Sacca."

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

ii. "This Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering should be developed-Bhavetabbam."

Thus, O, Bhikkhus, with respect to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

iii. This Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the cessation of Suffering has been developed - Bhativam

Thus, O Bhikkhus, with respect to thin unheard before, there arose in me the eye...the light.

"As long as, O Bhikkhus, the absolute true knowledge regarding these Four Noble Truths under their three aspects and twelve modes was not perfectly clear to me, so long did I not acknowledge, in this world, together with gods, Maras, and Brahmas, amongst the hosts of ascetics and priests, gods and men, that I had gained the Incomparable, Supreme Enlightenment.

When O Bhikkhus, the absolute true knowledge regarding these Four Noble Truths, under their three aspects and twelve modes perfectly clear to me, then only did I acknowledge in the world, together with gods, Maras, and Brahmas, amongst the hosts of ascetics and priests, gods, and men, that I had gained the Incomparable Supreme Enlightenment.

"And there arose in me the knowledge and insight - Unshakable is the deliverance of my mind, this is my last birth now there is no more rebirth."

This the Blessed One said, and the delighted Bhikkhus applauded the words of the Blessed One. While this doctrine was being expounded, there arose in the Venerable Kondanna" the dustless, stainless eye of Truth, 'Whatsoever has arisen, all that must inevitably perish.'

When the Buddha expounded this Dhammacakka, the earth-bound deities exclaimed:-"This excellent Dhammacakka, which could not be expounded by any ascetics, priest, god;

Mara, or Brahma in this world, was expounded by the Blessed One at the Deer Park in Isipatana, near Benares."

Hearing it, the Devas of Catummaharajika, Tavatimsa, Yama, Tusita, Nimmanarati, Paranimitavasavatti; and the Brahmas of Brahma Parisajja, Brahma Purohita, Maha Brahma, Parittabha, Appamanabha, Abhassara, Paritta-subha, Appamanasubha, Subhakinha, Vehapphala, Aviha, Atappa, Sudassa, Sudassi, and Akanittha also raised the same joyous cry.

Thus at that very moment, at that very instant, this cry extended as far as the Brahma Realm. These ten thousand world systems quaked, tottered and trembled violently.

A radiant light, surpassing the effulgence of the Devas, appeared in the world. Then the Blessed One said:

"Friends, Kondanna has indeed understood. Friends, Kondanna has indeed understood." Therefore the Venerable Kondanna was named Annata Kondanna.

Chapter 5

The Sending Of The Missioners

The Conversion Of Yasa

In Benares there was a young man named Yasa, son of a millionaire, who led a luxurious life at home. Realizing the vanities of worldly life, he stole away from home at night and went in the direction of Isipatana where the Buddha was staying. The Buddha, seeing him, invited him to His presence and expounded the Dhamma, hearing it, he at first attained Sotapatti and later became an Arahant.

The sorrowing father, who was looking for his missing son, also came across the Buddha, and hearing the Dhamma from Him, became the first lay disciple (Upasaka) who sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. He then invited the Buddha and the Venerable Yasa to his house for alms. When the Buddha visited his house and expounded the Dhamma, the Venerable Yasa's mother and his former wife also sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. They were his first two-laywomen disciples (Upasika).

The Venerable Yasa had fifty-four friends. Hearing of the Venerable Yasa's conversion, they also entered the Order and attained Arahantship.

Exhortation to the First Missioners

When there were sixty Arahants excluding the Buddha in this world, the Blessed One uttered the following memorable words and dispatched them in various directions to propagate the Sublime Dhamma:-

"Free am I, O' Bhikkhus, from all bonds, whether divine or human. You, too, O Bhikkhus, are freed from all bonds, whether divine or human."

"Go forth, O Bhikkhus, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit, and happiness of gods and men... Let not two go by one way. Preach, O Bhikkhus, the Dhamma, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, both in spirit and in the letter. Proclaim the Holy Life, altogether perfect and pure."

"There are beings with a little dust in their eyes, who, not hearing the Dhamma, will fall away. There will be those who understand the Dhamma."

I, too, O Bhikkhus, will go to Uruvela in Senanigama, in order to preach the Dhamma." With this exhortation the Buddha dispatched His first sixty disciples in various directions.

Conversion of Thirty Young Men

As it was the rainy season the Buddha spent His first Retreat at Isipatana in Benares. Immediately after He went towards Uruvela. On the way He rested at the foot of a tree.

At that time thirty happy young men went with their wives to a grove to amuse themselves. As one had no wife he took with him a courtesan. While they were enjoying themselves this woman absconded with who went in search of valuables. The young men enquired of Him whether he saw the Buddha and inquired whether He saw a woman passing that way.

"Which do think young men is better - seeking a woman or seeking oneself? questioned the Buddha.

"Seeking oneself is better young men Lord!" replied the young men.

"Well, then, sit down: I shall preach the doctrine to you", said the Buddha.

They attentively listened to Him and the 'Eye of Truth' arose in them.

Later they all entered the Order and received the Higher Order.

Conversion of the three Kassapa Brothers

At Uruvela, there lived three matted-hair (Jatila) ascetics known as Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa and Gaya Kassapa. They were all brothers living separately with Five hundred, Three hundred and Two hundred disciples respectively. With much effort, at times using His psychic powers too, the Buddha at first converted the eldest Kassapa who was greatly infatuated by his own spiritual attainments. Therefore he with his disciples entered the Order and obtained the higher Ordination. The other two brothers and their disciples followed suit.

Accompanied by them all, the Buddha repaired to Gaya Sisa where He preached the Adittapariyaya Sutta - 'All in Flames', hearing which all attained Arahantship.

The Buddha meets King Bimbisara

With His large retinue of Arahant disciples, the Buddha, in accordance with the promise He made to King Bimbisara before His Enlightenment, proceeded to Rajagaha.

The king, hearing of His arrival in his kingdom, went with a large following to pay his respects to the Buddha. As the ascetic Kassapa was held in high esteem by his people, he was at a loss to understand whether the Buddha was a disciple of Kassapa or the latter was a disciple of the former. The Buddha, reading his thought, questioned Kassapa as to why he abandoned fire-worship.

Then the venerable Kassapa acknowledged the Buddha's superiority, saying:-

"My teacher, Lord, is the Lord: I am the disciple. My teacher, Lord, is the Lord: I am the disciple."

The devout people were pleased to hear of the conversion. The Buddha thereupon preached the Maha Narada Kassapa Jataka to show that they were similarly converted in a previous birth. The 'Eye of Truth' arose in them all. King Bimbisara attained Sotapatti. Thereupon the king invited the Buddha and His followers to his palace for the meal. At the close of the meal on the following day the king offered his Bamboo Grove (Veluvanarama) for the use of the Buddha

and His disciples.

Conversion of Sariputta and Moggallana

Not far from Rajagaha in the village Upatissa, also known as Nalaka, there lived a very intelligent youth, named Sariputta (Son of Sari). Since he belonged to the leading family of the village, he was also called Upatissa. He had three sisters - Cala, Upacala and Sisupacala - and three brothers Upasena, Cunda and Revata.

Though nurtured in Brahmanism, his broad outlook on life and mature wisdom compelled him to renounce his ancestral religion for the more tolerant and scientific teachings of the Buddha Gotama. His brothers and sisters followed his noble example. His father, Vanganta, apparently adhered to the Brahmin faith. His mother, on the contrary, was converted to Buddhism by herself at the moment of her death.

Upatissa was brought up in the lap of luxury. He found a very intimate friend in Kolita, also known as Moggallana, with whom he was closely associated from an infinite past. One day as both of them were enjoying a hilltop festival called the Giragga Samajja, they realized how vain, how transient, were all sensual pleasures. Instantly they decided to leave the world and seek the Path of Release.

Dismissing their attendants and without even informing their parents, they wandered from place to place in quest of Peace.

The two young seekers went at first to Sanjaya, who had a following of five hundred disciples, and sought ordination under him. Before long they acquired the meager knowledge which their master could impart to them: but unsatisfied with his teaching they left him, and meeting disappointment everywhere, returned to their own village. Ultimately they agreed between them that whosoever first discovers the Path should teach the other.

It was at this time that Venerable Assaji, one of the first five disciples, went in the direction of Rajagaha.

With body well composed, robes neatly arranged, this venerable figure passed with measured steps from door to door, accepting the morsels of food which the charitable placed in his bowl. The saintly deportment of this dignified person at once arrested the attention of Upatissa, who was wandering in the city of Rajagaha.

"Never before have I seen," thought Upatissa to himself, an ascetic like this. Surely he must be one of those who have attained Arahantship or one who is treading the path leading to Arahantship. What if I were to approach him and

ask:- "For whose sake Sir, have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?"

Upatissa, however, refrained from questioning him, as he thought he would thereby interfere with his silent begging tour. The Arahant Assaji, having begged what little he needed, was seeking a suitable place to take his meal. Upatissa, seeing this, gladly availed himself of the opportunity to offer him his own stool and water from his own pot. Fulfilling thus the preliminary duties of a pupil, he exchanged pleasant greetings with him and reverently inquired:-

"Calm and serene, Reverend Sir, are your organs of sense; clean and clear is the hue of your skin. For whose sake did you retire from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?"

The unassuming Arahant Assaji modestly replied:-"I am still a novice in the Order, brother; I am not able to expound the Dhamma to you at length."

I am Upatissa, Reverend Sir. Say much or little according to your ability, and it is left to me to understand it in a hundred or a thousand ways." "Say little or much," Upatissa continued.

"Tell me just the substance. The substance only do I require. A mere jumble of words is of no avail."

The Venerable Assaji uttered a four-line stanza, skillfully summing up the profound philosophy of the Master, in the scientific truth of the law of cause and effect.

Ye dhamma hetuppabhava - tesam hetum tathagato Aha
tesan ca yo nirodho - evam vadi Maha-Samano

"Of things that proceed from a cause
Their cause the Tathágata has told,
And also their cessation:
Thus teaches the Great Ascetic."

So well did the Venerable Assaji guide him on his upward path that, immediately on hearing the first two lines, he attained the first stage of Sainthood.

Now, in accordance with the agreement, he returned to his companion Kolita to inform him of the joyful tidings. Kolita, who was as enlightened as his friend, also attained to the same state on hearing the whole stanza. Overwhelmed with joy at the successful conclusion of their search after Peace, they went, as in duty bound, to meet their teacher Sanjaya with the object of converting him to their new faith. Frustrated in their attempt, Upatissa and Kolita, accompanied by 250

of the followers of Sanjaya who readily joined them, repaired to the Veluvana monastery to see their illustrious Teacher, the Buddha.

In compliance with their request, the Buddha admitted both of them into the Order by the mere utterance of the words:-"Etha Bhikkhave! Come, O Bhikkhus!"

A fortnight later, the Venerable Sariputta attained Arahantship on hearing the Buddha expound the Vedana Pariggaha Sutta to the wandering ascetic Dighanakha. On the very same day in the evening the Buddha summoned all His disciples to His presence and conferred the exalted positions of the first and second disciples in the Sangsa respectively on the Venerable Sariputta and Monggallana, who also had attained Arahantship a week earlier.

Chapter 6

The Buddha Visits His Birthplace

King Suddhodana desires to see the Buddha

On hearing that the Buddha was preaching the Dhamma in Rajagaha, King Suddhodana was desirous of seeing Him. Nine courtiers, each with a large following, were sent on nine successive occasions to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. Contrary to the King's expectations all nine attained Arahantship and joined the Order. Since Arahants are indifferent to worldly things they did not convey the King's message to the Buddha.

The disappointed King finally dispatched Kaludayi, who was a playmate of the Buddha. He agreed to go on condition that he would be allowed to enter the Order.

He, too, hearing the Dhamma, attained Arahantship and entered the Order. But unlike the others he conveyed the message to the Buddha and persuaded Him to visit His aged royal father. The Buddha, attended by a large retinue of His disciples, journeyed the whole distance preaching the Dhamma on the way, and arrived in Kapilavatthu in two months.

Arrangements were made for Him to stay in the Park of Nigrodha, a Sakyan. The conceited elderly Sakyans, without paying Him due obeisance, put forward the younger ones to salute Him. The Buddha subdued their pride by rising into the air and exhibiting the "Twin Wonder." The King, seeing this wonderful sight, saluted Him immediately, saying that it was his third salutation. Then all the other Sakyans paid Him due respect. Thereupon the Buddha came down from the sky and sat on the prepared seat. The relatives too sat down to listen to Him.

Then a strange phenomenon occurred. Rain broke out, but it wetted only those who wished to be wet, and not others. When the Sakyans marveled at this phenomenon, the Buddha preached the Vessantara Jataka to show that a similar incident took place in the presence of his relatives in a previous birth.

The Buddha Goes On His Alms-Round

The King sees the Light

As no one invited Him for the noonday meal on the following day, the Buddha, bowl in hand went from house to house in the streets of Kapilavatthu seeking alms together with His disciples. This was reported to the King, and he with agitated heart hurried to the scene and inquired of the Buddha why He thus disgraces the family.

"This is the custom of our lineage, O King" replied the Buddha to the King's astonishment.

"Surely, Lord, ours is the warrior lineage of Mahasammata, and not a single warrior has gone seeking alms." "This royal lineage is yours, O King; mine is the Buddha lineage." Standing in the street the Buddha then advised the King thus:- "Be alert! Be not heedless! Lead a righteous life. The righteous live happily both in this world and in the next."

The King saw the light of Truth and attained the first stage of Sainthood. Soon he took the bowl from the Buddha and conducted Him and His disciples to the palace and served them all with food. After the meal the Buddha preached the Dhamma thus:- "Lead a righteous life, and not one that is corrupt. The righteous live happily both in this world and in the next."

Thereupon the King attained Sakadagami-Once Returner, the second stage of Sainthood, and Maha Pajapati Gotami attained the first stage of Sainthood.

On a later occasion, hearing the Dhammapala Jataka, the King attained Anagami-Never-Returner, the third stage of Sainthood.

On his deathbed, the King heard the Dhamma from the Buddha for the last time and attained Arahantship.

The Buddha and Princess Yasodhara

When the Buddha visited the palace, all but Princess Yasodhara came to pay their reverence to the Buddha. Yasodhara thought:-

Certainly if there is any virtue in me, the noble Lord Himself will come to my presence. Then will I reverence Him."

The Buddha handed His bowl to the King, and accompanied by His two chief disciples entered the chamber of Yasodhara and sat on the prepared seat, saying:-

"Let the King's daughter reverence as she likes. Say nothing."
Swiftly she came, clasped His ankles, and placing her head on His feet, revered Him as she liked.

The King then commented on her great love and said:-

"Lord, when my daughter heard that you were wearing yellow robes, she also robed herself in yellow; when she heard that You were taking one meal a day, she also did the same; when she heard that You had given up lofty couches, she lay on a low couch; when she heard that You had given up garlands and scents, she also gave them up; when her relatives sent messages to say that they maintain her, she did not even look at a single one. So virtuous was my daughter!"

"Not only in this birth but in a previous birth, too, she protected me, O' King," remarked the Buddha and cited the Candakinnara Jataka. Consoling her with these words, the Buddha left the palace.

After the death of King Suddhodana, when Maha Pajapati Gotami became a Bhikkhuni, Yasodhara also entered the Order and later attained Arahantship. It may be mentioned that Princess Yasodhara was of the same age as the Buddha.

The Buddha and His Stepbrother Nanda

Two days after the arrival of the Buddha in Kapilavatthu, Prince Nanda, the son of Queen Pajapati Gotami, was celebrating his consecration ceremony, marriage ceremony, and the house-warming ceremony. It was on the occasion of these three festivals that the Buddha visited the palace.

The Buddha handed the bowl to Prince Nanda and uttering a Blessing rose to go without taking the bowl. The Prince followed Him. Princess Janapada Kalyani seeing Nanda following the Buddha said:-"Return quickly, O noble Lord!" Prince Nanda was deeply moved by these words that fell from the mouth of his fiancée, but with deference to the Buddha he could not return the bowl to Him. So, bowl in hand, he went to the park with the Buddha and was asked to join the Order.

With reluctance he entered the Order out of respect for Him as a Buddha and as an elder brother of his; but he was constantly thinking of his fiancée. The Buddha reading his thoughts devised a means to set him on the right path. With the object of showing him celestial nymphs the Buddha using His psychic powers, took him to a heavenly plane. On the way Nanda Bhikkhu was shown a singed she-monkey clinging to a burnt-up stump in a scorched field.

Reaching heaven Nanda Bhikkhu beheld the celestial nymphs and was so much fascinated by them that he compared his charming fiancée to the old she-monkey.

"Would you like to have them, Nanda?" the Buddha questioned him.

"Yes, Lord!" he childishly replied.

"Well, then, I guarantee that you will possess them if you persevere as I bid you."

Hearing that Nanda Thera was living the Holy Life with the object of winning heavenly nymphs, the Bhikkhus ridiculed him, calling him 'hireling'. Eventually he became ashamed of his base motive, and by striving diligently attained Arahantship.

The Buddha and Prince Rahula

On the seventh day after His arrival in Kapilavatthu Princess Yasodhara dressed up Rahula and pointing to the Buddha said:-

"Behold, son, that great ascetic of majestic appearance. He is your father. Go up to Him and ask for your inheritance."

Young Rahula came to His presence, and asking for his inheritance, as advised by his mother, very affectionately said:-

"O ascetic, even your shadow is pleasing to me."

After the noon meal he followed the Buddha uttering much else that was becoming. Nobody attempted to stop him. Nor did the Buddha prevent him from following Him. On arrival at the park the Buddha summoned the Venerable Sariputta and said:-

"Rahula asks me for his inheritance. I shall give him the seven-fold noble wealth, which I received at the foot of the Bodhi tree, and make him owner of an inheritance transcending this world. Ordain him, Sariputta."

Rahula, who was then only seven years of age, was admitted into the Order. King Suddhodana was deeply grieved to hear of this unexpected ordination of his beloved grandson. He came to the Buddha and humbly requested Him not to ordain any one without the prior consent of his parents.

The Buddha granted the request.

There are several instructive discourses preached specifically to the Venerable Rahula. Having come of age, he received the Higher Ordination and attained Arahantship in due time.

The Buddha and Ānanda

Ānanda was a cousin of the Buddha. He entered the Order together with the Sakya Nobles - Anuruddha, Bhaddiya, Bhagu, Kimbila, and Devadatta. Hearing a discourse from the Venerable Mantaniputta on the nature of things, he became a Sotapanna.

As he possessed a powerful retentive memory, and as he had the rare privilege of listening to all the discourses of the Buddha owing to his close association with Him, he was later appointed the "Treasurer of the Dhamma-Dhamma-Bhandagarika."

From the 55th year of the Buddha, until His Parinibbana in the 50th year, the Venerable Ananda ministered to all His needs acting as His favourite attendant. It was he who pleaded for the establishment of the Order of Nuns. At the First Council he was chosen to rehearse the Dhamma. Thus every Sutta begins with his words - "Evam me sutam. - Thus have I heard."

As he was expected to take a leading part in the First Council, which was composed only of Arahants, he strove hard and attained Arahantship on the night preceding the Convocation while he was about to lie down on his couch. It is stated that he was the only disciple who attained Arahantship free from the postures of sitting, standing, walking or sleeping.

The Buddha and Devadatta

Devadatta was the son of Suppabuddha, and hence the cousin and brother-in-law of the Buddha. He entered the Order in the early part of the Buddha's ministry, and was distinguished for psychic powers (Iddhi). Later, overcome by worldly gain and honor, he so completely changed his life that he became the greatest adversary of the Buddha. He once approached the Buddha and expressed his desire to lead the Order as the Teacher was old. The Buddha

refused. Devadatta thereafter committed many an evil act for which he still suffers in Avici.

Knowing perfectly well that the Buddha would not assent, but in order to make it a pretext to disparage the Buddha and thereby win the support of the ignorant folk, he requested the Buddha to enforce the following five rules:-

- I. That monks should dwell all their lives in the forest,
- II. That they should live on alms begged,
- III. That they should wear Pamsukula robes (i.e., robes made from rags collected from the dust heap and cemeteries),
- IV. That they should live at the foot of a tree,
- V. that they should not eat fish or flesh throughout life.

The compassionate, far-seeing Buddha declared that those who wished were free to observe them, but He would not make them compulsory.

Devadatta made this refusal a weapon to cause a schism in the Order. Instigated by Him, Ajatasattu caused the death of his innocent and devout father, King Bimbisara.

Failing in all efforts to destroy the Buddha, finally Devadatta himself made an unsuccessful attempt to kill Him by hurling a rock from above on His head. Books state that in the remote future he would become a Pacceka Buddha, named Athissara, as a result of the Holy Life he led before his wicked career.

Chapter 7

The Buddha's Ministry

The Buddha's successful ministry lasted 45 years. From His 35th year, the date of His Enlightenment, till His death in His 80th year, He served humanity both by example and precept, with no personal motive. Throughout the year He wandered from place to place, teaching the Dhamma to the people and liberating them from the bonds of Samsara. During the Rainy Season (Vassana-July to November) He lived in retirement, as was customary with all ascetics, owing to the incessant rains.

The First Twenty Years

According to the Buddhavamsa commentary, His first twenty years were spent as follows:-

1st Year - Benares

After preaching the Dhammacakka Sutta on the Asalha full-moon day, He spent the first Vassana (Retreat) in the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Benares. Here there was no special building for Him to reside.

2nd, 3rd and 4th Years - Rajagaha

When the Buddha visited King Bimbisara, he offered his Bamboo Grove (Veluvana) to the Buddha and His disciples. This was an ideal solitary place for monks as it was neither too far nor too close to the city. Three rainy seasons were spent in this quiet grove.

5th Year - Vesali

During this year whilst He was residing in the Pinnacled-Hall at Mahavana near Vesali, He heard of the impending death of King Suddhodana and repairing to his death-chamber preached the Dhamma to him. Immediately after he attained Arahantship, for seven days he enjoyed the bliss of Emancipation and passed away.

The Order of Nuns

Bhikkhuni Sasana was founded in the 5th Vassana year of the Buddha. After the death of King Suddhodana, Maha Pajapati Gotami, desirous of joining the Order, approached the Buddha who was then residing at Kapilavatthu and begged permission for women to be admitted into the Order. For several reasons the Buddha refused and returned to Vesali.

But Maha Pajapati Gotami, without being discouraged, cut off her hair and wearing yellow garments went on foot to Vesali, accompanied by many other Sakyan ladies, experiencing many a hardship. Weeping they stood outside the porch of the Pinnacled Hall in Mahavana where the Buddha was residing. The Venerable Ánanda, moved by the pathetic sight, appealed to the Buddha on their behalf. Again He refused thrice but was finally persuaded by the entreaties of the Venerable Ánanda on condition that Maha Pajapati Gotami would agree to observe the following eight Chief Rules:-

1. A nun, even of a hundred years' standing by Upasampada, should salute a Bhikkhu and rise before him, though he had received the Higher Ordination that very day. '
2. A nun should not spend a Retreat in a place where there is no Bhikkhu.
3. Every fortnight a nun should ask from the Order of monks the time of Uposatha meeting and when a Bhikkhu would come to admonish them.

4. The Pavarana ceremony after the Retreat should be held by a nun in the presence of the Order of both Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis.
5. Major offences of a nun should be dealt with by the Order of both Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis.
6. A female novice (Sikkhamana) who remains on probation for two years should receive the Higher Ordination from the Order of both Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis.
7. A nun should on no account rebuke or abuse a Bhikkhu.
8. Nuns should not give admonition to Bhikkhus, but Bhikkhus should admonish nuns.

Pajapati Gotami gladly agreed to abide by these eight Chief Rules. By accepting them she automatically received the Lesser and Higher Ordination. The other Sakyan ladies also received their Lesser and Higher Ordination. All of them later attained Arahantship. Yasodhara and Nanda, the daughters of Pajapati Gotami, were also admitted into the Order.

In the Order of Nuns Khema and Uppalavanna were appointed the two chief Female Disciples, as were Sariputta and Moggallana in the Order of Monks.

6th Year - Mankula Hill

Just as He performed the "Twin Wonder" (Yamaka Parihariya) to overcome the pride of His relatives at Kapilavatthu, here too He did the same a second time to convert others.

7th Year- Tavatimsa Heaven

A few days after the birth of the Bodhisatta his mother Queen Maha Maya died and was born as a Deva in the Tavatimsa Heaven. In this 7th year during the rainy three months, He preached the Abhidhamma to the Devas of this Celestial Plane, headed by His mother Deva. Daily He came to earth and gave a summary of His sermon to the Venerable Sariputta, who in turn expounded the same doctrine in detail to his disciples. What is embodied in the present Abhidhamma Pitaka is supposed to be this detailed exposition of the Dhamma by Him.

It is stated that on hearing these philosophical discourses the mother Deva attained the First Stage of Sainthood.

8th Year - Bhesakala Forest

Near Sumsumara Rock, In the Bhagga District

9th Year - Kosambi

It was in this year that Magandiya harboured a grudge against the Buddha for what He uttered when her father proposed to give her in marriage to Him.

10th Year - Parileyyaka Forest

Owing to some unfortunate dispute that could not be settled between two parties of Bhikkhus, the Buddha retired to this forest for the Retreat. It was on this occasion, according to the story, that an elephant and a monkey ministered to His needs.

11th Year - Ekanala, Brahmin village

The interesting Kasibharadvaja Sutta was delivered here.

12th Year - Veranja

During this period the Buddha and His disciples were compelled to live on food used for horses. The stay at Veranja forms the introduction to the Vinaya.

13th Year - Caliya Rock

14th Year - Jetavana Monastery, Savatthi

The Venerable Rahula received his Higher Ordination at this time on the completion of his 20th year.

15th Year - Kapilavatthu

The tragic death of King Suppabuddha, the father of Princess Yasodhara, occurred in this year. It should be noted that the Buddha spent only one Retreat in his birthplace.

16th Year - City of Alavaka

The conversion of Alavaka, the demon, who feasted on human flesh, took place on this occasion.

17th Year - Rajagaha

18th Year- Caliya Rock

19th and 20th Year - Rajagaha

Angulimala

It was in the 20th year that the Buddha converted the notorious murderer Angulimala. Ahimsaka - Innocent - was his original name. He belonged to a distinguished family, and was the most illustrious and favorite pupil of his renowned teacher.

Unfortunately his associates grew jealous of him, concocted a false story, and succeeded in poisoning the teacher against him. The enraged teacher, without any investigation, contrived to put an end to his life by ordering him to fetch a thousand fingers as a present. In obedience to the teacher, though with great reluctance, he repaired to the forest and started killing people to collect fingers for the necessary offering. Later he wore a garland of these fingers to ascertain the number - hence the name Angulimala.

When he had collected 999 fingers, so the book state and was ready to complete the number, the Buddha appeared on the scene. Angulimala made a vain attempt to kill the Buddha, but was eventually converted to the noble Dhamma and was admitted into the Order. One day as he went on his alms-round he saw a woman in travail. Moved by compassion he reported this pathetic case to the Buddha who then taught the Angulimala Paritta which runs as follows:-

"Sister, since I was born in the Ariyan clan, I know not that I consciously destroyed the life of any living being."

"By this truth may you be whole, and may your child be whole!"

He studied this Paritta, and going to the presence of the suffering sister sat on a seat separated from her by a screen, and made this Act of Truth. Instantly she was delivered of the child with great ease. The efficacy of this Paritta persists to this day.

In due course Venerable Angulimala attained Arahantship.

The remaining twenty-five years were spent in Savatthi at the Jetavana Monastery, built by Anathapindika, the millionaire, and at Pubbarama, built by Visakha, the chief benefactress of the Buddha.

Anathapindika

Anathapindika, the Feeder of the Helpless, was a millionaire in Savatthi. His family name was Sudatta. In the course of a visit to his brother-in-law in Rajagaha, to his indescribable joy, he heard that the Buddha was living in a forest close by.

He was so eager to meet the Buddha that he rose up very early and proceeded to the spot, passing through a lonely cemetery. It seems that his faith in the Buddha was so intense that a light emanated from his body. With the aid of this light and the encouragement given to him by an invisible being in the cemetery, he reached Sitavana where the Buddha was walking up and down anticipating his visit. The Buddha summoned him to his presence, addressing him by his family name. He heard the Dhamma from the Buddha and became a Sotapanna.

Returning to Savatthi he bought the park belonging to Prince Jeta, covering, so the story goes, the whole site with gold coins, and erected the famous Jetavana Monastery at great cost. Here the Buddha spent nineteen rainy seasons. This monastery, where the Buddha spent the major part of His life, was the scene of many of His sermons.

Several discourses, which are of particular interest to laymen, were delivered to him. Owing to his unparalleled generosity he was regarded as the chief lay supporter of the Buddha. It was on his suggestion that the Ānanda Bodhi Tree, which stands to this day, was planted at the entrance to the monastery.

His wife was Punnalakkhana. He had three good daughters - Maha Subhadda, Cula Subhadda, and Sumana. The elder had attained Sotapanna, whilst the youngest was a Sakadagami. His only son Kala, who was at first irreligious, later attained Sotapanna, skillfully guided by his father. Anathapindika breathed his last after hearing a profound discourse from the Venerable Sariputta.

After death he was reborn in the Tusita Heaven. Books state that on the very day he was reborn as a Deva he visited the Buddha at night, and extolling the virtues of the Venerable Sariputta, expressed his pleasure on seeing the Buddha and His disciples residing in his Monastery.

Visakha

Visakha was the devout daughter of Dhananjaya, a millionaire. Her mother was Sumana, and her beloved grandfather was Mendaka.

The Buddha happened to visit her birthplace when she was only seven years old. Though young in age, she was comparatively advanced in Samsara. As such when she heard the Dhamma from the Buddha for the first time she became a Sotapanna.

Books state that even in her prime she possessed masculine strength. Gifted with all womanly charms talented young Visakha excelled both in worldly wisdom and spiritual insight.

She was given in marriage to a non-Buddhist named Punnavaddhana, the son of a millionaire named Migara. On the wedding day, in addition to a large dowry and an exquisitely rich ornament (Mahalata Palandana), ten admonitions were given to her. By her tact and patience she eventually succeeded in converting her husband's house to a happy Buddhist home. Her callous father-in-law was the first to become a Sotapanna and embrace Buddhism.

Thereafter she was left free to engage in her religious activities as she liked.

It was she who constructed the Pubbarama in the east of Savatthi; as suggested by the Buddha. Here the Buddha spent six rainy seasons. She became the most prominent lay female supporter of the Buddha and His disciples. As a lady she played a very important part in many activities connected with the Sasana. At times she was even deputed by the Buddha to settle disputes that arose amongst the Bhikkhunis. Some rules were laid down for Bhikkhus at her suggestion.

By her dignified conduct, refined manners, courteous speech, obedience and reverence to elders, compassion to her less fortunate ones, and kind hospitality, she won the hearts of all who knew her.

Chapter 8

The Buddha's Daily Routine

The Buddha performed His duties systematically in accordance with a pre-arranged plan. The whole day He was fully occupied with His religious work, except when He was attending to His essential physical needs. Though, on several occasions, He delivered discourses that tend to worldly happiness, His main concern was the moral uplift-ment of the people. Himself enlightened, He endeavored His best to enlighten others.

His day was divided into five parts - namely,

- I. The Forenoon Session,
- II. The Afternoon Session,
- III. The First Watch,
- IV. The Middle Watch and
- V. the Last Watch.

The Forenoon Session

Usually early in the morning He surveys the world with His Divine Eye to see whom He could help. If any person needs his assistance, uninvited He goes - on foot, as a rule, otherwise according to circumstances, exercising His psychic

powers - and leads him or her on the right path. He went in search of the vicious and the impure; the virtuous and the pure came in search of Him. Rendering any such spiritual service to whom so ever it is necessary; He proceeds on his alms-round, if He is not invited to any particular place, either alone or with the Bhikkhus. Before midday He finishes His meal.

Immediately after the meal He delivers a short discourse to the people, establishes them in the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts, and if the persons are spiritually matured, they are shown the Path to Sainthood. At times He grants ordination if there are candidates for the Order. He then retires to the monastery.

The Afternoon Session

After the noon meal He takes a seat in the monastery when Bhikkhus assemble to listen to His exposition of the Dhamma. Some get objects of meditation according to their temperaments and retire to congenial places. Others pay their due respects to Him and retire to their chambers to spend the afternoon.

Having exhorted the disciples thus, He himself retires to His private 'Perfumed Chamber' to rest. If He so desires, He lies to His right side and sleeps for a while with mindfulness. On rising He attains to the Ecstasy of Great Compassion - Maha Karuna Samapatti and surveys with His Divine Eye the world, especially the Bhikkhus who retired to solitude for meditation, and others in order to give them any spiritual advice that is needed. If the erring ones that need advice happen to be at a distance, there He goes by His psychic powers, advises them and then retires to His chamber.

Towards evening the lay followers flock to Him to hear the Dhamma. Perceiving their innate tendencies and their temperaments with the Buddha-Eye, He preaches to them for about one hour.' Each member of the audience, though differently constituted, thinks that the Buddha's sermon is directed particularly to him. Such was the Buddha's method of exposition of the Dhamma.

As a rule the Buddha converts others chiefly by expounding the Dhamma, for He appeals more to the intellect than to emotion. The Buddha advises the seekers of Truth not to accept anything merely on the authority of another, but to exercise their own reasoning and judge for themselves whether anything is right or wrong.

On one occasion the Kalamas of Kessaputta approached the Buddha, and said that many ascetics and Brahmins who came to preach to them used to exalt their own doctrines and denounce the doctrines of others, and that they were at a loss to understand who of those worthies were speaking the truth and who were not.

"Yes, O Kalamas, it is right for you to doubt, it is right for you to waver. In a doubtful matter wavering has arisen."

Thus remarked the Buddha and gave them the following advice, which applies with equal force to the modern rationalists as it did to those skeptic Brahmins of yore. "Come, O Kalamas!

Do not accept anything on (mere) hearsay. Do not accept anything on mere tradition. Do not accept anything on account of rumors. Do not accept anything just because it accords with your scriptures. Do not accept anything by mere supposition. Do not accept anything by merely considering the reasons. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable. Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is respected by us."

"But, Kalamas, when you know for yourselves - These things are immoral; these things are blame-worthy; these things are censured by the wise; these things when performed and undertaken, conduce to ruin and sorrow - then indeed do you reject them."

"When, Kalamas, you know for yourselves - These things are moral; these things are blameless; these things are praised by the wise; these things when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness - then do you live acting accordingly."

These words of the Buddha, uttered some 2500 years ago, still retain their original force and freshness.

On rare occasions, as in the case of Angulimala, Khema and others, the Buddha resorts to His psychic powers.

The sublime Teachings of the Buddha appealed to all alike. There was milk for the babe and meat for the strong in His rational teachings. Both rich and poor, high and low renounced their former faiths and embraced the new Message of Peace. The infant Sasana, which began with five ascetics soon developed into millions and peacefully spread throughout central India.

The First Watch

This period of the night extends from 6 to 10, and is exclusively reserved for Bhikkhus. It is during this period that Bhikkhus get their doubts cleared question the Buddha on the intricacies of the Dhamma, obtain suitable objects of meditation, and hear the Dhamma from the Buddha.

The Middle Watch

During this period which extends from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Celestial Beings such as Devas and Brahmas, who are invisible to ordinary human beings, approach the Buddha to question Him on the Dhamma. Several such discourses and answers given to their queries appear mostly in the Samyutta Nikáya.

The Last Watch

The small hours of the morning extending from 2 to 6, which comprise the last watch, are divided into four parts.

The first part is devoted to pacing up and down (Cankamana). This serves as a mild physical exercise to him. During the second part (3 to 4), mindfully He sleeps lying to the right side. Throughout the third part (4 to 5) He attains the Fruit of Arahantship and enjoys Nibbanic Bliss. The last hour (5 to 6) He spends in attaining to the Ecstasy of Great Compassion - Maha Karuna Samapatti.

At this early hour He radiates thoughts of Loving-Kindness towards all beings and surveys the world with His Buddha-Eye to see whether He could be of service to any. If there be any worthy case, He goes of His own accord and gives the necessary spiritual assistance.

The whole day He is occupied with His religious activities. He sleeps only for one hour a day at night. For two solid hours in the noon and at dawn He pervades the whole world with thoughts of Mettá - Loving-Kindness. He seeks His own food without inconveniencing any. Leading a life of voluntary poverty, begging His food from door to door, wandering from place to place for eight months throughout the year. He tirelessly worked in the foregoing manner till His eightieth year.

Chapter 9

The Buddha's Greatness

The Buddha was a unique Being. He was the profoundest of thinkers, the most persuasive of speakers, the most energetic of workers, the most successful of reformers, the most compassionate and tolerant of teachers, the most efficient of administrators, and above all - the Holiest of Holies.

During the early period of His renunciation He sought the advice of distinguished religious teachers, but He could not obtain what He sought from outside sources. Circumstances compelled Him to think for Himself and seek within. He sought, He thought, He reflected; ultimately He found His goal of life. Having discovered the Truth, He opened the gates of Immortality to all who wish to hear Him and

seek their Deliverance from this ever-recurring cycle of births and deaths, and not because He was an infant prodigy in the ordinary accepted sense.

As He knew everything that ought to be known and as He obtained the key to all knowledge. He is called Sabbannu-Omniscient. This knowledge He acquired by His own efforts as the result of a countless series of births.

What He taught was merely an infinitesimal part of what He knew. He taught only what was necessary for our Deliverance. On one occasion while the Buddha was residing in a forest He took a handful of leaves and said:-"O Bhikkhus, what I have taught you is com-parable to the leaves in my hand, what I have not taught you is comparable to the number of leaves in the forest."

Daily He preached His Doctrine to both the Sangha (ordained disciples) and the laity. In the forenoon He goes in search of individuals who need His advice. Immediately after His noon meal He exhorts and instructs His ordained disciples. In the evening for about an hour He preaches to the lay folk who flock to hear Him. During the first watch of the night He again preaches to His ordained disciples. Throughout the middle watch He receives the Devas and other invisible beings and explains the doctrine to them.

Practicing what He preached, He worked incessantly for forty-five long years for the good and happiness of all to His last moment.

The Buddha and the Caste System

Very wisely and very effectively He labored to eradicate the social evils that prevailed in His day. He vehemently protested against the caste system that blocked the progress of mankind.

In His opinion:-

"Birth makes no Brahman,
nor non-Brahman makes;
this life doing that mould the Brahman true.
Their lives mould farmers,
tradesmen, merchants, serfs;
their lives mould robbers, soldiers, chaplains, kings.
By birth is not one an outcast,
by birth is not one a Brahman,
by deeds is one an outcast,
by deeds is one a Brahman."

According to the Buddha, caste or color does not preclude one from becoming a Buddhist or entering the Order. Fishermen, scavengers, courtesans, together

with warriors and Brahmins, were freely admitted into the Order and enjoyed equal privileges and were equally given positions of rank.

Upali, the barber, for instance, was made, in preference to all others, the chief in matters pertaining to the Vinaya. The timid Sunita, the scavenger, was admitted by the Buddha Himself into the Order. The courtesan Ambapali entered the Order and attained Arahantship. Sati, the monk who maintained a deadly heresy, was the son of a fisherman. Subha was the daughter of a smith, Punna was a slave girl. Capa was the daughter of a deerstalker. Such instances could be multiplied to show that the portals of Buddhism were wide open to all without any distinction.

It was also the Buddha who attempted to abolish slavery for the first time in the known history of the world.

The Buddha and Women

The Buddha raised the status of women and brought them to a realization of their importance to society. He did not humiliate women, but only regarded them as weak by nature. He saw the innate good of both men and women and assigned to them their due place in His Teaching. Sex is no obstacle to attaining Sainthood.

Sometimes the Pali term used to denote woman is "Matugama", which means 'mother-folk', or 'society of mothers'. As a mother, woman holds an honorable place in Buddhism. The wife is regarded as 'the best friend' (paramasakha) or the husband.

Although at first the Buddha refused to admit women into the Order, yet later He was persuaded by the entreaties of the Venerable Ānanda and founded the Order of Bhikkhunis (Nuns). Just as the Arahants Sariputta and Moggallana were made the two chief disciples in the Order of Monks, even so the Arahants Khema and Uppalavanna were made the two chief female disciples in the Order of Nuns. Many other female disciples too were named by the Buddha Himself as amongst His most distinguished and devout followers.

Women were placed under unfavorable circumstances before the advent of the Buddha, and this new Order was certainly a great Blessing.

In this Order queens, princesses, daughters of noble families, widows, bereaved mothers, help-less women, courtesans - all despite their caste or rank - met on a common platform, enjoyed perfect consolation and peace, and breathed that free atmosphere which is denied to those confined in cottages and palatial mansions. Many who otherwise would have fallen into oblivion distinguished themselves in

various ways and gained their emancipation by seeking refuge in the Order.

His Tolerance towards Dumb Animals

The tolerance of the Buddha was extended not only to men and women but to dumb animals as well. For it was the Buddha who banned the sacrifice of poor beasts and admonished His followers to extend their Loving-Kindness (Maitri) to all living beings. No man has the right or power to destroy the life of another living animal even for the sake of one's stomach as life is precious to all.

His Greatness

The efficient way in which He maintained the discipline of His numerous followers, especially His Orders of Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, testifies to His unsurpassed administrative ability. He anticipated even the present Parliamentary system.

Lord Zetland writes:-

"And it may come as a surprise to many to learn that in assemblies of Buddhists in India, two thousand years and more ago, are to be found the rudiments of our own Parliamentary practice of the present day."

The most notable characteristic of the Buddha was His absolute purity and perfect holiness. He was so pure and so holy that He should be called "The Holiest of Holies." He was the perfect model of all the virtues He preached. His life had not a stain upon it." On no occasion did the Buddha manifest any moral weakness. Everybody that came in contact with Him acknowledged His indisputable greatness and was deeply influenced by His magnetic personality.

His will, wisdom, compassion, service, renunciation, perfect purity, exemplary personal life, the blameless methods that were employed to propagate the Dhamma, and His final success - all these factors have contributed to hail the Buddha as the greatest religious Teacher that ever lived on earth.

Hindus honor Him as an incarnation of Vishnu. Christians have canonized Him as Saint) Joshaphat (a corruption of Pali term Bodhisatta).

Muslims regard Him as a spiritual teacher. Rationalists treat Him as a great freethinker. H.G. Wells, the distinguished thinker, assigned to Him the first place amongst the seven great men in the world. The poet Tagore calls Him the Greatest Man ever born.

Fausboll, a Russian admirer, says:-
"The more I know Him, the more I love Him."

A humble follower would say:-

"The more I know Him, the more I love Him; the more I love Him, the more I know Him."

Chapter 10

The Buddha's Parinibbána

The Buddha reached His eightieth year. His death was drawing near. His two chief disciples-the Venerable Sariputta and Moggallana - had predeceased Him. So had Venerable Rahula and Yasodhara.

One day He addressed the Venerable Ánanda and said:-

"Ánanda, whosoever has fully developed the Four Paths of Accomplishment' - Iddhipada could if he so desires, remain in the same birth for a Kappa or for a Kappa and a little more. Now the Tathágata has thoroughly practiced and developed them, and he could, therefore, should he desire it, live on yet for a kappa or for a Kappa and a little more."

But the Venerable Ánanda could not comprehend the meaning of this statement as his heart was possessed by the Evil One. He did not beseech the Buddha, saying:- "Vouchsafe, Lord, to remain during the Kappa! Live on through the Kappa, O Happy One, for the good and happiness of the many..." For the second and third time the Buddha made the same statement. Still the Venerable Ánanda was silent.

Mara

When the Venerable Ánanda left Him, Mara approached the Buddha and invited Him to pass away.

The Buddha replied:-

"O Evil One! Make thyself happy, the death of the Tathágata shall take place before long. At the end of three months from this time the Tathágata will pass away."

Immediately after, the Buddha consciously and deliberately rejected the rest of His allotted term of life. Later the Buddha mentioned this matter to the Venerable

Ánanda, who then reminded Him of His previous utterance and besought Him to remain for a Kappa.

"Enough, Ánanda, beseech not the Tathágata! The time for making such a request is past. If thou shouldst then have so besought the Tathágata, the Tathágata might have rejected the appeal even for the second time, but the third time he would have granted it. Thine, therefore, Ánanda, is the fault, thine is the offence." replied the Buddha.

An Exhortation

On another occasion the Buddha summoned all His disciples and addressed them thus:—"Behold, O disciples, now I speak to you. Transient are all component things. Strive on with diligence. In no long time the Final Release of the Accomplished One will take place. After the lapse of three months from now, the Accomplished One will attain Parinibbána."

"Ripe is my age; short is my life. Leaving you I shall go. I have made myself my refuge. Be diligent, O disciples, mindful and virtuous. With thoughts collected, guard your minds. He who lives strenuously in this Dispensation will escape the cycle of rebirth and put an end to suffering."

The Venerable Dhammarama's High Regard For The Buddha

The ordinary disciples were deeply grieved to hear that the Buddha would pass away in three short months. They came in large numbers to pay their last respects to Him. One Bhikkhu named Dhammarama refrained from joining them. This matter was reported to the Buddha, and He was summoned to His presence. When questioned as to his absence the loyal and dutiful Bhikkhu remarked:—"Lord, I knew that Your Reverence would pass away three months hence, and I thought the best way of honoring the Teacher was by attaining Arahantship even before the decease of Your Reverence."

"Excellent, excellent! He who loves me should emulate this Bhikkhu. He honors me best who practices my teaching best," said the Buddha in extolling the praiseworthy conduct of that exemplary Bhikkhu.

The Buddha's Last Meal

Cunda the smith, a rich and devout person, heard that the Buddha had arrived at Pava and was staying in his mango grove. He went up to Him and after listening to a very instructive discourse, invited the Buddha and His disciples for the noon meal on the following day.

The Buddha assented by His silence

Cunda after that night was over, made ready in his house choice food both hard and soft, together with a large quantity of Sukaramaddava, and intimated the time to the Blessed One, saying, "It is time, O Lord! Alms are ready."

Then the Blessed One dressed Himself in the forenoon, and taking bowl and robe, went together with the company of disciples to the abode of Cunda and sat on the prepared seat.

Seated thus, the Buddha addressed Cunda as follows:-"O Cunda, serve me with that Sukaramaddava which you have prepared; but serve the company of disciples with other food - both hard and soft."

"So be it, Lord" replied Cunda and did accordingly. Thereupon the Blessed One said to Cunda:-"Whatsoever, Cunda, remains of the Sukaramaddava, bury that in a hole in the ground for, Cunda, I perceive not in this world of gods, Maras, and Brahmas and amongst other beings, together with ascetics and priests, and gods and men, anyone who could eat this food and well digest it, save the Accomplished One."

"So be it Lord!" responded Cunda, and buried the remainder of that Sukaramaddava in a hole in the ground, and approaching the Blessed One, respectfully saluted Him and sat on one side. As he was seated thus, the Blessed One gladdened him with a religious discourse and departed. Then arose in the Blessed One, who partook of the meal of cunda, a grievous sickness, dysentery, and severe pains, resembling those of death. But the Blessed One, conscious and reflective, bore them up unflinchingly.

Thereupon the Blessed One proceeded to Kusinara, accompanied by the Venerable Ánanda.

His Last Convert

At that time there lived at Kusinara a wandering ascetic named Subhadda. He heard the news that the ascetic Gotama would attain Parinibbána in the last watch of the night, and he thought of seeing Him. So he went to the Upavattana

Sala Grove of the Mallas and inquired of the Venerable Ánanda whether he could see the Buddha.

"Enough, friend Subhadda, do not worry the Accomplished One. The Blessed One is wearied." For the second and third time Subhadda made his request, and for the second and third time the Venerable Ánanda replied in the same manner. The Buddha overheard their conversation, and addressing Ánanda said:-

"Nay, Ánanda, do not prevent Subhadda from entering. Let Subhadda behold the Accomplished One. Whatsoever Subhadda will ask of me, all that will be with the desire for knowledge, and not to annoy me. And whatever I shall say in answer he will readily understand."

Permission being thus granted, Subhadda approached the Buddha, and exchanging friendly greetings with Him spoke to Him as follows:-"There are these ascetics and priests, O Gotama, who are leaders of companies and congregations, who are heads of sects, and are well-known, renowned religious teachers, esteemed as good men by the multitude - as for instance Purana Kassapa, Makkhali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambali, Pakudha Kaccayana, Sanjaya Belatthiputta, Nigantha Nataputta. Have they all, as they themselves claim, thoroughly understood or not, or have some of them understood, and some not?"

"Let it be so, Subhadda! Trouble not yourself as to whether all or some have understood or not. I shall teach the doctrine to you. Listen and bear it well in mind. I shall speak.

"So be it Lord!" replied Subhadda.

The Blessed One spoke as follows:-

"In whatever Dispensation there exists not the Noble Eightfold Path, neither is the first Samana, nor the second, nor the third, nor the fourth, to be found therein. In whatever Dispensation there exists the Noble Eightfold Path, there are also to be found the first Samana, the second Samana, the third Samana, and the fourth Samana. In this Dispensation there exists the Noble Eightfold Path. Here indeed, are found the first Samana, the second Samana, the third Samana, and the fourth Samanas.

The other foreign schools are empty of Samanas. If, O Subhadda, the disciples live rightly, the world would not be void of Arahants. "My age was twenty-nine when I went forth as a seeker after what is good. Now one and fifty years are gone since I was ordained, O Subhadda. Outside the fold there is not a single ascetic who acts even partly in accordance with this realizable doctrine."

Subhadda then praised the Buddha for His lucid exposition of the Noble Dhamma and seeking refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, expressed his desire to receive the Lesser and the Higher Ordination.

The Buddha said:-

"Whosoever, Subhadda, being already committed to the other doctrines, desires the Lesser and Higher Ordination in this Dispensation, remains on probation for four months. At the end of four months, the disciples approving, he is ordained and raised to the status of a Bhikkhu. Nevertheless, with discretion I make individual exceptions."

Subhadda agreed to abide by the regulation, but the Buddha requested the Venerable Ānanda to ordain Subhadda.

In the presence of the Blessed One, Subhadda received the Lesser and Higher Ordination and before long attained Arahantship.

He was the last personal convert of the Buddha.

The Last Scene

The Buddha addressed Ānanda and said:

"It may be Ānanda, that you will say thus: 'without the teacher is the sublime teaching. There is no teacher for us.' Nay, Ānanda, you should not think thus. That Doctrine and Discipline taught and promulgated by me, Ānanda, will be your teacher when I am gone."

The Buddha addressed the disciples and said: "If, O disciples, there be a doubt or perplexity in any disciple with regard to the Buddha, the Doctrine, the Order, and the Practice, question me (now) and repent not afterwards thinking - We were face to face with the Teacher, yet were not able to question the Buddha in His presence." When he spoke thus, the disciples were silent. For the second and third time the Buddha addressed the disciples the same way. And for the second and third time the disciples were silent. Then the Buddha addressed the disciples and said: "Perhaps it may be out of respect for the teacher that you do not question me. Let a friend, O disciples, intimate it to another." Still the disciples were silent.

Thereupon the Venerable Ānanda spoke to the Buddha as follows: "Wonderful, Lord! Marvelous Lord! Thus am I pleased with this company of disciples. There is not a single disciple who entertains a doubt or perplexity with regard to the Buddha, the Doctrine, the Order, and the Practice." "You speak through faith, Ānanda. With regard to this matter there is knowledge in the Accomplished One,

that in this company of disciples there is not a single disciple who entertains a doubt or perplexity with regard to the Buddha, the Doctrine, the Order, and Practice. Of these five hundred disciples, Ánanda, he' who is the last, is a Stream-Winner, not subject to fall, but sure of, and destined for, Enlightenment."

Then the Blessed One addressed the disciples and said:-

"Behold, O disciples, I exhort you. Subject to decay are all component things. Strive on with diligence." These were the last words of the Buddha.

The Buddha's Last Moment

The Buddha's life was drawing to an end. For the last time He rested on the couch placed between two Sala trees in the Upavattana Sala Grove. His disciples were surrounding Him in perfect silence.

The Buddha attained to the First Ecstasy - Jhana.

Emerging from it He attained, in order, to the Second, Third, and Fourth Ecstasies.

Emerging from the Fourth Ecstasy He attained to the "Realm of Infinity of Space - Akasanca yatana."

Emerging from this He attained to the "Realm of Infinity of Consciousness - Vinnanancayatana." Emerging from this He attained to "The Realm of Nothingness - Akincannayatana."

Emerging from this He attained to "The Realm of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception - N'eva Sanna N'Asannayatana'o."

Emerging from this He attained to "The Cessation of Perceptions and Sensations - Sannavedayita-Nirodha."

Instantly the Venerable Ánanda, who was anxiously observing the dying state of the Buddha, remarked that the Buddha had passed away. The Venerable Anuruddha, who was distinguished for his Divine Eye, explained that the Buddha had attained to "The Cessation of Perceptions and Sensations."

Then the Buddha emerged from that State and attained in order to the Fourth, Third, Second and First Arupa Jhanas.

Emerging from these He again attained in order to the Fourth, Third, Second, and First Rupa Jhanas. Emerging from these He attained in order to the Second,

Third, and Fourth Rupa Jhanas. Immediately emerging from this Fourth Ecstasy The Buddha finally passed away.

As a man He was born. As an extraordinary man He lived. As a Buddha He passed away.

Chapter 11

Kamma

Kamma (Sanskrit-Kamma) literally means action of deed. In its ultimate sense Kamma means good and bad volition (Kusala Akusala Cetana).

Every volitional action, except that of a Buddha or of an Arahant, is called Kamma. The Buddha and Arahants do not accumulate fresh kamma as they have destroyed all their passion.

In other words Kamma is the law of moral causation. It is action and reaction in the ethical realm. Kamma does not necessarily mean past action only; it may be both present and past actions. It is not fate. Nor it is predestination, which is imposed on us by some mysterious unknown power to which we must helplessly submit ourselves. It is one's own doing, which react on one's, own self, and so it is possible for us to divert the course of our Kamma.

Kamma is action and Vipaka, fruit, is its reaction. It is reaction. It is the cause and the effect. Like a mango seed is Kamma, Vipaka, effect, is like the mango fruits arising from the tree. The leaves and flowers are like the Vipakanisamsa - inevitable consequences.

As we sow, we reap either in this life or in a future birth. What we reap today is what we have sown either in the present or in the past.

Kamma is a law in itself. But it does not follow that there should be a lawgiver. Ordinary laws of nature e.g. gravitation, need no lawgiver. The law of Kamma too demands no lawgiver. It operates in its own field without intervention of an external, independent ruling agency.

Inherent in Kamma is the potential of producing its due effect. The cause produces the effect; the effect explains the cause. The seed produces the fruit; the fruit explains the seed, and both are inter-related; the effect already blooms in the cause.

Kusala Kamma

There are ten kinds of Kusala Kamma or meritorious actions.

They are: -

1. Generosity – Dana, which yields wealth.
2. Morality - Sīla, which gives birth in noble families and in states of happiness.
3. Meditation - Bhāvaná, which gives birth in Realms of Form and Formless Realms, and which tends to gain Higher Knowledge and Emancipation.
4. Reverence - Apacayana, the cause of noble parentage.
5. Service - Yeyyavaca, which tends to produce a large retinue.
6. Transference of merit - Pattidana, which serves as a cause to give in abundance in future births.
7. Rejoicing in others' merit - Pattanu Modana, which is productive of merit whenever one is born.
8. Hearing the Doctrine - Dhamma Savana, which promotes wisdom.
9. Expounding the Doctrines - Dhamma Desana, which promotes wisdom.
10. Straightening of one's own views - Ditthijju Kamma, which strengthens one's confidence.

These 10 are sometimes treated as twelve. Then praising of Others' Good Action - Pasamsa is added to rejoicing in Others' Merit; and Taking the Three Refuges - Sarana and Mindfulness - Anussati are used instead of Straightening One's View.

Praising others' good deeds results in getting praise for oneself. The seeking of the Three Refuges results in the destruction of passions. "Mindfulness" promotes diverse forms of happiness.

The Five Rupa Jhanas and the Four Arupa Jhanas are also regarded as Kusala Kamma pertaining to the Realms of Form and the Formless Realms respectively.

Akusala Kamma

There are ten Akusala Kammās or evil actions, which are caused by deed, word, and thought. Three are caused by deed: - namely, killing - Panatipata, stealing - Adinnadana and un-chastity - Kamesu Micchacara.

Four are caused by word:- namely, lying-Musavada, slandering-Pisunavaca, harsh speech-Pharusavaca, and frivolous talk-Samphappalapa.

Three are caused by mind: - namely, covetousness-Abhijja, ill will - Vyapada, and false views-Micchaditthi.

Killing means the destruction of any living being.. The Pali term Paññá strictly means the psychophysical life pertaining to one's particular existence. The speedy destruction of this life force, without allowing it to run its due course, is Panatipara. Animals are also included in living beings, but not plants.

The following five conditions are necessary to complete this evil of killing:-

- i a being,
- ii consciousness that it is a being,
- iii intention of killing,
- iv effort, and
- v consequent death.

The evil effects of killing are:- short life, diseased-ness, constant grief caused by separation from the loved, and constant fear.

Five conditions are necessary to complete the evil of stealing - namely,

- i another's property,
- ii consciousness that it is so,
- iii intention of stealing,
- iv effort, and
- v consequent removal.

The evil effects of stealing are:- poverty, wretchedness, unfulfilled desires, and dependent livelihood.

Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil of un-chastity - namely,

- i the mind to enjoy the forbidden object,
- ii the attempt to enjoy,
- iii devices to obtain, and
- iv possession.

The evil effects of un-chastity are - having many enemies, getting undesirables wives, birth as a woman or as an eunuch,

Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil of lying namely,

- i an untrue thing,
- ii intention to deceive,
- iii the corresponding effort,
- iv the communication of the matter to others.

The evil effects of lying are:- being tormented by abusive speech, being subject to vilification, incredibility, and a stinking mouth.

Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil of slandering - namely,

- i persons that are to be divided,
- ii the intention to separate them or the desire to endear oneself to one of them,
- iii corresponding effort, and
- iv the communication.

The evil effect of slandering is the dissolution of friendship without sufficient cause.

Three conditions are necessary to complete the evil of harsh speech - namely,

- i a person to be abused,
- ii angry thought, and
- iii the abuse.

The evil effects of harsh speech are:- being detested by others though absolutely blameless, and a harsh voice.

Two conditions are necessary to complete the evil of frivolous talks - namely

- i the inclination towards frivolous talk, and
- ii its narration.

The evil effects of frivolous talk are:- defective bodily organs and incredible speech.

Covetousness has the characteristic mark of thinking "Ah, would this property were mine!" The two conditions necessary to complete this evil are:-

- i another's property and
- ii adverting to it, saying:- "Would this be mine!"

The evil effect of covetousness is non-fulfillment of one's wishes.

Two conditions are necessary to complete the evil of ill-will namely,

- i another being, and
- ii the thought of doing harm.

The evil effects of ill-will are:- ugliness, manifold diseases, and a detestable nature. False, view is seeing things wrongly. False beliefs, like the denial of the efficacy of deeds etc., are also included in this evil.

Two conditions are necessary to complete this evil - namely,

- i perverted manner in which the object is viewed and
- ii the understanding of it according to that misconception,

The evil effects of false view are:- base attachment, lack of wisdom dull wit diseases and blameworthy ideas.

The Cause of Kamma

Not knowing things as they truly are does one accumulate Kamma. No Kamma is accumulated by one who has completely eradicated craving and has understood things as they truly are. Ignorance - Avijja and craving -Tanha are the chief causes of Kamma

The Doer of Kamma

Who is the does of Kamma? Who reaps the fruits of Kamma? Says the Venerable Buddhaghosa in the Visuddhi Magga: -

"No doer is there who does the deed,
Nor is there one who feels the fruit."

In the ultimate sense a Buddhist cannot conceive of any unchanging entity, any being in the form of a Deva, a man, or an animal. These forms are merely the temporary manifestations of the Kammic force. The term "being" is only used for conventional purposes. Strictly speaking what we call "a being" is only composed of mind and matter.

Buddhist believes that there is no actor apart from action, no perceiver apart from perception, no conscious subject behind consciousness.

Volition or will-cetana, is itself the doer of Kamma. Apart from these mental states, there is none to sow and none to reap.

Where is Kamma?

"Where, Venerable Sir, is Kamma?" questions King Milinda of the Venerable Nagasena.

"O Maharaja", replies the Venerable Nagasena, "Kamma is not stored somewhere in this fleeting consciousness or in any other part of the body. But dependent on mind and matter, it rests, manifesting itself at the opportune moment, just as mangoes are not said to be stored somewhere in the mango trees, but dependent on the mango tree they lie springing up in due season."

Just as wind or fire is not stored in any particular place, even so Kamma is not stored anywhere within or without the body.

Kamma is an individual force, which is transmitted from one existence to another.

Classification of Kamma

There are moral and immoral actions which may produce their due effects in this very life. They are called "Immediately Effective - Dittha Dhamma Vedaniya Kamma." If they do not operate in this life, they become "ineffective - Ahosi".

There are some actions which may produce their effects in a subsequent life. They are termed "Subsequently Effective - Apapajja Vedaniya Kamma". They too become ineffective if they do not operate in the second birth.

Those actions may produce their effects in any life in the course of one's wandering in the Samsara, are known as "Indefinitely Effective - Aparapariya Vedaniya Kamma/"

This classification of Kamma is with reference to the time in which effect are worked out.

There are four classes of Kamma according to function-Kicca.

Every birth is conditioned by past good and bad kamma that predominates at the moment of death. The Kamma that conditions the future birth is called "Reproductive - Janaka Kamma."

Now another Kamma may step forward to assist or maintain the action of this Reproductive Kamma. Just as this Kamma has the tendency to strengthen the Reproductive Kamma, some other action which tends to weaken, interrupt, the fruition of the Reproductive Kammamay step in. Such actions are respectively

termed "Supportive - Upatthambhaka Kamma" and "Counteractive - Upapidaka Kamma".

According to the law of Kamma, the potential energy of the Reproductive Kamma could be nullified by a more powerful opposing Kamma of the past which, seeking an opportunity, may quite unexpectedly operate, just as a powerful opposing force can check the path of the flying arrow and bring it down to the ground. Such an action is called "Destructive - Upaghataka Kamma", which is more effective than Supportive and Counteractive Kamma in that it not only obstructs but also destroys the whole force.

There are four classes of Kamma according to the priority of effect.

The first is Garuka, which means weighty or serious. This Kamma, which is good or bad, produces results in this life, or in the next for certain. If good, it is purely mental as in the case of Jhanas - Ecstasies. Otherwise it is verbal or bodily.

The five kinds of Weighty Kamma are:-

- i) Matricide
- ii) Parricide
- iii) the murder of an Arahant
- iv) the mounding of the Buddha
- v) the creation of a Schism in the Sangha

Permanent Skepticism - Niyata Micchaditthi is also termed one of the Weighty Kammass.

In the absence of a Weighty Kamma to condition the next birth, a death-proximity Kamma - asanna might operate. This is the Kamma one does immediately before the dying moment.

Habitual - Acinna Kamma is the next in the priority of effect. It is the Kamma that one habitually performs and recollects and for which one has a great liking.

The fourth is the "Cumulative - Katatta Kamma", which embraces all that cannot be included in the above three. This is as it were the reverse fund of a particular being.

The last classification is according to the place in which the Kamma effects transpire, namely: -

- i) Evil Kamma - Akusala, which may ripen in the Sentient - Kamaloka
- ii) Good Kamma - Kusalā, which may ripen in the Sentient Plane.
- iii) Good Kamma, which may ripen in the Realm of Form - Rupaloka.

iv) Good Kamma, which may ripen in the Formless Realms - Arupaloka

Is Everything Due To Kamma?

Although Buddhism attributes the inequality of mankind to Kamma as one of the chief causes amongst a variety, yet it does not assert that everything is due to Kamma.

If everything is due to Kamma, a person would always be bad if it was his Kamma to be bad. One would not need to consult physician to be cured of a disease; for if one's Kamma was such, one would be cured.

According to Buddhism there are five orders or processes – Niyamas, which operate in the physical and mental realms.

1. Utu Niyama - physical inorganic order; e.g., the seasonal phenomena of winds and rains, the unerring order of seasons, characteristic seasonal changes and events, the causes of wind and rains, the nature of heat etc.

2. Bija Niyama - physical organic order; order of germs and seeds; e.g., rice produced from rice seed, sugar taste resulting from sugar-cane or honey, the peculiar characteristics of certain fruits, etc. The scientist theory of cells and genes and the physical similarity of twins may be ascribed to this order.

3. Kamma Niyama - order of act and result; e.g., desirable and undesirable acts produce corresponding good and bad results. As surely as water seek its own level, so does Kamma, given opportunity, produce its inevitable result - not in the form of reward or punishment but as an innate sequence. This sequence of deed and effect is as natural and necessary as the way of the sun and the moon.

4. Dhamma Niyama - order of the norm; e.g., the natural phenomena occurring at the advert of a Bodhisatta in his last birth. Gravitation and other similar laws of nature, the reason for being good, and so forth, may be included in the group.

5. Citta Niyama - order of the mind or psychic law; e.g., processes of consciousness, constituents of consciousness, power of mind, etc. Telepathy, telethetia, retro cognition, premonition, clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought reading - all psychic phenomena which are inexplicable to modern science are included in this class.

Every mental or physical phenomena could be explained by these all-embracing five orders or processes which are laws in themselves.

It is this doctrine of Kamma that gives consolation, hope, self-reliance and moral courage to a Buddhist.

This belief in Kamma "validate his effort and kindles his enthusiasm" because it teaches individual responsibility.

This law of Kamma explains the problem of suffering, the mystery of so-called fate and predestination of other religions, and above all the inequality of mankind.

Chapter 12

Rebirth

Kamma necessarily leads to rebirth. Past Kamma conditions the present birth, and present Kamma, in combination with past Kamma, the future. The present is the offspring of the past, and becomes, in its turn, the parent of the future.

The present needs no proof. The past is based on memory and reports, and the future on forethought and inferences.

Reasons To Believe In A Past Birth

The greatest authority on rebirth is the Buddha.

He said:

"With clairvoyant vision, purified and supernormal, I perceived beings disappearing from one state of existence and re-appearing in another. I beheld the base and the noble, the beautiful and the ugly, the happy and the miserable, passing according to their deeds."

There were no reasons for the Buddha to tell an untruth to deceive His followers. Following His instructions His disciples also developed this retro cognitive knowledge and were able to read their past lives to a great extent.

The development of this supernormal vision is not restricted only to the Buddha and His disciples. Any person, whether Buddhist or not, could possess this faculty. Some Indian Rishis, even before the advent of the Buddha, developed such powers as clairaudience, clairvoyance, thought reading, and so forth.

There are also some persons who, according to the laws of association, spontaneously develop the memory of their past birth and remember fragments of their previous lives. A few well-attested cases are reported from Burma, India, Germany, England, etc.

Extraordinary experiences of some modern reliable psychiatrists and strange cases of alternating and multiple personalities tend to throw light upon this belief in rebirth.

This phenomenon of secondary personalities has to be explained either as remnants of past individual experiences or as "being possessed". The former explanation sounds more reasonable, but the latter cannot totally be discarded.

In hypnotic states some can relate experiences of their past lives; while a few others, like Edgar Casey of America, were able not only to read the past lives of others but also to heal diseases.

Sometimes we go through strange experiences, which cannot be explained but by rebirth. How often do we meet persons whom we have never before met and yet inwardly feel that they are quite familiar to us? How often do we visit new places and yet feel impressed that we are perfectly acquainted with their surroundings?

In this world there arise Perfect Ones like the Buddhas, highly developed personalities. Could they evolve suddenly? Could they be the products of a single existence?

How are we to account for colossal characters like Confucius, Pamini, Homer and Plato, men of genius like Kalidasa, Shakespeare, infant prodigies like Ramanujan, Pascal, Mozart, Beethoven, Raphael, and others, and little children conversant with different languages and certain subjects which they had never learnt in their present life?

Heredity alone cannot account for them, "else their ancestry would disclose it, their posterity, even greater than themselves, demonstrate it." Could they arise to such lofty heights if they had not lived such noble lives and gained similar experiences in the past? Is it by mere chance that they are born of those particular parents and placed under those favorable circumstances?

The theory of heredity should be supplemented by the doctrine of Karma and rebirth for an adequate explanation of these puzzling problems. Is it reasonable to believe that the present brief span of life is the only existence between two eternities of heaven and hell?

The few years we are privileged to spend here, for the most five score years, must certainly be an inadequate preparation for eternity. If one believes in the present and in future, it is quite logical to believe in the past.

If there be reasons to believe that we have existed in the past, then surely there are no reasons to disbelieve that we shall continue to exist after our present life has apparently ceased. It is indeed a strong argument in favor of past and future

lives that "in this world virtuous persons are very often unfortunate and vicious persons prosperous."

Some discoveries of modern spirituals also tend to prove the existence of a future birth.

The Cause Of This Rebirth Process-The Wheel Of Life

In short, Kamma, which is rooted in Ignorance, is the cause of birth and death. As long as this Kammic force survives there is rebirth. This process of becoming is fully explained in the Paticca Samuppada - Dependent Arising or Dependent Origination.

It should be understood that Paticca Samuppada is only a discourse on Samsara or the process of birth and death and not a theory of the evolution of the world from primordial matter. It deals with the cause of rebirth and suffering, but it does not attempt to show the absolute origin of life.

Ignorance - Avijja, of the Four Noble Truths is the first link or cause of the wheel of life. It clouds all right understanding.

Dependent on ignorance arises volitional activities (Sankhárá). Moral and immoral activities, whether good or bad, which are rooted in ignorance, tend to prolong wandering in Samsara.

Nevertheless, good actions are essential to get rid of the ills of this ocean of life. Dependent on Volitional Activities arises Relinking Consciousness - Vinnana. This links the past with the present.

Simultaneous with the arising of Re-linking Consciousness there come into being Mind and Matter - Nama and Rupa.

The Six Senses - Salayatana, are the inevitable consequences of Mind and Matter. Because of the Six Senses Contact - Phassa, sets in.

Contact leads to Sensations - vedana,

Dependent on Sensations arises Craving - Tanha.

Craving produces Attachment - Upadana.

Attachment conditions Kamma - Bhava, which in its turn determines future Birth - Jati.

Old Age and Death - Jara-Marana are the inevitable consequences of birth. If, on account of a cause, an effect comes to be, then if the cause ceases, the effect also must cease. The complete cessation of Ignorance leads to the cessation of birth and death.

The above process of cause and effect continues ad infinitum. The beginning of this process cannot be determined, as it is impossible to say whence this life-flux was encompassed by ignorance. But when this ignorance is turned into knowledge and the life-flux is transmuted to Nibbána Dhatu, then the end of the life process or Samsara comes about.

Modes Of Birth And Death

Buddhism assesses death to the following four causes:-

1. The exhaustion of the force of Reproductive Kamma that gives rise to the birth in question - Kammakkhaya.

The Buddhist belief is that, as a rule, the thought, volition, or desire, which is extremely strong during lifetime, becomes predominant at the point of death and conditions the subsequent birth. In this last thought-moment is present a special potentiality. When the potential energy of this Reproductive Kamma is exhausted, the corporealised, the life force, cease even before the approach of old age.

2. The expiration of the life-term - Ayukkhaya.

What are commonly understood to be natural deaths due to old age may be classed under this category. There are various planes of existence according to Buddhism, and to each plane is naturally assigned a definite age-limit. Irrespective of the Kammic force that has yet to run, one must, however, succumb to death when the maximum age-limit is reached. It may also be said that if the force is extremely powerful, the Kammic energy rematerialises itself on the same plane or in some higher realm as in the case of the Devas.

3. The simultaneous exhaustion of the Reproductive Kammic energy and the expiration of the life-term - Ubhayakkhaya.

4. The action of a stronger Kamma - Upacehdaka that suddenly cuts off the power of the Reproductive Kamma before the expiry of the life-term.

The first three types of deaths are collectively called Kalamarana (timely death) and the last one is known as Akalamarana (untimely death).

An oil lamp, for instance, may get extinguished owing to any of the following four causes:- the exhaustion of the wick, the exhaustion of oil, simultaneous exhaustion of both wick and oil, and some extraneous cause like a gust of wind.

The death of a person may similarly be caused by the above-mentioned four ways.

The Four Modes Of Birth

The four Modes of Births are:-

1. Egg-born creatures - Andaja, such as birds, snakes, etc.
2. Womb-born creatures - Jalabuja. All human beings, some earth-bound deities, and those animals that take their conception in mother's womb, belong to this class.
3. Moisture-born creatures - Samsedaja, such as certain insects that take moisture as material for their growth.
4. Creatures having spontaneous births - Opapatika. They are generally invisible to the naked eye. Conditioned by past they appear suddenly, independent of parents. Brahmas, Devas of heavenly realms, Petas, and miserable ones who are subject to torments and sufferings in states of woe - Niraya are included in this class.

There are 31 Planes of Existence. They are:-

(A) The Four States of Unhappiness - Duggati, viz.,

1. Niraya - woeful states, which are temporary, but not everlasting.
2. Tiracchana Yoni - the animal Kingdom.
3. Peta Yoni - the plane of Petas or ghost-beings.
4. Asura Yoni - the plane of Asura demons.

(B) The Seven Happy States - Sugati, viz.,

1. Manussa - the realm of human beings.
2. 6 Devalokas - heavenly realms.
3. 16 Rupalokas- Realms of Form.
4. 4 Arupalokas- Formless Realms.

How Rebirth Takes Place

To the dying man is presented a Kamma, Kamma Nimitta, or Gati Nimitta. By Kamma is here meant some action of his whether good or bad. It may be either a meritorious or a de-meritorious Weighty Action - Garuka Kamma, such as Jhanas - Ecstasies, or parricide, and so forth.

These are so powerful that they totally eclipse all other actions and appear very vividly before the mental eye. If experience has afforded him nothing weighty, he may take for the object of his dying-thought a Kamma done immediately before death - Asanna Kamma.

In the absence of an Asanna Kamma, a habitual meritorious or de-meritorious act (Acinna Kamma) is presented, such as stealing in the case of a robber, or the healing of the sick in the case of a good physician. Failing all these, some casual act, that is, one of the accumulative reserves of the endless past - Katatta Kamma, becomes the object of the dying thought. Kamma Nimitta is any sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, or idea which was obtained at the time of the commission of the Kamma, such as knives in the case of a butcher, patients in the case of a physician, an object of worship in the case of a devotee, etc.

By Gati Nimitra is meant some sign of the place where one is destined to be reborn - an event, which invariably happens to dying persons. When these indications of the future birth occur, if they are bad, they could be turned into good. This is done by influencing the thoughts of the dying man, so that his good thought may now act as the proximate Kamma and counteract the influence of the Reproductive Kamma which would otherwise affect his subsequent birth.

These symbols of one's destiny may be hellish fires, forests, mountainous regions, a mother's womb, celestial mansions, etc.

Taking for the object of the dying-thought one of the above, a thought process runs its course even if the death be an instantaneous one. It is said that even the fly which is crushed by a hammer on the anvil also experiences such a process of thought before it actually dies.

By death is meant the ceasing of the psychophysical life of one's individual existence. Death takes place by the passing away of vitality - Ayu, heat - Usma and consciousness - Vinnana.

In the words of a Western philosopher death is merely "the temporary end of a temporary phenomenon." It is not the complete annihilation of the so-called being, for, although the organic life has ceased, the force, which hitherto actuated it is not destroyed.

Just as an electric light is only the outward visible manifestation of invisible electric energy, even so we are only the outward manifestations of invisible Kammic energy. The bulb may break and the light may be extinguished, but the current remains and the light may be reproduced in another bulb. At the death the consciousness perishes only to give birth to another consciousness in a subsequent birth. This renewed life-flux inherits all past experiences.

This new being is neither absolutely the same as the past one owing to its different composition, nor totally different - being the identical stream of Kammic energy - Na ca so na ca anno.

The birth-process of the butterfly may be cited in illustration of this. It was first an egg, and then, it became a caterpillar. Later it developed into a chrysalis, and finally evolved into a butterfly. This process occurs in the course of one lifetime. The butterfly is neither the same as, nor totally different from, the caterpillar. Here too there is a flux of life or continuity.

The transition of the flux is also instantaneous. There is no room for an intermediate state - Antara bhava. Buddhists do not believe that the spirit of the deceased person takes lodgment in a certain state until it finds a suitable place for its reincarnation.

Rebirth takes place immediately, and there is no difference in time whether one is born in a heaven or in a state of misery, as an animal or as a human being.

What Is It That Is Reborn?

No Soul (Anattá) - Pancakkhandha

According to Buddhism, apart from mind and matter, which constitute this so-called being, there is no immortal soul or an eternal ego which man is either gifted with or has obtained in a mysterious way from a mysterious Being or force.

The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth should be distinguished from the theory of re-incarnation or transmigration, for Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging or eternal soul. In the ultimate sense a Buddhist cannot think of an unchanging soul, any being in the form of a Deva, a man, or an animal. These forms are merely the temporary manifestations of the Kammic force.

"Being" is only a concept used for conventional purposes. If nothing in the form of a spirit or soul passes from this life to the other, what is it that is reborn? In asking this question one takes for granted that there is something to be reborn.

In the past it was argued - "Cogito, ergo sum - I think, therefore I am." True indeed, but it has to be proved first that there is an 'I' to think. I say that there is no I to think. In one breath I contradict myself. Yes, it has to be admitted that we cannot avoid using conventional terms we say that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west despite what scientists prove to us.

We cannot strike a place twice although to all appearance we have done so. Everything has changed so soon. Even space has changed at the second moment.

According to Buddhism the so-called being is composed of mind and matter - Nama and Rupa.

Rupa or matter is merely the manifestation of forces and qualities. In the ancient days the Indian sages too believed in an indivisible atom - Paramanu. The Buddha analyzed this so-called indivisible Paramanu and declared that it is only a manifestation of inter-related forces, which he termed Paramatthas or fundamental units of matter.

These Paramatthas are Pathavi, Apo, Tejo, and Vayo. Pathavi means the element of extension, the substratum of matter. Apo is the element of cohesion. Tejo is the element of heat. Vayo is the element of motion.

The four essentials of matter are invariably combined with four derivatives, color - Vanna, odor - Gandha, taste - Rasa and nutritive essence Oja. The four elements and the derivatives are inseparable and inter-related, but one element may preponderate over the other, for instance, the element of extension predominates in earth; cohesion in water, heat in fire, and motion in air.

Mind, which is the most important part in the machinery of man, is also a compound of fleeting mental states. There are fifty-two such mental states. Vedana or sensation is one, Sañña or perception is another. The remaining fifty mental states are collectively called Sankhárás or volitional activities. These immaterial states arise in a consciousness - Vinnana.

Thus the so-called being is a complex compound of five Aggregate - Pancakkhandha - namely, Rupa or matter, Vedana or sensations, Sañña or perceptions, Sankhára or mental states, and Vinnana or consciousness, which are in state of constant flux.

One's individuality is the combination of these five Aggregates. There is no permanent soul that resides in this so-called being.

How Is Rebirth Possible Without A Soul To Be Reborn?

Birth is simply the arising of the Khandhas, the aggregates. Rebirth is the arising of the aggregates again and again. Just as the arising of a physical state is conditioned by a preceding state as its cause, even so the coming-into-being of this psychophysical life is conditioned by causes anterior to its birth. As one life-process is possible without a permanent thing passing from one thought-moment to another, a series of life-processes is possible without anything to transmigrate from one life to another.

This body - to use conventional terms - dies transmitting its Kammic force to another without anything transmigrating from this life to the other. The future being there will be conditioned by the present Kamma here. The new being is neither absolutely the same as its predecessor - since the composition is not identical - nor entirely another being the same stream of Kammic energy. There is, therefore, a continuity of a particular life-flux; just that and nothing more.

Chapter 13

The Four Noble Truths

Truth is that which is Sacca. It is an incontrovertible fact. According to Buddhism there are four such Truths - all associated with man.

In the Rohitassa Sutta the Buddha states: - "In this very one-fathom long body, along with its perceptions and thoughts, I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the Path leading to the cessation of the world."

This interesting passage refers to the Four Noble Truths, which the Buddha Himself discovered. Whether Buddhas arise or not, they exist, and it is a Buddha that reveals them to the ignorant world.

These truths are in Pali termed Ariya Saccani because they were discovered by the Greatest Ariya, that is, one who is far removed from passions, or because they lead to the Ariyan state of passionless ness.

The first Truth deals with Dukkha, which, for need of better English equivalent, is inappropriately rendered by suffering. As a feeling Dukkha means that which is difficult to be endured (Du-difficult, Kha - to endure). Here Dukkha is used in the sense of contemptible (Du) emptiness (Kha) The world rests on suffering (Dukkhe loko palitthito) - hence It is contemptible. It is devoid of any reality - hence it is empty or void.

Average men are only surface-seers. An Ariyan sees things as they truly are. To one who sees, there is no real happiness in this sorrowful world, which deceives mankind with illusory pleasures. What we call happiness is merely the gratification of some desire. "No sooner is the desired thing gained than it begins to be scorned." Insatiate is all desires. All are subject to birth - jati, and consequently to decay-jara, disease- vyadhi, and death - marana. No one is exempt from these four causes of suffering.

Impeded wish is also suffering. We do not wish to come in contact with persons or things we do not like, nor do we wish to be separated from persons or things we like most. But our wishes are not always fulfilled. What we least expect or what we least desire is often thrust on us. At times such unpleasant circumstances become so intolerable and painful that weak ignorant folks are compelled to put an end to their lives.

In brief, this body itself is a cause of suffering. Buddhism rests on this pivot of suffering. But it does not allow that Buddhism is pessimism. It is neither totally pessimistic nor totally optimistic. On the contrary it teaches a truth that lies midway between them. Whilst emphasizing the truth of suffering, the Buddha suggests a means to get rid of this suffering and gain the Highest Happiness. The cause of this suffering is Craving, which is the second Noble Truth.

The Dhammapada states:-

"From craving springs grief,
from craving springs fear;
For him who is wholly free from craving,
there is no grief, whence fear?"

Suffering exists as long as there is craving or attachment - Tanha. There are three kinds of craving. The first is the grossest form of craving, which is simple attachment to all sensual pleasures Kamatanha. The second is attachment to pleasures connected with the view of Eternalism - Bhavatanha, the third is that which is connected with the view of Nihilism - Vibhavanha.

It is this gross and subtle craving that leads to repeated births in Samsara and that which makes one cling to all forms of life.

This craving is so powerful a force that one has to summon eight equally powerful forces (the Eightfold Path) to overpower this one single foe. The grossest forms of craving are first weakened on attaining Sakadagami and are eradicated on attaining Anagami. The subtle forms of craving are eradicated only on attaining Arahantship.

The Third Noble Truth is the complete Cessation of suffering, which is Nibbána, the Bliss Supreme. It is achieved by the total eradication of all forms of craving.

The Fourth Noble Truth is the Path leading to the Cessation of suffering, which is the Noble Eightfold Path, the *via media* - the golden mean - of the Buddha.

The first two are mundane - *lokiya*, the second two are supra-mundane - *lokuttara*.

The first three deals with the philosophy of the Buddha's Teaching and the fourth with the practice in accordance with that philosophy.

Buddhism as such is neither an ordinary philosophy nor an ordinary ethical system. It is a moral and philosophical teaching, founded on the bedrock of facts that can be tested and verified by personal experience.

Strictly speaking, Buddhism cannot be called a religion either, because it is not a system of faith and worship, which emphasizes the existence of a supernatural God. If by religion is meant a teaching (*Agama*) which distinguishes between right and wrong, and which furnishes men with a guide to proper conduct, then it is a religion of religions.

Chapter 14

Nibbána:

[Nibbána is the *summum bonum* of Buddhism]

Definition:

The Pali word Nibbána (Sanskrit Nirvana) is composed of "Ni" and "Vana." Ni is a particle implying negation. Vana means weaving or craving. It is this craving which acts as a cord to connect one life with another.

"It is called Nibbána in that it is a 'departure' (ni) from that craving which is called Vana, lusting."

As long as one is bound up by craving, one accumulates fresh Kammic forces, which must materialize in one form or other in the eternal cycle of birth and death. When all forms of craving are extirpated, Kammic forces cease to operate, and one attains Nibbána escaping the cycle of birth and death. The Buddhist conception of Deliverance in this escape from the ever recurring cycle of life and death which is not merely an escape from sin and hell.

Nibbána is also explained as the extinction of the fire of lust - *Lobha*, hatred - *Dosa*, and delusion - *Moha*.

Is Nibbána Nothingness?

To say that Nibbána is nothingness simply because one cannot perceive it with the five senses, is as illogical as to say that light does not exist simply because the blind do not see it. In the well-known fable the fish who was acquainted only with water arguing with the turtle, triumphantly concluded that there existed no land, because he received 'no' to all his queries. The turtle, though acquainted with both sea and land, could not explain to the fish the real nature of land.' The fish too could not grasp what land was as it was acquainted the water. In the same way the Arahants, who are acquainted with mundane and the supra-mundane cannot define exactly what supra-mundane is by mundane terms, nor can a worldlying understand the supra-mundane merely by mundane knowledge. It is a supra-mundane state, which is to be realized by one's own intuitive knowledge.

What Nibbána is not, one can definitely say. What it precisely is, one cannot adequately express in conventional terms. It is for self-realization.

Sopadisesa and Anupadisesa Nibbána Dhatu

These are not two kinds of Nibbána, but one single Nibbána receiving its name according to the way it is experienced before and after death,

Nibbána is attainable in this present life. Buddhism does not state that its ultimate goal could be reached only in a life beyond. When Nibbána is realized in this life with the body remaining, it is called Sopadisesa Nibbána Dharu. When an Arahant attains Parinibbána, after the dissolution of the body, without any remainder of physical existence, it is called Anupadisesa Nibbána Dhatu.

Three Distinct Characteristics of Nibbána

Contrasting Nibbána with Samsara, the Buddha says that the former is eternal - Dhava, desirable - Subha and happy - Sukha.

According to Buddhism everything cosmic, and hypercosmic is classed under two divisions - namely, things conditioned by causes - Sankhata and things not conditioned by any cause-Asankhata.

Nibbána is not conditioned by any cause, Hence there is neither an arising nor a passing away. It is birth less, decay less, and deathless. It is neither a cause nor an effect. All conditioned things - and to this category belongs everything in this

universe - are, on the contrary, constantly changing without remaining for two consecutive moments the same.

Everything that has sprung from a cause must inevitably pass away, and as such is undesirable-*Asubha*.

That which is transient and undesirable certainly cannot be happy - *Sukha*. *Nibbána*, being non-conditioned, that which has not arisen from a cause, is, in contradistinction to phenomenal existence, eternal, desirable, and happy.

The happiness of *Nibbána* should be differentiated from ordinary happiness. *Nibbanic* bliss arises as the result of calming down passions - *Vupasama*, unlike the worldly happiness, which results from the gratification of some desire - *Vedayita*.

In conventional terms the Buddha says-*Nibbanam paramam sukham* - *Nibbána* is the highest bliss.

It is bliss supreme because it is not a kind of happiness that is experienced by the senses. It is a positive blissful state of relief.

The very fact of the cessation of suffering is ordinarily termed happiness, which too is not an appropriate word to depict its real nature.

Where is Nibbána?

"Just as fire is not stored up in any particular place but arises when the necessary conditions exist, so *Nibbána* is not said to be existing in a particular place, but is attained when the necessary conditions are fulfilled."

In the *Rohitassa Sutta* the Buddha says;- "In this very one fathom-long body, along with its perceptions and thoughts, do I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path leading to the cessation of the world."

Here world means suffering. The cessation of the World, therefore, means the cessation of suffering, which is *Nibbána*,

One's *Nibbána* is dependent upon this one-fathom body, It is not something that created itself, nor is it something to be created.

Nibbána is not a sort of heaven where a transcendental ego resides, but an attainment (*Dhamma*), which is within the reach of all.

What attains Nibbána?

This question must necessarily be set aside as irrelevant, for Buddhism denies the existence of a permanent entity or an immortal soul. As right now and here there is neither a permanent ego nor an identical being, it is needless to say that there is no 'I' in Nibbána.

The Visuddhi Magga states-

"Misery only doth exist, none miserable;
nor doer is there,
nought save the deed is found;
Nibbána is, but the man who seeks it
The path exists, but not the traveler on it."

The chief difference between the Buddhist and the Hindu conception of Nibbána lies in the fact that Buddhists view their goal without an eternal soul and creator, whilst Hindus do.

This is the reason why Buddhism can neither be called Eternalism nor Nihilism. In Nibbána nothing is eternalized, nor is anything annihilated.

As Sir Edwin Arnold says:-
"If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
Say unto such they lie
If any teach Nirvana is to live,
Say unto such they err,"

The Light of Asia

Chapter 15

The Noble Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path (Ariya Atthangika Magga), discovered by the Buddha Himself, is the only way to Nibbána. It avoids the extreme of self-mortification that weakens one's intellect, and the extreme of self-indulgence that retards one's spiritual progress.

It consists of the following eight factors: -

Right Understanding - Samma Ditthi
Right Thoughts - Samma Sankappa

Right Speech - Samma Vaca
 Right Action - Samma Kammanta
 Right Livelihood - Samma A jiva
 Right Effort - Samma Vayama
 Right Mindfulness - Samma Sati
 Right Concentration - Samma Samadhi

1. Right Understanding is the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. In other words it is the understanding of oneself as one really is. The keynote of Buddhism is this Right Understanding. Buddhism as such is based on knowledge and not on unreasonable belief.

2. Right thoughts are threefold. They are the Thoughts of Renunciation - Nekkhamma Sankappa, which are opposed to lustful desires. Benevolent Thoughts - Avyapada Sankappa, which are opposed to ill-will, and Thoughts of Harmlessness (Avihimsa Sankappa) which are opposed to cruelty. These tend to purify the mind.

3. Right speech deals with refraining from falsehood, slandering, harsh words; and frivolous talks.

4. Right Action deals with refraining from killing, stealing, and un-chastity.

5. Right livelihood deals with the five kinds of trades, which should be avoided by a lay disciple. They are trading in arms, human beings, flesh (that is, breeding animals for slaughter), intoxicating drinks, and poison. Hypocritical conduct is cited as wrong livelihood for monks.

6. Right Effort is fourfold - namely,

- i. the endeavor to discard evil that has already arisen,
- ii the endeavor to prevent the arising of un-risen evil,
- iii the endeavor to develop un-risen good, and
- iv the endeavor to promote that good which has already arisen.

7. Right Mindfulness is also fourfold. It is the mindfulness with regard to body, sensations, mind, and Dhamma (Phenomena).

8. Right Concentration is the one-pointed ness of the mind.

The first two are grouped in Wisdom - Paññá, the second three in Morality - Síla, and the last three in Concentration - Samadhi.

Síla {Right Speech
 {Right Action
 {Right Livelihood

Samadhi {Right Effort
 {Right Mindfulness
 {Right Concentration

Paññá {Right Understanding
 {Right Thoughts

Strictly speaking these factors that comprise the Noble Eightfold Path signify eight mental properties (Cetasikas) collectively found in the four classes of Supra-mundane Consciousness whose object is Nibbána.

According to the order of development Síla, Samadhi, and Paññá are the three stages of the Path. All these stages are embodied in the following beautiful verse:-

Sabba Papassa Akaranam
 Kusalassa Upasampada
 Sacitta Pariyodapanam
 Etam Buddhana Sasanam

To cease from all evil,
 To do what is good,
 To cleanse one's mind;

This is the advice of all the Buddhas.

Síla or Morality is the first stage.

Without killing or causing injury to any living being, the aspirant should be kind and compassionate towards all. Refraining from stealing, he should be upright and honest in all his dealings. Abstaining from sexual misconduct, he should be pure and chaste. Shunning false speech, he should be truthful. Avoiding pernicious drinks that pro-mote heedlessness, he should be sober and diligent.

Every follower of the Buddha is expected to observe these five principles of regulated behavior daily. As circumstances permit he may advance a step further and observe the eight or even the ten precepts.

Whilst he progresses slowly and steadily with regulated word and deed and sense-restraint, the Kammic force of this striving aspirant compels him to renounce worldly pleasures and adopt the ascetic life. Realizing the vanity of worldly pleasures, he voluntarily forsakes his earthly possessions, and donning the ascetic garb, tries to lead the Holy Life in all its purity. It should be understood that it is not absolutely necessary to retire apart and lead the life of an ascetic to be a Saint.

The life of a Bhikkhu expedites and facilitates spiritual progress, but even as a layman one could attain Sainthood. There are several instances of laymen who realized Nibbána without renouncing the world. Anathapindika and Visakha were Sotapannas, the Sakya Mahanama was a Sakadagami, the potter Ghatikara was an Anagami and King Suddhodana died as an Arahant. In the role of a Bhikkhu the aspirant leads a life of voluntary poverty and practices the four kinds of Higher Síla - Discipline as prescribed by the Patimokkha, Sense-Restraint, Purity of Conduct connected with livelihood and Conduct in connection with the necessities of life.

Securing a firm footing on the ground of Síla, he then embarks upon the higher practice of Samadhi, the control and culture of the mind, the second stage of this path. Samadhi is the one-pointedness of the mind.

When he gains this perfect one-pointedness of the mind, it is possible to develop the five Supernormal Powers - Abhinna, namely, Divine Eye - Dibbacakkhu, Divine Ear - Dibbasota, Reminiscence of past births - Pubbenivasanusatti Nana. Thought Reading - Paracittavijjanana and different psychic powers - Iddhividha. It must not be understood that these supernormal powers are essential for Sainthood.

Though the mind is purified, there still lies dormant in him the tendency to give vent to his passions, for by concentration passions are only lulled to sleep. They may rise to the surface at unexpected moments.

Both Discipline and Concentration are essential, but it is Insight - Vipassana Paññá that enables one to see things as they truly are. This is the final stage on the path to Nibbána.

With his one-pointed mind he looks at the world to get a correct view of life. He now meditates on the Three Characteristics - Tilakkhana, Transiency - Anicca, Sorrow - Dukkha and Soullessness - Anattá. He comprehends that all conditioned things are transient - Sabbe Sankhara Anicca, all conditioned things are sorrowful - Sabbe Sankhara Dukkha, and all things conditioned and non-conditioned are soulless - Sabbe Dhamma Anattá. Of these three characteristics he takes the one that appeals to him most and intently keeps on developing insight in that particular direction until that glorious day comes to him when he would realize Nibbána for the first time in his life, having destroyed the first three Fetters - Samyojana - Self-illusion - Sakkaya Ditthi, Doubts - Vicikiccha, and Indulgence to wrongful rites and ceremonies - Silabbata-paramasa.

At this stage he is called a Sotapanna - one who has entered the Stream that leads to Nibbána. As he has not eradicated all Fetters he is reborn seven times at the most.

Summoning up fresh courage as a result of this distant glimpse of Nibbána, he cultivates deeper Insight and becomes a Sakadagami - Once-Returner - by weakening two more Fetters - namely, Sense-desires - Kamaraga and Ill will - Patigha. He is called a Sakadagami because he is reborn on earth only once in case he does not attain Arahantship.

It is in the third stage of Sainthood - Anagami - Never-Returner that he completely discards the above two Fetters. Thereafter he neither returns to this world nor does he seek birth in the celestial realms, since he has no more desire for sensual pleasures. After death he is reborn in the "Pure Abodes" (Suddhavasa), a congenial place meant exclusively for Anagamins and Arahants.

Now the earnest pilgrim, encouraged by the unprecedented success of his endeavors, makes his final advance and destroying the remaining five Fetters:- Attachment to Realms of Forms - Ruparaga, Attachment to Formless Realms - Aruparaga, Conceit - Mana, Restlessness - Uddhacca, and Ignorance - Avijja - becomes a Perfect Saint by attaining Arahantship.

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Thereafter he lives as long as his Reproductive Kammic force lasts. On the dissolution of the body he attains Parinibbána.

Chapter 16

Nivarana Or Hindrances

Nivarana (Ni and var, to hinder, to obstruct) is that which hinders one's progress or that which obstructs the path to Emancipation and the heavenly states. It is also explained as that which "muffles, enwraps, or trammels thought".

There are five kinds of Nivaranas or Hindrances, they are:-

- i. Sensual desire - Kamacchanda,
- ii. Ill will - Vyapada,
- iii. Sloth and Torpor - Thina-Middha,
- iv. Restlessness and Worry - Uddhacca-Kukkucca,
- v. Doubts - Vicikiccha

1. Kamacchanda means sensual desire or attachment to pleasurable sense-objects such as form, sound, odor, taste, and contact. This is regarded as one of the Fetters that bind one to Samsara.

An average person is bound to get tempted by these alluring objects of sense. Lack of self-control results in the inevitable arising of passions. This Hindrance is inhibited by One-pointed-ness-Ekaggata, which is one of the five characteristics of Jhana. It is attenuated on attaining Sakadagami and completely eradicated on attaining Anagami. Subtle forms of attachment such as Rupa Raga and Arupa Raga (Attachment to Realms of Form and Formless Realms) are eradicated only on attaining Arahantship.

The six following conditions tend to the eradication of sense-desires:-

- i. Perceiving the loathsomeness of the object,
- ii. Constant meditation on loathsomeness,
- iii. Sense-restraint,
- iv. Moderation in food,
- v. Good friendship, and

vi. Profitable talk.

2. Vyapada is ill will or aversion, A desirable object leads to attachment, whilst an undesirable one leads to aversion. These are the two great fires that burn the whole world, Aided by ignorance, these two produce all the suffering in the world. Ill will is inhibited by Piti or Joy, which is one of the Jhana factors. It is attenuated attaining Sakadagami, and eradicated on attaining Anagami.

The six following conditions lead to the eradication of ill will: -

- i. Perceiving the object with thoughts of goodwill,
- ii. Constant meditation on loving-kindness (Mettá)
- iii. Thinking that Kamma is one's own,
- iv. Adherence to that view,
- v. good friendship, and
- vi. Profitable talk.

3. Thina or Sloth is explained as a morbid state of the mind, and Middha as a morbid state of the mental properties. A stolid mind is as "inert as a bat hanging to a tree, or as molasses cleaving to a stick, or as a lump of butter too stiff for spreading." Sloth and torpor should not be understood as bodily drowsiness, because Arahants, who have destroyed these two states, also experience bodily fatigue. These two promote mental inertness and are opposed to strenuous effort - viriya. They are inhibited by the jhana factor, vitakka or initial application, and are eradicated on attaining Arahantship.

The six following conditions tend to the eradication of Sloth and Torpor:-

- i. reflection on 'the object of moderation in food',
- ii changing of bodily postures,
- iii contemplation on the object of light (alokasanna),
- iv living in the open air,
- v good friendship, and
- vi profitable talk.

4. Uddhacca is mental restlessness or excitement of the mind. It is a mental state associated with all types of immoral consciousness, As a rule an evil is done with some excitement or restlessness.

Kukkucca is worry. It is either repentance over the committed evil or over the unfulfilled good. Repentance over one's evil does not exempt one from its inevitable consequences. The best repentance is the will not to repeat that evil. Both these hindrances are inhibited by the Jhana factor, Sukka or happiness.

Restlessness is eradicated on attaining Arahantship, and worry is eradicated on attaining Anagami.

The six following conditions tend to the eradication of these two states:-

- i. Erudition or learning,
- ii. Questioning or discussion,
- iii. Understanding the nature or the Vinaya discipline,
- iv. Association with senior monks,
- v. Good friendship, and
- vi. Profitable talk.

5. Vicikiccha is doubt or perplexity, That which is devoid of the remedy or wisdom is vicikiccha (vi = devoid; cिकiccha = wisdom), It is also explained as vexation due to perplexed thinking (Vici = seeking; kiccha = vexation).

Here Vicikiccha is not used in the sense of doubt with regard to the Buddha etc for even non-Buddhists inhibit it and gain Jhanas. As a Fetter vicikiccha is certainly that doubt about the Buddha etc., but as a Hindrance it denotes indecision or unsteadiness in one particular thing that is being done. The Commentary explains vicikiccha as the inability to decide anything definitely that it is so.

This state is inhibited by the Jhana factor - vicara, sustained application - and is eradicated on attaining Sotapatti.

The six following conditions tend to its eradication:-

- i. knowledge of the Dhamma and Vinaya,
- ii. discussion or questioning,
- iii. understanding of the nature of the Vinaya Discipline,
- iv. excessive confidence,
- v. good friendship, and
- vi. profitable talk.

Chapter 17

The First Council

The Buddha passed away in His 80th year on the full-moon day of Vesak. His death was an irreparable loss. All His followers, with the exception of Anagamins and Arahants, were plunged in deep grief and were weeping and lamenting. But

an immoral Bhikkhu named Subhadda, who had entered the Order in his old age, was the only one that rejoiced over His death.

"Grieve not brothers," said he. "Weep not. We are now delivered of that Great Ascetic. He constantly worried us, saying 'This is suitable, this is not suitable.' Now we are free to do what we like."

These unexpected words that fell from the lips of a disciple, when hardly a week has passed since the death of the Teacher, induced the Venerable Kassapa, the third chief Disciple of the Buddha to Hold a Council of Leading Arahants in order to protect and fortify the Sanana. The other Theras were consulted, and they welcomed the suggestions.

King Ajatasatu was informed of the intention of the Sangha, and he made all the necessary arrangements for the Sangha to assemble at the entrance to the Sattapanni Cave in Rajagaha.

Five hundred seats were prepared in the spacious hall, but only Four hundred & Ninety Nine distinguished Arahants were chosen for the Convocation. The vacant seat was meant for the Venerable Ánanda who was then a Sotapanna. But in due time, as anticipated, he attained Arahantship and appeared on the scene by his psychic powers to occupy the vacant seat.

The Venerable Kassapa was the presiding Thera. The Venerable Upali and Ánanda were chosen to rehearse the Vinaya and Dhamma respectively.

The first council was held three months after the Parinibbána of the Buddha, in the eighth year of King Ajatasattu's reign. It lasted seven months.

Tipitaka

The Vinaya being the life-blood of the sasana was rehearsed first. It is composed of five books-namely,

- I. Parajika Pali -Major Offences
- II. Pacittiya Pali - Minor Offences
- III. Mahavagga Pali - Greater Section
- IV. Culavagga Pali - Smaller Section
- V. Parivara Pali - Epitome of the Vinaya

The Dhamma consists of Five Nikáyas - namely,

- I. Digha Nikáya - Collection of Long Discourses
- II. Majjhima Nikáya - Collection of Middle-length Discourses
- III. Samyutta Nikáya - Collection of Kindred

- IV. Anguttara Nikáya - Collection of Discourses arranged in accordance with number
- V. Khuddaka Nikáya - Smaller Collection

The fifth is subdivided into fifteen books:-

- I. Khuddaka Patha - Shorter Texts
- II. Dhammapada - Way of Truth
- III. Udana - Paeans of Joy
- IV. Iti Vuttaka - "Thus said" Discourses
- V. Sutta Nipata - Collected Discourses
- VI. Vimana vatthu - Stories of Celestial Mansions
- VII. Peta vatthu - Stories of Petas
- VIII. Theragatha- Psalms of the Brethren
- IX. Therigatha- Psalms of the Sisters
- X. Jataka - Birth Stories
- XI. Niddesa - Expositions
- XII. Patisambhida-Analytical Knowledge
- XIII. Apadana - Lives of Arahants
- XIV. Buddhavamsa - The History of the Buddha
- XV. Cariya Pitaka - Modes of Conduct

It should be noted that the introductory words in every Sutta - "Evam me sutam, thus have I heard" - were uttered by the Venerable Ánanda Thera.

The Abhidhamma, according to tradition, was rehearsed by all Arahants that were present at the Convocation. It consists of the following seven books: -

- I. Dhamma Sangani - Classification of Dhammas
- II. Vibhanga - The Book of Divisions
- III. Kathavatthu - Points of Controversy
- IV. Puggala Pannani - Description of Individuals
- V. Dhatukatha- Discussion with reference to Elements
- VI. Yamaka - The Book of the Pairs
- VII. Patthana - The Book of Relations

All these 31 books are collectively termed the Tipiraka (Three Baskets). The First Vinaya Piraka (Basket of Discipline) mainly deals with rules and regulations, which the Buddha promulgated, as occasion arose for the future discipline of the Order of Monks (Bhikkhus) and Nuns (Bhikkhunis).

The Sutta Pitaka (Basket of Discourses) Consists chiefly of discourses delivered by the Buddha on various occasions. Some discourses delivered by the Venerable Sariputta, Moggallana, Ánanda, etc., are also included in it. The Abhidhamma Pitaka

(Basket of Ultimate Doctrine) contains the profound philosophy of the Buddha's Teaching.

The Tipitaka was first committed in writing at Aluvihara in Sri Lanka about 80 B.C.E. in the reign of King Vacthagamani Abhaya.

The Second Council

The Second Council was held at Vesali in the tenth year of King Kalasoka's reign, 100 years after the Parinibbana of the Buddha,

Ten Unlawful Points

At that time in Vesali many shameless Bhikkus of the Vajji clan claimed that the following ten points were not unlawful: -

1. Singilonakappa, it is fit to use salt in horns etc. in order to season unsalted foods.
2. Dvangulakappa, it is fit to eat food as long as the sun's shadow has not passed the meridian by more than two fingers' breadth,
3. Gamantarakappa, it is fit for a Bhikkhu who has already finished his meal to eat another meal without going through the due Vinaya rite if he intends to enter a village.
4. Avasakappa, it is fit to perform the Uposatha ceremony in separate buildings in the case of a large Sima (Jurisdiction).
5. Anumatikappa, it is fit to perform any Vinaya ceremony first and then take the consent of the absent Bhikkhus,
6. Acinnakappa, it is fit to conform to the practice of teachers and preceptors.
7. Amafhitakappa, it is fit for a Bhikkhu Who has finished his meal to drink that milk which has changed its original state but has not yet become curd, without getting the due Vinaya rite done.
8. Jalogikappa, it is fit to drink unfermented palm-wine.
9. Adasaka-nisidanakappa, it is fit to use mats without fringes.
10. Jatarupadikappa, it is fit to accept gold and silver,

Venerable Yasa, who came to hear of these heretical teachings, resolved even at the cost of his life to nip them in the bud. He succeeded. The Venerable Revata who was questioned about them pronounced that they were all unlawful.

Ultimately, in the presence of eight distinguished Arahants who had assembled at Valukarama in Vesali, the Venerable Sabbakami, the most senior Arahant, being One hundred and Twenty years from his Upasampada, questioned by the Venerable Revata, adjudged that they were all unlawful according to the Vinaya.

After which the venerable Revata chose Seven hundred distinguished Arahants to hold a Council in order to protect the Dhamma. This second council lasted eight months. King Kalasoka acted as the Royal Patron. The Venerable Sabbakami was the presiding Thera.

Amongst the assembled Arahants Sabbakami, Salha, Revata, Khujjasobhita, Yasa, Sambhuta and Sanavasika, all pupils of the Venerable Ānanda and Vasabhagamika and Sumana, pupils of the Venerable Anuruddha had the good fortune to live in the Buddha's own time.

The Third in Council

The conversion of King Dharmasoka was a very great asset to Buddhism. With his loyal patronage Buddhism flourish, and the Sasana gradually grew up in importance and numbers. Tempted by worldly gain, many undesirables of alien sects joined the Order and polluted the sasana by their corrupt lives and heretical views.

The Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa, who was then the senior Arahant, being aware of the pollution of the Order, refrained from performing the Uposatha Ceremony with the Sangha for seven years, and was living in retirement on the banks of Ahoganga.

It was at this time King Dharmasoka entertained a doubt about thoughtless act done by an irresponsible minister. He was told that Arahant Moggaliputta Tissa would be able to clear his doubt. The King sent word to the Arahant, but he would not come. Failing twice, the third time he sent a messenger inviting him to come to protect the Sasana. The Venerable Thera accepted the invitation and arrived at Pataliputra. The King received him with due honor and accommodated him in Asokarama, built by the King himself. For seven days the King stayed with him, and studied the Dhamma sitting at his feet.

The Bhikkhus were then tested with regard to their views, and the undesirables were eliminated from the Noble Order, The pure Bhikkhus that remained performed the Uposatha for the first time after seven Years. The Arahant Moggaliputta Tissa availed himself of this opportunity to hold the third Council in

order to protect the Dhamma and the Sasana. One Thousand Arahants participated in the Council which was held at Asokarama, in Pataliputra (Patna) in the 18th year of King Asoka's reign, about Two hundred, and Thirty Six years after the Parinibbána of the Buddha. The Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa was the presiding Thera, and it was he who was responsible for the composition of the Kathavatthu-Pakarana, one of the seven books of the Abhidhamma, at this august Assembly.

Chapter 18

Ashoka And His Missions

There reigned in the newly founded city of Patna (Pataliputra), a Mauryan king named Chandragupta. King Bindurasa was his son, and he had sixteen wives who bore him One hundred and One sons. Of them Ashoka was the most distinguished. His mother was Subhadraangi, also known as "Dharma", Sumana or Susima, who was his eldest stepbrother, Tissa, also called Vitasoka or Vigatasoka, was his younger uterine brother.

Ashoka's Family

Ashoka had five wives, whilst he was acting as vice-regent in Avanti, he married a Sakyan princess named Devi. Asandhimitra (Chief Queen), Padmavati and Tisyarashita were his other wives.

He had four sons and two daughters, Mahinda and Sanghamitta were the children of Devi. Tivasa was the son of Karuvaki, and Kunala was the son of Padmavati. He had another son named Jalauka and a daughter named Carumati.

Aggimukha, the husband of Sanghamitta, and Devapala Kshatriya of Lalipura in Nepal, the husband of Carumati, were his sons-in-law. Prince Dasaratha, who succeeded him, Sampati son of Kunala, and Sumana, son of Sanghamitta, were his grandsons.

Ashoka Becomes King

In the opinion of some scholars Ashoka was born in 304 B.C.E. to Pali Chronicle he was anointed King Two hundred and Eighteen years after Parinibbána of the Buddha, but his accession took place four years later. He reigned Thirty-Seven

years after his coronation. He probably ascended the throne in his 30th year, and died in his Seventy-One year.

The Pali Chronicles state that Ashoka, in his ambition for supreme sovereignty, killed all his brother except his uterine brother Tissa, who later entered the Order and attained Arahantship. Some scholars do not accept this tradition as some Edicts prove that some of his brothers were still alive after his coronation.

Owing to his murderous attacks on his brothers and the indescribable suffering caused to many a family by his unjust wars, he was stigmatized Candasoka, Ashoka the Wicked. But after his conversion to Buddhism, he became such an exemplary monarch that his name was changed into Dharmasoka, Ashoka the Righteous. Devanampiya-Dear to the Gods, Piyadasi-Pleasant to Behold, were some of his well-merited epithets.

His Conversion to Buddhism

In accordance with the custom of the royal household, King Ashoka regularly bestowed alms on the Brahmin priests. But he was not pleased with their demeanor. One day, whilst he was quite casually looking through the window, he was a dignified-looking young novice, about twelve years of age, quietly walking along the street with restrained senses. He was invited to the palace and was requested to occupy a suitable seat. Seeing no spiritual superior to him, he ascended the throne. The King thought "Assuredly he will be the head of this place." He then entertained him with due honor, and taking a low seat listened to his exposition of the Dhamma. The young novice Nigrodha delivered an instructive discourse on the following stanza of the Dhammapada: -

"Heedfulness is the path to Deathlessness,
Heedfulness is the path to death.
The Heedful do not die,
The heedful are like unto the dead."

The word of the Buddha appealed to him, and he became a Buddhist. His conversion was the turning point of his career. Gradually he reformed himself. His outlook on life was completely changed, He modified his ways and means. He preferred the Dharma Vijaya - righteous domination - to Dig Vijaya - world domination. Later in life he became such a devout and righteous monarch that H.G. Wells says: - "Amidst the ten thousand names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majesties and graciousness and serenities and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Ashoka shines, and shines almost alone a star. From the Volga to Japan his name is still honored. China Tibet and even India, though it has left his doctrine, preserve the tradition of his greatness. More living men cherish his memory today than has ever heard the names of Constantine or Charlemagne."

Although he embraced Buddhism after meeting the novice Nigrodha, he did not give up his ambition of expanding his empire. It was after the Kalinga war that he became a genuine Buddhist by abandoning all warfare. Wells says he is the only monarch on record who abandoned warfare after victory.

He thereafter became an ideal Buddhist monarch. With ceaseless energy he worked for the dissemination of the Dhamma, not only in India and other parts of Asia but also in Europe and Africa. He transformed Buddhism into a world religion. He made the important teaching of the Buddha popular by his numerous interesting rock edicts. He erected so many Viharas (monasteries) round about Patna (Pataliputra) that the whole province came to be known as Vihara sacred places connected with the life of the Buddha, and lasting monuments were erected to mark those historic spots. Even the slaughtering of animals in the palace for household consumption was gradually lessened and stopped, and he forbade animal sacrifice. As Pandit Nehru says - "Ashoka example and the spread of Buddhism resulted in vegetarianism becoming popular."

With his royal patronage Buddhism flourished in his time, but as a real Buddhism monarch he was tolerant towards all faiths. One edit says: -

" All sects deserve for some reason or other. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people."

Ashoka was interested not only in the spiritual development of the people but also in their material development. All his subjects he treated as sons. He was so willing and ready to promote the public good that he says:- "At all times and at all places, whether I am dining or in the ladies' apartments, in my bedroom or in my closet, in my carriage or in my palace garden, the official reporters should keep me constantly informed of the people's business. Work I must for the common weal".

True to his words he acted like a father to all. In his time public gardens, medicinal herbs, hospitals for both men and animals, wells roads and educational institutions grew up all over the country. To his external credit it should be said that it was Ashoka who, for the first time in the history of the world, established hospitals for both men and animals, not only in Asia but also in Europe and Africa.

To those hasty critics who decry Buddhism as the cause of the decline and downfall of India, Asoka's prosperous Buddhist reign is a cogent reply.

Ashoka Missioners

According to the Pali Chronicles, at the end of the Third Council which was held in the seventeenth year of Ashoka' coronation, under the presidency of Arahant

Monggaliputta Tissa, it was decided to send competent Arahants to nine different places to propagate the Teachings of the Buddha.

The names of the missionaries and the places are as follows: -

Missioners Place

Majjhantika Thera Kashmir and Gandhar
 Mahadeva Thera Mahimsaka Mandala
 Rakkhita Thera Vanavasi
 Yonaka Dhammarakkhita Thera Aparantaka
 Mahadhammarakkhita Thera Maharattha
 Maharakkhita Thera Yonakaloka
 Majjhima Thera Himavantapadesa
 Sonaka and Uttara Theras Suvanabhumi
 Mahinda, Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasala Theras Tambapannidipa

It is stated that each mission consisted of five Theras so that it would be possible to perform the Upasampada ceremony in remote districts.

1. Kashmir is situated in the northwest of India. Peshavar and Ravapindi in north Punjab embrace Gandhara. Majjhantika Thera arrived here and subjugated the Naga King Aravala by his psychic powers and preached the Asivisopama Sutta.
2. Mahimsaka Mandala is identified the modern Mysore in South India. According to some it is a country south of the Vindhya Mountains. The Devaduta Sutta was preached here.
3. Vanavasi is North Kanara situated in South India. Even today there is a city called Vanavasi in this country. The Anamatagga Sutta Sutta ws the subject of the sermon.
4. Aparanta (Western End) is supposed to be Western India. According to the Puranas one of the five countries that existed in ancient India was Aparanta. Its capital was port Supparaka, modern Sopara. North Gujerat, Katiyavar, Kach, Sindh are included in Aparanta. The discourse that was delivered here was the Aggikkandhopama Sutta.
5. Maharattha is modern Maharashtra, which embraces mid-West India. The Maha Narada-Kassapa Jataka was delivered here.
6. Yonakaratta is the kingdom of the Greeks. It must be the Greek kingdom that existed in West India. According to some it comprises Egypt, Syria and Greece. The Kalakarama Sutta was delivered here.

7. It is stated that the Arahants Kassapagotta, Alakadeva, Mahadeva and Dundubhissara accompanied the Arahant Majjhima to the Himalaya region and preached the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta.

8. Some identify Suvannabhumi with Burma. Some say it is Karna Suvarna situated in Bengal and some say it is Hiranyavaha district along the banks of the Sona River. The brahmajala Sutta was the subject of the discourses.

9. Tambapannidipa is Sri Lanka (Ceylon).

The Mission to Ceylon

King Asoka's son himself accompanied by four Bhikkhus, one Samanera, and a lay Upasaka arrived in Langka to convert the Sinhala. It was on a festival day that they reached Ceylon. It was on a festival day that they reached Ceylon. They met the reigning king Devanampiyatissa, who had gone with a party to hunt deer on a hill called Missaka (modern Mihintale). The Arahant Mahinda arrested the attention of the king by addressing him simply as "Tissa". An interesting conversation then followed. After this the Arahant Mahinda preached the Cullahanthi-padopama Sutta to the king and his followers, hearing which they all sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and embraced this new teaching.

The Venerable Mahinda's Ceylon mission was a great success he found in Langka a fertile soil to disseminate the sublime Teachings of the Buddha. With royal patronage Buddhism was firmly established in Ceylon.

As Princess Anula, who attained the first stage of sainthood on hearing the first discourse delivered in the capital of Anuradhapura, expressed her desire to join the Order, the Venerable Mahinda dispatched a messenger to India inviting his sister Sanghamitta Their to visit Langka in order to establish the Bhikkhuni Sasana. As invited, she arrived in Ceylon with a branch of the Mahabodhi Tree at Buddha Gaya, and accompanied by a large retinue of distinguished men, who contributed largely to the material, intellectual and spiritual development of Sri Lanka.

To the eternal credit of Sinhala Buddhists it should be said that it is they who protected the sublime Teachings of the Dharma in their pristine purity by committing them to writing on ola leaves for the first time in the history of the Buddhist world.

Chapter 19

The Mangala Sutta

Blessing

Thus have I heard: -

On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at the monastery of Anathapindika in Jeta's Grove, near Savanthi. Now when the night was far spent, a certain deity, whose surpassing splendor illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Blessed One and, drawing near, respectfully saluted Him and stood on one side. Standing thus, he addressed the Blessed One in verse: -

1. "Many deities and men yearning after good have pondered on Blessings, Pray, tell me the Highest Blessing"

The Blessed One answered him thus: -

2. "Not to associate with fools, to associate with the wise, and to honor those who are worthy of honor - this is the Highest Blessing."

3. "To reside in a suitable locality, to have done meritorious actions in the past, and to set oneself in the right course - this is the Highest Blessing."

4. "Much learning, perfect handicraft, a highly trained discipline and pleasant speech - this is the Highest Blessing."

5. "To support of father and mother, the cherishing of wife and children and peaceful occupations - this is the Highest Blessing."

6. "Liberty, righteous conduct and helping of relatives and blameless actions - this is the Highest Blessing."

7. "To cease and abstain from evil, forbearance with respect to intoxicants and steadfastness in virtue - this is the Highest Blessing."

8. "Reverence, humanity, contentment, gratitude and opportune hearing of the Dhamma - this is the Highest Blessing."

9. "Patience, obedience, sight of the Samanas and religious discussion in due season - this is the Highest Blessing."

10. "Self-control, the hold life perception of the Noble Truths and the realization of Nibbána - this is the Highest Blessing."

11. "He whose mind does not flutter by contact with world contingencies. Sorrowless, Stainless and Secure - this is the Highest Blessing."

12. "To them, fulfilling matters such as these, everywhere invincible, in every moving happily - these are the Highest Blessing."

Chapter 20

The Parabhava Sutta

Downfall

Thus have I heard: -

On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at the monastery of Anathapindika in the Jeta Grove near Savatthi.

Now when the night was far spent, a certain deity whose splendor illuminated the whole Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Blessed One, and drawing near, respectfully saluted Him and stood on one side. Standing thus, he addressed the Blessed One in verse;

1. "Having come to interrogate the Blessed One, we ask thee, O Gotama, about the falling man. Pray, tell us the cause of one's downfall."

2. "Easily known is the progressive one, easily known is the declining one. A lover of the Dhamma is the progressive one, a hater of the Dhamma is the declining one.'

3. "This then we learn is the first cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the second cause of one's downfall."

4. "The vicious are dear to him. In the virtuous he finds nothing pleasing. He favors the creeds of the vicious - this is the cause of one's downfall."

5. "This then we learn is the second cause of one's downfall. Pray, O blessed One, tell us the third cause of one's downfall.'

6. "The man who is drowsy, fond of society, not industrious, indolent, and who manifests anger - this is the cause of one's downfall."

7. "This then we learn is the third cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the fourth cause of one's downfall."

8. "Whosoever, being rich, does not support his aged mother and father who have passed their youth - this is the cause of one's downfall."
9. "This then we learn is the fourth cause of one's downfall, Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the fifth cause of one's downfall."
10. "He who, by falsehood, deceives a Brahmana or an ascetic or any mendicant - this is the cause of one's downfall."
11. "This then we learn is the fifth cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the sixth cause of one's downfall."
12. "The man who owns much property, who has gold and food, but alone enjoys his delicacies - this is the cause of one's downfall."
13. "This then we learn is the sixth cause of one's downfall. Pray O Blessed One, tell us the seventh cause of one's downfall."
14. "The man who takes pride in birth or wealth or clan, and despises his own kinsmen - this is the cause of one's downfall."
15. "This then we learn is the seventh cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the eighth cause of one's downfall."
16. "The man who is debauch, a drunkard, a gambler and who squanders whatever he possesses - this is the cause of one's downfall."
17. "This then we learn is the eight cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the ninth cause of one's downfall."
18. "Not contented with one's own wives, if one is seen amongst courtesans and the wives of others - this is the cause of one's downfall."
19. "This then we learn is the ninth cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the tenth cause of one's downfall."
20. "The man who, past his youth, brings a very young wife and sleep not for jealousy of her this is the eleventh cause of one's downfall."
21. "This then we learn is the tenth cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the eleventh cause of one's downfall."
22. "He who places in authority an intemperate spendthrift woman, or a man of similar nature - this is the cause of one's downfall."

23. "This then we learn is the eleventh cause of one's downfall. Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the twelfth cause of one's downfall."

24. "He who, of warrior birth, with vast ambition but slender means, aspires to sovereignty - this is the cause of one's downfall."

25. "Knowing well these causes of downfall in the world, the Noble Sage, endowed with insight, shares a happy realm."

Chapter 21

The Mettá Sutta

Loving-kindness

1. He who is skilled in his good, and who wishes to attain that state of Calm, should act thus: -
2. He should be able, upright, perfectly upright, obedient, gentle and humble. Contented easily supportable, with few duties, of light livelihood, with senses controlled, discreet, not impudent, not be greedily, attached to families.
3. He should not commit any slight wrong on account of which other wise men might censure him. May all beings be happy and secure, may their hearts be wholesome.
4. Whatever living beings there be - feeble or strong, long, stout or medium, short, small or large, seen or unseen, those dwelling far or near, those who are to be born - may all beings, without exception, be happy minded.
5. Let none deceive another nor despise any person whatever in any place. In anger or ill-will let him not wish harm to another.
6. Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own, even so, let him cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings.
7. Let his thought of boundless love pervade the whole world - above, below across without any hatred, without any enmity.
8. Whether he stands, walks, sits or lies down, as long as he is awake, he should develop this mindfulness. This, they say, is the Highest Conduct here.
9. Not falling into Error, virtuous and endowed with Insight, he discards attachment to sense-desires. Of a truth, he does not come again for conception in a womb.

Chapter 22

The Vyagghapajja Sutta

Thus have I heard: -

On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling amongst the Koliyans in their market town named Kakkarapatta. Then Dighajanu, a Koliyan son, approached the Blessed One, respectfully saluted Him and sat on one side. Thus seated, he addressed the Blessed One as follows: -

"We, Lord are laymen who enjoy worldly pleasures. We lead a life encumbered by wife and children. We use sandalwood of Kasi. We deck ourselves with garlands, perfume and unguents. We suffer the use of gold and silver. To such as us, Lord, let the Blessed One preach the Doctrine, teach those things that lead to the weal and happiness in this life and to the happiness of the other world.

Causes Of Worldly Progress

These four things, Vyagghapajja, conduce to the good and happiness of a clansman in this very life. What four?

"The achievement of persistent effort - Utthanasampada, the achievement of wariness - Arakkhasampada, good friendship - Kalyanamittata and the balanced livelihood - Samajivikata."

"Herein, Vyagghapajja, by whatsoever activity a clansman earns his living, whether by the plough, by trading, by watching cattle, by archery, by ministering to kings or by any other kind of craft - at that he becomes skillful and is not lazy. He is endowed with reasoning as to ways and means thereof. He is able to do and manage (his job).

"This is called the achievement of persistent effort."

"What is the achievement of wariness?"

"Herein, Vyagghapajja, in whatsoever village or market town a clansman dwells, he stands together, converses, engages in discussions with householders of householders' sons, whether young or highly cultured or old and highly cultured, full of faith - Saddha, full of virtue - Síla, full of charity - Caga, full of wisdom - Paññá. He acts in accordance with the faith of those full of faith, with the virtue of

those full of virtue, with the charity of those full of charity, with the wisdom of those full of wisdom,

"This is called good company."

"What is balanced livelihood?"

"Herein, Vyagghapajja, a clansman knowing his income and expenses leads a steady life, being neither too extravagant nor too sordid, thinking that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but his expenses in excess of his income.

"Just as the goldsmith, or an apprentice of his, knows, on holding up a balance, that by such so much it has dipped down, by so much it has tiled up; even so a clansman knowing his income and expenses, leads his steady life, being neither too extravagant nor too sordid, thinking that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but not his expenses in excess of his income."

"If, Vyagghapajja, a clansman with little income were to lead a luxurious life, there would be those who say - 'Thus clansman enjoys his wealth like one who eats wood-apple. If, Vyagghapajja, a clansman, with large income were to lead a wretched life, there would be those who say: -

'This clansman will die like a starveling.'

"The wealth thus amassed, Vyagghapajja, has four sources of destruction: -

- I. Debauchery - Ittidhutto,
- II. Drunkenness - Suradhutto,
- III. Indulgence in gambling - Akkhadhutto, and
- IV. Friendship, companionship and intimacy with evil-doers.

"Just as in the case of a great tank with for inlets and outlets, if a man should close the inlets and open the outlets and there should be no adequate rainfall, decrease (of water) is to be expected in that tank and not an increase; even so there are four sources for the destruction of amassed wealth - debauchery, drunkenness, indulgence in gambling and friendship, companionship and intimacy with evil-doer.

There are four sources for the development of amassed wealth: -

- I. Abstinence from debauchery,
- II. Abstinence from drunkenness,
- III. Non-indulgence in gambling, and
- IV. Friendship, companionship and intimacy with the good.

"Just as in the case of a great tank with four inlets and four outlets, if a person were to open the inlets and close the outlets, and there should also be adequate rainfall, and increase of water is certainly to be expected in that tank and not a decrease, even, so the four above-mentioned are the sources of development of amassed wealth."

"These four things are conducive to the good and happiness of a noble son in this life itself."

Causes Of Spiritual Progress

"These four things are conducive to the good and happiness of a noble son in the other world."

"Which four?"

- I. Achievement of Faith-Saddhasampada
- II. Achievement of Virtue-Silasampada
- III. Achievement of Charity-Cagasampada
- IV. Achievement of Wisdom-Pannasampada

"What is the achievement of faith?"

"Herein a clansman is possessed of faith, believes in the Enlightenment of the Tathágata: - Thus, indeed is that Blessed One, An Exalted One, Omniscient, Endowed with wisdom and conduct, Auspicious Knower of worlds, an Incomparable Charioteer for the training of individuals, Teacher of gods and men, Enlightened and Holy."

"This is called the achievement of virtue?"

"Herein a clansman abstains from killing, stealing, un-chastity, lying and intoxicants that cause infatuation and heedlessness."

"This is called the achievement of virtue."

"What is the achievement of charity?"

"Herein a clansman, dwells at home with heart free from the stain of avarice, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in generosity, fit to be asked (for alms), rejoicing in sharing alms."

"What is the achievement of wisdom?"

"Herein a clansman is wise, is endowed with wisdom that leads to one's development and with noble penetrative insight - Nibbedikaya that leads to the complete destruction of suffering."

"This is called the achievement of wisdom."

"These four things are conducive to the good and happiness of a clansman in the other world."

"Strenuous in spheres of work, heedful and ordering, he lives well, protecting what he has amassed."

"Endowed with faith and virtue, generous and free from avarice, he ever clears the path of happiness to the other world."

"Thus for the believing home-seekers, these eight things that lead to the happiness in both worlds - well-being in this and happiness in the other - have been declared by Him who owns a truthful name. In this way do the charity and merit of laymen grow."