



Dhammapada

Vagga 1-10

Vol.I



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DHAMMAPADA

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HRISHIKESH SHARAN

Born in Bettiah, West Champaran, Bihar, India. Secured Post Graduate Degree in Physics from Patna University. Joined the Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise) in 1975. Obtained Law Degree from Kolkata University and Post Graduate Diploma in Operational Research (PGDOR) from the Operational Research Society of India. Led the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Group as the Liaison Officer in 1994. Awarded Diploma in Creative Writing in Hindi from the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). After retirement as Director General in 2011, served as Ombudsman, Indirect Tax, Mumbai in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Was appointed as the National Facilitator on Ethics and Values in Public Governance in 2015 by the Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India.

In 2007, he translated the 'Light of Asia' by Sir Edwin Arnold in Hindi (Poetry) as 'Jagadaradhya Tathagata'; in 2009 in Hindi (Prose) as 'Asia Ki Jyoti'; in 2012 in English prose by the same title 'Light of Asia' and in 2013 in Bhojpuri as 'Asia Ke Roshani'. In 2010, his work, the 'Dhammapada: Gatha aur Katha', consisting of 26 chapters of the Buddha's Teachings in Hindi was released on the Buddha Purnima Day. He is also author of 'Mantras of Mathematics' (2011). His latest publications are 'Siddhartha Ka Jivan: Sahasra Prashna aur Uttar' and Shakyamuni Buddha ki Sachitra Rangeen-Hindi Katha (A Pictorial Biography of Sakyamuni Buddha), both in Hindi Language.

For more than forty years, he has been pursuing the Life and the Message of the Buddha. Apart from travelling all over India and lecturing extensively, he has also delivered speeches in Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Singapore, Australia, Holland and Bhutan; speaking on 'Holistic Management' and 'The Life and the Message of the Buddha'. He has addressed a large number of students and teachers on 'Secrets of Success in Mathematics and Life'. Sri Sharan is a forceful motivational speaker and his mantra is: **'By doing extra, ordinary people start becoming extra-ordinary.'**



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14 February, 2013.

Foreword

The *Dhammapada* or the collection of sayings of the Buddha in verse form, is one of the most widely read and best known Buddhist scriptures. According to the great Buddhist master Buddhaghosa, each teaching in the collection was a response to a specific question or situation that had arisen in the life of the monastic community. The *Dhammapada*, therefore, is a guide to enlightenment through the right and meaningful conduct of daily life. The translation of the *Dhammapada* will bring this immense body of wisdom within the reach of many to inspire, encourage and guide our society along the good path.

The teaching of the *Dhammapada* are timeless and remain as relevant today as ever before. The beauty and wisdom shine through from the very first verse of the first chapter *Yamak Vagga* :

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage....all that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."

Extremely relevant in this age of violence and terrorism is verse 5 that tell us:

"Hatred does not cease by hatred. It ceases only by love, compassion, goodwill and friendship."

Many conflicts between individuals, families, communities and nations would not have arisen had the *Dhammapada* been more widely known.

I applaud Shri Hrishikesh Sharan, National Lecturer and long time member of The Theosophical Society of India; and Member of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, for undertaking this mission.

May the merit accumulated from this noble undertaking bring immeasurable benefit to all beings in these turbulent times.

Tashi Delek !

(Jigmi Y. Thinley)



**Dedicated with reverence to my
most respected,**

Mataji - Pitaji

Dadiji - Dadaji

Naniji - Nanaji

and

All ancestors

**Without whose blessings it was not
possible to publish it.**



PREFACE

In 2010, my Hindi version of the Dhammapada: Gatha aur Katha, consisting of 26 chapters of the Buddha's teachings with nearly nine hundred coloured pictures and published by the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taiwan was released on the Buddha Purnima Day at Kolkata by the Maha Bodhi Society. This monumental work has been widely welcomed by Hindi speaking readers. It is in great demand especially for its simplicity and get up though one set of four volumes weighs nearly two and half kilograms.

When my non-Hindi speaking friends and well wishers from India and abroad saw these books, they were very impressed and suggested that I write it in English as well. The Dhammapada has inspired millions of devotees all over the world for ages. It has touched my life also greatly. Therefore, I decided to write it in English. I hope that this work in English will also inspire English readers greatly and help them transform their lives.

The Dhammapada (The Words Of Truth) consists of 26 chapters. The chapters are named: The Twin Verses, Heedfulness, Mind, Flowers, Fools, The Wise, The Worthy, Thousands, Evil, Punishment, Old Age, The Self, The World, The Buddha, Happiness, Affection, Anger, Impurities, The Just, The Way, Miscellaneous, Woeful State, The Elephant, Craving, The Bhikkhu and The Brahmana. There are in total 423 melodious verses in Pali called Gathas which were uttered by the Enlightened One on 305 occasions for the benefit of the mankind in the course of his preaching tours till he attained the Maha Parinirvana at 80.

The Buddha is a Teacher par excellence. He has used very simple similes like cart's wheel and man's shadow so that his teachings can be understood by all. His disciples came from all sections of the society.

The teachings of the Buddha are not for intellectual entertainment. They are meant for practical action in life. The teachings are meant to bring inner transformation of the reader. So the Dhammapada should not be read only for the purpose of enjoying the stories or as a novel although the stories are also very engaging. The reader should read and re-read the Dhammapada with full devotion with the objective to change himself from within.

There are innumerable examples where the Buddha has pulled up disciples who only master the scriptures but do not practice them and experience the teachings in life. The theoretical knowledge has no meaning at all for the Buddha. He says in verses 19 and 20:

Verse 19: If one recites much of the sacred texts but does not act accordingly, then that heedless person is like a keeper of cows who counts the cows of another (does not get share in the milk products). He does not get share in the fruits of the Holy Life.

Verse 20: If one recites even little of the sacred texts but acts according to the Rules of the Dhamma, giving up lust, hatred and ignorance, truly knowing, with mind well

freed, attached to nothing here or in the other world; he shares the fruits of the Holy Life.

How much shall we be benefitted from the Dhammapada? It will depend on how seriously we take the teachings and follow them in our lives. The Buddha has shown us the way. Now the journey has to be undertaken by us only. He cannot undertake it on our behalf.

The Buddha in verses 51 and 52 of the Dhammapada says:

Verse 51: Just like beautiful flowers which have colour but no scent, so are the good words useless for one who does not practise it.

Verse 52: Just like beautiful flowers having colour and also scent, so are the good words useful for one who practises it.

I hope these teachings will inspire the reader to bring inner transformation. If there is even the least change in their lives, I shall consider my efforts to be amply rewarded.

I have been constantly encouraged by my Kalyan Mitra Venerable Dr. Rewatha D. Thero of the Maha Bodhi Society of India to write the Dhamma books. The present work is also due to that encouragement. He has constantly guided me in life and I have no words to express my gratitude to him. His Excellency, Jigmi Y Thinley, the then Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan, has written the Foreword of this book and I am grateful to him for the same. I shall fail in my duty if I do not place on record my sense of appreciation for the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taiwan which has been gracious enough to publish this book, as many of my other Dhamma books in the past. I was inspired to write this book by the great work, the 'Treasury of Truth' (Illustrated Dhammapada) by Ven. Dr. W. Sarada Maha Thero. I am indebted to him. Bhante Gyananandji and his disciple Gyanvijayaji of Sri Lanka have been kind enough to provide the front and back covers of the chapters and I am obliged to them for the beautiful work done by them.

I shall also like to place on record the encouragement I received from my wife Minu; grand-daughter Sarea; sons-in-law, Nishank and Varun; daughters, Ruchi and Pratichi; Respected Induji, Mahendra Bhai Saab and Bibhakar Thakurji. Without their constant support and sustained assistance I could not have written this monumental work!

Saint Tulsidas, the writer of the great epic the Ramayana, addressing the God has written, **"One, who tries to know about You, becomes like You."** I wish that all who are making sincere efforts to understand the Buddha and his teachings become like him and attain freedom from the cycles of birth and death which is the ultimate goal of human life.

May the blessings of the Triple Gem (The Buddha, The Dhamma and The Sangha) shower on us all and inspire us to undertake that final journey towards Nirvana! May we all sincerely strive to attain the Nirvana!

Bhawatu Saab Mangalam!
Hrishikesh Sharan
New Delhi, India.

DHAMMAPADA

Twin Verses

Yamaka Vagga



Chapter I

YAMAKA VAGGA

The Twin Verses

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YAMAKA VAGGA

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**Verse 1: Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā mano setṭhā manomayā
Manasā ce paduṭṭhena bhāsati vā karoti vā
Tato naṃ dukkhamanveti cakkam'va vahato padaṃ.**

Verse 1: Mind is the forerunner of everything. Everything (good or bad), arises from the mind. It is mind made. If one speaks or acts with an impure (evil, wicked) mind, suffering follows him, like the wheel of a bullock-cart behind the foot-marks of the ox drawing it.

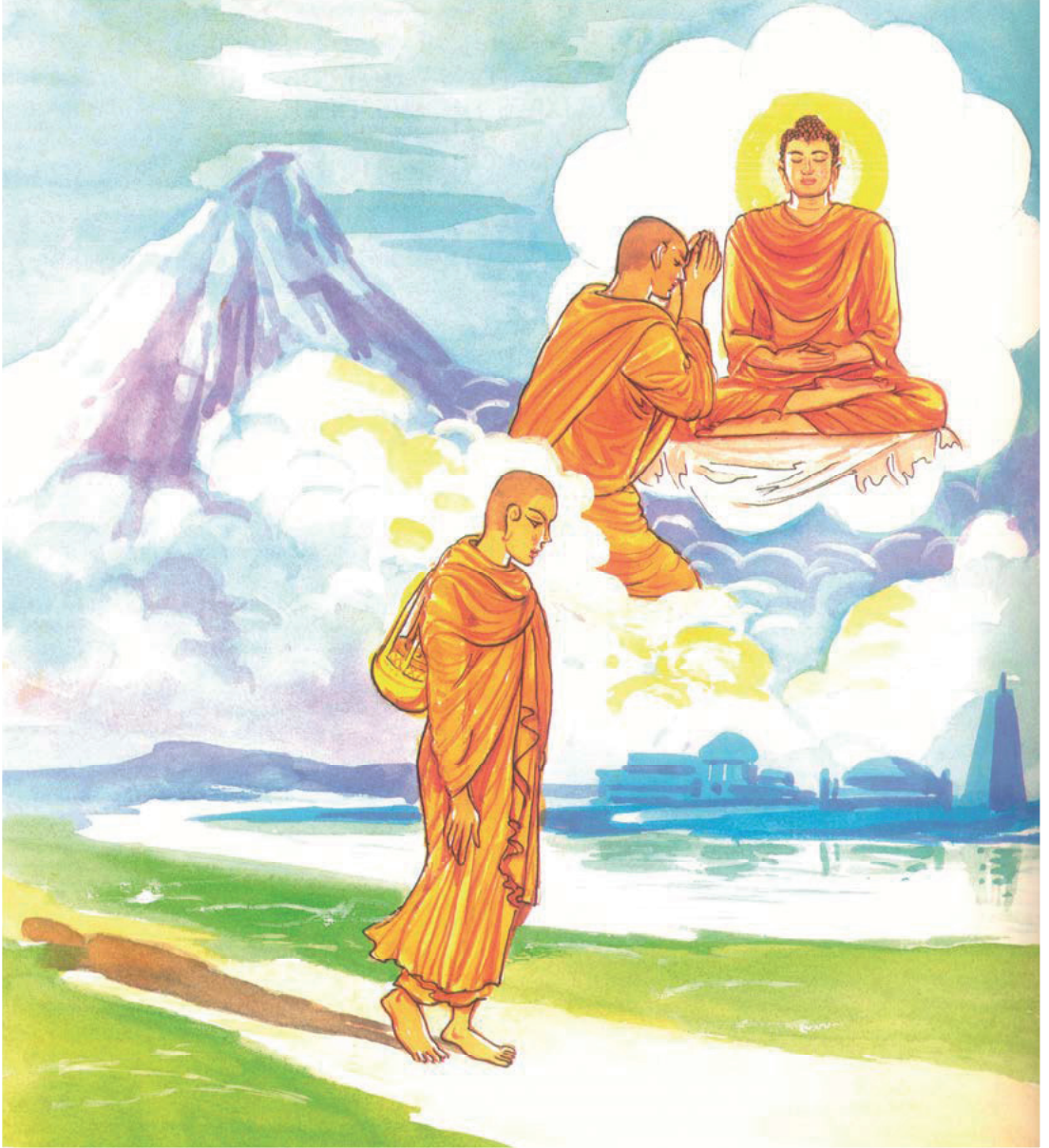
Suffering follows wrong thinking Story of Chakkhupala

Place: Jetavana Monastery.

The Buddha spoke this verse in respect of a blind monk, Chakkhupala.

One day, bhikkhu Chakkhupala happened to visit the Jetavana Vihara to pay homage to the Buddha. While staying there at night, he practised walking meditation. In course of the walk, as he was blind and could see nothing, a number of insects, coming under his slippers, were killed. At dawn, some bhikkhus saw these dead insects and reported the matter to the Buddha saying, 'Sir! Chakkhupala has committed grave crime last night. He has killed a number of insects.' The Buddha knew that Chakkhupala was an Arahant and that he had not killed them deliberately. So, after hearing them, the Buddha asked them, 'Did you see Chakkhupala killing those insects?' 'No Sir, we did not see!' The Buddha then clarified to them, 'Just as you have not seen Chakkhupala killing those insects, so also Chakkhupala has not seen them being killed. Besides he is an Arahant. An Arahant does not have ill-will towards anyone. He cannot commit a sin.' This satisfied the bhikkhus so far as the killing of the insects was concerned but they were curious to know how being an Arahant, Chakkhupala was born blind.

To clarify this, the Buddha told them the story of one of his previous lives. In one of his previous births, Chakkhupala was an eye-surgeon. Once, a woman came to him to get her vision improved. She promised the doctor that in case her eyes were cured, she would work as a maid-servant in his household all through her life. On this promise, Chakkhupala started the treatment. As the treatment continued, with the passage of time, her vision started improving. Chakkhupala knew this. But when he asked her about the condition of her eyes, out of fear that she may have to work as a slave all through her life, she told a lie that her eyes were not improving, in fact were getting from bad to worse. The doctor understood that she was telling a lie. Therefore, out of revenge, he applied an ointment in her eyes, which made her blind for the rest of her life. As a result of this evil deed, Chakkhupala had to suffer blindness in many of his future lives.



**Verse 2: Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā mano seṭṭhā manomayā
Manasā ce pasannena bhāsati vā karoti vā
Tato naṃ sukkhamanveti chāyāva anapāyini.**

Verse 2: Mind is the forerunner of everything. Everything (good or bad), arises from the mind. It is mind made. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows him, as the shadow of a man that never departs him.

Happiness follows right thinking

Story of Mattha Kundali

Place: Jetavana Monastery

Mattha Kundali was the son of a great miser, Adinnapubbaka. The father was so miserly that he did not give anything in charity all throughout his life. At the time of the marriage of his son, he made the ornaments himself so that he could save the wages of the goldsmith. Even when his son fell seriously sick, he did not call a doctor. The condition of the son kept on deteriorating and it was now clear that the son would die. At that moment also, the father did not call a doctor. Instead, he put his son on a cot outside the house, in the verandah, so that the people did not come inside his house and see his possessions.

On the other side, the Buddha, during his morning meditation, found the young man in his Net of Wisdom. So, while going for the alms-round in the village, he turned towards the house of Mattha Kundali and stood at the door of his house. The Buddha sent his rays of compassion to the youth who was lying with his face towards the house.

Mattha Kundali saw the Buddha and was keen on getting up from the bed to greet him and pay homage to him. But his body was not in a position to cooperate and he could not get up. However, from the core of his heart, he was intensely full of reverence for the Buddha. He professed his faith in him and felt happy. Though physically he could not attend to the Buddha, mentally he was already one with him. This was enough. When he passed away, he took birth in the Tavatimsa celestial world.

From the Tavatimsa world, Mattha Kundali saw his father mourning severely at the death of the son. So, he appeared before his father in his old earthly form and consoled him not to lament as he was reborn in the Tavatimsa loka. He also advised his father to invite the Buddha and the bhikkhus for a meal and listen to his discourse carefully. Accordingly, they were invited for a meal. After the meal ceremony the family members asked the Buddha, 'Can someone be born in the Tavatimsa Loka simply by having profound reverence in the Buddha, without giving any charity or observing any moral precepts?' To confirm that this was possible, the Buddha called upon Mattha Kundali to appear in person in his present celestial form. In response, he appeared before all in his celestial ornaments and explained that he was reborn in the Tavatimsa loka. The audience had to believe that Mattha Kundali had gained so much only through his full devotion to the Buddha.



**Verse 3: Akkocchi maṃ avadhi maṃ ajini maṃ ahāsi me
Ye taṃ upanayhanti veraṃ tesaṃ na sammati.**

Verse 3: He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me and he stole my belongings: for one who remembers such thoughts, enmity does not end from his life.

What does not lead to peace? Story of bhikkhu Tissa

Place: Jetavana Monastery

Bhikkhu Tissa was ordained to monkhood at an old age. He was a relative of the Buddha by birth. Although, when a person becomes a bhikkhu, he has to lay aside his past life--- all relationships, all bonds; yet Tissa never forgot his relationship with the Buddha. As a result, he always felt that he should be treated as a senior bhikkhu, with respect, by all other bhikkhus.

He did not understand and appreciate the fact that the seniority of the monks is calculated from the time of Higher Ordination (Upasampada), and not by the chronological age. On that count he did not fall in the category of a senior monk but he treated himself as a senior monk.

He did not follow the discipline of a bhikkhu. He also did not practise the Dhamma seriously. He did not perform the duties of even a junior monk, let alone those of a senior monk. The visiting young monks, considering his age, showed respect to him and offered their services. But very soon they realised that his knowledge of the Dhamma was poor and shallow. Bhikkhu Tissa often quarrelled with these young monks. If someone advised him to behave properly, he would start crying, go to the Buddha and complaint against the person. The Buddha tried to make him see his mistake but he did not listen to him either. Thus his behaviour always remained unpredictable. He did not forgive others, nor did he forget their past behaviour and always carried the wounds. In this way, he led a miserable life.

The bhikkhus approached the Buddha and told him about the unbecoming qualities and behaviour of Tissa. The Buddha explained, 'This is not the first time that Tissa has been stubborn and adamant. It has happened with him in one of his previous births as well. He was an obstinate ascetic by the name Devala. As a result of a misunderstanding, he cursed a very holy religious teacher by the name of Narada. In spite of the intervention of and persuasion by the king to forgive Narada, Devala refused to do so. Finally the king had to force him to do so.'



**Verse 4: Akkocchi maṃ avadhi maṃ ajini maṃ ahāsi me
Ye taṃ na upanayhanti veraṃ tesūpasammati.**

Verse 4: He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me and he stole my belongings: for one who does not remember such thoughts, enmity ends from the life of such a person.

Forgiveness leads to peace

Story of bhikkhu Tissa

The Buddha further advised them, **'Do not remember the thoughts of enmity. Enmity can end only by thoughts of friendliness. One who does not forgive others for ill-treating him will not be able to end hatred and enmity from his life. On the other hand, one who forgives others for ill-treating him will be able to end hatred and enmity from his life.'**

Note: There is so much of tension in relationships in the society today that it is very common to see people getting agitated at almost anything. They quarrel and fight with each other on petty issues. When some such incidence takes place in our life then we carry the memory of that unfortunate incidence, for all the times to come. Anger, hatred and negativities, as a result of this, instead of getting reduced, go on increasing. On the other hand, if one removes such experiences from his memories, forgives and forgets, then anger does not harm him in his life. Hatred disappears from his life. Such a person lives peacefully and happily.

The Buddha always taught his disciples to show self-restraint, patience and tolerance in their behaviour. He was full of praise for all those who were in a position to show anger, in retaliation to some wrong done to them, but did not do so, in spite of great provocation. We will read many such stories in "Anger" and other chapters of the Dhammapada in the coming pages.

There are many instances in the life of the Buddha too from which we may learn the lesson. He forgave people who criticised, abused or attacked him. According to him, patience and forgiveness are not the signs of a weak man. Rather they are the indicators of our great internal strength.



**Verse 5: Na hi verena verāni sammantīdha kudācanaṃ
Averena ca sammanti esa dhammo sanantano.**

Verse 5: Hatred does not cease by hatred. It ceases only by love, friendliness and goodwill. This is the age-old eternal law.

Cure of hatred: Love and Compassion

Story of Kali Yakshini

Place: Jetavana monastery

Once, there lived a householder with his wife and family members. His wife was barren and could not give birth to a baby. The family members were unhappy with her over it. They ill treated her. Therefore, she decided to get her husband remarried to another lady. But she did not approve the idea from the core of her heart. She was, therefore, jealous of the new lady. So, on two occasions when the new lady became pregnant, the first lady gave her food mixed with such a medicine that she had a miscarriage. On the third occasion, she mixed poison with the food. As a result of this, the baby as well as the mother died during the child birth. While the dying lady passed away from the world, she was full of anger, hatred and vengeance for the barren lady. Thus the story of revenge started between the two. The enmity between them continued henceforth in all the future lives and they took revenge from each other by turn. The animosity between them continued even when they were born in different species. Time passed on in this revengeful way till they were reborn during the time of the Buddha. At that time, one of them appeared as the daughter of a rich man of Sravasti. The other was born as an evil female spirit, Kali Yakshini. As the hatred had continued, the lady who was blessed with the baby was scared that the other lady may kill her child. So, she decided to seek shelter of the Buddha to protect her child. As the Buddha was giving discourse at the Jetavana monastery at that time, she took her son in her arms and rushed to the monastery and placed the baby at the feet of the Master and sought his protection. On the other hand, Kali Yakshini did not dare enter the monastery. Later the Buddha himself asked her to come inside. When both the ladies were face to face in the presence of the Buddha, he narrated stories of their past deeds and how they took revenge from each other in various lives and brought miseries to themselves. He thus rebuked them to put an end to the hatred between them. He also told them how hatred does not cease by hatred. Rather hatred begets more hatred. Hatred can end only by love, compassion, goodwill and friendship. There is no other way to win hatred. Both the ladies realised their mistakes and wrong doings and thus the centuries old hatred between them came to an end. Then the Buddha advised the baby's mother to hand over her son to Kali Yakshini. At first, she was scared to do so. But due to the deep faith that because of her devotion to the Buddha nothing untoward would happen to her, she gave her son to Yakshini who took the baby in her lap as if he was her own son. After kissing the baby, she returned him to the mother.



**Verse 6: Pare ca na vijānanti mayamettha yamāmase
Ye ca tattha vijānanti tato sammanti medhagā**

Verse 6: The ignorant do not remember that we all shall die one day. For those who remember, all quarrels end.

Remember death: Hatred will end Story of Kausambi bhikkhus

Place: Jetavana Monastery

Once, the bhikkhus in the Buddha's Sangha following the Vinaya Rules and those following the Dhamma Rules had a quarrel over a trivial issue. The Buddha tried his best to bring reconciliation between the two groups but none of the groups was ready to settle the issue and close the matter. The Tathagata felt that it was better to maintain silence and keep distance from both the groups. So, he withdrew himself from their company and went to Rakkhita grove near Parileyka forest to pass the rainy season there. The devoted elephant, Parileyya and a monkey attended to his needs and performed immense service to him.

The residents of Kausambi came to know about the reason for the departure of the Buddha, after he had already left for the forest. They became very angry with both the groups of the bhikkhus and stopped giving alms to them. Then the bhikkhus realised what wrong they had done to the Buddha and the consequences thereof. They immediately reconciled their disputes amicably. They realised that they had done great disservice to the Buddha by creating such an unfriendly atmosphere in the Sangha that he had to retreat to the forest. But the lay disciples were not ready to pardon them. They did not provide them alms food with the same enthusiasm and devotion as they used to do earlier when the Buddha was present. They felt that the bhikkhus should fall at the feet of the Master and seek his pardon. But the Buddha was in the forest and this was the rainy season. The bhikkhus could anyhow manage to pass the rainy season.

After the vassa period was over, Venerable Ananda along with other bhikkhus from both the groups went to the forest and prayed to the Buddha to return back to the monastery. They also carried the message from Anathapindika and other lay disciples praying to him to return back to the monastery. The Buddha, compassion personified as he is, accepted their prayer to return to the monastery.

All the disciples fell at his feet, admitted their guilt and prayed for his pardon. The Buddha exhorted them, **'No one is born to live permanently in this world. If one remembers all the time that the death is sure to come to anyone, anytime and anywhere like an uninvited guest, then all our infightings will disappear. We should never act as if we are never going to die. Remembering death would end all quarrels, conflicts and misunderstandings.'**



**Verse 7: Subhānupassiṃ viharantaṃ indriyesu asaṃvutaṃ
Bhojanamhi ca amattaññuṃ kusitaṃ hinaviriyaṃ
Taṃ ve pasahati māro vāto rukkhaṃva dubbalaṃ.**

Verse 7: He whose mind is fixed on the pursuit of pleasures, who is not controlled in his senses, who eats food without moderation, who is lazy and lacks in energy, will certainly be taken over by Mara, just as a weak tree is uprooted by a stormy wind.

Weak will be thrown off by Mara

Story of bhikkhu Mahakala

Place: Setavya Nagar, Sravasti

Three brothers, Mahakala, Madhyakala and Chulakala used to live together in Setavyanagar and earned their living through trading business. Eldest brother, Mahakala and the youngest brother Chulakala travelled together to different places and brought merchandise goods in their carts for sale. Madhyakala used to take care of the sale of the goods, brought by them.

Once, the two brothers were returning to their village with their purchased goods. They stopped their convoy on the way between Sravasti and Jetavana. There, Mahakala saw some lay disciples of the Buddha going to hear his discourse. He became curious and asked his younger brother to take care of the carts and went to the monastery to hear the discourse of the Buddha. On reaching, he saluted the Buddha and sat down to hear his talk on the 'Law of Suffering and decay.' Hearing the discourse, Mahakala became mindful about the impermanence and decaying nature of the physical body. He decided to become a bhikkhu and approached the Buddha for the same, who asked him, 'Is there anyone in your family who will recommend your ordination?' Mahakala then called his younger brother to stand as his guardian. Chulakala did not want his brother to become a bhikkhu and made all efforts to persuade him not to become one. But Mahakala remained firm on his decision. Thus he became a bhikkhu. Chulakala also became a bhikkhu. Mahakala started living in the cremation ground and meditated there. Soon he attained Arahant hood. On the other hand, Chulakala did not pursue meditation seriously. He did not gain much. In fact, he had joined the Sangha only with the objective to take his brother back to the worldly ways once again.

One day, the Buddha arrived at Setavya and entered the Simsapa forest. By that time Mahakala had attained Arahant hood. When Chulakala's wives heard that the Buddha had arrived at Setavya, they conspired to bring their husband back to the family fold. They invited the Buddha and the bhikkhus to their house for almsfood. As per practice, one bhikkhu was sent in advance to oversee the arrangements. Chulakala was deputed for this purpose.



**Verse 8: Asubhānupassiṃ viharantaṃ indriyesu susaṃvutaṃ
Bhojanamhi ca mattaññuṃ saddhaṃ āradhaviyaṃ
Taṃ ve na ppasahati māro vāto selaṃ va pabbataṃ.**

Verse 8 : He, whose mind is not fixed on the pursuit of pleasures (he meditates on the impurities of the body), who is well controlled in his senses, who eats food with moderation, who is full of confidence and ever flowing energy, will not be overwhelmed by Mara, just as a rocky mountain is not uprooted by a stormy wind.

Strong will not be thrown off by Mara

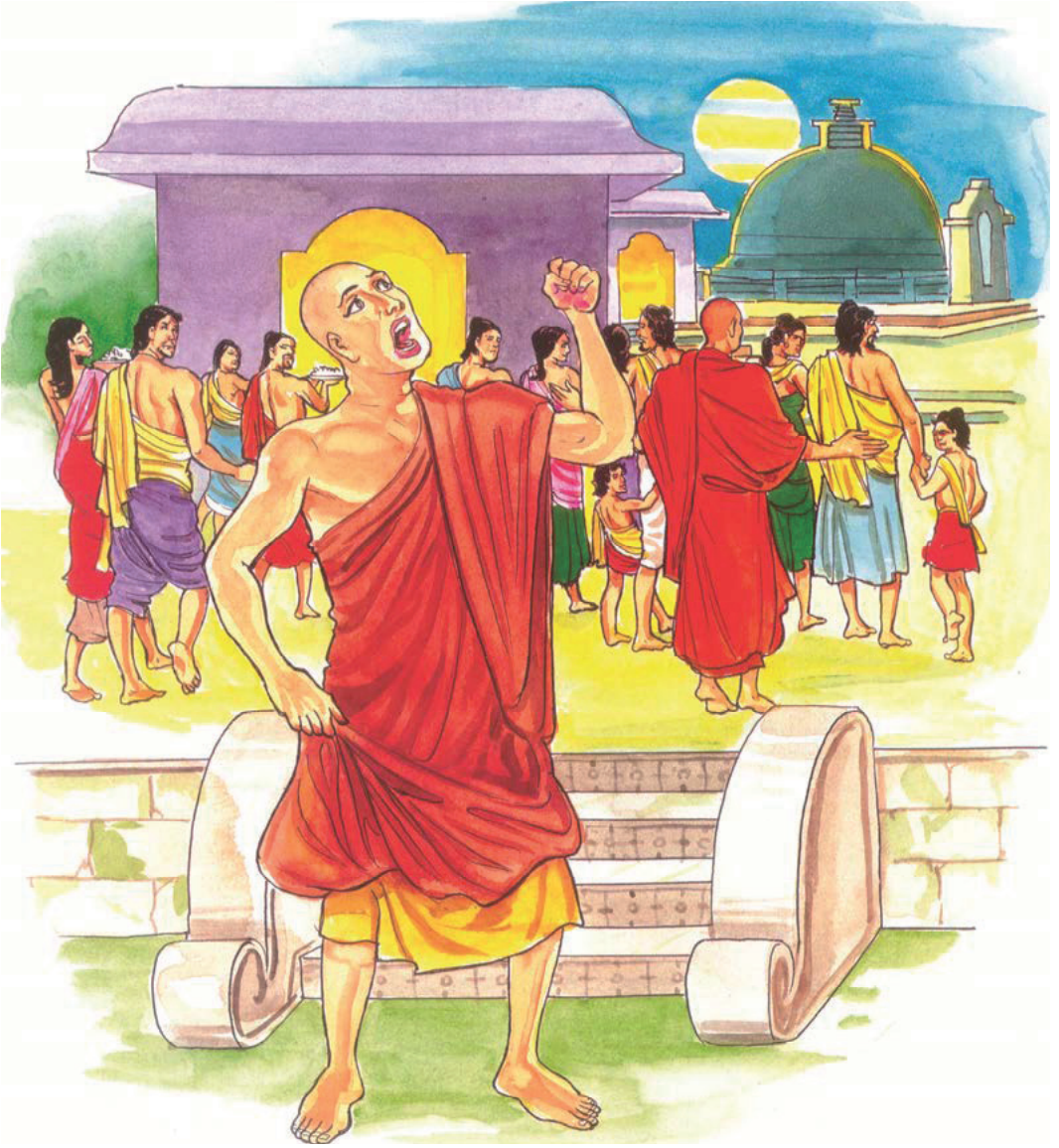
Story of bhikkhu Mahakala

When Chulakala arrived at his house, his wives started scolding him and made fun of him. They pulled off his saffron robe, instead dressed him in white clothes and sent him back to the monastery. It was hardly a year that Chulakala had been ordained. He had practically no interest in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. He did not, therefore, feel ashamed that he had left the Sangha. The Buddha arrived at their house with the bhikkhus. The alms-giving ceremony was performed. The thanks-giving was over. The Buddha and the disciples left for the monastery.

Encouraged to see that Chulakala had come back to the household, the wives of Mahakala also thought of playing the same trick on their husband. They also invited the Buddha and the Sangha for the almsfood the next day. But that day some bhikkhu, other than Mahakala, was sent to oversee the arrangements. Mahakala had eight wives against two wives of Chulakala. But these eight wives also could do nothing to Mahakala what was done to his younger brother.

After the alms ceremony, Mahakala's wives requested the Buddha to leave Mahakala behind for anumodana (thanks-giving). The Buddha acceded to their request and left for the vihara with his disciples. The bhikkhus were agitated thinking whether Mahakala was left behind unintentionally or the Buddha had agreed to leave him behind deliberately. The fresh experience of Chulakala was haunting them. So, as soon as the group reached the outskirts of the village, the disciples asked the Buddha, 'Bhante! Mahakala is a simple natured, open hearted and virtuous man. It is possible that his family members may force him to leave the robe and join the household. Chulakala had only two wives whereas Mahakala had eight.' The Enlightened One stopped at that place and addressed the bhikkhus, 'You are committing grave mistake by comparing Mahakala with Chulakala. The younger brother, even when he was staying in the vihara, always kept pondering about the worldly life. **He behaved as if he were like a weak tree, standing by the side of a river, which falls down with a little storm. On the other hand, Mahakala, after being ordained, considers the household life a hindrance. He is like a rock which is not affected by the storm.'**

At the house, Mahakala's wives also started pulling down his saffron robes. Mahakala immediately realised the seriousness and gravity of the danger around. Therefore, through his Arahant power, he raised himself above the ground and got out of the house through opening of the roof. He arrived at the outskirts of the village where the bhikkhus were discussing with the Buddha about him.



**Verse 9: Anikkasāvo kāsāvaṃ yo vatthaṃ paridahessati
Apeto dama saccena na so kāsāvam arahati.**

Verse 9: He, who without cleaning himself of mental impurities, without self-control and truthfulness, wears yellow robe is unworthy of wearing it.

Who is worthy of yellow robe?

Story of Devadatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, two Chief Disciples of the Buddha, Sariputta and Maha Moggallana took leave of the Buddha from Jetavana monastery and went to Rajagriha. The residents of Rajagriha offered them alms in groups of two, three or more, according to the custom of the time. One day, while participating in the anumodana (thanks-giving), Sariputta explained to them the **noble consequences of alms-giving: 1. If a man gives alms but does not encourage others to give alms, then in the future lives he receives the blessing of wealth himself but not the family wealth. 2. If he himself does not give alms but encourages others to give alms, then in future lives he does not receive the blessing of wealth himself but his family members do receive these blessings. 3. If a man neither himself gives the alms nor inspires his family members to give alms, such a person has miserable life in future. Neither he, nor his family members receive the blessings in the future. 4. On the other hand, if a man himself gives alms and also encourages his family members to give alms, then in future births, they all are blessed with fortune.**

On hearing the benefits of alms giving, one of the lay disciples thought, 'Innumerable are the benefits of Dana (charity). Why don't I invite the bhikkhus for the Dana ceremony?' Therefore, he arranged for the alms giving at his residence the next day; went round the town to raise funds so that there was no shortage of the offerings. One rich man donated a valuable piece of cloth saying, 'You may sell it, if there is shortage of funds. Otherwise, you may offer it to some deserving bhikkhu.'

The function went off well. There was no shortage of funds. Thereafter the householders discussed amongst themselves, 'Our function is over without any shortage of funds. Whom should we hand over this piece of cloth? Who deserves it the most?' 'Sariputta is the most deserving,' someone said. Others questioned, 'But Bhante Sariputta has been coming and going off and on. He has not been staying with us continuously. Devadatta, on the other hand, has been staying with us regularly. We should offer this cloth to him as he is a resident of Rajagriha.' Thus, considering their proximity to Devadatta, without going into the merit of the issue whether Devadatta deserved the robe or not, they made the offering to Devadatta.



**Verse 10: Yo ca vantakāsāv assa silesu susamāhito
Upeto dama saccena sa ve kāsāvam arahati.**

Verse 10: He who has purified himself of his mental impurities, is morally well-established, is self-disciplined and truthful; is worthy of wearing yellow robe.

Only the Pure deserve the yellow robe. Story of Devadatta

Devadatta immediately stitched the cloth into a robe and started wearing it. At that time a bhikkhu from Rajagriha came to Sravasti to pay homage to the Buddha and told him about Devadatta and the robe. The Buddha replied, 'This is not for the first time that Devadatta is wearing a robe he does not deserve.' He told the story of his past life.

Devadatta was an elephant-hunter in one of his previous births. At that time, there lived a large number of elephants in a certain forest. One day the hunter saw that the elephants knelt down to a Pachchekabuddha and then only moved forward. 'If I can get some saffron robe, I can easily kill them,' he thought. So, he stole the upper part of a yellow robe, covered his upper part of the body and hands with it and sat down on their usual route of movement. The elephants mistaking him for a Pachchekabuddha paid salute to the hunter and the last elephant easily became prey to his spear. Thus, he killed one elephant at a time every day. The number of the elephants started coming down.

Later on, the Bodhisattva (the Buddha to be) was born as an elephant in that group. He was the leader of the herd. He also followed the habit of saluting the hunter, as his forefathers had done. But one day, on seeing their number getting reduced, he consulted amongst themselves, 'It appears that our number is decreasing. No elephant would leave us without telling us. I am suspicious of the man sitting in the yellow robe in the forest.'

He decided to investigate the matter. So, he followed the herd at its end and was alert. When the hunter threw the spear, he was able to avoid the spear and saved himself. Now, he caught hold of the hunter and wanted to kill him. But when he thought of the saffron robe, he spared his life and told him, 'By wearing the saffron robe and killing the innocent elephants, you have committed a heinous act. It is totally unbecoming of a bhikkhu.' The Buddha further added, 'Devadatta was the hunter in that birth and I was the Bodhisattva, the leader of the elephants' herd.'



**Verse 11: Asāre sāramatino sāre cāsāradassino
Te sāraṃ nādhigacchanti micchā saṅkappagocarā.**

Verse 11: Those who take unreal as real and real as unreal— will never realise the real due to their wrong thinking (mis-conceptions).

Who gets the real? Story of Sariputta & Moggallana

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

There were two villages near Rajagriha by the name Upatissa and Kolita. The day a lady named Rupasari of Upatissa village conceived a child; the same day another lady named Moggalli of Kolita village also conceived a baby. It was a coincidence that both mothers conceived the baby the same day. These two families had been firmly knit together in a bond of friendship for the last seven generations. On the expiry of ten months' time, both mothers gave birth to sons. Rupasari's son was named Upatissa and Moggalli's son was named Kolita, after the names of the two respective villages.

One day, while watching the mountain-top festival, Girijasammaja fair, they thought, 'What is left in this fair? Everything will be over shortly. We should strive to get released from the bondage of this worldly fair.' So, they decided to look for a way for liberation. They approached Sanjaya, a wandering ascetic who lived there, but they were not satisfied with his teachings. Then they decided, 'We are not going to gain anything by staying with this acharya (teacher). Aryavarta is a big country. If we look around, we shall definitely get some real acharya.' So they separated with the resolution, 'Whosoever of us realises the truth first will inform the other.' But after much searching also they could not find true Dhamma. Hence, they returned back to Rajagriha.

One day, Upatissa happened to meet bhikkhu Aswajeet, one of the first five disciples of the Buddha, and thought, 'I have never seen a monk so calm and serene like him. Why should I not speak to him and find out about his acharya etc?' So, Upatissa approached Aswajeet and asked him about the doctrine he followed and who his teacher was. The monk uttered the verse, '**Ye dhamma hetuppabhava', meaning, 'All phenomena arise from causes. Those causes have been taught by the Tathagata. And their cessation too has been proclaimed by the Great Sramana. (Theory of Dependent Origination)**' On hearing this verse, Upatissa attained Srotappati state. Thereafter, as agreed, he went to his friend, Kolita and uttered the verse to him. On hearing the verse, Kolita also attained Srotappati state. Then both friends decided to meet the Buddha and seek his blessings. They both remembered their old teacher Sanjaya.



**Verse 12: Sāraṅ ca sārato ñatvā asāraṅ ca asārato
Te sāraṃ adhigacchanti sammā saṅkappagocārā.**

Verse 12: Those who take real as the real and unreal as the unreal— will realise the real due to correct thinking (right conceptions).

With right perception, reach the real

Story of Sariputta & Moggallana

They went to Sanjaya and requested him, 'We have found the one who can guide us to Deathlessness--The Buddha has appeared in this world. The Dhamma has been revealed to the people. The Sangha has been formed. Sir, Come, we will go to the Teacher.' But Sanjaya refused to go with them saying, 'So far, I have been a teacher of persons from the higher strata of the society. It is impossible for me to become a disciple now.' Both disciples tried their best to persuade their old teacher to come with them, but he refused to go with them, saying, 'In the world there are more fools than the wise. Let the wise people go to the wise monk Gautama and let the fools come to me.' Upatissa and Kolita, with many other followers of Sanjaya, went to see the Buddha at Veluvana. There, they were admitted in the Sangha as bhikkhus. Kolita, the son of Moggali became known as Moggallana and Upatissa, the son of Rupasari was given the name Sariputta. On the seventh day after ordination, Moggallana became Arahant. Sariputta achieved the same a fortnight after his ordination. **The two later became the two Chief Disciples of the Buddha and are known as 'the Left and the Right arms of the Buddha.'**

Sanjaya could not tolerate the loss of bhikkhu disciples and died instantaneously. The two disciples then told the Buddha about the meeting they had with their former teacher. They mentioned what Sanjaya had told them, 'I have been a teacher to so many pupils. For me to become a disciple of the Buddha is like a jar turning into a drinking cup. Besides, only a few are wise. The majority are ignorant. Wise can go to the Buddha and the ignorant can follow me.'

The Buddha pointed out that Sanjaya's false pride had prevented him from seeing the truth as it was. He added, **'Because of his wrong thinking, foolish Sanjaya had taken untruth as truth and truth as untruth. On the other hand, Sariputta and Moggallana were wise and they had realised the untruth as untruth and truth as truth.'**



**Verse 13: Yathā gāraṃ ducchannaṃ vuṭṭhi samati vijjhati
Evaṃ abhāvitaṃ cittaṃ rāgo samati vijjhati.**

Verse 13: Just as the rain water enters a house with damaged or leaking roof, lust (passion, raga) enters a mind that is not properly trained to protect itself.

Lust enters untrained mind Story of Nanda

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

After the Great Departure of Prince Siddhartha from the palace known as the Mahabhinishkramana (The Great Renunciation), King Suddhodana came to know about him only after six long years. He sent Kaludayi, who was the most trustworthy minister and Siddhartha's playmate in childhood, to invite the Buddha to visit Kapilvastu. In spring time, Kaludayi felt that it was the proper time for Shakyamuni (The Buddha) to undertake the journey to see his father. So, he described the beauty of the route from Rajagriha to Kapilvastu, how yellow mustard and other flowers spread all over along the way, like a beautiful carpet. Thereupon, Tathagata decided to go there along with a large number of bhikkhus.

On reaching Kapilvastu, he recited the Vassantara Jataka to his relatives. On the second day, he entered the city reciting '**Uttitthe Nappamajjeya: One should arise and should not be unmindful...**' On hearing this, his father attained Srotappati fruition. On arrival at the palace, the Tathagata recited another verse '**Dhammam care sucaritam: One should practise the Dhamma.**' This established the king in Sakkridangami fruition. When the meals had been served, he gave a discourse on Chandakinnari Jataka, with reference to the virtues of Rahula's mother, Princess Yashodhara.

On the third day, Nanda, cousin of the Buddha, was to be married. The Buddha went there for alms and after the alms ceremony, handed over his alms bowl to Prince Nanda. Thereafter, the Buddha left the palace with other bhikkhus without taking the bowl back. Nanda was forced to follow the Buddha as it would have been disrespectful to ask him to return the bowl. The bride, princess Janapadakalyani, on seeing Nanda going with the Tathagata, rushed out and reminded him to come back soon. On reaching the monastery, the Buddha asked Nanda, 'Will you like to be ordained?' Nanda could not say 'no' to him and was ordained.



**Verse 14: Yathā gāraṃ succhannaṃ vuṭṭhi na samati vijjhati
Evaṃ subhāvitaṃ cittaṃ rāgo na samativijjhati.**

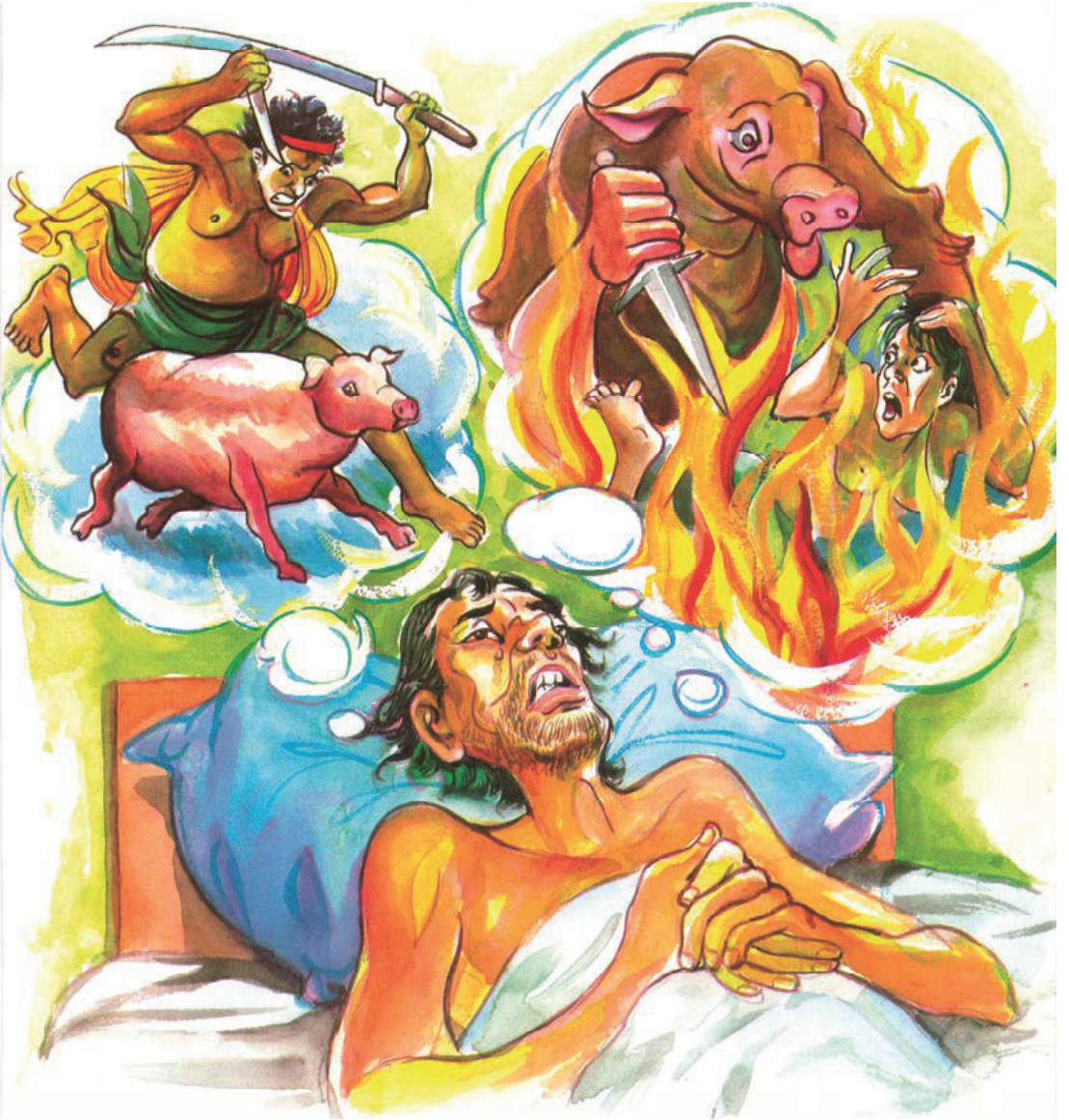
Verse 14: Just as rain water does not enter a house with a good roof, lust (passion, raga) does not enter a mind that is properly trained to protect itself.

Lust cannot enter a trained mind

Story of Nanda

Later on, the Buddha moved to the monastery built by Anathapindika at Jetavana Park, near Sravasti. Nanda also stayed there but he was not happy with the life of a recluse. The words of Princess Janapadakalyani kept on echoing in his ears. The Buddha understood the weakness of Nanda and through his supernatural power showed him the beautiful female Devas of Tavatimsa world. They were far prettier than Janapadakalyani. The Buddha told him, 'If you practise the Dhamma diligently, then I will get you one.' The monks ridiculed Nanda that he was practising Dhamma for a woman. Hearing this, Nanda felt ashamed and started living isolated in a secluded place in the monastery and soon attained Arahantship. Now, as an Arahant he had no attachment with any worldly things, including a woman. The Buddha was also released from his promise, made to Nanda. He had foreseen all this long ago and, therefore, taken Nanda in the Sangha.

Other bhikkhus, knowing that Nanda was not happy in the monastery when he came, asked him as to how he felt now. Nanda replied, 'I have no attachment left in me.' The disciples had a doubt about what he said. They thought that Nanda was boasting and speaking a lie. The Buddha said, 'Nanda is not speaking a lie. The nature and mind of Nanda was earlier like that of an ill-thatched hut. But now it is like a well thatched hut. From the day he saw the beautiful female devas of the Tavatimsa loka, he strove very hard to get released from the samsara---the cycle of birth and death. He has indeed won the ultimate goal of life. He has understood the Four Noble Truths and become an Arahant.'



**Verse 15: Idha socati pecca socati pāpakāri ubhayattha socati
So socati so vihaññati disvā kamma kiliṭṭham attano.**

Verse 15: In this world, he grieves. After death, he grieves. He, who does evil deeds, grieves in both the worlds. He grieves, suffers and perishes both bodily and mentally, seeing the evil and immoral nature of his deeds.

Evil doers suffer everywhere Story of butcher, Chunda

Place: Veluvana, Rajagriha

A butcher by the name Chunda used to live in a village, very close to Veluvana monastery. He was very cruel hearted and killed animals mercilessly. He tortured them first before killing. He was in the business of animal slaughter for the last fifty-five years and earned his living in this cruel way. In spite of the fact that he was earning so much of evil karma, he never repented what he did, nor did he perform a single act of charity all these years. No generosity was shown; no meritorious deed was performed in honour of the Buddha or anyone else. He was in great pain and agony before his death. He kept on moving and rolling about on his hands and knees like a pig for several days. Thus suffering both mentally and physically, he died on the seventh day and was reborn in a suffering state.

Some bhikkhus, while passing through his house on alms round, heard prolonged cries coming from the house for several days and concluded that he must be busy killing more pigs. They commented, 'He is a very cruel and evil-natured man. He has not done a single act of loving kindness. He is a totally selfish man, lacking compassion.'

On hearing these remarks, the Buddha commented, 'Bhikkhus! Chunda has been killing the pigs in the past but not doing so during the last seven days. Lately, his evil karma has overpowered him. It has made him suffer and behave in a very unnatural way --like a pig before his death. Today he is dead and reborn in a woeful state.' The Tathagata ended his talk by concluding, '**The evil deeds done by a person continue to haunt him. There is no escape from their consequences. Such a person suffers in this world as well as in the worlds to come.**'

Note: This does not mean that a man must always suffer due to his past deeds, without any hope for the future. If it were true, then there is no benefit in leading a holy life, nor there is a chance to redeem the wrongs--we have done in the past. There would be no liberation from the cycle of karma either. This is not true. The Law of Nature is very kind. It gives us chance to redeem our past wrongs. That is why it has been well said, 'There is no sinner, who does not have a future. Nor there is a saint, who did not have a past.'



**Verse 16: Idha modati pecca modati katapuñño ubhayattha modati
So modati so pamodati disvā kamma visuddhamattano.**

Verse 16: He rejoices in this world. He rejoices after death. He, who does virtuous deeds, rejoices in both the worlds. He rejoices; rejoices more and more, seeing the pure nature of his deeds.

Right doers are happy everywhere

Story of layman Dhammika

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived in Sravasti, a lay disciple by the name Dhammika, who was virtuous and fond of doing charities. He made offerings of food and other requisites regularly as well as on special occasions. He was in fact the leader of many lay disciples of the Buddha staying in Sravasti. He had seven sons and seven daughters who were also virtuous like their father. When he fell very sick and was on his death-bed, he requested the bhikkhus from the Sangha to recite the Mahasatipatthana Sutta by his bed side.

While the bhikkhus were reciting the sacred verses, he saw six celestial decorated chariots arriving from six celestial worlds to take him there. He did not want the recitation to be interrupted. So, in the middle of the recitation, he cried out to them, 'Wait! Wait!' The bhikkhus thought that they were being asked to stop the recitation. Therefore, they stopped the chanting and left the place for the vihara.

A little later, Dhammika told his children about the six decorated chariots waiting for him and that he had decided to take the chariot from the Tusita world. Thus, he left for the other world happily. But before that he advised his children to continue with the charity.

When the bhikkhus reached the monastery, they told the Buddha about the incidence and asked him where Dhammika was reborn. 'In the world of Tusita devas,' was the reply given by the Buddha. 'Bhante, Immediately before his death, he was living happily with his family here. Has he again gone to a place where he lives happily?' 'Yes bhikkhus! No doubt! **Those who are in awakened state of mind, whether they are laymen or bhikkhus, they rejoice in both the worlds—before and after the death, equally.**'



**Verse 17: Idha tappati pecca tappati pāpakāri ubhayattha tappati
Pāpaṃ me katan ti tappati bhiyyo tappati duggatiṃ gato.**

Verse 17: In this world he suffers. After death he suffers. He who does evil deeds suffers in both the worlds. He suffers to see his own evil deeds. He suffers still more, having gone to a miserable state.

Sinner grieves everywhere Story of Devadatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Devadatta, cousin of the Buddha, was jealous of him since his childhood. As a child, he had fought with him over a bird. Subsequently when the Buddha attained enlightenment, he also became a monk and joined the Sangha of the Buddha. But there also he was very jealous of him, as people showed great respect to the Buddha and made offerings to him. He was so envious of him that one day he suggested to the Buddha that he be made head of the Sangha. This was not desirable as there were other monks senior to him like Sariputta, Moggallana and Ananda. Devadatta also did not possess strong moral character and, therefore, the Buddha admonished him. The reason given by Devadatta was that the Buddha was growing old.

Devadatta felt aggrieved and vowed to take revenge from the Buddha. He made three attempts to kill him: Firstly, he hired some archers to kill him. But the hired killers, instead of killing him, became his disciples. On another occasion, Devadatta climbed up the Griddhakuta Hill and rolled down a big piece of rock to kill him. The big rock did not hit him. Only a splinter hit his toe and injured it. This was cured by Jivaka, his physician, a disciple. Devadatta finally charged a mad elephant, Nilagiri to attack the Buddha. The mad elephant rushed towards him but on reaching the Buddha, it calmed down. The animal sat down near his feet as a mark of respect for him. Having failed in these attempts, Devadatta hatched a conspiracy against him. He suggested some new Vinaya rules to be imposed on the bhikkhus but the Buddha did not want to make them compulsory for obvious reasons. When the Buddha did not accept his proposal, he walked away with a group of monks to Gayasisa hills. But very soon these monks realised the hollowness of his teachings and returned back to the Sangha of the Buddha.

Later on, as he was growing old, Devadatta fell sick for nearly nine months. He started repenting for the evil deeds done by him. The only person who could provide him solace and peace of mind was the Buddha. He repented, 'I have indeed harboured hatred towards the Buddha, but the Buddha never had any hatred towards me.' He started in his carriage to see the Buddha and to seek his pardon. He was staying in Jetavana monastery at that time. On the way, he alighted from his cart to take bath and proceed further. As soon as he alighted from the cart, he was swallowed by the earth and taken to Avichi hell.

Note: After paying for his evil deeds over a very long period of time, Devadatta became Pachchekabuddha due to his earlier noble deeds. In samsara, cycle of birth and death, neither hell nor heaven is permanent or everlasting. Nibbana is the only ultimate destiny.



**Verse 18: Idha nandati, pecca nandati katapuñño ubhayattha nandati
Puññaṃ me katan ti nandati bhiyyo nandati suggatiṃ gato.**

Verse 18: In this world he is happy and rejoices. After death he is happy and rejoices. He who does good deeds is happy and rejoices in both the worlds. He is happy and rejoices to see his own virtuous deeds. He rejoices still more, having gone to a happy state.

The virtuous will rejoice Story of Sumana Devi

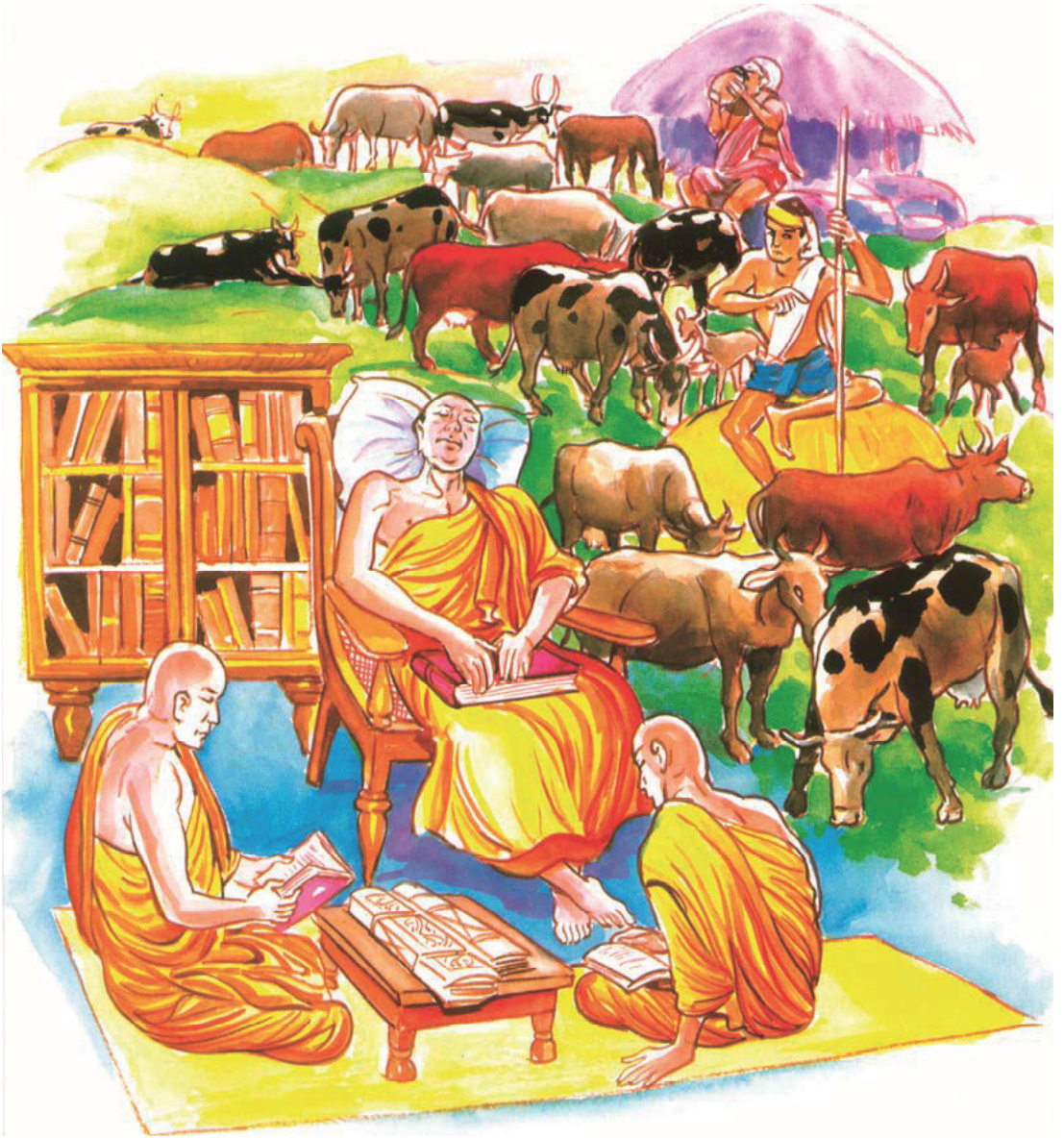
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Anatha Pindika and Visakha were well known devotees of the Buddha. Both are known for their generosity and are famous for alms-giving. The alms-giving at Anatha Pindika's house was first supervised by his eldest daughter, then by the second daughter. When these daughters got married and went away to their husbands' place, the responsibility of supervision fell on his youngest daughter, Sumana Devi.

One day Sumana fell seriously ill and was on her death bed. Her father came to see her. In the course of their conversation, she addressed her father as 'younger brother'. Subsequently, she passed away. Her father was in great pain at the loss of his daughter, more so because he felt that his daughter had lost her mental balance before her death as she addressed him as her 'younger brother'.

So, Anatha Pindika approached the Buddha and told him about the passing away of Sumana. He also mentioned how she had lost her balance of mind. The Buddha explained, 'Sumana Devi had not lost her balance of mind. In terms of spiritual advancement, she has gone ahead of you. You are only a Srotappan. You belong to the Order of Hearers. You are at the first stage. She is at the second stage, more advanced than you. She is Sakridagami, one who is required to take one more birth only. So, you should rejoice that your daughter is spiritually more advanced than you. There is no reason to grieve.' 'Where is she reborn, Bhante?' he asked. 'She is re-born in Tusita world, Anatha Pindika!' the Buddha replied.

'Sir, my daughter rejoiced while she was here. Now she is rejoicing when she is in the other world! How?' 'Yes, house-holder; **Because of her noble deeds, your daughter rejoiced here when she was alive. Because of the same noble deeds, she rejoices today in the heavenly world as well!**'



Verse 19: Bahum pi ce sahitaṃ bhāsamāno na takkaro hoti naro pamatto Gopo' va gāvo gaṇayaṃ paresaṃ na bhāgavā sāmaññaṣṣa hoti.

Verse 19: If one recites much of the sacred texts but does not act accordingly, then that heedless person is like a keeper of cows who counts the cows of another (does not get share in the milk products). He does not get share in the fruits of the Holy Life.

Practice is better than precept

Story of two bhikkhus

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Two friends from noble families joined the Sangha together. One of them concentrated on learning the 'Tripitaka'. After learning it, he became very proficient in reciting its verses. He expounded it well and became teacher of eighteen groups of bhikkhus. The other monk approached the Buddha and said, 'Sir! I have become a monk at an elderly age. I shall not be able to fulfil the duty of study but I shall fulfil the duty of meditation.' This bhikkhu strove diligently and attained Arahant hood.

One day, the two bhikkhus came to the monastery to pay homage to the Buddha. The two monks happened to meet each other and were face to face in the presence of the Buddha. Knowing that the other one was not an expert in Tripitaka, the learned bhikkhu wanted to show him in low stature in the eyes of the Buddha and other bhikkhus. The Buddha foresaw the evil intentions of the learned bhikkhu. He also did not want that the learned bhikkhu should create evil karma by speaking ill of the other bhikkhu. So, out of compassion, the Buddha intervened.

The Buddha started asking questions from the learned bhikkhu on meditational practices (jhanas and maggas), how to achieve higher progress through the path of meditation. He could not answer them because he had not practised what he had taught theoretically. Then the Buddha asked these questions to the other bhikkhu. He answered all the questions as he had practised the Dhamma ardently and had attained Arahant hood. The Buddha praised this monk profusely but he did not utter a single word of praise for the other bhikkhu.



**Verse 20: Appam pi ce sahitaṃ bhāsamāno, Dhammassa hoti anudhammacāri
Rāgañ ca dōsañ ca pahāya mohaṃ, Sammappajāno suvimutta citto
Anupādiyāno idha vā huraṃ vā, Sa bhāgavā sāmaññaṃssa hoti.**

Verse 20: If one recites even little of the sacred texts but acts according to the Rules of Dhamma, giving up lust, hatred and ignorance, truly knowing, with mind well freed, attached to nothing here or in the other world; he shares the fruits of the Holy Life.

Practice makes perfect

Story of two bhikkhus

The lay disciples could not understand why the Buddha was full of praise for the old bhikkhu and not for the learned bhikkhu. When asked, the Tathagata clarified that the learned bhikkhu was like a cowherd, who looks after the cows of others for the wages. The older bhikkhu, on the other hand, was like the owner of the cows.

One, who practises Sainthood and does not simply talk about it, is like the cowherd who gets the benefit of all the five products of the cow i.e. milk, curd, ghee (butter), butter milk and cream. He knows little of the Dhamma but practises it diligently after understanding its essence. He has eradicated craving, ill-will and ignorance. His mind has become free from mental impurities and attachments to this world as well as the next world. He truly reaps the benefits of Sainthood or Perfection. The scholar bhikkhu, on the other hand, was not the owner of the cows. He did not enjoy the five products of the cow i.e. milk, curd, ghee (butter), butter milk and cream. He only enjoyed the services rendered by his disciples to him but not the benefits of Sainthood.

A photograph of a forest path. Sunlight streams through the tall, thin trees, creating bright rays of light that illuminate the path. The path is covered in fallen red leaves, and the overall atmosphere is serene and peaceful.

DHAMMAPADA

Yamaka Vagga



DHAMMAPADA

Heedfulness

APPAMADA VAGGA



Chapter II

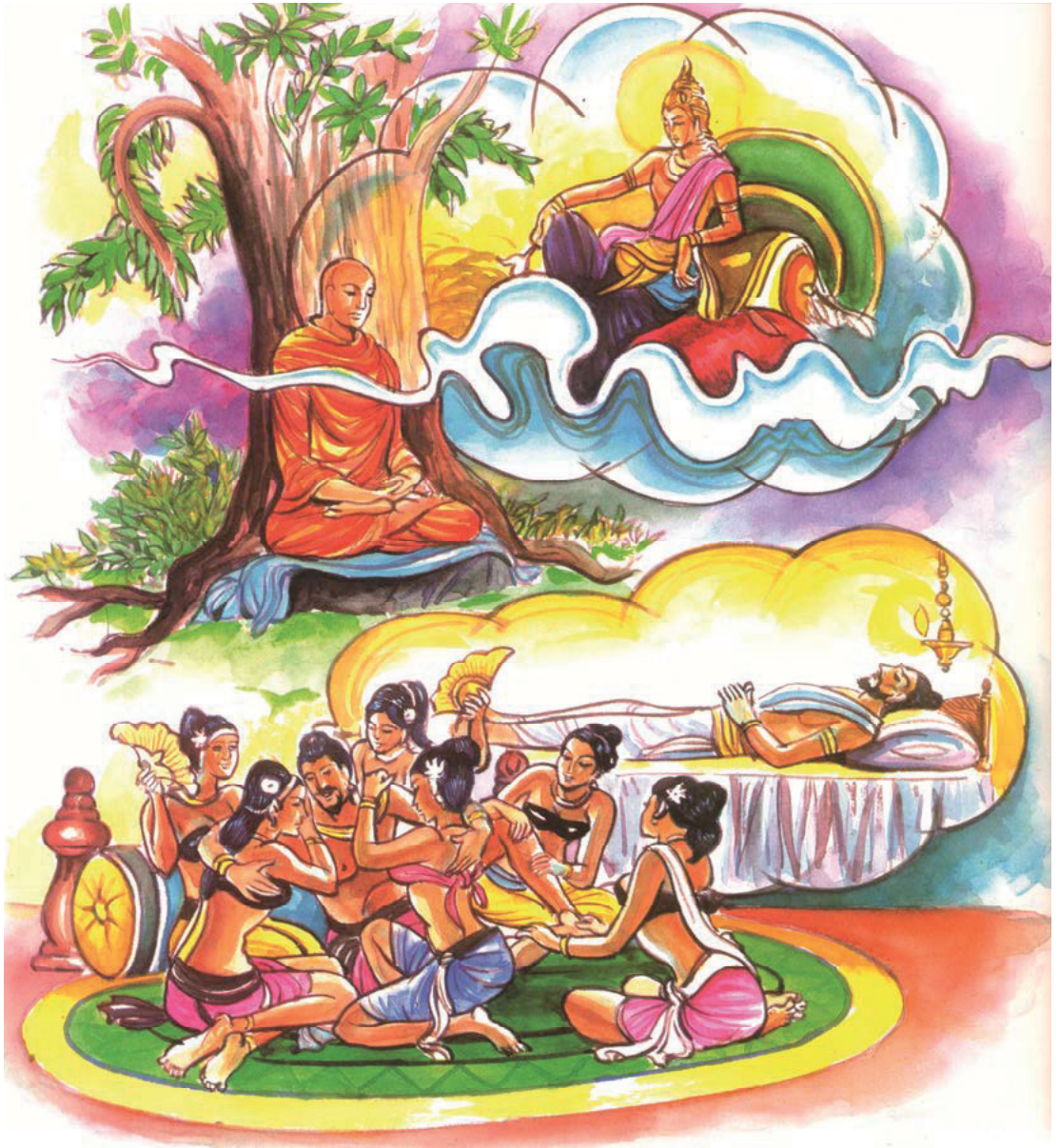
APPAMADA VAGGA

Heedfulness

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APPAMADA VAGGA

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**Verse 21: Appamādo amata padaṃ, pamādo maccuno padaṃ
Appamattā na miyanti, ye pamattā yathā matā.**

Verse 21: Heedfulness is the path to Nibbana. Heedlessness is the path to death. Those, who are heedful, do not die. The heedless are as good as the dead.

Always be absolutely alert Story of Samavatti

Place: Ghoshitaram, Kausambi

Once upon a time, in village Bhaddavati, near Kausambi, there used to live the city treasurer by name Bhaddavati Sresthi. He had a very close friend named Ghoshita. He was also city treasurer of another town, near Kausambi. Though they were very close friends, yet they had never met each other.

Once, there was severe plague in the village and Bhaddavati left his village for Kausambi with his wife and daughter, Sama. In Kausambi, Ghoshita ran a food-centre for the poor and the needy. Sama collected three, two and finally one plate of food from there on three consecutive days. Mitta, the in-charge of the food-centre, saw this and observed, 'Today only, on the third day, you have finally come to know about your appetite.' She replied, 'It is not so, my brother! Day before yesterday my parents were alive; yesterday only my mother was alive and today I alone am alive.' Mitta took pity on her. 'From this day, you are like my daughter.'

One day, Sama saw the stampede and confusion created by the crowd pushing each other to take food at the food-centre. In order to regulate the crowd, she got two gates made, one each for entry and exit. The crowd was now controlled properly and there was no stampede. The owner of the food-centre saw this and was greatly impressed with Sama. He came to know that she was the daughter of his old friend. He adopted her as his daughter. Since Sama had made a 'vatti' (a fence) at the food-centre, she was henceforth called, 'Samavatti.'

Samavatti was very beautiful. One day, the King, Udayan, saw her and developed liking for her. He proposed marriage with her. Thus she reached the palace as the Chief Queen. There, she had a maid named Khajjutara who brought flowers for her from florist Sumana. Sumana was a great devotee of the Buddha. One day, after hearing the Buddha's discourse at Sumana's house, Khajjutara attained Srotappana state. She started attending the Buddha's discourses regularly and repeated the same to Samavatti and other maids. They also started taking deep interest in the Dhamma.



**Verse 22: Etaṃ viśesato ñatvā appamādamhi paṇḍitā
Appamāde pamodanti ariyānaṃ gocare ratā.**

Verse 22: Clearly understanding this difference between heedfulness and heedlessness, wise people rejoice in heedfulness, delight in the teachings of the Buddhas and Arahants.

Always alert, accident avert

Story of Samavatti

At that time the king took fancy for another lady by name Magandiya. She was the daughter of a brahmin. She was very beautiful but very bitter for the Buddha because the Buddha had turned down her father's proposal of marriage with her. She decided to take revenge from Samavatti as Samavatti was a devotee of the Buddha.

Samavatti and her maids were very keen to hear the teachings of the Buddha. But they were scared to tell this to the king. So, they got some holes made in the walls of the palace so that they could get a glimpse of the Buddha through them when he went for the alms round. Magandiya complained to the king that Samavatti and her maids were not loyal to him. The king went deep in the matter and found no truth in the complaint and simply ignored it.

Having failed, Magandiya thought of a conspiracy. The king was to go to the palace of Samavatti after a few days to stay there for some time. Magandiya accompanied the king there saying that she had the premonition that some danger awaited him there. Knowing that the king would be carrying his flute with him, she put a snake inside it and covered the two ends with flowers. When the king was resting at the palace of Samavatti, she removed the flowers. The snake came out hissing and sat on the bed. Magandiya cried, 'Snake! Snake!' When the king saw the snake, he realized that Samavatti was trying to kill him. He was furious. He ordered Samavatti to stand in the courtyard and all the maids were lined up behind her. Then he dipped his arrow in poison and shot it from his bow. But Samavatti and her maids bore no ill-will towards the king and as they were filled with goodwill (metta), the arrow did not hit the target, although the king was an excellent archer. Seeing this obvious miracle, the king realised that Samavatti and her maids were innocent. He gave them permission to invite the Buddha and the bhikkhus to the palace for almsgiving and discourses.



**Verse 23: Te jhāyino sātatikā niccaṃ dalha parakkamā
Phusanti dhirā nibbāṇaṃ yogakkhemaṃ anuttaraṃ.**

Verse 23: Such wise people, forever dedicated to constant meditation, always strive for spiritual progress and go to Supreme Nirvana, which gives them unsurpassed peace in plenty.

Heedfulness leads to Nirvana Story of Samavatti

When Magandiya realised that none of her plots succeeded, she thought of a final faultless plan. She sent full instructions to her uncle, who was also her guardian, to get the palace of Samavatti burnt down along with her maids. Samavatti and her maids were spiritually advanced and they continued to meditate even when the palace was burning. Thus, some of them attained the second stage of Sainthood.

As soon as the king heard the news, he rushed to the palace to save them but it was too late. He suspected that it was done at the instigation of Magandiya but he did not want to show that he was suspicious. Instead, he said, 'While Samavatti was alive; I was always suspicious and alert that she might harm me. But now I am at peace. Who could do it? It must have been done by someone who loves me very dearly.' Hearing this, foolish Magandiya promptly admitted that it was done at her initiation. She had instructed her uncle to do this terrible deed. At this, the king pretended that he was very happy with her and wanted to reward her relatives. So, the relatives were invited to come and they came gladly. On arrival, all of them, including Magandiya, were arrested and put to death in the courtyard. Thus wicked Magandiya was punished to death for killing the innocent and holy queen along with her maids.

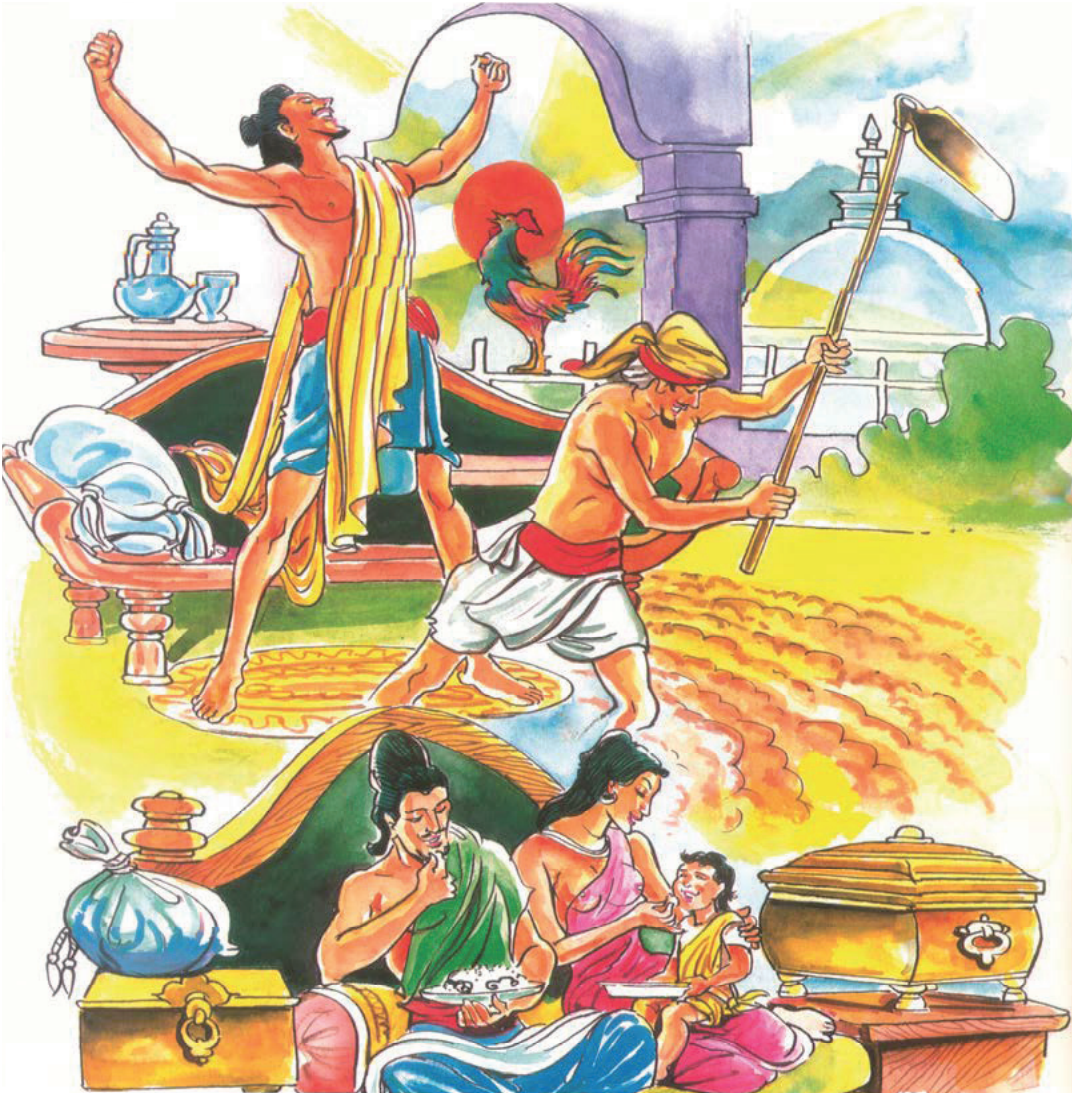
When the Buddha was told about these two incidents, he said, '**Those who are mindful never die. Those who are unmindful are dead, even while living.** The sacrifice of Samavatti and others did not go in vain. Some of them were Srotappan and others were Sakridagami. They all made further progress on the spiritual path.'

P.S.: What is Nibbana ?

***Metaphysically, Nibbana is the ending of all suffering.**

***Psychologically, Nibbana is the extinction of the ego.**

***Ethically, it is the eradication of lust, hatred and ignorance.**



**Verse 24: Uṭṭhānavato satimato sucikammaṣṣa nisamma kāriṇo
Saññatassa ca dhamma jivino appamattassa yaśo'bhivaḍḍhati.**

Verse 24: One who is energetic, mindful, does pure deeds, discriminating, self-controlled, has rightful living, vigilant; the fame of such a person increases steadily.

The mindful prospers

Story of Kumbha Ghosaka

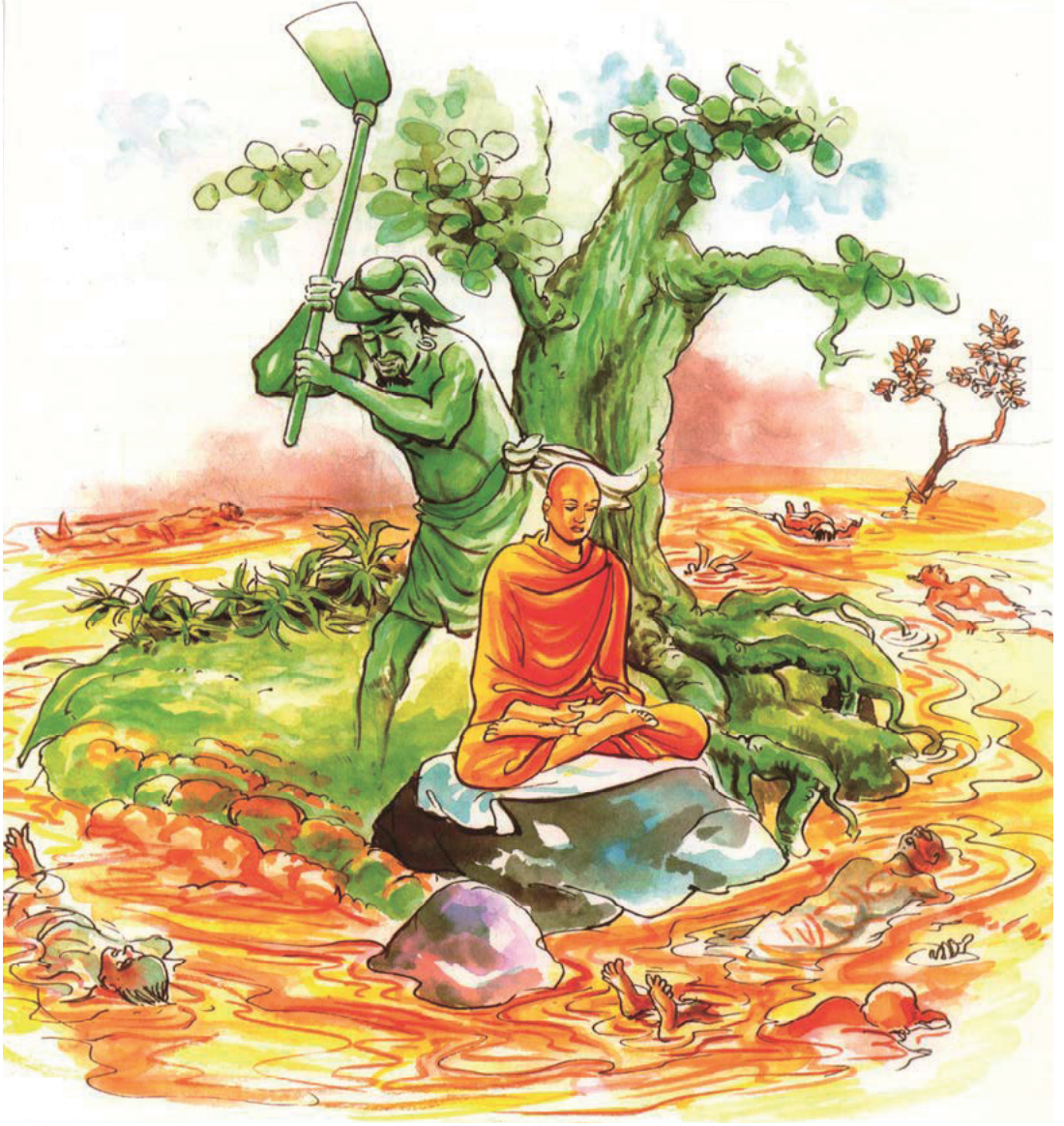
Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, a plague broke out in the city of Rajagriha. The city banker and his family members also suffered. When everyone was affected in the family, the parents told their son, Kumbha Ghosaka, to leave them alone and go away and return only when the plague had subsided. They also told him the place where they had buried some valuable treasure. The son did as he was told and stayed away from the city for twelve long years.

When he returned, nobody could recognise him. He went to the place where his parents had hidden the treasure and found it to be intact. But instead of taking it out, he thought, 'If I dig the treasure now and start using it, people will think that this poor man has acquired wealth through wrong means and may report the matter to the king. In that case the king may confiscate the property and put me in jail.' So, he decided not to dig the treasure for the time being. He took up the job of the town announcer and the drum beater. His job was to wake people up in the morning by making an announcement, 'Get up! Get up! It is time to go for cultivation. Fetch the carts, yoke the bullocks!'

The king, Bimbisara was conversant and knew the art of recognising the voice of people. One day, on listening to the announcement of Kumbha Ghosaka, the king said, 'This is the voice of a very rich man. Go and find out about him.' The messengers reported that it was the voice of a daily wager. But the king repeated his remarks on two subsequent occasions also and was adamant on his stand. So, the king's trusted maid requested the king's permission to investigate the matter personally. The attendant and her daughter, disguised as travellers, went and stayed in the house of Kumbha Ghosaka. They prolonged their stay on one pretext or the other. In the meanwhile, the king announced, 'Every citizen has to contribute to the coming festival, to be performed shortly.' Kumbha Ghosaka had no cash at that time. So, he had to dig some gold coins. The lady attendant substituted the gold coins with her own money and sent the coins to the king. Kumbha Ghosaka was summoned to the court. He went reluctantly to the king. At the palace, the king asked him to tell the truth. He also promised that he would not be harmed, if he were innocent. Kumbha Ghosaka, therefore, told the entire story truthfully. Subsequently, the whole treasure was dug out and brought to the palace. The king was very pleased at the diligence, righteousness and mindfulness of Kumbha Ghosaka. He appointed him as the city banker, the position his father had once held. He also gave him his daughter's hand in marriage.

When the Buddha visited Rajagriha the next time, the king took Kumbha Ghosaka to see him and explained how this young man, though profusely rich, worked as a daily-wager. He also told him how greatly he was impressed with him that he appointed him as his banker and got his daughter married to him. On hearing this, the **Buddha told these qualities of mindfulness, perseverance, righteousness etc. needed to prosper in life.**



**Verse 25: Uṭṭhānenappamādena saññāmena damena ca
Dipaṃ kayirātha medhāvi yaṃ ogho n'ābhikirati.**

Verse 25: Every wise man should, through sustained self-effort, training, heedfulness, earnestness, discipline and self-control, create an island around himself, which no flood of passions can submerge.

Make your own destiny Story of Chula Panthaka

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Maha Panthaka and Chula Panthaka were two grandsons of a banker. The elder one, Maha Panthaka used to accompany his grandfather to listen to the religious discourses of the Buddha. Later, Maha Panthaka joined the Holy Sangha and through his efforts, in due course of time, became an Arahant. Chula Panthaka also became a bhikkhu but was a dullard, because in one of his previous births he had made a fun of a dullard bhikkhu. He was unable to remember even one verse in four months. On seeing this, Maha Panthaka suggested to his younger brother that it would be better for him if he could return back to the life of a householder.

On one occasion, physician Jivaka invited the Buddha and his disciples to his house for almsfood. Maha Panthaka did not put the name of his younger brother in the list of the invitees. When Chula Panthaka found this, he was so depressed that he decided to return back to the worldly life. The Buddha came to know about his intention. Compassion personified as the Buddha is, he advised him to sit in the monastery in front of his room and gave him a piece of cloth asking him to simply keep on rubbing the cloth, while repeating 'Rajoharanam', meaning 'taking off impurity.' Giving this instruction, the Buddha left for the house of Jivaka along with other bhikkhus.

This time, Chula Panthaka took the instruction of the Teacher very seriously and went on rubbing the cloth diligently, chanting 'Rajoharanam.' Soon the cloth became soiled. Seeing the change in the cloth, his past good karma came up and he realised the impermanent nature of all things. The Buddha, sitting in the house of Jivaka, saw the progress of the bhikkhu. He sent forth light, appeared before him and told him, **'It is not only the piece of cloth which becomes dirty by dust. Within oneself also there exist the dust of passion (raga), the dust of ill-will (dosa), and the dust of ignorance (moha), i.e. the ignorance of the Four Noble Truths. Only by removing these, one can achieve one's goal and attain Sainthood.'** Chula Panthaka understood the message and continued with the meditation and soon attained Arahant hood.

At the house of Jivaka, the almsgiving ceremony was getting over when the Buddha asked, 'Is there any bhikkhu left in the monastery?' 'None', they replied. 'Chula Panthaka has been left there. Bring him from there.' When the messenger reached the monastery, he found that there were many bhikkhus, all identical! They were all created by Chula Panthaka by his supernormal power. The messenger was sent for the second time to announce the message, 'The Buddha has summoned the bhikkhu by the name of Chula Panthaka'. But when he read out the message, everyone responded, 'I am Chula Panthaka.' Again baffled, he returned the second time. This time he was told to get hold of the bhikkhu who was the first to respond as Chula Panthaka. This time, as soon as he got hold of that bhikkhu, others disappeared. Chula Panthaka accompanied the messenger to the house of Jivaka. After the meal, as directed by the Buddha, he delivered a brilliant religious discourse. The bhikkhus were astonished. They could not believe that a bhikkhu, who could not remember even a single verse in four months, could attain Arahant hood so quickly.

Note: It is not that Chula Panthaka attained Arahant hood in a short period. He had, in fact, prepared for it over a number of previous lives. The Buddha helped him remove the ignorance between him and the truth, like removing the cloud from the moon and allowing it to shine.



**Verse 26: Pamādamanuyuñjanti bālā dummedhino janā
Appamādam ca medhāvi dhanam setṭham va rakkhati.**

Verse 26: Fools and ignorant indulge themselves in heedlessness. Wise men, on the other hand, protect their heedfulness as the supreme treasure.

Heedfulness: Greatest treasure

Story of Childish behaviour festival

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

These two verses were narrated by the Buddha while residing at Jetavana Vihara in connection with Bala Nakkhatra festival, festival of fools.

Once, a popular festival known as the 'festival of fools' was celebrated in Sravasti for a period of seven days. During this period the entire city was under the control of the fools. A large number of young men would smear their bodies with cow dung and ashes, keep roaming in the city aimlessly, shouting and abusing each other in filthy language, thus creating nuisance for themselves and the public as well. While they roamed in the city, they stopped at the doors of the householders, spoke in uncivilised language till they were given half or quarter of a penny by them as per their capacity.

During this period of holidaying, these persons did not show any respect to their relatives, friends, elders or even monks, when they met them on the way. On the other hand, they looked for every opportunity to insult them. Only way to get rid of them or to keep them at bay was to pay them some money as soon as one came across them. Then they would take the money and move away to harass someone else.

At that time, a large number of the Buddha's lay disciples lived in Sravasti. They did not approve the behaviour of these fools but felt helpless when they saw these fools humiliating the monks. Knowing that they could do nothing against these rowdy young men, the lay disciples sent message to the Buddha and the bhikkhus requesting them to remain indoors for seven days. These noble disciples sent the cooked food to the monastery itself and everyone remained indoors for seven days.



**Verse 27: Mā pamādamanuyuñjetha mā kāmaratisanthavaṃ
Appamatto hi jhāyanto pappoti vipulaṃ sukham.**

Verse 27: Therefore, men should not indulge in heedlessness, nor be addicted to sensual pleasures. The man, who is awake and meditates with heedfulness, experiences immense bliss.

Meditate with heedfulness

Story of Childish behaviour festival

On the eighth day, after the festival was over, the Buddha and the Sangha were invited to the city, for almsfood. After the meals, during the religious discourse, the disciples narrated to the Buddha their horrible experience during the last seven days mentioning, 'Bhante! The last seven days have been really very miserable. Our ears almost burst listening to the abusive and coarse language of the fools. No respect was shown to anyone during this period. For this reason, we prayed to you and the other bhikkhus to remain indoors and not come out of the monastery during this period. We ourselves remained indoors all these seven days.'

The Buddha patiently heard what they said and replied, **'Unwise people, who are ignorant, behave as fools behaved, without dignity and nobility. Wise people, on the other hand, preserve mindfulness as we preserve our treasures. O lay disciples, do not be negligent, nor be addicted to the sensual pleasures. But at all times, practise mindfulness. Through mindfulness, one is able to gain happiness and realises Nirvana, the supreme bliss.'**

While the lay disciples heard the discourse from the Enlightened One, they were filled with joy and happiness. Many of them attained Srotappati fruition. In many, their shraddha (reverence) in the Triple Gem (The Buddha, The Dhamma and the Sangha) was enhanced.



**Verse 28: Pañadaṃ appamādena yadā nudati paṇḍito
Paññā pāsādamāruyha asoko sokiniṃ pajam
Pabbataṭṭho va bhummaṭṭhe dhiro bāle avekkhati.**

Verse 28: The wise person dispels heedlessness through mindfulness and climbs up the tower of wisdom. The Arahant looks on the suffering humanity, himself free from sorrows, like one standing on a mountain top looks on ignorant ones, standing on the ground.

Overcome heedlessness by heedfulness

Story of bhikkhu Maha Kassapa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke this gatha (verse) at the Jetavana monastery in respect of bhikkhu Maha Kassapa.

Once, bhikkhu Maha Kassapa, while residing at Pippali cave near Rajagriha, decided to use his supernatural power to view the past and the future lives of human beings. He had just returned to his cave from the alms round, taken his food and sat down for meditation. He was concentrating to find out who were mindful and who were negligent, who were likely to die in the near future and who were to be reborn. He extended his area of vision to water, below the earth and also to the mountains.

Tathagata (the Buddha), seated in the Jetavana monastery, looked at bhikkhu Maha Kassapa with his divine vision. He found that his son like disciple, Maha Kassapa, had been wasting his time pondering over trivial issues. So, he sent his glorious radiance to him, appeared before him and told him, **'My son Kassapa! The cycle of birth and death of human beings cannot be comprehended by the human mind. Living beings die and take birth in the womb of mother even without the parents knowing it. You cannot understand this mystery. It is beyond your range of perception. It is only the Enlightened Buddha who can go into the cycle of birth and death of the human beings, understand it and explain it.'**

Note: This story, like all other stories of the Dhammapada, has a message for us. We should not waste our time and energy in doing things which will not benefit us. The Buddha's advice to his disciples was to clearly understand the nature of existence and strive strenuously to get away from the dukkha (sorrows). All other efforts and pursuits are useless. Through the process of heedfulness, one can attain Arahant hood, ultimate aim in Sainthood.



**Verse 29: Appamatto pamattesu suttesu bahujāgaro
Abalassaṃ va sighthasso hitvā yāti sumedhaso**

Verse 29: Heedful amongst the heedless, watchful amongst the sleeping, the wise man advances ahead of the foolish one as a swift horse moves ahead, leaving a weak horse behind.

Mindful overtakes the unmindful Story of two monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, two bhikkhus obtained a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went to a monastery in the forest for a retreat. One of them indulged in pammada (heedlessness). He was negligent by nature and during the first watch of the night normally sat near the fire, warming and talking to the young bhikkhus. Thus he generally wasted away his time. The other, the heedful monk, performed all the duties of a monk faithfully. He walked in meditation in the first watch of night, rested in the second watch and again meditated in the last watch of the night. He was ever diligent, mindful, serious and sincere in his efforts. His sincerity showed result and very soon he attained Arahant hood. He also used to advise his friend, the other monk, 'Brother! Do not waste your time in a heedless manner. A heedless bhikkhu will not be able to get away from sorrows and sufferings. This double-dealing will not help us at all.' But the lazy monk did not pay any attention to his advice. The heedful monk realised that there was no point in admonishing him. He would not improve his ways. Therefore, he gave up persuading his friend to change his ways.

At the end of the vassa, they went to see the Buddha, paid regards to him and sat down in attendance. After exchange of pleasantries, the Tathagata asked them how fruitful their retreat was. The lazy bhikkhu told the Buddha, 'My friend has wasted away his time in just idling and sleeping.' Shakyamuni (the Buddha) knew everything. Therefore, he asked him, 'What about you?' 'Venerable! Generally, I sat down near the fire in the first watch and warmed myself but did not sleep at all.' The Buddha explained, 'Although you have been careless and heedless, yet you claim that you are alert and heedful. On the other hand, the other bhikkhu has been alert and heedful yet you project before me that he is lazy and negligent. You have mistaken heedlessness for heedfulness. You are like a weak and slow horse which is left behind by a strong and fast horse. Compared to you, my son is like a strong, fleet footed horse.'



**Verse 30: Appamādena Maghavā devānaṃ seṭṭhataṃ gato
Appamādaṃ pasaṃsanti pamādo garahito sadā.**

Verse 30: Heedfulness is always praised by the wise. Heedlessness is always blamed. Through heedfulness, Magha became the king of devas. He attained supreme position over them.

Heedfulness earned Indra's throne Story of Magha

Place: Kutagara monastery, Vaishali

One day, Mahali, a Lichchavi prince, came to listen to the Dhamma from the Buddha. That day, the Buddha spoke on Sakkapanha Sutta and in his discourse praised Sakka profusely. On hearing the minute details of the qualities of Sakka, Mahali thought, 'The Buddha, it appears, has met Sakka personally. Otherwise, he could not have described his qualities in so much detail.' To be sure, he put this question before the Buddha. To his query, the Buddha replied, 'Yes, Mahali! I know Sakka. Not only I know him, I also know how he became Sakka, the king of gods.' Then the Buddha told the story of Sakka in one of his previous births.

Sakka, the king of gods, in one of his previous births, was born by the name Magha, in a village by the name Machala. As young men, Magha and his thirty-two friends had taken up various social welfare projects like building of roads and rest houses etc. Magha had taken a pledge that all throughout his life he would observe seven vows:

- 1. He will attend to his parents.**
- 2. He will always show respect to elders.**
- 3. He will always speak gently to all.**
- 4. He will not indulge in back-biting.**
- 5. He will not be greedy. Rather he will be generous.**
- 6. He will speak the truth, and**
- 7. He will check himself against temper.**

It was because of these extraordinary qualities, living a pure life based on them, doing only the right deeds and observing right conduct that in the next birth, Magha became the king of devas.



**Verse 31: Appamādarato bhikkhu pamāde bhayadassi vā
Saññojanaṃ aṇuṃ thūlaṃ ḍahaṃ aggi va gacchati.**

Verse 31: A bhikkhu getting delight in heedfulness, seeing fear in heedlessness, moves forward like a fire burning all fetters on the way, both big and small.

The heedful advances

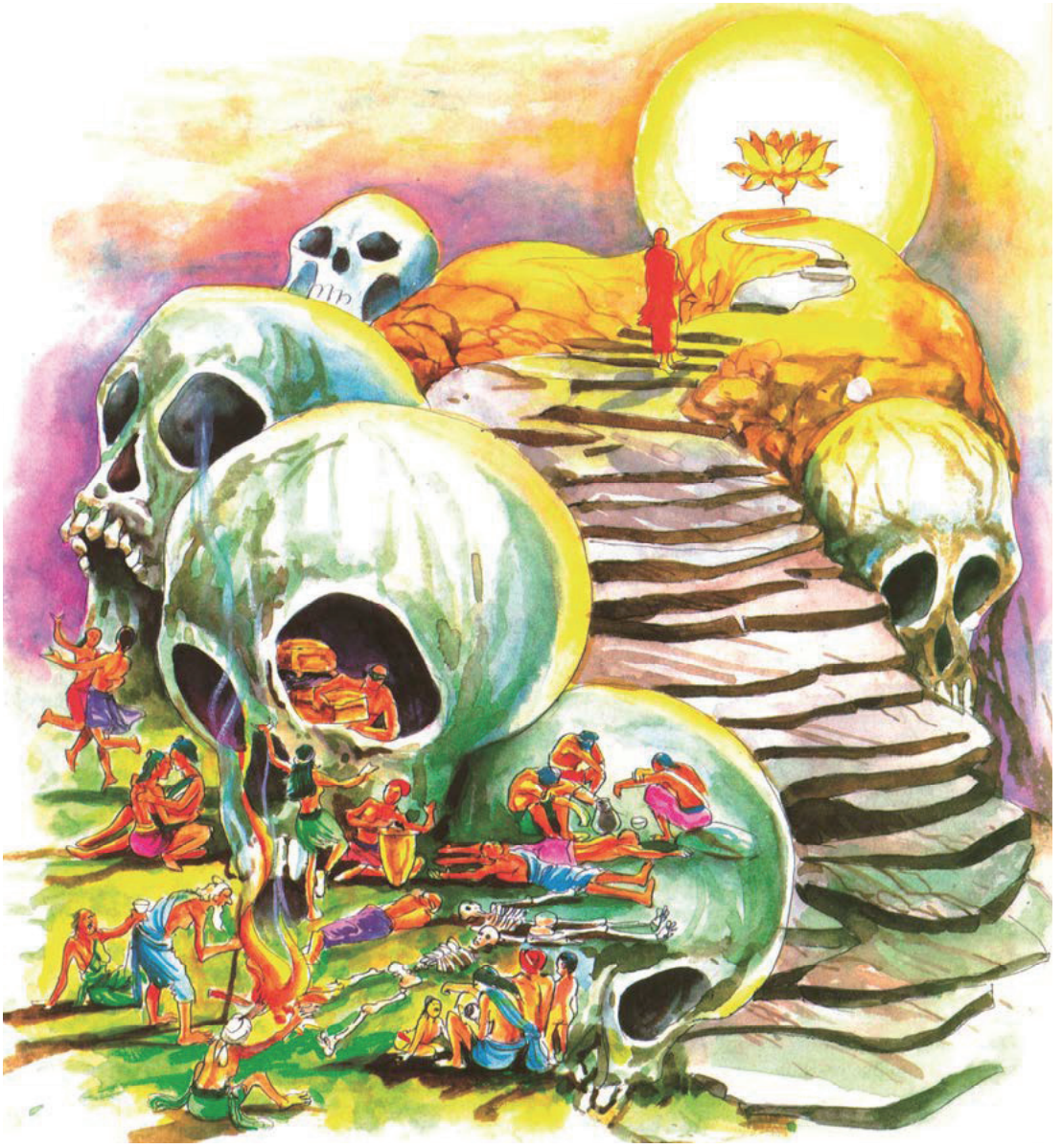
Story of a heedful monk

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A certain bhikkhu obtained a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went to the forest for meditation. He tried hard to contemplate on that subject of meditation but could not advance much. He became depressed and decided to meet the Buddha and get another subject of meditation from him. With this purpose in mind, he left the forest for the Jetavana monastery. On the way, he saw a great fire burning the forest. Interested in knowing what was happening, he climbed to the hill-top and started looking at the forest-fire. He found that the fire consumed everything that came its way. It suddenly flashed to him, **‘Just as the fire consumes everything that comes its way—both big and small; so the development of the mental insight can set afire all the fetters, both big and small.’**

Meanwhile, the Buddha, while sitting in his perfumed chamber, saw what was going on in the mind of the bhikkhu. He transmitted his radiance, appeared before him and spoke, ‘My son! You are proceeding in the right direction. Strive diligently in the same direction. Be like the fire that burns away all obstacles that come in its way, both big and small. A bhikkhu, who delights in heedfulness and looks at heedlessness with fear, burns away all the fetters that come in his way, both great and small.’

The bhikkhu kept meditating on the lesson given to him by the Buddha and soon attained Arahant hood.



**Verse 32: Appamādarato bhikkhu pamāde bhaya dassi vā
Abhabbo parihānāya nibbānasseva santike.**

Verse 32: A bhikkhu who delights in heedfulness and is afraid of heedlessness will never fall away. He is close to Nirvana.

Be heedful, you will never fall

Story of bhikkhu Nigamavasi Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Nigamavasi Tissa was a bhikkhu, born and brought up in a small town near Sravasti. On becoming a monk, he lived a very simple life. His needs were limited. For almsfood he would go to the nearest village where his relatives stayed and was content with whatsoever was given. As soon as his requirements were met, he returned back to the vihara and got back to his meditation practices. He kept himself away from big celebrations even when the bhikkhus were invited by Anatha Pindika and King Pasendi of Kosala for grand offerings.

Some of the bhikkhus complained to the Buddha, 'Bhikkhu Nigamavasi Tissa is attached to his relatives and his old village. He visits them only and not the others for almsfood. He shows disrespect to Anatha Pindika and King Pasendi also by not going to their celebrations.' The Buddha asked the bhikkhu to explain his conduct. The bhikkhu replied, 'Bhante! You know the whole truth. It is true that I often go to my village for almsfood but it is only for food offering and nothing else. The moment I receive sufficient food to meet my requirement, I return from there. I do not bother whether the food is tasty or not. I do not go to the big celebrations because my needs are very limited.'

On hearing this, the Tathagata praised the bhikkhu in the presence of monks and said, 'My son Tissa speaks the truth. All monks should lead a life like him. Their needs should be few and they should always live with a contented state of mind. This is my teaching and the teaching of the other Noble Ones in the past.'

On the request of the bhikkhus, the Buddha narrated the following story:

Long ago, a large number of parrots lived with their parrot-king in a fig grove by the side of the river Ganges. When the fruits of the trees were eaten away, the parrots left the trees and went away except for the parrot-king. The parrot-king was content living on whatever remained—whether leaf, shoot or bark. He ate whatever was left in the trees, drank water from the river and lived happily where he was. He was so virtuous that the kingdom of Sakka began to shake. Sakka wanted to test his virtuous nature. Therefore, through his supernatural power, he got the trees dried up. He and his wife took the form of geese and asked him why he was not leaving the tree. The parrot-king replied, 'I have a sense of gratitude towards this tree. So long as I get the minimum food from this tree to sustain my body, I shall not leave it.' Sakka was greatly impressed and revealed his identity. He took a little water from the river, sprinkled it over the dead fig tree and the tree became green once again. Then the Buddha explained that he was the parrot-king in that birth and Aniruddha was Sakka who came to test his loyalty.



DHAMMAPADA
APPAMADA VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

Mind

CHIT VAGGA

Chapter III

CHIT VAGGA

Mind

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CHIT VAGGA

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**Verse 33: Phandanaṃ capalaṃ cittaṃ durakkhaṃ dunnivārayaṃ
Ujūṃ karoti medhāvi usukāro va tejanaṃ**

Verse 33: A wise person controls, conquers and straightens the mind, which is shaky and fickle, hard to guard, hard to control, just like an arrow-maker straightens an arrow.

Straighten the fickle mind Story of bhikkhu Meghiya

Place: Chalika Parvat

On one occasion, Venerable Meghiya was returning from alms round. On the way he saw a pleasant and beautiful mango grove. He thought that it was the right place for meditation. He was so impressed and enchanted with its beauty that he immediately made up his mind to go there. Therefore, he requested the Buddha to permit him to go there for sadhana (meditation). Shakyamuni told him, 'Only liking a place and going there won't help. Besides, at the moment I am all alone in the vihara. You wait here for some time. You can go to that mango grove after some bhikkhu comes back to the vihara.' But Meghiya was so fascinated by the beauty of the place that he was restless to go there. He kept on insisting that he wanted to go there. Meghiya was so keen, determined and in a hurry to go that the Buddha allowed him to go as per his wish.



**Verse 34: Varijova thale khitto okamokata ubbhato
Pariphandati idaṃ cittaṃ Māra dheyyaṃ pahātave.**

Verse 34: The mind struggles to get out of the control of Mara, the Tempter, as a fish shakes that is drawn out from its watery-home and thrown upon the dry land. Therefore, one should control his passions.

Conquer the turbulent mind

Story of bhikkhu Meghiya

Thus Meghiya set out for the mango grove. On arrival, he sat down below a tree for meditation. But his mind was already disturbed due to the strong desire which was haunting him since morning to go to the grove. It could not be calmed down. Though he stayed there for the whole day, he could not concentrate and make any progress. He returned to the monastery in the evening and told the Buddha how disturbed he was by thoughts all throughout the day.

The Buddha admonished the bhikkhu by saying, 'Meghiya! You did wrong by going there. I had advised you to stay back here for sometime till some other bhikkhu came but in spite of my advice you went your way to the mango grove. A bhikkhu should not be given away to thoughts of attachment and desires. He should not be so fickle minded that he cannot control his thoughts. **One should always control one's mind wherever one is.**'

Meghiya kept on pondering over the teaching of the Buddha and very soon attained Srotapann state.



**Vrse 35: Dunnigghassa lahuno yattha kāma nipātino
Cittassa damatho sādhu cittaṃ dantaṃ sukhāvahaṃ.**

Verse 35: The mind is very hard to control. It moves very swiftly and lightly at will and lands on this or that, any place it likes. It is a noble achievement to tame the mind. A well guarded mind brings lots of happiness.

One act only: Control your mind Story of Matika Mata

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, a group of sixty bhikkhus, after obtaining a topic of meditation from the Buddha, went to village Matika for sadhana. There Matika Mata, mother of the village headman, offered them almsfood and also built a vihara for them. One day, she requested the bhikkhus to teach meditation to her. They taught her how to meditate on the thirty-two constituents of the body and also on the decay and dissolution of it. She practised it diligently and soon attained the third stage of Sainthood. Now with her Divine Power of Sight (Dibbyachakkshu), she saw that the bhikkhus had not attained any stage of Sainthood, although they had the potential to do so. The reason was that they were not getting proper nutritious food. Hence their body was not able to bear the strain. So, she started providing them nutritious food and very soon they all attained Arahantood.

At the end of the rainy season, the bhikkhus returned to Jetavana monastery where the Buddha was staying at that time. They told him about Matika Mata, how she had taken care of them and also that she could read the thoughts of others.

On hearing this, one bhikkhu decided to go to Matika village. So, he took a topic of meditation from the Buddha and left for the village. There he found that whatsoever he wanted was provided by Matika Mata. Whenever he wished to eat a particular food he would find that after sometime Matika Mata would bring it with her. After taking food, he would ask her if she could read the thoughts of others. She evaded such questions and instead replied, 'People who are capable of reading the thoughts of others behave in such and such way.' On hearing this, the bhikkhu thought, 'If I have some impure thoughts like worldly men, and if she can really read those thoughts, then she is sure to think ill of me.' He, therefore, became afraid of the lay disciple and decided to return to Jetavana monastery. On reaching there, he told the Buddha, 'Venerable! I cannot stay in Matika's village because I am afraid that she can read my impure thoughts.' The Buddha then advised him, '**Observe only one thing i.e. to control your mind. Go back to the village Matika. Do not think of anything else except the object of your meditation.**' The bhikkhu returned to the village and Matika Mata offered him nutritious food, as she had done to the other bhikkhus so that he might be able to concentrate on his meditation without any worry. Within a short time, he also purified his mind and attained Arahantood.



**Verse 36: Sududdassaṃ sunipuṇaṃ yattha kāmanipātinaṃ
Cittaṃ rakkhetha medhāvi cittaṃ guttaṃ sukhāvahaṃ.**

Verse 36: A wise man should guard his mind, difficult to control, very delicate and artful. It moves and lands on this or that, as it likes. A well guarded mind is the fountain of happiness.

Beware of your mind

Story of an unhappy bhikkhu

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once upon a time, in the city of Sravasti, there lived the son of a banker. One day, he asked the bhikkhu, who used to come to his house, 'Bhante! What should I do to get liberated from the cycle of birth and death?' 'Divide your property in three parts: One third for doing business, one third for the family and the remaining one third should be spent on charity,' instructed the bhikkhu. The young man did as he was told but did not get satisfactory results. So, he approached the bhikkhu again with the same question. 'Take refuge in the Triple Gems (The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha) and Panchashila (Five Precepts).' The banker's son did accordingly but was not happy with the results. 'What next?' 'Follow the ten precepts', was the reply given this time. As the banker's son kept performing one merit after the other, he came to be known as 'Anupubha.' He finally asked once again if anything else was to be done. The bhikkhu advised him to become a monk. The banker's son accordingly renounced the world and became a bhikkhu in the Sangha.

In the Sangha he had two teachers, one for Abhidhamma (Buddhist Psychology) and the other for Vinaya (Rules of Conduct). On learning these teachings, he felt that the rules of conduct for a bhikkhu were so strict that there was hardly any room to stretch even one's hand. He thought, 'I joined the Sangha with the purpose of getting released from the cycle of birth and death but there is no freedom here at all. I can release myself from suffering even when I live as a householder. It will be better for me to return to my previous life.' As a result of his discontentment, he became depressed and started neglecting his duties. He became lean and thin and weak. The Buddha came to know about it and asked him, 'Bhikkhu! Are you discontented?' 'Yes Bhante!' Then the Buddha advised, 'Bhikkhu! If you can do one thing then you will not be required to do anything else.' 'What is it, Sir?' 'Can you guard your thoughts?' 'I can try, honourable Bhante!' **'Then only guard your thoughts. If you can control your mind; there will be nothing else to be controlled. Therefore, simply control your mind, your thoughts.'**



**Verse 37: Duraṅgamaṃ ekacaraṃ asariraṃ guhāsayam
Ye cittaṃ saññamesanti mokkhanti māra bandhanā.**

Verse 37: The mind strays and goes far away, wanders about all alone, is without a body and lies hidden in the cave of the heart. Those who control such a mind are freed from the bonds of Mara.

Gain freedom: Control your mind Story of Sangha Rakkhita Bhagineyya

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived a senior bhikkhu by name Sangha Rakkhita in Sravasti. When his sister gave birth to a baby boy, she named him after her brother. The boy was known as Rakkhita Bhagineyya (Nephew of Sangha Rakkhita). In due course of time, he also became a bhikkhu. Now during one vassa period, this young bhikkhu stayed in a monastery away from the monastery where his uncle stayed. There he was offered two sets of robes. He decided to give one set to the uncle monk. At the end of the vassa period, he came back to the vihara, paid respects to his uncle monk and offered him one set of the robe. But the monk said, 'I have enough of them. I don't need one more.' He kept on insisting to present it to his uncle but the Elder didn't accept the robe as he did not need it. The bhikkhus are supposed to keep only three robes. As the Elder monk refused to accept the additional robe, the nephew bhikkhu felt disheartened. He thought that his uncle disliked him and did not care for his feelings. Therefore, he thought of leaving the vihara.

From that time onwards, his mind wandered here and there. He thought, 'After leaving the Sangha, I shall sell away this robe. From that money I shall buy a she-goat. That she-goat will give birth to many she-goats. I will sell them and get a lot of money. With that money, I shall marry and have a baby boy. One day, I shall take my wife and the son in a cart to the vihara to see the monk uncle. On the way I shall tell my wife, "Give the child to me." She, instead of giving the child, would ask me, "Do not bother about the boy. Instead, concentrate on driving the cart." But he won't agree. He would insist on taking the child and grab the baby from her. In the process, the child would fall on the ground and the cart-wheel would run over him. He would become so furious that he would beat his wife with a stick.'

While the young monk was thus day-dreaming, he was also fanning his uncle. Unmindful of what he was doing, he hit the head of his uncle with the fan. The Elder who could read his thoughts said, 'You were unable to beat your wife. Why have you beaten an old, innocent bhikkhu?' The young monk was greatly surprised and was also embarrassed at the words of his uncle. He became extremely frightened and wanted to leave the monastery then and there. But the elder monk managed to take him to the Buddha.

When the whole matter was reported to the Buddha, he spoke kindly to the bhikkhu, **'The mind has the ability to think of an object even though it may be far away. This would naturally cause much distraction. Therefore, one should strive hard for liberation from the bondages of the fickle mind --- passions, ill-will and ignorance.'**



**Verse 38: Anavaṭṭhita cittassa saddhammaṃ avijānato
Pariplava pasādassa paññā na paripūrati.**

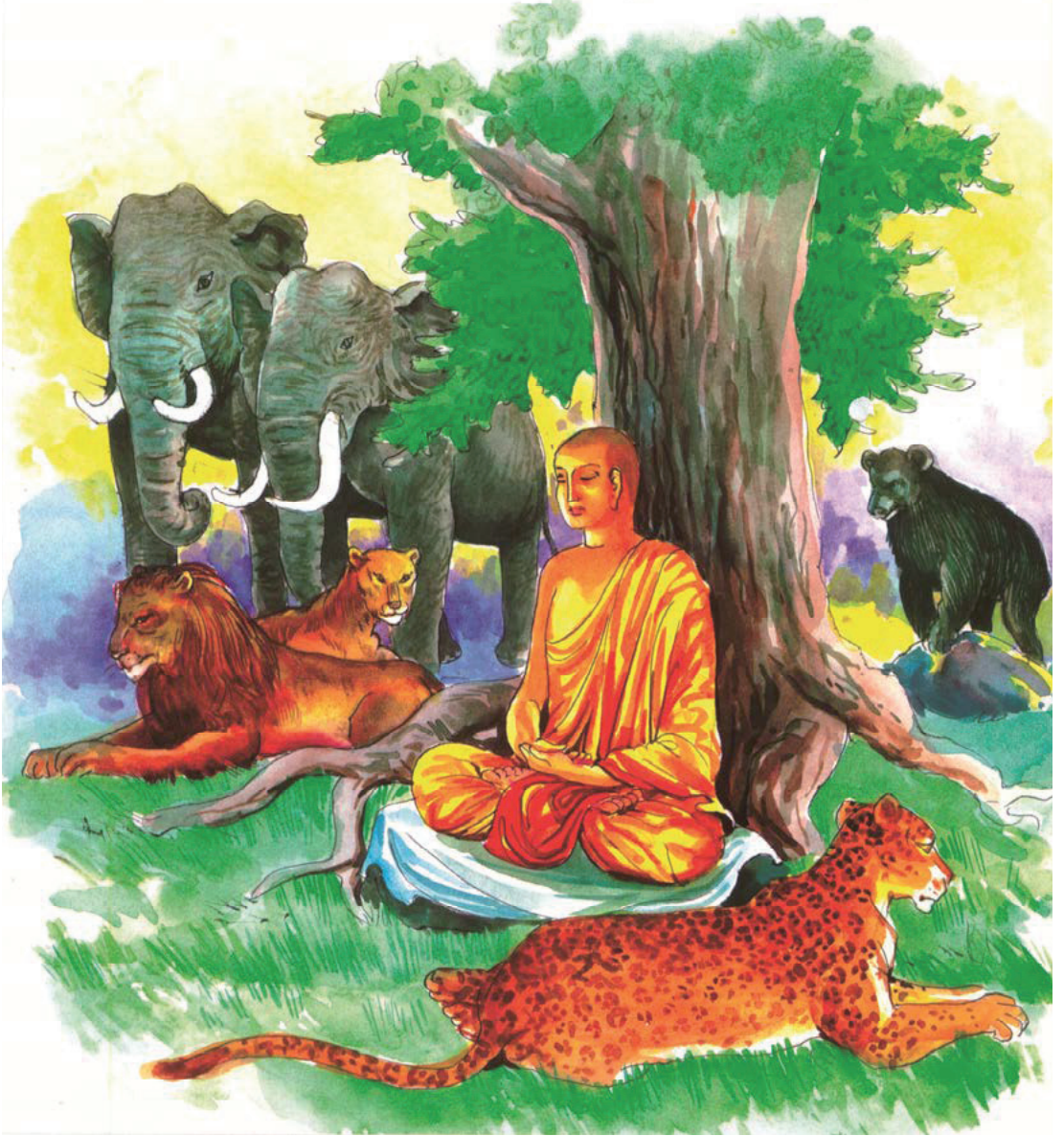
Verse 38: One, whose mind is not steady, one who does not understand the true Dhamma, one whose confidence wavers and mental peace is disturbed, the wisdom of such a person will not be total and perfect.

Whose wisdom is total? Story of Bhikkhu Chitta Hatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A farmer from Sravasti once lost his ox in the forest and went in search of it. In the process he felt very hungry and went to a nearby monastery where the monks gave him some food to eat. While he took the food, he thought, 'Why not I also become a monk? It is so easy to get food without doing any work.' The monks ordained him in the Sangha.

At the monastery, he performed the duties of a bhikkhu in a casual way. As there was plenty of food available without much of physical exertion, he soon gained weight. He became lazy and after some time, he got tired of even going around for almsfood. He returned to the life of a layman. After a few days, he realised that the life at home was very hard and he went back to the monastery and became a bhikkhu for the second time. But the second time again, he left the Sangha and returned to his family-life. He went back to the monastery for the third time and left it again. This coming and going went on for six times. Since he acted at the whims of his chitta (mind), he was known as 'Chitta Hatta'. While he was going back and forth from the monastery, his wife became pregnant. He was actually not ready for renunciation and had joined the Sangha only for the sake of convenience. As a result, he was unhappy, both as a bhikkhu as well as a layman.



**Verse 39: Anavassuta cittassa ananvāhata cetaso
Puñña papa pahinassa natthi jāgarato bhayaṃ.**

Verse 39: One whose mind is steady and remains unsoiled by lust, one whose thoughts are not confused, one who is not affected by hatred, one who is above both good and bad; for such a vigilant one, there is no fear.

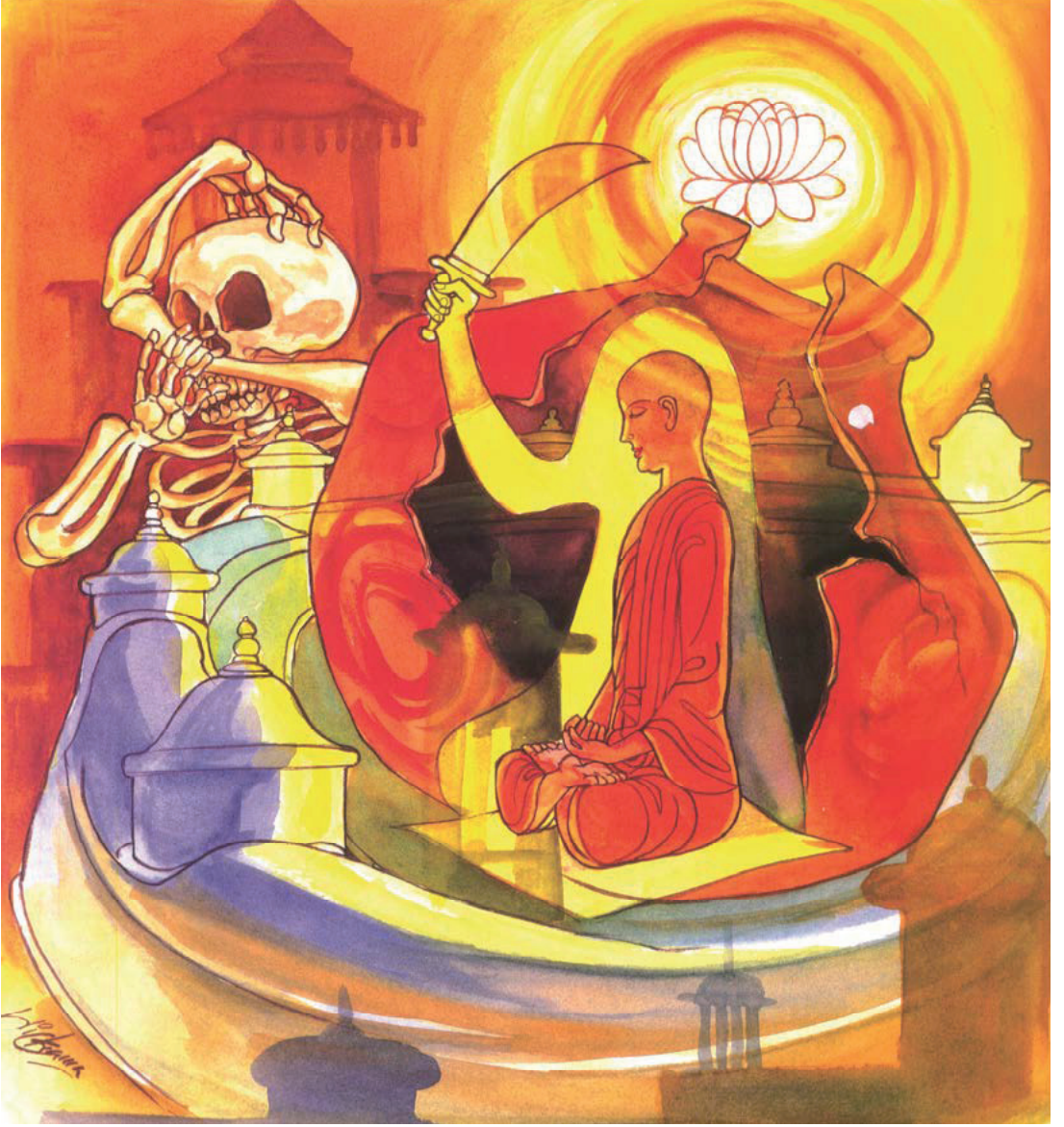
Awakened person has no fear

Story of Bhikkhu Chitta Hatta

One day, during his last stay at home, he had just returned from the fields and entered his bed-room. He saw his pregnant wife fast asleep like a fat pig, mouth wide open, snoring loudly and saliva flowing slowly down her mouth. Her undergarments had fallen to the ground and she was almost naked. She appeared like a swollen corpse and gave an ugly and repulsive look. Seeing her like a dead body, he was disgusted and, realised the transient nature of the body. He said, 'I have been a bhikkhu a number of times but have not been able to remain so, because of this woman.' Hence, taking the yellow robe with him, he left for the monastery for the seventh time. As he went along, he repeated, **'All that is there in this world is impermanent, unsatisfactory and involves suffering'** and reflected on its meaning. By the time he reached the monastery, he was already a Srotapann. He had acquired the first stage of Sainthood.

On reaching the monastery, he requested the bhikkhus to re-admit him in the Sangha. But they refused to do so this time, saying, 'We cannot admit you anymore. Your head is like a grinding stone.' 'Give me the last chance', he insisted. Since he kept on requesting, the bhikkhus took pity on him and readmitted him in the Sangha. Within a short time, he attained Arahantship. He did not go back home again.

The bhikkhus, not seeing him going home for a long time, were surprised and asked him, 'Why have you not gone home for a long time?' He replied, 'I used to go home when I still had attachment left in me. But now, that attachment is cut off.' The bhikkhus reported the matter to the Buddha, who said, 'Chitta Hatta's mind was not steadfast at that time and he did not understand the Dhamma. But now he is already an Arahant. He has discarded all his attachments.'



**Verse 40: Kumbhūpamaṃ kāyamimaṃ viditvā, nagarūpamaṃ cittamidaṃ ṭhapetvā
Yodetha māraṃ paññayudhena, jitañ ca rakkhe anivesano siyā.**

Verse 40: Considering this body as fragile as an earthen jar, keeping this mind as firm as a fortified city, one should fight Mara with the weapon of wisdom. One should continue to defend one's conquest without attachment and rest.

Defend your mind as a fort

Story of Bhikkhus, disturbed by spirits

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A group of bhikkhus from Sravasti, after obtaining a subject of meditation from the Buddha, travelled a far distance and came to a large forest grove, suitable for meditation. The guardian spirits of the trees thought, 'In case the bhikkhus are going to stay in the forest, then it won't be proper for us to live here on these trees with our families.' So, they descended from the trees thinking that the bhikkhus would stop there only for one night. But the bhikkhus were still staying there at the end of the fortnight. Then it occurred to them that the bhikkhus may be staying there till the end of the vassa season. They felt that if it was the case, then they and their families may have to stay on the ground for long. So, they decided to frighten the bhikkhus by making ghostly sounds and frightful visions. They showed up bodies without heads and heads without bodies. The bhikkhus were very upset and left the place. They returned to the Buddha and related everything to him. The Buddha advised them thus, 'This incidence happened with you because you went there unarmed. You should now go there, properly armed with weapons.' Saying so, the Tathagata taught them the entire Metta Sutta, sermon on loving kindness, as their suitable weapon.

The Buddha instructed them to enter the forest reciting the Metta Sutta, radiating loving-kindness, without exception, to all the living beings that inhabit the earth. They should not bear any ill-will or fear towards any being.

The bhikkhus returned to the forest, this time reciting the Metta Sutta. They behaved exactly the way they had been advised by the Buddha. The guardian spirits of the trees, on seeing the loving-kindness radiating towards them, welcomed them most heartily. They themselves stayed on the ground. There were no more ghostly sounds, no frightening scenes now. The monks meditated peacefully on the physical body and came to understand its fragile and temporary nature.



**Verse 41: Aciraṃ vat ayaṃ kāyo paṭhaviṃ adhisessati
Chuddho apeta viññāno niratthaṃ va kaliṅgaram.**

Verse 41: Before long alas! This body, deprived of consciousness, will have to lie on the earth discarded, devoid of sensation, like a useless rotten log of tree.

Don't identify with your body

Story of Bhikkhu Putigatta Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Tissa, after taking a subject of meditation from the Buddha started meditating diligently. At that time, he was suffering from a skin disease. Small boils appeared all over his body which turned into big sores. On maturity, when these boils burst, his robe became sticky, stinky and full of pus and blood. His whole body gave foul smell. Because of his stinking body, he was called Putigatta Tissa: the monk with stinking body. The Buddha saw the pitiable condition of the bhikkhu. His fellow bhikkhus had abandoned him because of his stinking body. He also saw that Tissa would soon attain Arahant hood. So, the Buddha decided to help him. He went to the fire-shed, close to the place where the bhikkhu was staying. There, he personally boiled some water and went to the place where the monk was lying. It was then only that the other monks gathered around him. As instructed by the Buddha, he was carried near the fire place where he was to be washed. While he was being bathed, his robes were washed and dried. After the bath, the monk became fresh in body and mind and developed one-pointedness of concentration. The Buddha stood near the monk and told him, 'Very soon, when the life will be gone, this body will be as useless as a log and shall be laid to the earth.' After the conclusion of the sermon, Tissa attained Arahant hood and soon passed away in Parinirvana. The Buddha then directed the bhikkhus to cremate the body and enshrine the relics in a stupa.

The bhikkhus asked the Buddha why Tissa had a stinking body. The Buddha explained, 'In one of his previous births, Tissa was a cruel fowler. After spreading the net and catching the birds, he used to break their legs and wing-bones so that they could not escape. For all this evil karma, Tissa was born with a stinking body.'

The Buddha also advised the bhikkhus to take care of each other by saying, 'Bhikkhus! You do not have your parents here who could help you. If you do not help and take care of each other, who will take care of you? Remember that if anyone attends to a sick person, he attends to me only.'



**Verse 42: Diso disaṃ yam taṃ kayirā veri vā pana verinaṃ
Micchā paṇihitaṃ cittaṃ pāpiyo naṃ tato kare.**

Verse 42: A wicked mind ill-directed towards illusory things, can do oneself far greater harm than an enemy can do to an enemy, or a hater to a hater.

A wicked mind: Greatest enemy Story of Nanda, the herdsman

Place: Kosala Janapada

Nanda was a herdsman who looked after the cows of a rich man. Although he was poor, he saved as much money as he could. Occasionally, he used to go to the house of his master. There he sometimes met the Buddha and heard his discourses. He also invited the Buddha to pay a visit to his house for almsfood. The Buddha accepted his invitation but he did not go to his house immediately. He told him that he would come to his house at the proper time.

After sometime, one day while moving with his bhikkhus, the Buddha made a detour to visit Nanda, knowing that the time was now ripe for him to receive his Teachings properly. Nanda received the Buddha and the monks with great reverence and served them food for a number of days. On the last day, after hearing the teachings of the Tathagata, he attained Srotappan stage of Sainthood. When Shakyamuni started his journey back to the monastery, he followed him, carrying the Buddha's bowl in his hand. After going some distance, he paid homage to the Master and turned back to go home.

At that moment, a hunter who had been an old enemy of Nanda shot him dead. The bhikkhus, who were following the Buddha, saw the dead body of Nanda. They told the Buddha about it saying, 'Respected Bhante! Nanda, who made great offerings to you and accompanied you while you came back to the monastery, was killed, when he turned to go home. Because he came to see you, he died.'

The Tathagata clarified, 'Bhikkhus! There was no escape for Nanda from death because of his past karma irrespective of the fact whether I came here or not. Therefore, you must reflect in your mind that a **"misdirected, misguided mind"** can do one, much more harm, than a bitter enemy or a thief can. A well directed mind is the only safeguard against danger.'



**Verse 43: Na taṃ mātā pitā kayirā aññe vā pi ca nātakā
Samsmā pañihitaṃ cittaṃ seyyaso naṃ tato kare.**

Verse 43: A well directed mind can indeed do one greater good than what the mother, father, or any other relative can do.

Develop a well directed mind Story of bhikkhu Soreyya

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, Soreyya, a young rich man, accompanied by his friend and some servants went out in his luxurious cart, to take a bath. At that time, Venerable Maha Kachchayana was adjusting his robes outside the city, before going for the alms round. Soreyya saw the beautiful complexion of the bhikkhu and thought, 'How I wish the bhikkhu were my wife or my wife had complexion like his.' Just as he wished it, his sex started changing. He turned into a lady. Soreyya (now a lady), felt very shocked and ashamed, slipped from the company of her friend and servants and left the city for Taxshila. On the way, she gave her golden ring to a cart-man who allowed her to travel in his carriage. Her friend and the servants could not trace him and took him to be dead.

On arrival at Taxshila, her companions told a rich young man there about a beautiful lady who had come with them. The young man married her. As a result of this marriage, two sons were born to her. One day, the son of a rich man, her friend from her old city came to Taxshila for business purposes. Soreyya recognised her friend and called for him. The man was surprised because he did not know her. He asked her if she knew him. She said that she knew him and also asked about the well being of her family and friends. The man next told her about the young man who had mysteriously disappeared. Then lady Soreyya while weeping revealed her identity and explained to him what had happened because of her wrongful thoughts and the later story. The man did not believe her initially but was later convinced with what she said. He advised her to seek pardon from bhikkhu Maha Kachchayana, who was in the city at that time. The monk was, accordingly, invited for almsfood for the next day. After the meal was over, lady Soreyya was brought before the monk and he was told that the lady was earlier a man. It was explained to him, how for wrongful thoughts towards a saint, the man changed into a female. Thereafter, Lady Soreyya reverently sought for pardon from Ven. Kachchayana. No sooner than the Venerable uttered the words, 'Soreyya! Get up! I forgive you', she again changed to her earlier male form. Thereupon, her husband told Soreyya, 'Since you are the mother of these two boys and I am their father, truly both of them are our sons. Please continue to live here.' Soreyya replied, 'Earlier I was father of two sons and then I became mother of these two sons. Having lived three different lives in one birth, I have no desire to live the life of a householder. I will now become a bhikkhu. Please take care of the sons. Don't neglect them.' Saying so, Soreyya kissed the two sons on their forehead, embraced them, handed them over to their father and left home. Soreyya also expressed his heartfelt gratitude to his friend who had helped him in seeking pardon from the Elder and finally to get out of the cycle of birth and death and suffering. Accordingly, Kachchayana admitted him as a bhikkhu. Soreyya strove diligently in meditational practices and was taken to the Buddha in due course of time. There, at the Jetavana monastery, the young monks used to ask him, 'You had two sons as a father and two sons as mother. Whom do you love more?' He would reply to them that those born of her womb were dearer to him. The question was repeated so many times that he felt ashamed and embarrassed. So, he started keeping himself away from their company and with great diligence meditated on the decay and dissolution of the body. Very soon he attained Arahanthood. When the same question was put next time, he replied, 'I have no attachment with anyone now.' The bhikkhus reported the matter to the Buddha who said, 'What he says is true. He has attained Arahanthood and is now free of attachment.'



DHAMMAPADA

CHIT VAGGA

Surya The Artist





DHAMMAPADA

Flowers

PUPPHA VAGGA



Chapter IV

PUPPHA VAGGA

Flowers

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PUPPHA VAGGA

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**Verse 44: Ko imaṃ paṭhaviṃ vijessati yamalokañ ca imaṃ sadevakaṃ?
Ko Dhamma padaṃ sudesitaṃ kusalo pupphamiva pacesati?**

Verse 44: Who will conquer this earth (self) as well as the world of the Lord of Death along with the world of gods? Who will pick the well-taught maxims of the Dhamma like an expert garland-maker picks up flowers?

Who will conquer the self? Story of bhikkhus visiting a village

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a number of bhikkhus accompanied the Buddha to a village near Jetavana monastery for almsfood. In the evening, the bhikkhus sat together and talked about the visit. They discussed how the land was—whether it was plain, levelled or hilly; was black, red or sandy; fertile for cultivation or not. While they talked so, the Tathagata happened to pass through them. He overheard their conversation, stopped and asked them about their topic of discussion. On knowing the topic of discussion, he exhorted them, ‘Bhikkhus! The earth and the land that you are talking about are external to your physical body. It will be better, if instead of concentrating your attention on the external world, you concentrate it on the internal world. It will be more advantageous to you, if you examine the constitution of your body and strive diligently to understand it.’

The Buddha asked the bhikkhus, ‘Who will examine the nature of life deeply like an expert garland maker first selects, then plucks and arranges flowers into garlands?’ He further added, ‘By understanding oneself, one can understand the whole world, even the heaven and the hell and can realise the Dhamma also. This is like a garland arranged by an expert garland-maker.’ The group of bhikkhus reflected mindfully on the advice given, purified themselves and attained Sainthood.



**Verse 45: Sekho paṭhavim vijessati yamalokañ ca imaṃ sadevakaṃ.
Sekho Dhamma padaṃ sudesitaṃ kusalo puppham iva pacesati.**

Verse 45: A disciple (sekha, one well trained on the spiritual path) will conquer this earth (self) as well as the world of the Lord of Death along with the world of gods. He will pick up the well-taught maxims of the Dhamma like an expert garland-maker picks up beautiful flowers.

Virtuous will conquer the self

Story of bhikkhus visiting a village

Out of the two gathas, 44 and 45, the first one is in the form of a question and the second one is in the form of answer to that question.

The Buddha asks, 'An expert in garlands making selects, then plucks and arranges the flowers in a beautiful manner as a garland. In the same way, who will examine the nature of the life deeply? Who will perceive the real nature of life in this world along with the kingdoms of the underworlds and the heavenly beings? Who will perceive the doctrine of the Dhamma, like an expert garland maker, carefully plucking and arranging the flowers?'

In the next verse 45, the Buddha himself gives the answers to these questions. He says, '**The Sekha, a noble learner, a disciple in higher learning and training, the seeker, the apprentice, the person who is disciplined, will perceive the Doctrine of the Dhamma like an expert garland maker who selects, then plucks and arranges the flowers to make a beautiful garland. It is the learner, the seeker, the student, who will understand the world of Yama, the kingdom of the heavenly beings and the existence of the earth.'**



**Verse 46: Phenupamaṃ kāyamimaṃ viditvā, marici dhammaṃ abhisambudhano
Chetvāna māraṣṣa papupphakāni, adassanaṃ maccu rājassa gacche.**

Verse 46: Knowing this body like foam, comprehending its illusive nature like a mirage, one should break the flower-arrows of Mara (sensual passions) into pieces and go beyond the kingdom of the King of Death.

This body is mortal

Story of a bhikkhu who saw body as mirage

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A certain bhikkhu took a topic of meditation from the Buddha and went to the forest to practise meditation. He tried hard to contemplate on that topic but could not progress much. So he thought, 'I shall return back to Jetavana monastery and request the Teacher to give me another subject for meditation, better suited to my temperament.' With this thought in mind, he left the forest for Jetavana Vihara.

On the way, he saw a mirage. Reflecting deeply, he realised that a mirage was only an illusion which gave the feeling of the presence of water, when in actuality there was no water at all. Our physical body is also an illusory object, subject to decay and death. It has no permanency. The life stretches only between the birth and the death. Fixing his mind on the mirage, he kept on pondering and practising meditation deeply.

Moving further, he sat down by the side of river Aciravati to take some rest. While he was sitting below a tree looking at the flow of water in the river, he saw the formation of bubbles in water, their breaking and disappearance. On seeing them, he further realised the impermanent nature of the body.

Meanwhile the Buddha, sitting in his perfumed chamber, was aware of what was going on in the mind of the bhikkhu. He transmitted his radiance, appeared before him and spoke, 'My son! Your thinking is in the right direction. Continue with your meditation on the same line. It is good that you have realised that this body is illusory like a mirage and that it has temporary existence like a bubble.'

The bhikkhu kept on contemplating on the topic of meditation and attained Arahant hood.



**Verse 47: Pupphāni heva pacinantaṃ byāsatta manasaṃ naraṃ
Suttaṃ gāmaṃ mahoghova maccu ādāya gacchati.**

Verse 47: The man, who gathers only flowers, whose mind is distracted away to sensual pleasures; is carried away by death, just as a great flood carries away a sleeping village.

Death: taker of sensual people Story of Viduddabha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

King Pasendi of Kosala wanted to come closer to the Tathagata. He felt that improving his relationship with the Sakyas will help him in achieving his objective. He, therefore, thought of having matrimonial alliance with the Sakyas. Accordingly, he sent some messengers to Kapilvastu requesting for the hands of one of the Sakyan princesses. The Sakyans did not want to offend him and replied that the proposal was acceptable to them. But instead of sending a Sakyan princess, they sent a beautiful girl, Vasabha Khattiya, born of king Mahanama and a slave woman. King Pasendi made her as one of his chief queens. She gave birth to a son who was named as Viduddabha. When the prince reached sixteen, he expressed his desire to visit his maternal-grandfather's house. But he was received there with half-hearted hospitality. All the Sakyan princes, younger to him in age, were sent away to a nearby village so that they were not required to be in attendance to pay respects to Viduddabha. After staying in Kapilvastu for some time, Viduddabha and his soldiers left for home.

One soldier, who had left his sword behind by mistake, came back to collect it. There, he found a maid washing the place with milk where Viduddabha last sat. As she did so, she remarked, 'This is the place where the son of that slave-woman sat.' That soldier asked a few questions and came to know the truth. He reported to Viduddabha that his mother was the daughter of a slave-girl. When Viduddabha was told about this, he became so furious that he took a vow to wipe out the clan of the Sakyans.

True to his word, when he became the king, he marched to the kingdom of the Sakyans and killed them all except a few who were with Mahanama and some others. On their journey back home, Viduddabha and his army halted on the sandbanks of river Aciravati. As there was heavy rain in the upper parts of the country that night, the river swelled and rushed down with great force. It carried away Viduddabha and his army to the ocean.

On hearing about these two tragedies, the Buddha explained, 'In one of their previous existences, my relatives had put poison in a river that killed all the fishes. As a result of this evil karma, the Sakyan princes had to die en masse.'

Referring to the incidence of Viduddabha and his army, the Buddha said, **'As a great flood carries away all the villagers sleeping in the night, so also death carries away everyone who is hankering after worldly things!'**



**Verse 48: Pupphāni heva pacinantam byāsatta manasam naram
Atittam yeva kāmesu antako kurute vasam.**

Verse 48: The man who gathers only flowers of sensual pleasures, whose mind is distracted away, whose thirst of desires is not yet quenched, is overpowered by death.

Have no sensual attachment Story of Pati Pujika Kumari

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Pati Pujika Kumari was a lady from Sravasti. She was married at the age of sixteen and had four sons. She was virtuous and generous and made offerings of food and other requisites to the holy people. She regularly visited the monastery, swept the premises, filled up the pots and jars with water and attended to other needs of the bhikkhus. Pati Pujika also had the insight by which she remembered that in one of her previous existences, she was the wife of Malabhari in the deva loka of Tavatimsa. She also remembered that in the Tavatimsa loka, she had come to the garden along with her companions to pluck flowers, when she passed away from there and was reborn in Sravasti. So, every time she made some offering to a bhikkhu or did some meritorious deed, she aspired that she may be reborn in the Tavatimsa heaven as the wife of Malabhari. As she was greatly devoted to her previous husband, she was called Pati Pujika Kumari.

One day, Pati Pujika fell sick and passed away. As she had been ardently wishing, she was reborn in the Tavatimsa heaven again as a wife of Malabhari. As one hundred years on this earth is equivalent to just one day in the Tavatimsa world, Malabhari and other devas were still moving around in the garden enjoying the beauty there and Pati Pujika had been hardly missed by them. So, when she rejoined them, Malabhari asked her where she had been the whole morning. She then told her story after passing away from the Tavatimsa loka, 'I was conceived by my parents in Sravasti and remained in the womb of my mother for nine months. After my birth, when I was grown up, I was married to a man from Sravasti and gave birth to four sons. After passing away from there, I am reborn here.' 'How long is the life of human beings on the earth?' asked Malabhari. 'Maximum hundred years', was her reply. 'How long is it in the heaven in comparison to the life on the earth?' The wife replied, 'The life on the earth is almost equal to one day's period in the Tavatimsa loka.' 'Is it so?' the husband asked with great shock and surprise. 'How sad it is that human beings live for such a short period on the earth and yet they behave as if they are going to live permanently on it. I do not know when the people of the earth will realise this and start living a life of heedfulness and virtues.'

The monks came to know about the death of Pati Pujika and reported this to the Buddha. He said, **'The life of human beings on this earth is very short. Before men are satiated of the worldly desires and passions, they are overpowered by the death.'**



**Verse 49: Yathā' pi bhamaro pupphaṃ vaṇṇa gandhaṃ aheṭhayaṃ
Paleti rasamādāya evaṃ gāme muni care.**

Verse 49: Just as a bee without harming the flower, its colour or scent, flies away, sucking only the honey, so should a saint visit a village, without affecting the faith, generosity or wealth of the villagers.

Saints are like bees

Story of Kosiya

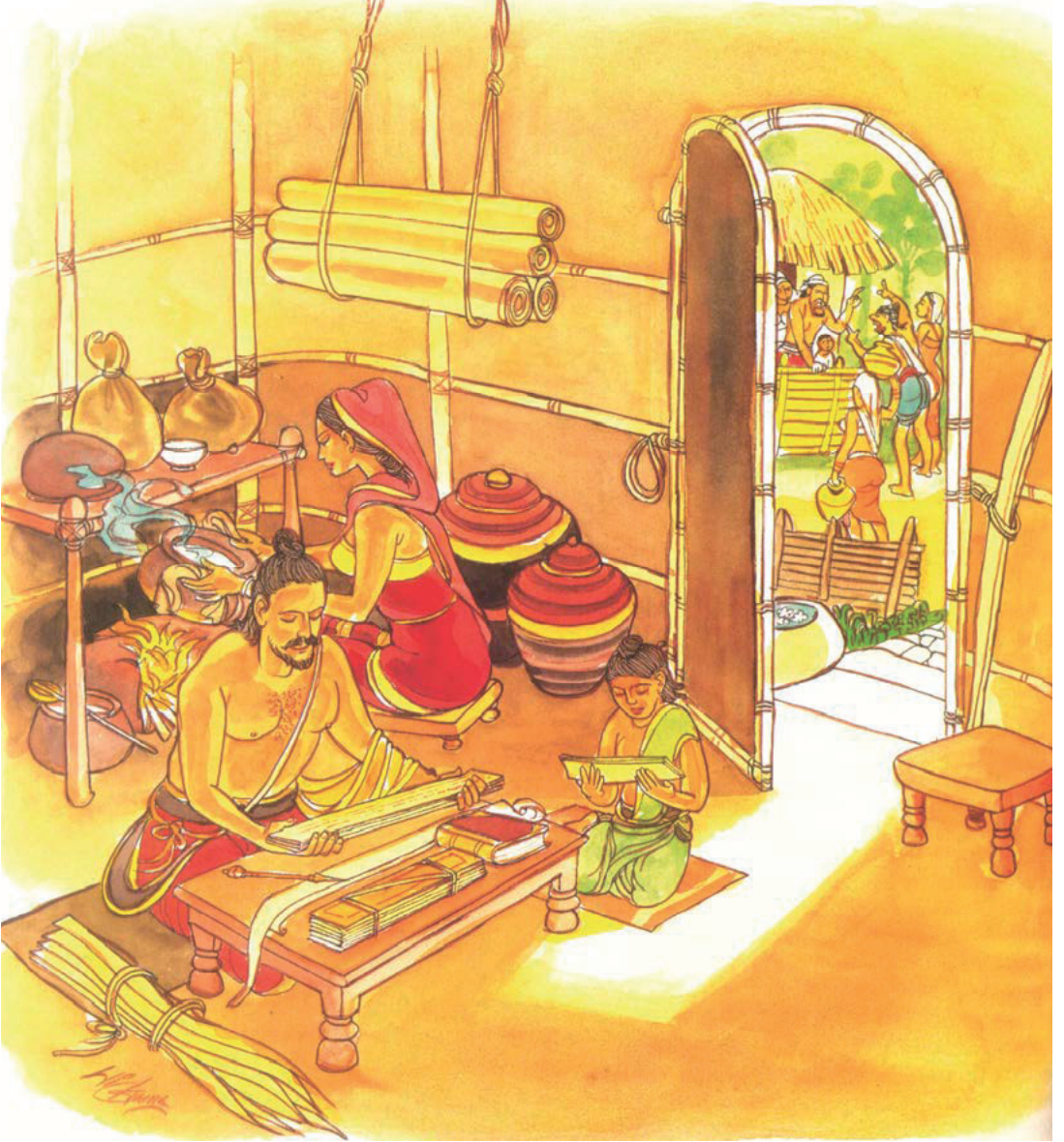
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

In the village of Sakkara, near Rajagriha, there lived a rich man named Kosiya. He was a great miser. One day, he and his wife decided to make some pancakes. But they did not want to share it with others. So, they went to the top floor of the house to cook it secretly.

Early in the morning that day, the Buddha, in his vision, saw that the man and his wife were due to attain the first stage of Sainthood. So, he sent his Chief Disciple, Moggallana to the house of Kosiya to bring them to the monastery before the meal-time. Moggallana, by his supernormal power, immediately reached Kosiya's house and stood at the window. Kosiya saw him and asked him to leave. But Moggallana ignored what he said. He kept on standing there. At last, Kosiya told his wife, 'Make a very small pancake and give it to him.' So, she put a small quantity of dough in the pan but the dough filled up the entire pan. Kosiya thought that his wife must have put large quantity of dough. So, he himself put a pinch of it in the pan and it again swelled, as before. It so happened that however little dough they put in the pan, it always swelled and filled the whole pan. At last, Kosiya asked his wife to give one small piece from the basket. When she tried to take one pancake from the basket, the whole lot of pancakes came out. They all had stuck together and could not be separated from each other. By this time, Kosiya had lost all appetite for the pancakes and offered the whole basket to bhikkhu Moggallana.

Knowing that they were in a proper frame of mind to receive the teachings, Venerable Moggallana gave them a discourse on charity. He also told them that the Buddha, along with his disciples, was waiting for them at the Jetavana monastery. He took them with the basket of pancakes and appeared before the Buddha. There, they offered cakes to the Buddha and other disciples. After the meals, the Buddha delivered a discourse on charity and both Kosiya and his wife attained Srotappana state of Sainthood.

In the evening Dhamma congregation, the bhikkhus discussed about the rare qualities of Venerable Moggallana. The Buddha overheard them and added, 'Yes, Monks! Bhikkhus should be like my son, Moggallana. You should also receive alms from the villagers without affecting their faith, generosity or wealth.'



**Verse 50: Na paresaṃ vilomāni na paresaṃ katākataṃ
Attanova avekkheyya katāni akatāni ca.**

Verse 50: One should not find faults of others, nor look into what has been done or not done by others. One should look into only what one has done or not done.

Look at your own faults Story of Ascetic Paveyya

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

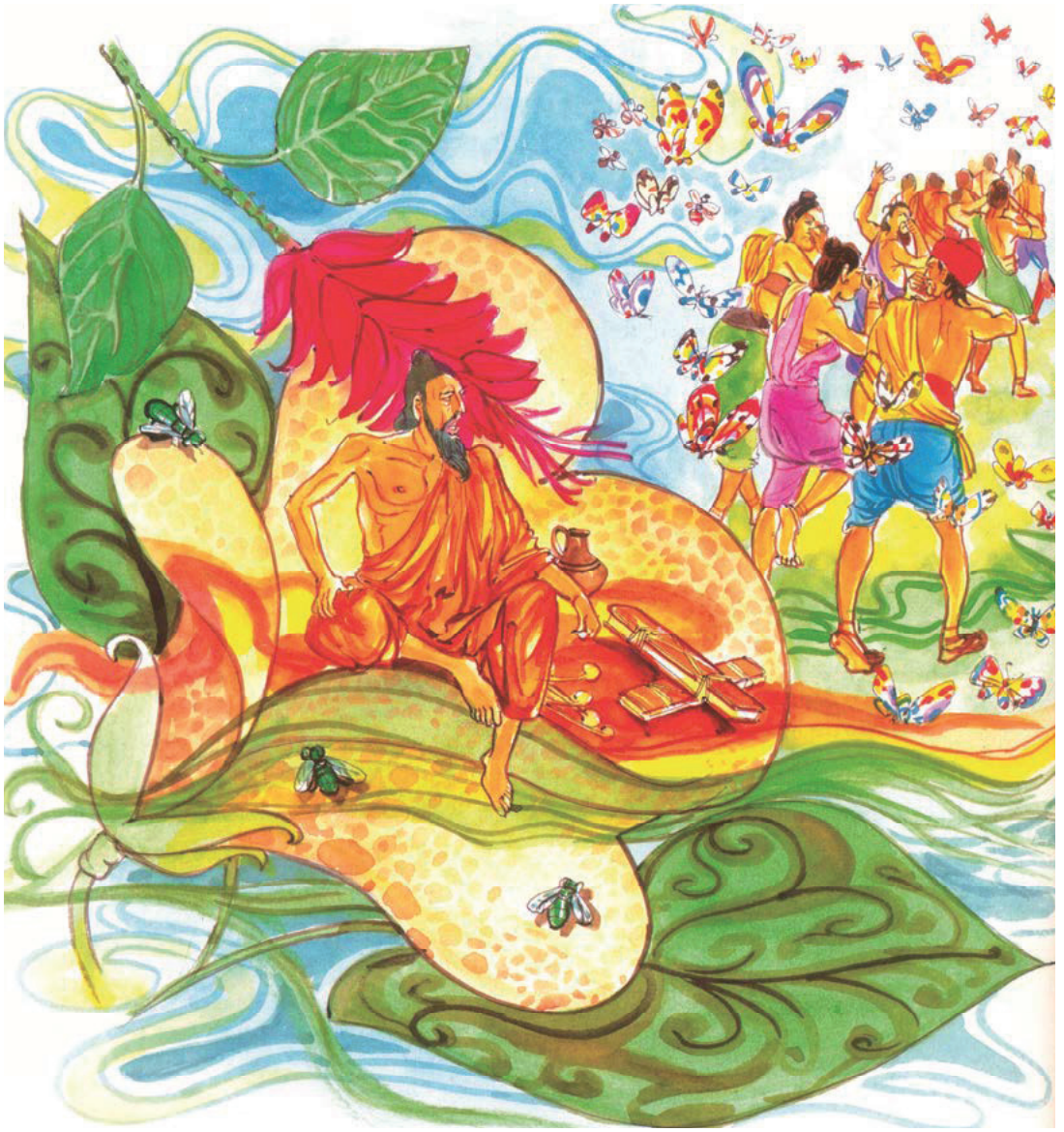
A rich lady of Sravasti was a supporter and disciple of the naked ascetic, Paveyya. Because of her strong devotion and regard for him, she treated him as her son. She had many friends and neighbours who were lay disciples of the Buddha. They often went to the Jetavana monastery to pay their respects to the Buddha and listen to his discourses. When she heard her neighbours and friends praising the Buddha profusely, she also felt like going to the monastery to pay her respects to him and listen to his discourses. However, Paveyya prevented her several times from going to the monastery to listen to the discourses.

So, she decided to invite the Buddha for almsgiving to her house through her son. When the son was going to the monastery to invite the Buddha, he happened to meet Paveyya. On coming to know that he was going to invite the Buddha, he persuaded him not to go there. But the son replied to him, 'I am greatly afraid of my mother and cannot disobey her.' 'Alright, invite him, but don't tell him the way to your house.' The boy agreed to this. When the boy returned from the monastery, the ascetic reconfirmed from him that he had not told the Buddha the way to his house. 'Well done! We shall both eat the delicious food together tomorrow as the Buddha does not know the way to your house and won't be able to come' said Paveyya. But Paveyya did not realise that for one who had successfully discovered the path of Nirvana, there was no worldly path, he could not discover!

Next day, choicest food items were prepared for the occasion. After the almsfood, the Buddha gave discourse on the Dhamma. Hearing the golden words of the Buddha, for the first time in her life, her whole body was filled with joy and happiness and she exclaimed spontaneously, 'Sadhu! Sadhu! (Well done! Well done!)

Paveyya, who was sitting in the adjacent room exclaimed, 'She is no longer my disciple.' He was fuming with anger and left the place cursing the lady and the Buddha. The lady felt embarrassed and ashamed and could not concentrate on the discourse. The Buddha understood what had happened and advised her, 'Do not be concerned about his criticism and abuses. Be mindful of your own good and bad deeds.'

At the end of the discourse the lady attained the first stage of Sainthood.



**Verse 51: Yathā' pi ruciraṃ pupphaṃ vaṇṇa vantaṃ aḡandhakaṃ
Evaṃ subhāsītā vācā aphaḷā hoti akubbato.**

Verse 51: Just like beautiful flowers having colour but no scent, so are the good words useless for one who does not practise them.

Don't be like flowers without scent Story of Chakrapani, a lay disciple

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A devotee of the Buddha, named Chakrapani, lived in Sravasti. He had attained Sakridagami, the second stage of Sainthood. He was also well versed in the Tripitaka. One day, he was at the Jetavana monastery listening to the talk of the Buddha. At that time, King Pasendi arrived to pay respects to the Buddha. On seeing the king, Chakrapani thought, 'Should, I rise and pay respect to the king or should I continue to sit? If I get up, it will mean that I pay more respect to the king than I pay to the Buddha. It will also mean showing disrespect to the World Honoured, the Enlightened One!' Thinking so, he kept on sitting. Wise men do not become angry when they see a man sitting, instead of getting up, in the presence of those who are higher in rank than them. But the king was a man of little understanding. He took it as a personal insult. He felt offended. The Enlightened One understood what was going on in the mind of the king. So, he told the king the virtues of Chakrapani and also that he was well versed in the Tripitaka. On hearing the qualities of Chakrapani, the king was impressed and was somewhat softened.

One day, from the roof of his palace, the king saw Chakrapani passing by. He immediately summoned him. On coming near the king, Chakrapani removed his sandals, kept his umbrella on one side and stood nearby and paid regards to him. The king asked, 'Why did you remove the umbrella and the sandals?' 'I removed them as I was coming to see the king.' 'It seems that at last you have realised today that I am the king.' 'I have always shown you the respect due to a king.' 'If it be true, then why did you not get up the other day when I came to see the Buddha?' 'I did not do so because that would have meant showing disrespect to the Buddha.' 'Alright, let the bygones be bygones. I am told that you are well versed in the Tripitaka. Come to the palace daily and teach the Dhamma to the two queens.' 'I cannot do that, your majesty!' 'Why, you cannot do it?'



**Verse 52: Yathā pi ruciraṃ pupphaṃ vaṇṇa vantaṃ sagandhakaṃ
Evaṃ subhāsita vācā saphalā hoti sakubbato.**

Verse 52: Just like beautiful flowers having colour and also scent, so are the good words useful for one who practises them.

Wise are like flowers with scent Story of Chakrapani, a lay disciple

‘In a king’s palace many proper and improper deeds are done.’ ‘Or is it that you still remember the old incidence that you do not want to come?’ ‘Your majesty, it is not proper for a householder to perform the duties of a bhikkhu. Please request the Buddha to give this work to some bhikkhu.’

Subsequently, the king requested the Buddha, ‘Venerable! Queens Mallika and Vasabhakhattiya want to learn the Dhamma. Kindly come to the palace daily with five hundred bhikkhus for almsfood and preaching the Dhamma.’ The Buddha told him, ‘Great King! The Buddhas do not go to a particular place regularly for almsfood.’ ‘In that case kindly assign this work to some bhikkhu.’ The Buddha then deputed bhikkhu Ananda for this work. After sometime, the Buddha asked Ananda about the progress made by the two queens. Ananda replied, ‘Queen Mallika has taken the Dhamma seriously. However, Vasabhakhattiya has not been paying sufficient attention to the teachings.’

On hearing this, the Buddha addressed the gathering of the monks, **‘Dhamma can be of benefit to those only who learn it seriously with due respect and attention and then practise diligently what is taught.’**



**Verse 53: Yathā' pi puppha rāsimhā kayirā mālāguṇe bahū
Evaṃ jātena maccena kattabbaṃ kusalaṃ bahuṃ.**

Verse 53: Just as one makes many strings of garlands from a heap of flowers, in the same way, many good deeds should be done by one who is subject to birth and death.

Do plentiful good deeds Story of Visakha

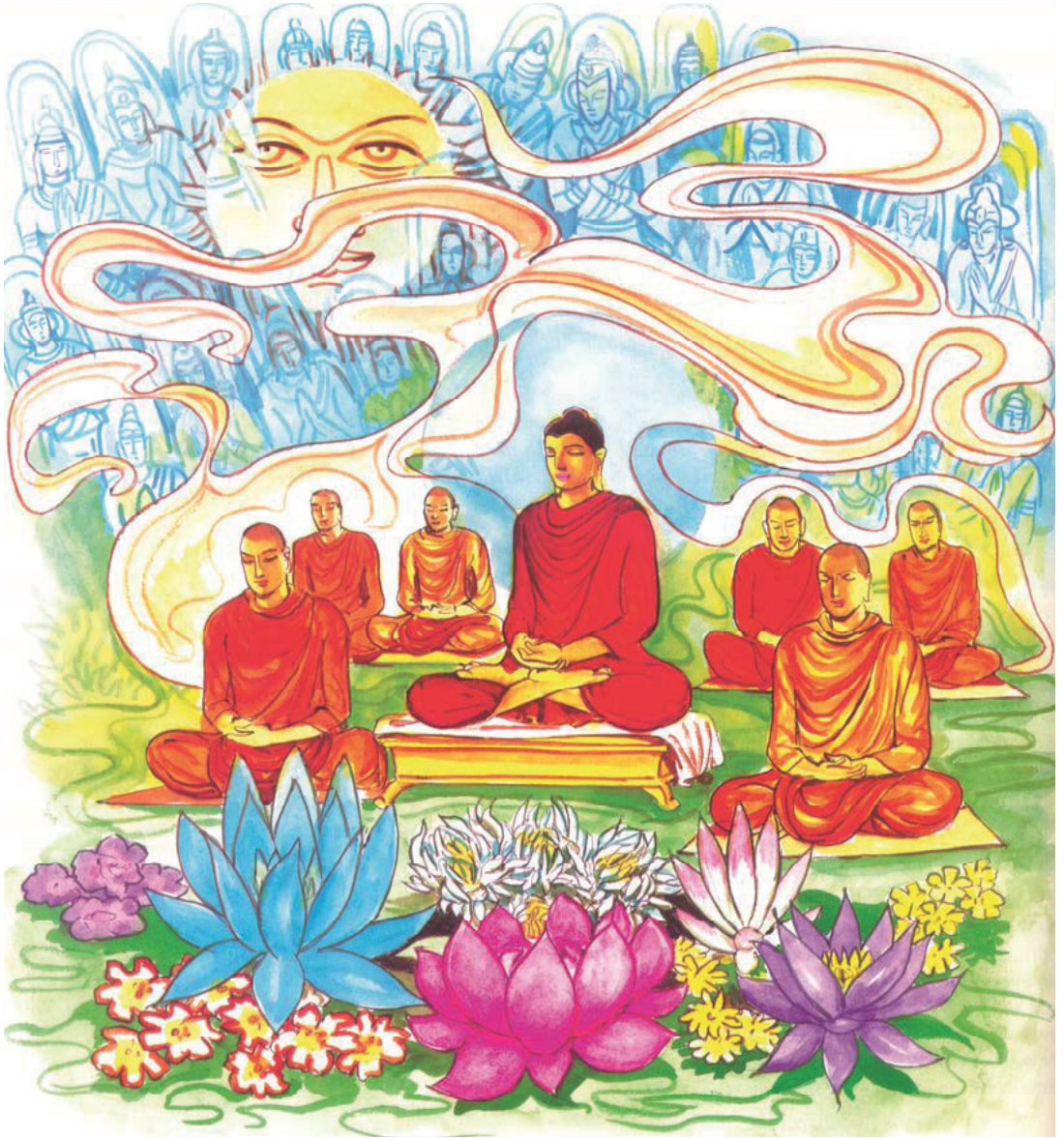
Place: Pubbarama, Sravasti

Visakha was the daughter of a rich man of Bhaddiya, named Dhananjaya and his wife, Sumana Devi. She was the grand-daughter of Mendaka, one of the five richest men of King Bimbisara's kingdom. When Visakha was a child, the Buddha came to Bhaddiya. On that occasion Mendaka took Visakha and her friends to pay homage to the Buddha. On hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, all of them attained Sro-tappan state. When Visakha grew up, she was married to Punnavaddhana, son of Migara, a rich man of Sravasti. On the day of her marriage, her father gave her ten commandments which she followed all throughout her life. One day, Migara was having his food when a bhikkhu stopped near the door for almsfood. The father-in-law ignored him and continued to eat. Visakha then told the bhikkhu, 'Sir! I am sorry, my father-in-law eats only stale food.' On hearing this, Migara was furious and asked Visakha to leave his house but she told him that she won't leave. When questioned by the elders, Visakha clarified, 'When my father-in-law ignored the bhikkhu, I thought that he was eating the stale food because he was not doing any good deed in this life and was living only on the past good karma.' The elders decided that Visakha was not guilty. Visakha then told the elders that she could not stay at a place where the bhikkhus are not welcome. She, therefore, wanted to leave the house. On hearing this, Migara granted her permission to invite the bhikkhus for almsgiving.

Next day, Visakha invited the Buddha and the Sangha for almsfood. She requested her father-in-law to join the offering of food but he refused to come. At the time of anumodana, he wanted to join for the discourse but his ascetic teachers didn't allow him to go. So, he heard the teachings sitting behind the curtain. On hearing the Buddha's teachings, Migara's good karma ripened and he immediately attained Srotap-pan state. He expressed his gratitude to the Buddha and Visakha and announced that henceforth Visakha would be like his mother. So, Visakha is also known as Migara Mata.

Visakha had a very costly gem-studded shawl which she got as a wedding gift. She offered it for sale but it was so costly that nobody could purchase it. So, she bought it herself and with that money built a monastery, known as Pubbarama. After this ceremony, Visakha was very happy and satisfied that all her wishes had been fulfilled. Happily, she went round the monastery, reciting some verses. The bhikkhus complained to the Buddha that Visakha had gone off her mind. The Buddha explained to them, 'Surely Visakha has not gone off the mind. Today she is very elated and satisfied. Hence she expressed her happiness through some verses. She has always been an ardent promoter of the Dhamma.' The Buddha also revealed that during the period of Padumuttara Buddha, she wished to be the chief female disciple of the Buddha. Padumuttara Buddha confirmed that her wish would be fulfilled. In another birth also, she received similar assurance from Kassapa Buddha.

Shakya Muni finally concluded, 'Visakha has done a number of good deeds in her previous births as an expert florist makes many garlands from a collection of flowers.'



**Verse 54: Na puppha gandho paṭivātam eti, na candanaṃ tagara mallikā vā
Satañ ca gandho paṭivātam eti, Sabbā disā sappuriso pavāti.**

Verse 54: The fragrance of flowers cannot go against the wind, not even that of sandalwood, tagara, or jasmine. But the wind cannot stop the fragrance (reputation) of the virtuous which goes in all the directions.

Virtues spread in all directions Story of question raised by Ananda

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered these two verses in response to a question raised by Venerable Ananda regarding the fragrance of virtues.

One day, Venerable Ananda, while absorbed in meditation, pondered, 'The scent of flowers and the roots spread only in the direction of the wind and not against it. Is there any scent which goes in the direction of the wind as well as against it?' Then he thought, 'What is the use of my exploring the answer to this question? I will seek the answer from the Buddha and the Buddha alone.' Accordingly, he approached the Buddha and repeated his question to him.

In answer to the question, the Tathagata said, 'Ananda! Suppose there is a person who takes refuge in the Triple Gem (The Buddha, The Dhamma and The Sangha) and recites:

Buddham Sharanam gachchami: I take refuge in the Buddha!

Dhammam Sharanam gachchami: I take refuge in the Dhamma!

Sangham Sharanam gachchami: I take refuge in the Sangha!



**Verse 55: Candanaṃ tagaraṃ vā' pi uppalaṃ atha vassiki
Etesaṃ gandha jātānaṃ silagandho anuttaro.**

Verse 55: Sandalwood, tagara, lotus and jasmine have excellent scents. But the scent of virtue excels all scents.

Moral fragrance: Best fragrance

Story of question raised by Ananda

The Buddha further explained, 'Suppose he observes the five moral precepts — the Panchashila i.e. if he refrains from five things i.e.: 1. taking life, 2. the sins of flesh, 3. speaking untruth, 4. the use of liquors or spirits and 5. taking what is not given; suppose he is virtuous and lives a righteous life, with a heart free from greed, is liberal, generous and open-hearted, then such a man is truly virtuous and worthy of praise. The reputation of such a person spreads far and wide in all directions. The bhikkhus, brahmins and laymen all speak in praise of such a virtuous person.'



**Verse 56: Appamatto yaṃ gandho yā' yaṃ tagara candani
Yo ca silavataṃ gandho vāti devesu uttamo.**

Verse 56: The scents of tagara and sandalwood are very faint compared to the scent of the virtuous. The scent of virtuous (reputation) spreads even to the deva Loka and is excellent in every way.

Scent of the virtuous is the best Story of bhikkhu Maha Kassapa

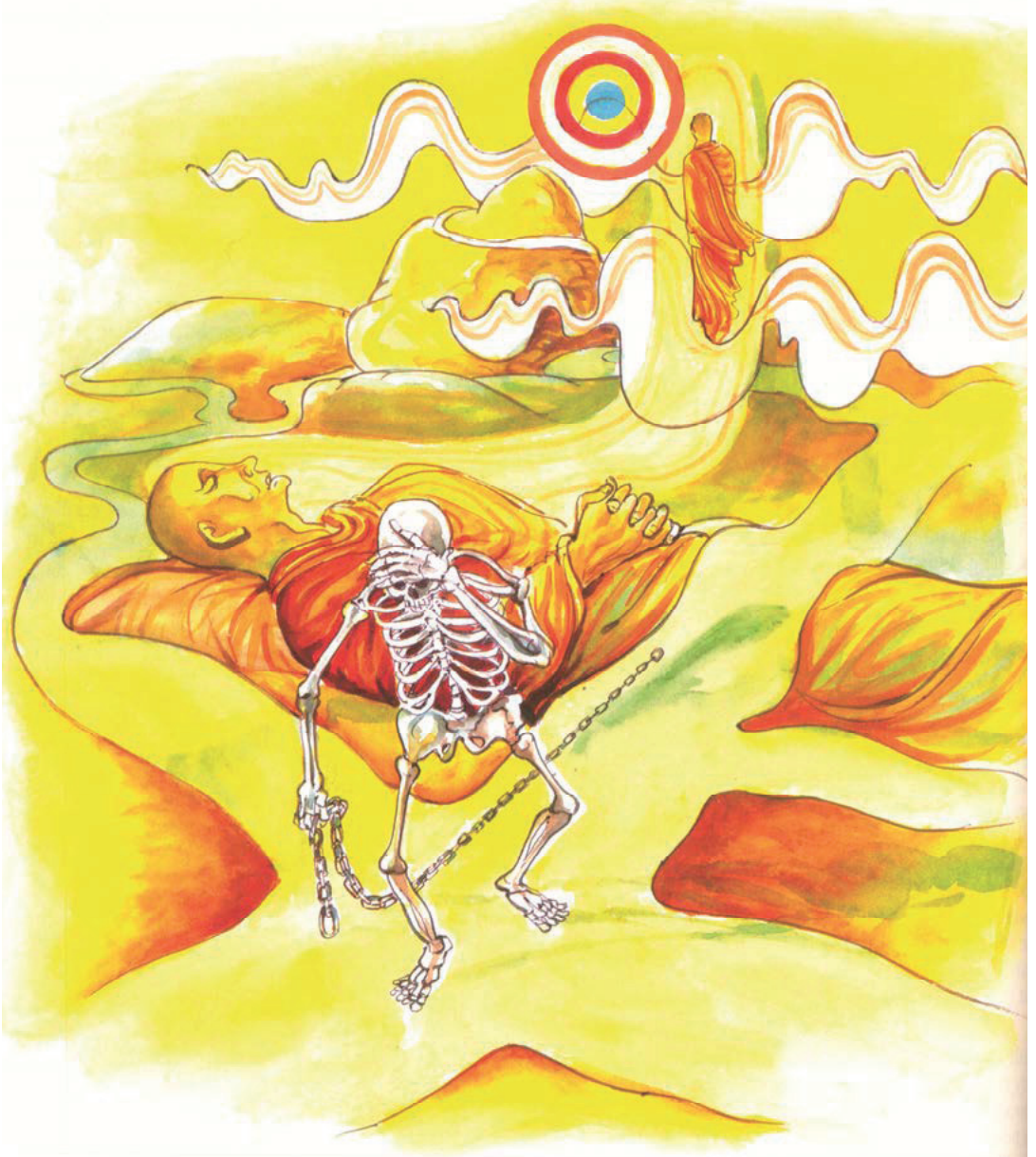
Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, bhikkhu Maha Kassapa rose from seven days of Nirodha Samapatti. In Nirodha Samapatti there is temporary suspension of mental activities. The Venerable wanted to favour some poor man by taking alms from him. 'By bestowing alms on me today, any poor man may get the post of the Commander-in-Chief or the post of the Treasurer of a kingdom.' Therefore, he entered the poor men's colony in Rajagriha.

Sakka also came to know of it. He desired to make an almsfood offering to the monk. So, he took the form of a poor weaver with broken teeth, grey hair and a bent body. His wife Sujata also took a similar form. The old man sat outside his hut spinning thread. When the monk came to that area, he looked around and saw these two old persons. He thought, 'This must be the right place for the almsfood.' So, he came and stood at their door. The weaver took hold of his bowl and filled it with rice and curry. Instantaneously, the smell of the curry spread all over Rajagriha. Then the monk thought, 'This old man who has offered me almsfood is not an ordinary person.' He found out from his inner vision that this man was Sakka. Therefore, he told Sakka, 'You have done great wrong by taking the form of a poor man. You have deprived a poor man of the merit which he could have won.' 'Is there any man poorer than me, Sir?' Sakka said. 'How do you say that you are poor? You enjoy all the luxuries of the world.' 'Bhante, I am also poor because I have not been able to offer anything to anyone during the period of the Buddha.' 'Even if this be true, henceforth do not deceive me and give me alms.' Sakka and his wife begged for pardon. After paying respects to the monk, Sakka and his wife left for the heaven.

From his perfumed chamber, the Buddha saw Sakka and his wife leaving for the heaven. He told the story to the bhikkhus. The bhikkhus queried, 'How Sakka came to know that bhikkhu Kassapa had just woken up from Nirodha Samapatti and that it was just the right time to make the offering?'

The Buddha replied, 'Bhikkhus! The virtues of a person like my son Kassapa spread in all directions, even to the deva lokas. On account of the virtues of the monk, Sakka also had to come to the earth to pay respects to him.'



**Verse 57: Tesam sampanna silānaṃ appamāda vihāriṇaṃ
Sammadaññā vimuttānaṃ māro maggaṃ na vindati.**

Verse 57: Mara (Tempter) cannot find the path of those who are virtuous, awake in living and are freed through full enlightenment.

Arahants: Where do they go?

Story of bhikkhu Godhika

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, bhikkhu Godhika was practising Tranquility and Insight Meditation at Isigili Mountain in Magadha. When he achieved one-pointedness of mind, he became seriously sick. It retarded his progress. In spite of this, he kept on striving diligently. But every time he made some progress, he was overcome by sickness. He suffered six times like this. Then he resolved, 'If I do not attain Arahant hood, I will end my life.' Finally, he decided to end his life. He cut his throat with a knife. When the pain arose, he concentrated on it and attained one-pointedness. He attained Arahant hood, before he passed away.

It is extremely difficult to maintain concentration in the face of pain, yet he showed his determination when he took physical pain as the subject of meditation.

When Mara came to know about his passing away, he tried to find out where he was reborn. But he did not succeed. He took the form of a young man and approached the Buddha to tell him where he was reborn. The Buddha recognised him and replied, 'Mara! It will be of no use to you to find out the destination of bhikkhu Godhika. He has been freed from mental impurities. He has become an Arahant. He is not going to be reborn. A hundred or thousands like you, with all your power, will not be able to find out where Arahants like bhikkhu Godhika go after death.'



**Verse 58: Yathā saṅkāra dhānasmim̐ ujhitasmim̐ mahā pathe
Padumaṃ tattha jāyetha sucigandhaṃ manoramaṃ.**

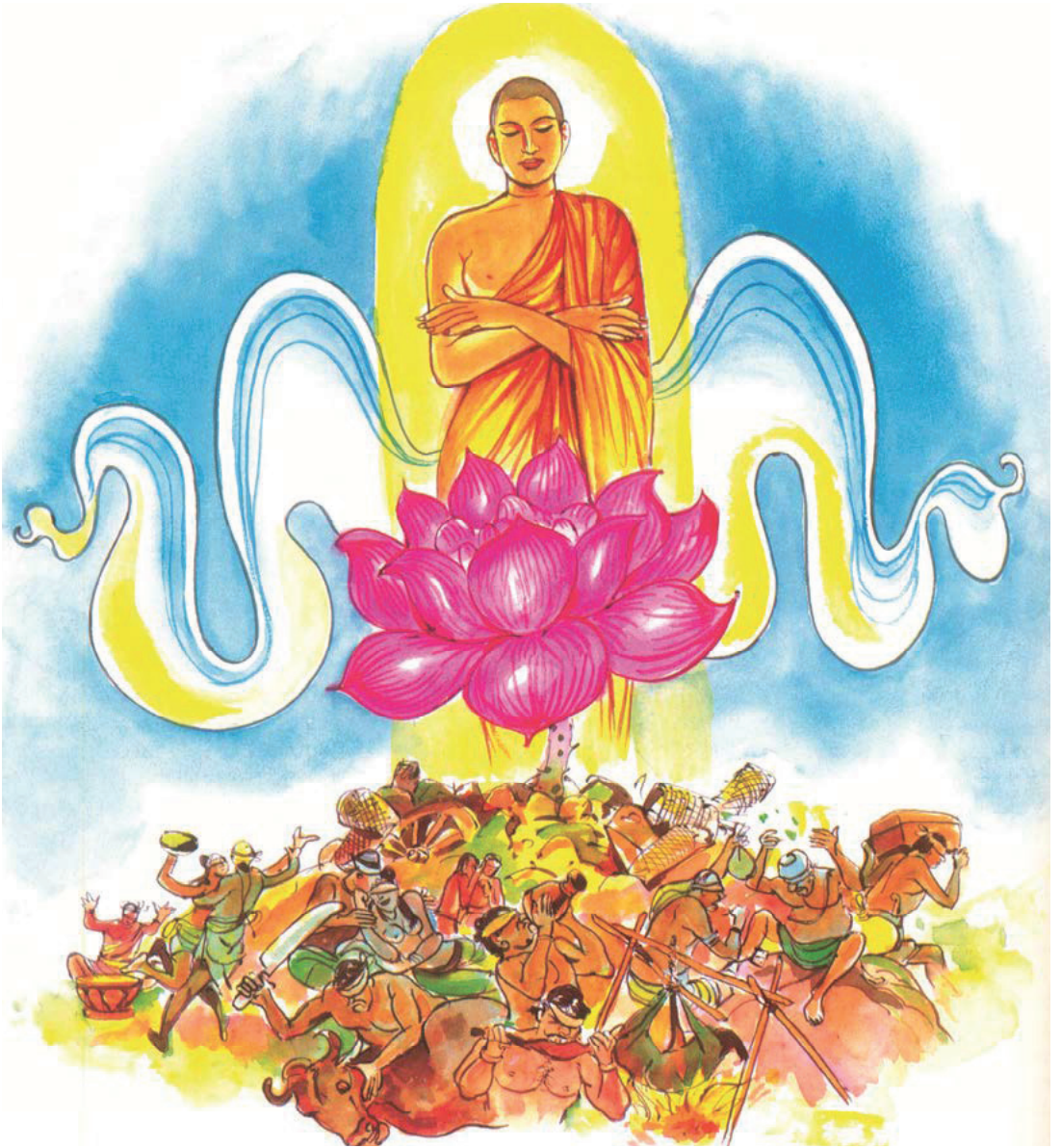
Verse 58: As upon a heap of rubbish thrown on the side of the highway, a sweet-smelling, lovely lotus may blossom.....

The wise outshine the worldly Story of Sirigutta and Garahadinna

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Two friends by the name Sirigutta and Garahadinna lived in Sravasti. Sirigutta was a follower of the Buddha. Garahadinna was a follower of the Niganthas, the ascetics. The Niganthas were hostile to the Buddha. On the advice of his teachers, Garahadinna often asked Sirigutta, 'What benefit do you get by following the Buddha? Why don't you follow my teachers?' When he persuaded him several times, Sirigutta asked him the counter question, 'Tell me what your teachers know.' 'O friend! Don't ask me this question. Ask me, what they don't know. They know all about the past, present and the future. They can also read the thoughts of others.' 'If this be true, then why did you not tell me earlier? Please invite them to my house for almsgiving tomorrow.' Garahadinna was pleased to report this to his teachers. They asked, 'Did Sirigutta invite us personally?' 'Yes Sir!' 'Very well, then all gains including his properties will be ours, the moment he joins us.'

Sirigutta wanted to test whether the Niganthas really possessed the powers they boasted of. Therefore, he made a long, deep trench and filled it up with dirt and covered it with cloth. Seats were placed unstable over it. When the sadhus arrived, they were invited to sit down simultaneously. As all of them sat, the weak rope broke down. They all fell in the trench. Sirigutta asked them, 'You said that you could read the thoughts of others. Why did you not read my thoughts?' The Niganthas fled away in fear. Garahadinna was very angry with his friend. He refused to talk to him for some time. Then he decided to take revenge. He pretended that he was no longer angry with him. He invited the Buddha and the monks for almsgiving. Sirigutta narrated the whole story to the Buddha what he had done to the teachers of Garahadinna. He also expressed his fear, 'Garahadinna may be inviting you and the monks in retaliation to take revenge.'



**Verse 59: Evaṃ saṅkāra bhūtesu andhabhūte puthujjane
Atirocati paññāya sammāsambuddha sāvako.**

Verse 59:in the same way, in this worldly mess, the true disciple of the Enlightened One outshines the ignorant men in wisdom.

The true disciple outshines all Story of Sirigutta and Garahadinna

The Buddha from his supernatural power saw that the time was ripe for both the friends to attain Srotappan stage of Sainthood. Therefore, he accepted the invitation for almsfood. Garahadinna did all that Sirigutta had done earlier. But when the Buddha put his steps on the mat, lotus flowers as big as the size of a cart-wheel sprang up. The Buddha and his disciples sat upon them.

Seeing this, Garahadinna was greatly frightened and told his friend, 'My dear Sirigutta! Please help me. I have done great wrong out of revenge. There is no food in the kitchen. All the pots are empty. Please help me.' Sirigutta then told Garahadinna to go back and look into the pots. When he looked into the pots, he was astonished to find them all filled up with food. He was relieved of great anxieties and became happy. The food was served on the Buddha and the monks. After the meals, the Buddha expressed his appreciation (anumodana) of the noble act and said, 'Ignorant people lack in wisdom. They do not know the unique qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Such people are like the blind men. On the other hand, the wise people, who have the knowledge of the triple gem, are like the people with sight.'

The Buddha explained the principles of the Dhamma slowly and slowly. As he proceeded, Garahadinna's body was filled up with joy and happiness. Both friends heard the teachings very attentively. At the end of the discourse, they attained Srotappan, the first stage of Sainthood. After this incidence, Sirigutta and Garahadinna once again became friends. They also became great supporters of the Buddha. They donated most of their wealth to the Sangha.

In Jetavana monastery, the bhikkhus expressed surprise that lotus flowers of the size of cart-wheel sprang up from a trench, filled with dirt. The Buddha replied, 'It is not for the first time that it has happened so. It has happened in the past also as mentioned in the Khadirangara Jataka.'



DHAMMAPADA

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DHAMMAPADA

FOOLS

BALA VAGGA



Chapter V

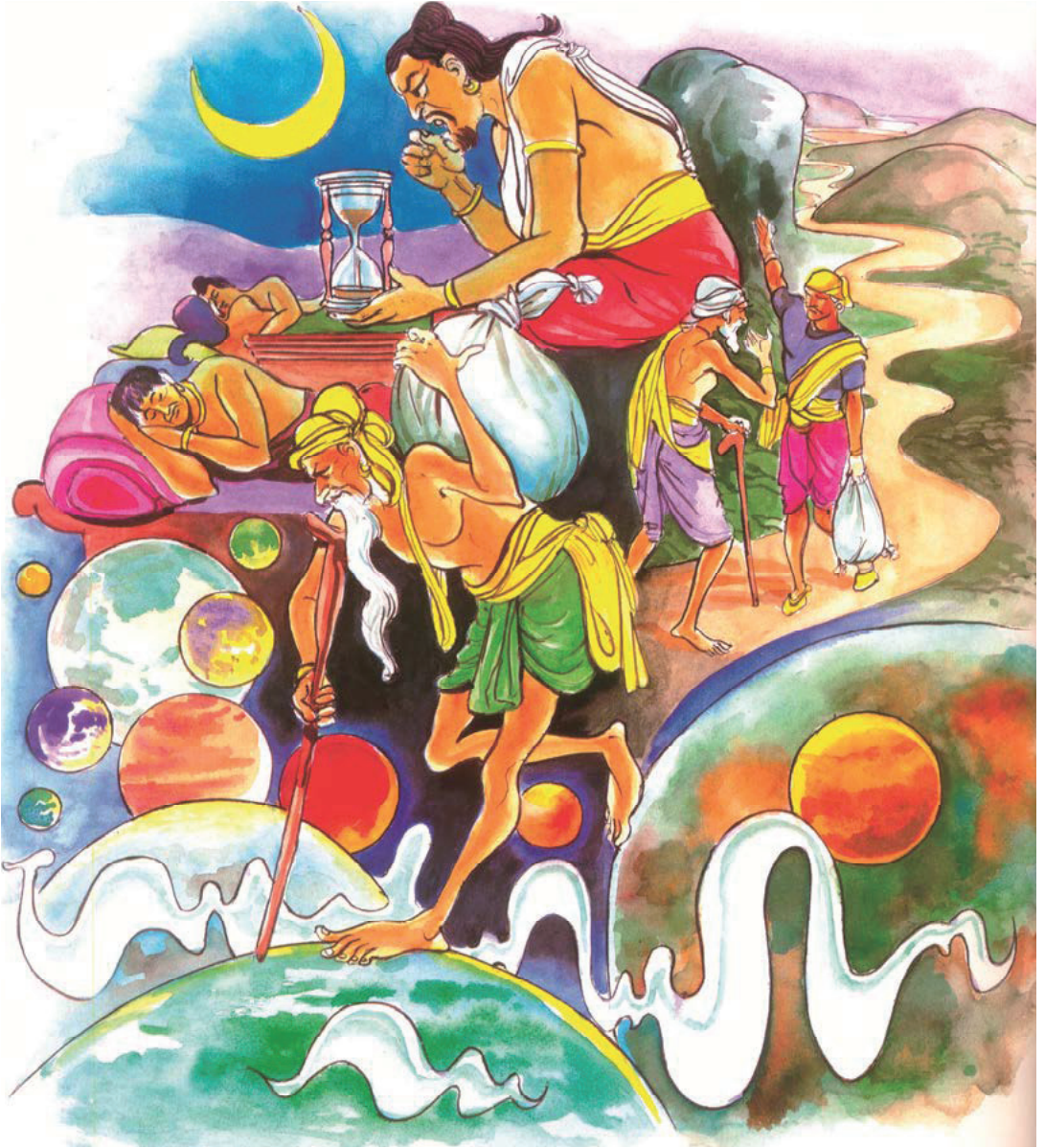
BALA VAGGA

Fools

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BALA VAGGA

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**Verse 60: Dighā jāgarato ratti dighaṃ santassa yojanaṃ
Digho bālānaṃ saṃsāro saddhammaṃ avijānataṃ.**

Verse 60: The night seems long to the sleepless. The journey appears long to the tired traveller. Likewise, long is the journey of samsara to the ignorant who does not know the Supreme Truth.

Be wise: Shorten your journey Story of king Pasendi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, while King Pasendi was going round the city, he saw a beautiful young woman, standing at the window of her house. He instantaneously fell in love with her. He was desperate to get her but learnt that she was married. So, he sent for her husband Duggat and forcibly employed him as a servant in the palace. Later, not knowing how to get his wife, the king sent Duggat on an impossible mission, to the underground world to bring kumudi (lotus) flowers and some red earth (arunavati) from the land of the nagas by the evening, before the bath time of the king. He was confident that the man will fail. Therefore, he will punish him to death and take his wife.

The young man took a food packet from his wife and left the town in a hurry. On the way, he shared some food with a traveller and threw some rice into the river water and made the prayer loudly, 'O guardian spirits and nagas living in the river! King Pasendi has commanded me to bring lotus flowers and red soil for him. Today, I have shared some food with a traveller and thrown some rice in the river for the fishes. I now share the good deeds done by me today with you. Please get me lotus flowers and red earth.' A supernatural being, taking pity on Duggat, took the form of an old man and brought some lotus flowers and red soil and gave it to him.

That day, the king apprehending that the man may come back in time, got the gate of the palace closed early. The young man put the red earth on the city wall and stuck the flowers in the earth and announced loudly, 'O citizens! You be my witness! I have done the impossible commanded by the king. The king wants to kill me for no reason.' After that, Duggat left for the monastery to pass the night there.

Meanwhile, the king was so compelled by his sexual desire that he could not sleep for the whole night. He was thinking of getting the man killed in the morning and taking the lady. After midnight he started hearing very frightful and gloomy voices. The king was scared and did not know what to do. In the morning, on the advice of Queen Mallika, he went to see the Buddha. The Buddha explained, 'The fearful and gloomy voices were of four men during the time of the previous Buddha. They are suffering in hell because of sexual misconduct in that life.' The king realised the bad karma that could be created through sexual misconduct. He reflected, 'It was due to my desire for another man's wife that I was tormented for the whole night and could not sleep.' He took a vow not to covet for any other person's wife in future. He told the Buddha, 'Sir, now I understand how long the night is for a person who is not getting sleep.' Duggat, the young man, was also sitting close by, said, 'Sir, because I had travelled a long distance yesterday, I also know how long the journey is for one who is tired.' Thus both the king and his subject were benefitted from their experiences. Then the Buddha said, **'Long is samsara (earthly journey) to the ignorant who does not know the truth.'**



**Verse 61: Caraṇ ce nādhigaccheyya seyyaṃ sadisam attano
Ekacariyaṃ dalhaṃ kayirā natthi bāle sahāyatā.**

Verse 61: If one is unable to find a companion, better or equal to him, then he should live all alone. There should be no companionship with the fools.

Be away from the fool

Story of the disciple of Mahakassapa

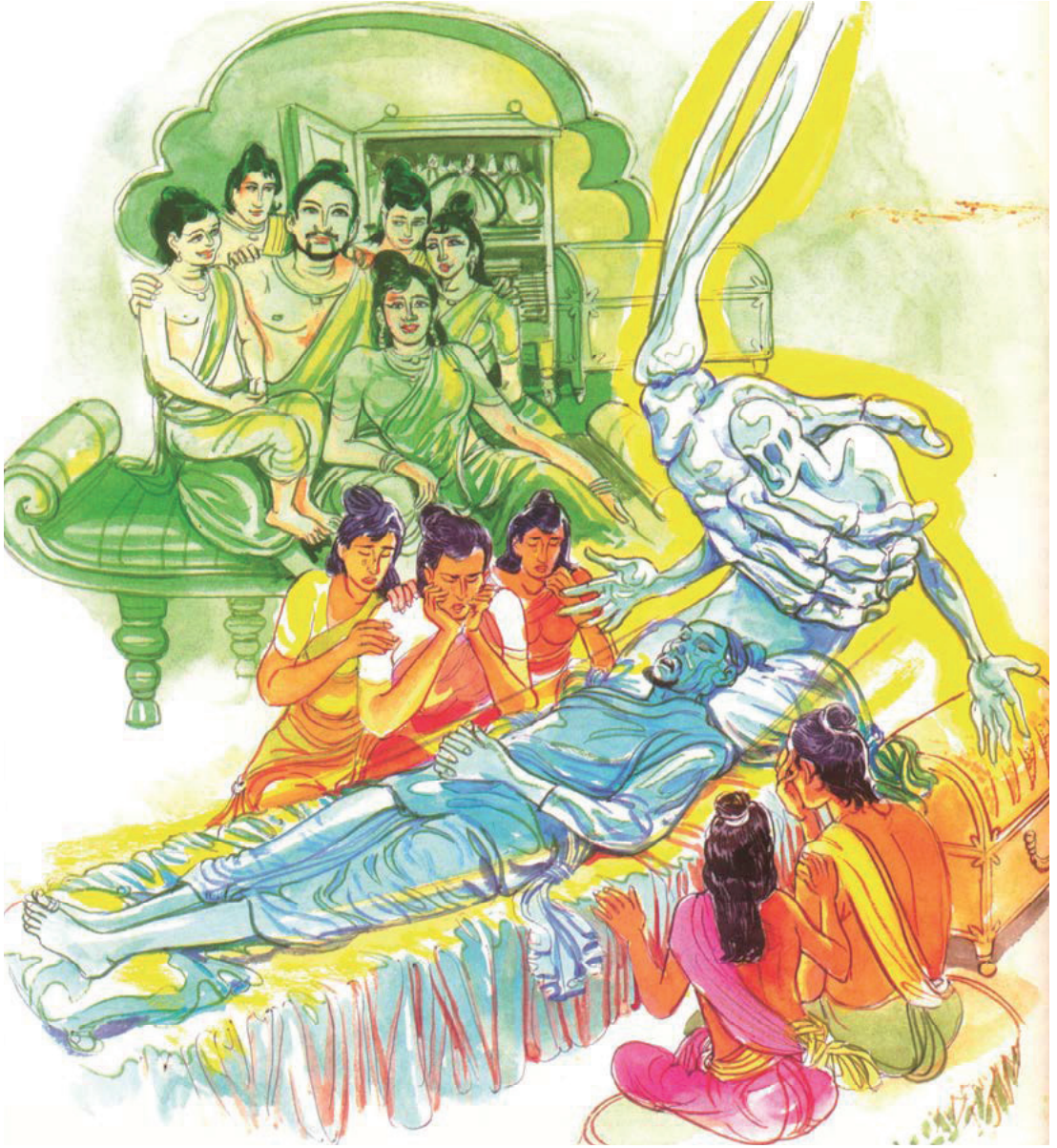
Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

When Venerable Mahakassapa was residing at Pippali cave near Rajagriha, he had two disciples staying with him. One of them was respectful, obedient and dutiful and the other was not. The respectful disciple performed his duties obediently but the other disciple often shirked his responsibility and also took away the credit for the work done by the respectful one. For example, when the obedient disciple would put some water for face-washing or some tooth-stick, the disobedient one would go to the senior monk and say, 'Venerable! Water for washing the face and a tooth-stick has been kept at the proper place. You may please go and wash your face and brush your teeth.'

The teacher, however, came to know about the nature of the shirker disciple. When Kassapa advised the disobedient bhikkhu to be dutiful and not neglect his duties, he felt very offended. On the following day, he refused to accompany the Teacher on alms round. The Venerable, therefore, took the obedient disciple only with him.

While Venerable Kassapa went out for almsfood, the foolish bhikkhu stayed back in the monastery. Burning with vengeance, he broke the pots and cots there and set fire to the monastery.

When the Buddha came to know about it, he remarked, 'It would have been much better for Kassapa to stay alone than to live in the company of a fool.' He also told the story from Kapi Jataka, 'This monk, as a monkey in that birth, destroyed away the nest of a bird. Maha Kassapa was the bird in that birth.'



**Verse 62: Puttā matthi dhanam m'atthi' iti bālo vihaññati
Atta hi attano natthi kuto puttā kuto dhanam?**

Verse 62: 'Sons I have, wealth I have', the ignorant thus thinks and feels secured. Indeed, if he himself is not of his own, how can the sons or wealth, be his?

No one is his own Story of Ananda, the rich miserly man

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once upon a time, there lived in Sravasti a very rich but miserly man, named Ananda Sresthi. He had a treasure of eight billion gold coins. He had buried them in five pots but did not tell its location to his son, Mulasiri. He did not do any act of charity. He was deeply attached to his wealth and advised his son, 'Don't think that we are wealthy people. Don't give away anything in charity. Thus make the wealth grow. Otherwise, it will be finished.'

Nobody has control over death. It comes, as an uninvited guest, anytime, anywhere. It happened with Ananda Sresthi also. One day, he passed away. He could not tell the location of the treasure to his son. He was still attached to his wealth.

As Sresthi did not do a single act of charity all throughout his life, he created no good karma for himself. He was reborn in beggars' colony, not far off from Sravasti. As a boy, he was ugly and repulsive. He was unlucky to his mother as well as to other beggars. If the mother went out alone for begging, she received her normal quantity of food. But when the son accompanied her, she got nothing. So, when the boy grew up, she asked him to beg for himself to earn his living.

One day, as the child went round Sravasti, he recognised his old house and entered inside it. But when the sons of Mulasiri saw him, they were frightened and started crying. The beggar child was beaten up by the servants and expelled out of the house.

At that time the Buddha was passing through their house. He called Mulasiri and told him, 'The young beggar is your father. He is reborn as a beggar due to his bad karma in the last birth.' Mulasiri and others could not believe it. The Buddha, therefore, asked the beggar child, 'Show the place where you buried the pots of gold.' He showed the pots. Mulasiri and the villagers had to believe that the beggar child had been Ananda Sresthi in his previous birth. Mulasiri became a devoted disciple of the Buddha.

Later, the Buddha explained to the devotees, **'Due to attachment we take our lives as permanent. We do no acts of charities. It is wrong to say: I have sons. I have wealth. When the self is not his own, how can the sons or wealth be his?'**



**Verse 63: Yo bālo maññati bālyam paṇḍito vā' pi tena so
Bālo ca paṇḍitamāni sa ve bālo' ti vuccati.**

Verse 63: A fool, who is conscious of his foolishness, is wise for that reason. But the fool, who considers himself as wise, is indeed a fool.

How wisdom dawns? Story of two pickpockets

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, two pickpocket friends joined a group of devotees going to the Jetavana monastery to hear the discourse of the Buddha. One of them listened to the discourse attentively and became Srotappan. The other one did not pay attention to the discourse and as per his habit looked for something to steal. He found someone with five gold coins and stole those coins away.

After the discourse, both went to the house of the pickpocket who had stolen the gold coins. That evening, no food was cooked at the house of the Srotappan pickpocket. On the other hand, delicious food was cooked at the house of the other one. The thief and his wife ridiculed the friend, 'You are so excessively wise that you do not have enough money to get food cooked in your house.' He who had attained Srotappan thought, 'This man, although he is a fool, does not think that he is a fool.' He went to the Buddha with some relatives and narrated the story to him.

The Buddha explained, **'The fool, who knows that he is a fool, can for that very reason at least, be taken as a wise man. But the fool, who thinks that he is wise, is indeed, a fool.'**

Note: We get different types of mirrors in the market. In the plain mirror the image is seen, as it is, without any distortion. In the curved mirrors, the pictures are seen as curved. The images are distorted from what they actually are. If in the mirror of life, we see ourselves as we are, then there is no problem. But often we pretend to be other than what we are. Then the problem arises.

If a dishonest man accepts that he is dishonest, then there is a possibility that he may change in future. But if a person is dishonest and pretends as honest, then only god can save such a person! His future is definitely doomed.



**Verse 64: Yāvajivam' pi ce bālo paṇḍitaṃ payirupāsati
Na so dhammaṃ vijānāti dabbi sūparaṣaṃ yathā.**

Verse 64: A fool, even when he is in life-long company of a wise man, does not grasp the significance of the Dhamma, just as a spoon in the soup does not know its taste.

Who realises the Dhamma? Story of bhikkhu Udayi

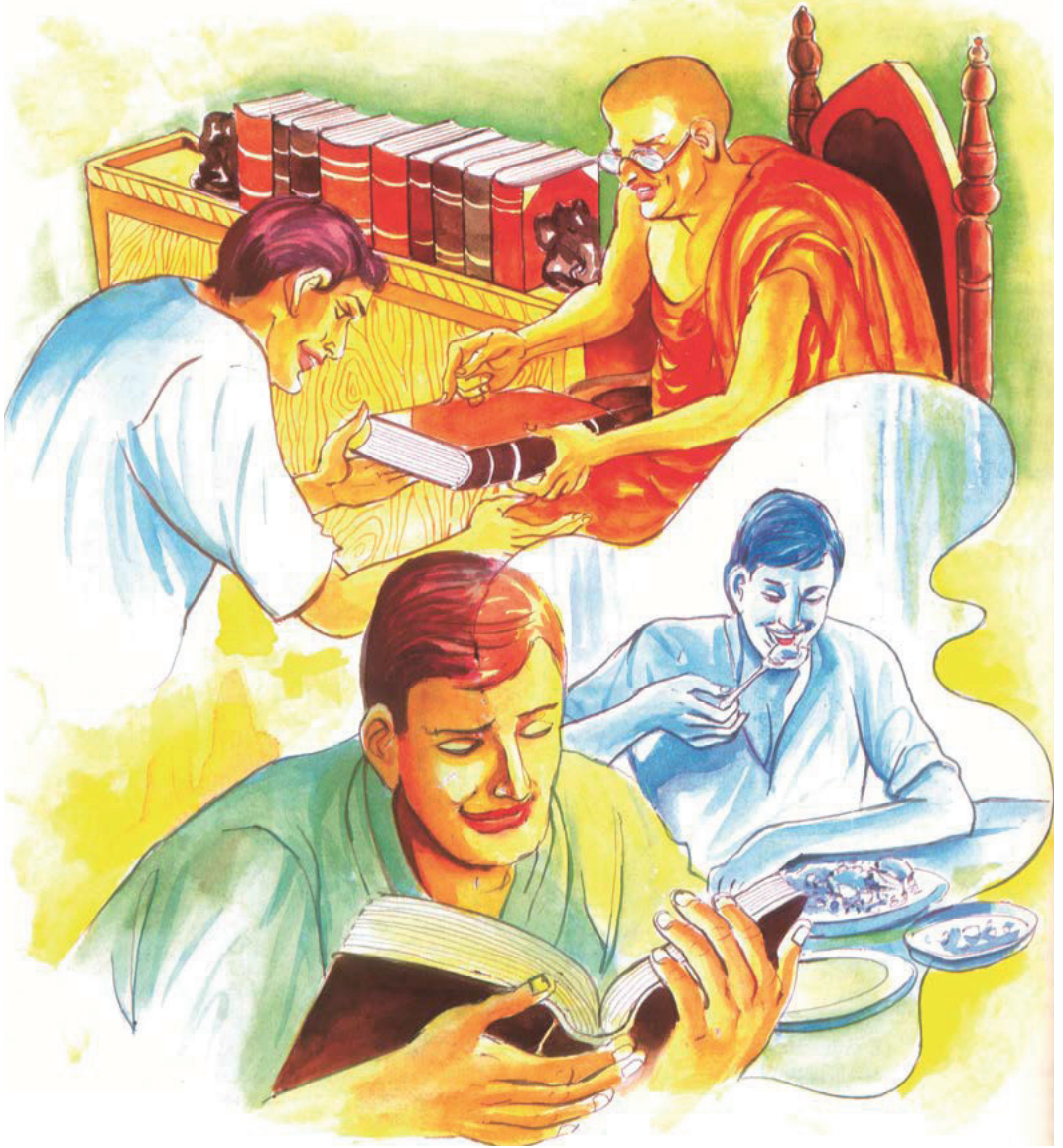
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse with reference to Kal Udayi, a pretending monk.

The story goes that when the monks would leave the Hall of Truth, Venerable Udayi would go and sit on the same platform, from where the seniors had delivered their discourses.

On one occasion, a group of monks happened to visit the monastery and saw him sitting on the platform. They thought, 'This must be the Buddha.' Therefore, they made some queries regarding the five aggregates of beings and related matters. Udayi could not give a single answer as he did not know anything of the Dhamma. They were astonished and thought, 'How is it that one staying in the same monastery with the Buddha does know so very little about the mind, elements and six senses?' So, this matter was brought to the notice of the Buddha who said, **'Even though a fool may be associated with the wise for the whole life, he may not understand a single word of the Dhamma, just as a spoon does not know the taste of the soup.'**

Note: This can be understood also from the example of the snakes encircling the sandalwood tree. The snakes do not gain from the scent of the sandalwood, though they keep on embracing it all throughout their life.



**Verse 65: Muhuttam api ce viññū paṇḍitaṃ payirupāsati
Khippaṃ dhammaṃ vijānāti jivhā sūparaṃ yathā.**

Verse 65: A wise man, even though he is associated with the learned for a moment, realises the Dhamma quickly, just as the tongue enjoys the taste of soup with one sip.

The wise realise the Dhamma Story of thirty bhikkhus from Paveyyaka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, thirty young men from Paveyyaka went to a forest with a prostitute for enjoyment. While they were resting, the prostitute ran away with their ornaments. On getting up, they started looking for her and the ornaments. They could not find her. But in the process they found the Buddha, the Path Finder. They asked him, 'Sir! Have you seen any lady with ornaments? She has fled away with our valuables.'

The Buddha instead asked them, 'What is more important? To look for the lady or to look and search within?' The young men replied, 'Searching within is more important and valuable than searching without.' Thus, their attention got diverted from the lady. They gave up looking for her. Instead, they concentrated attentively on the discourse, the Buddha gave to them.

After the discourse they all joined the Sangha and followed the Master to the Jetavana monastery. While staying there, they strictly observed the purification practices. Later, when the Buddha delivered the Anamatagga Sutta (Discourse on Countless Existences), all of them attained Arahantship.

When other bhikkhus came to know about it, they were surprised. They commented, 'These bhikkhus have been very quick in attaining arahantship.' The Buddha explained, '**An intelligent person, even though he is associated with a wise man only for a moment, can easily grasp the Dhamma, just as the tongue knows the taste of the soup.**' He also added, 'This is not for the first time that these thirty men committed an evil deed. They did so in one of their previous births as well. But they heard the religious discourse of Venerable Tundila and immediately understood it. They adopted the Panchashila, the five precepts. It is due to the merit gained in that birth that they have attained arahantship immediately in this life.'



**Verse 66: Caranti bālā dummedhā amitten eva attanā
Karontā pāpakaṃ kammaṃ yaṃ hoti kaṭukapphalaṃ.**

Verse 66: The fools transform themselves into their own enemies by doing evil deeds that brings bitter results for them. They live as their own enemies.

Be not your own enemy

Story of the leper, Suppabuddha

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

This religious message in regard to Suppabuddha, the leper, appears in the Udana.

Once, Suppabuddha listened to the discourse of the Buddha attentively. At its conclusion, he became a Srotappan. When the crowd dispersed, he followed the Buddha to the monastery. He desired to tell him about the blessing he received from the discourse. At that moment, Sakka, the king of the devas, thought, 'Suppabuddha wants to tell the Buddha about the blessing he has received from the discourse. Let me test his faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.' He appeared before him and said, 'You are a poor man who earns his living by begging. I shall give you immense wealth and fortune if you only deny your faith in the Triple Gem; the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.' 'Who are you?' 'I am Sakka.' Suppabuddha replied, 'Fool, One who is shameless! You are not fit to talk to me. I am certainly not a poor man with no one to rely on, as you think. I am a very happy and rich man. I possess the **seven wealths which noble ones possess. They are: shraddha (confidence, Faith), sila (morality), hiri (sense of shame to do evil), ottappa (sense of fear to do evil), suta (learning), caga (generosity) and panna (knowledge).**' Sakka left the place, went to the Buddha and told him about it. On hearing this, the Buddha said, 'It will not be possible even for a hundred or a thousand Sakkas to shake the faith of Suppabuddha and keep him away from the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.' Soon after this, Suppabuddha also arrived. He narrated the same story to the Buddha.

On the way back, he was hit by an evil spirit. She was a courtesan in a previous birth and had been killed by Suppabuddha. She had taken a vow to take revenge from him.

When the bhikkhus came to know about the death of Suppabuddha, they asked the Buddha where he was reborn. The Buddha replied, 'Suppabuddha has been reborn in Tavatimsa deva loka. He was born as a leper in this birth because in one of his previous births on seeing Tagarshikha Pachchekabuddha he spat on him and said, "Who is this leper going?" But in due course of time, he has realised the Dhamma and his mental impurities are gone.'



**Verse 67: Na taṃ kammaṃ kataṃ sādhu yaṃ katvā anutappati
Yassa assumukho rodaṃ vipākaṃ paṭisevati.**

Verse 67: It is no good to do such deeds which, after having done it, one repents, whose consequences he reaps with tearful eyes.

Do deeds that you do not repent

Story of the Buddha saving a farmer

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, in his morning survey, the Buddha found a farmer in his field of vision. He was to attain Srotappan stage that day. Therefore, he along with Venerable Ananda left to see the farmer. At that time the farmer was cultivating his field. The farmer saluted the Buddha and Venerable Ananda. After paying respects to them, he continued to plough the field.

Now it so happened that the previous night, some thieves had come to that field with stolen property and by mistake left behind a bag of money. On seeing the bag of money, the Buddha commented, 'Ananda! Do you see that poisonous snake?' Ananda nodded his head and said, 'Yes, Venerable Sir! I can see that deadly snake.' Observing so, both Ananda and the Buddha moved on. The farmer did not know what to do with the bag. So, he hid it in the ground.

The owner of the bag and the soldiers of the king trailed the footsteps of the robbers and reached the field. They found out the bag there. They caught hold of the farmer and took him to the king. The king awarded him death penalty.

The soldiers took him to the execution ground. On the way, the farmer kept on uttering, 'Ananda! Look at that poisonous snake!' 'Indeed Venerable Sir! It is a deadly snake.' The soldiers heard the continuous utterances of the conversation between Ananda and the Buddha. They were puzzled and took the farmer back to the king. The king guessed that the farmer was calling upon the Buddha as a witness. The farmer was, therefore, taken to the Buddha. The Buddha gave an account of what he had seen in the morning. The king remarked, 'If he did not call the Buddha as a witness, he would have been behind the gallows today.'

The Buddha replied, **'A wise man should do nothing that he has to regret after doing it.'**



**Verse 68: Tañ ca kammañ katañ sādhu yañ katvā nānutappati
Yassa patito sumano vipākañ pañisevati.**

Verse 68: That deed is well done, having done which, one does not repent,
whose fruits one enjoys with joy, pleasure and contentment.

Good deeds bring happiness Story of florist Sumana

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A florist by name Sumana used to supply jasmine flowers to King Bimbisara every day in the morning. One day, when he was carrying flowers for the king, he saw the Buddha and the bhikkhus going for alms round. He felt very strong urge to offer those flowers to the Buddha. He also thought of its consequences, 'The king may exile me from the kingdom. He may grant me death-sentence. I have to choose today between the king of Magadha and the King of the Universe!' He took the right decision. With utmost devotion, he offered the flowers to the Buddha. He threw them to the sides, to the back and above the Buddha. Flower walls were formed on the sides and the back. The flowers above took the form of a canopy. As the Buddha moved along with the bhikkhus, these also moved. They stopped when the Buddha stopped. The Buddha radiated six coloured rays. Thousands of people from Rajagriha and nearby came to pay regards to the Buddha. As for Sumana, his whole body was filled with delightful happiness (piti).

Sumana's wife then approached the king, 'Sir! I have no hand in my husband's failure to provide flowers to you.' The king was himself a Srotappan. Instead of getting angry on Sumana, he appreciated the offering made to the Buddha. He came out of the palace and provided almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus.

After the meal, the Buddha returned back to the monastery. The king summoned Sumana to the palace and said, 'I praise you for your devotion to the Buddha and also for your courage. I congratulate you for what you have done. Take these eight-fold gifts of various kinds.'

At the monastery, Venerable Ananda asked the Buddha what benefits would accrue to Sumana. The Buddha explained, 'Because Sumana was not scared of the consequences, surrendered his life to me and honoured me, he will not be reborn in any of the lower forms of existence (apaya). One day, he will be released from the cycle of birth and death and become Sumana Buddha.'



**Verse 69: Madhu vā maññati bālo yāva pāpaṃ na paccati
Yadā ca paccati pāpaṃ atha bālo dukkhaṃ nigacchati.**

Verse 69: So long as an evil deed does not ripen, the fool thinks it as honey. But when it ripens, the fool comes to grief.

Evil-doers come to grief

Story of bhikkhuni Uppala Vanna

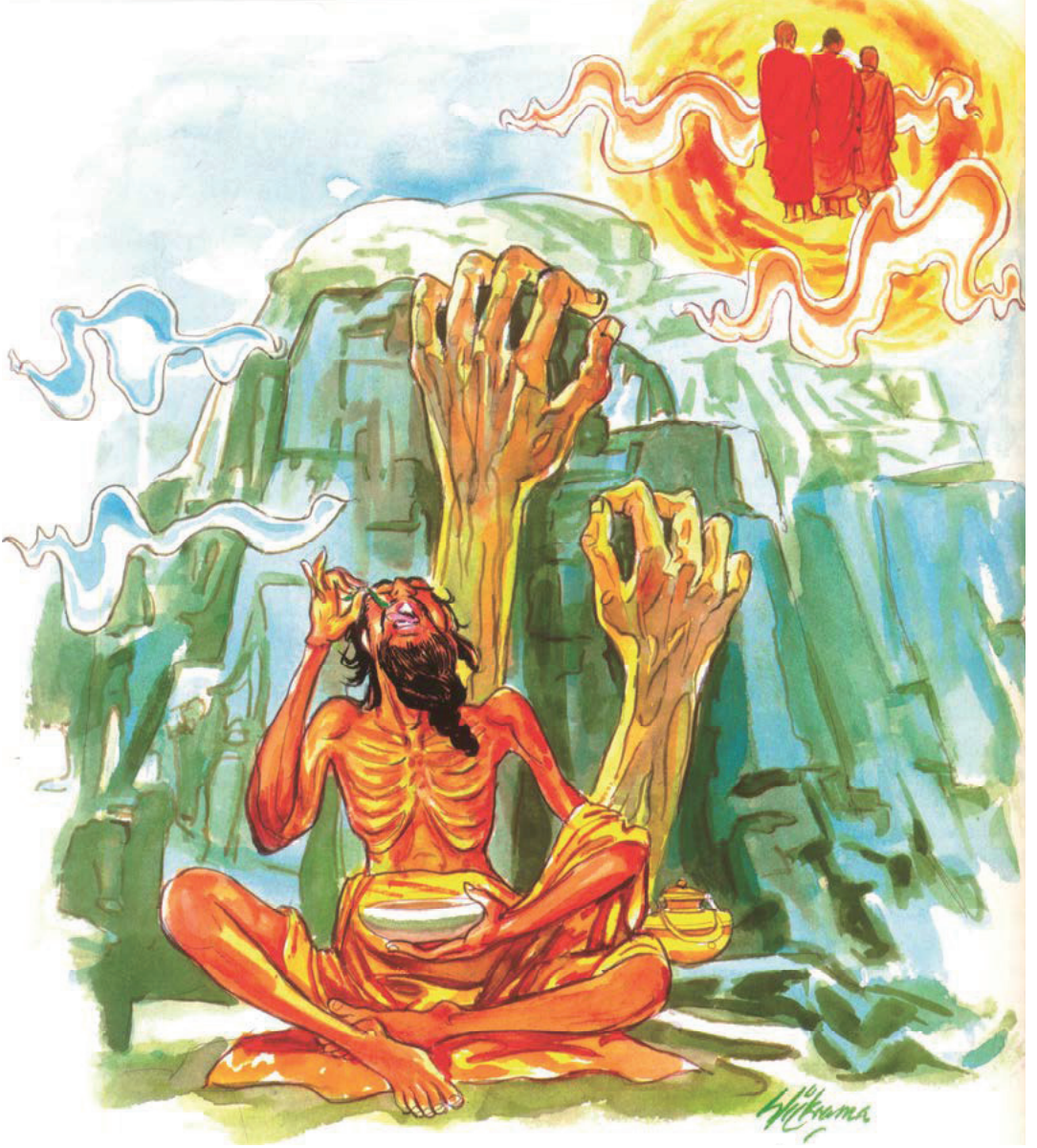
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once there lived in Sravasti the daughter of a very rich man of a well-known family. Because she was very beautiful, with looks as tender and sweet as that of the blue lotus, she was called 'Uppala Vanna.' The fame of her beauty spread far and wide. There were many suitors: princes, rich men and many more. Her father thought, 'I shall not be able to fulfil the wishes of all. I must find some way to get out of this difficulty.'

Because of her past karma, she became a bhikkhuni and joined the Order of the Bhikkhunis of the Buddha. One day, after lighting a lamp, she fixed her mind on the flame and meditated on it. Soon, she attained Arahant hood.

Sometime later, she moved to Andhavana (Dark forest). One day, when she had gone out for alms round, her cousin, Nanda came to her hut and hid himself below her bed. Nanda had been in love with her even before she became a bhikkhuni. Now his intention was to take over her by force. As she had just come in from the sunlight, she was unable to see him. Nanda came out and moved towards her. She told him, 'Do not be foolish! Do not harm me. Do not molest me.' But Nanda did not stop at that. He committed the grave crime and left her. As if unable to bear his evil act, the earth opened up. Nanda was swallowed away, to be born in Avici hell. He had to suffer for a long time there.

When the Buddha heard of this incidence, he sent for King Pasendi of Kosala. He told him the dangers and difficulties the bhikkhunis, staying in the forests, had to face from irresponsible persons. The king got monasteries for the bhikkhunis built within the cities. From that time onwards, they lived in the cities only.



**Verse 70: Māse māse kusaggena bālo bhuñjetha bhojanaṃ
Na so saṅkhata dhammānaṃ kalaṃ agghati solasiṃ**

Verse 70: Month after month, a fool may eat only as much food as can be picked up on the tip of a kusa grass blade, but his merit is not worth a sixteenth part of those who have comprehended the Truth.

Realisation is far better than fasting Story of ascetic Jambuka

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

In the family of a rich man of Sravasti, a son was born with peculiar habits. This was due to his past karma. He lived naked, slept on the floor instead of bed and ate human excreta instead of rice etc. His father sent him to the ajivikas, the naked ascetics. But when they came to know about his habits, they also expelled him. In the night, he ate human excreta secretly. In the day time he stood on one leg with mouth open saying, 'I live only on air. I stand on one leg only as I do not want to put weight on the earth.' On this account, he was known as Jambuka, a jackal. Many people believed in what he said. They came to him with offerings. He refused to accept it and said, 'I live only on air.' If people insisted, he took just a little bit with the blade of grass and said, 'This is enough. Now you may go. You will have enough of merit.'

One day, in his morning meditation, the Buddha saw that Jambuka had the potential to attain Arahant hood. Therefore, he decided to help him. He went to him in the evening and asked for a place to spend the night. Jambuka pointed him towards a mountain cave where he was himself staying. In the night, the devas came to pay regards to the Buddha. There was a lot of radiance near the cave. In the morning, Jambuka came to the Buddha and asked him about the brightness. The Buddha replied, 'The devas had come in the night to pay their regards to me.' Then Jambuka told him, 'You must be a truly great spiritual being that the devas came to pay their respect to you. So far as I am concerned, I have done tapasya (austerity) for the last fifty-five years, stood with open mouth on one leg but no deva has come to pay regards to me.' Then the All-Knower replied, 'Jambuka! You may deceive the whole world but you cannot deceive me. I know that you have been eating human excreta for years and sleeping on the ground.'

Further the Buddha told him, 'Do you know why you have picked up these peculiar habits? In one of your previous births, during the time of Kassapa Buddha, you prevented a monk from entering a house for almsfood. You also threw away the plate of food, when you were asked to take it to the monk.' Jambuka realised his folly that he was fooling others. He fell down at the feet of the Master. The Buddha gave him a piece of cloth to cover his body. Then the Buddha gave a discourse. At the end of it, he became an Arahant. He joined the Sangha on the spot. Soon afterwards, pupils of Jambuka arrived from Anga and Magadha. They were surprised to find that their teacher had joined the Order of the Buddha. To them, the Buddha explained, 'Though your teacher has been living in austerity yet it was not worth even one-sixteenth part of his present practice and achievement.'



**Verse 71: Na hi pāpaṃ kataṃ kammaṃ sajjū khiraṃ' va muccati
Ḍahantaṃ bālam anveti bhasmācchanno'va pāvako.**

Verse 71: An evil deed may not bear the fruit immediately, just as milk does not curdle into yoghurt at once. But it chases the fool, like the burning coal-fire concealed in the ashes.

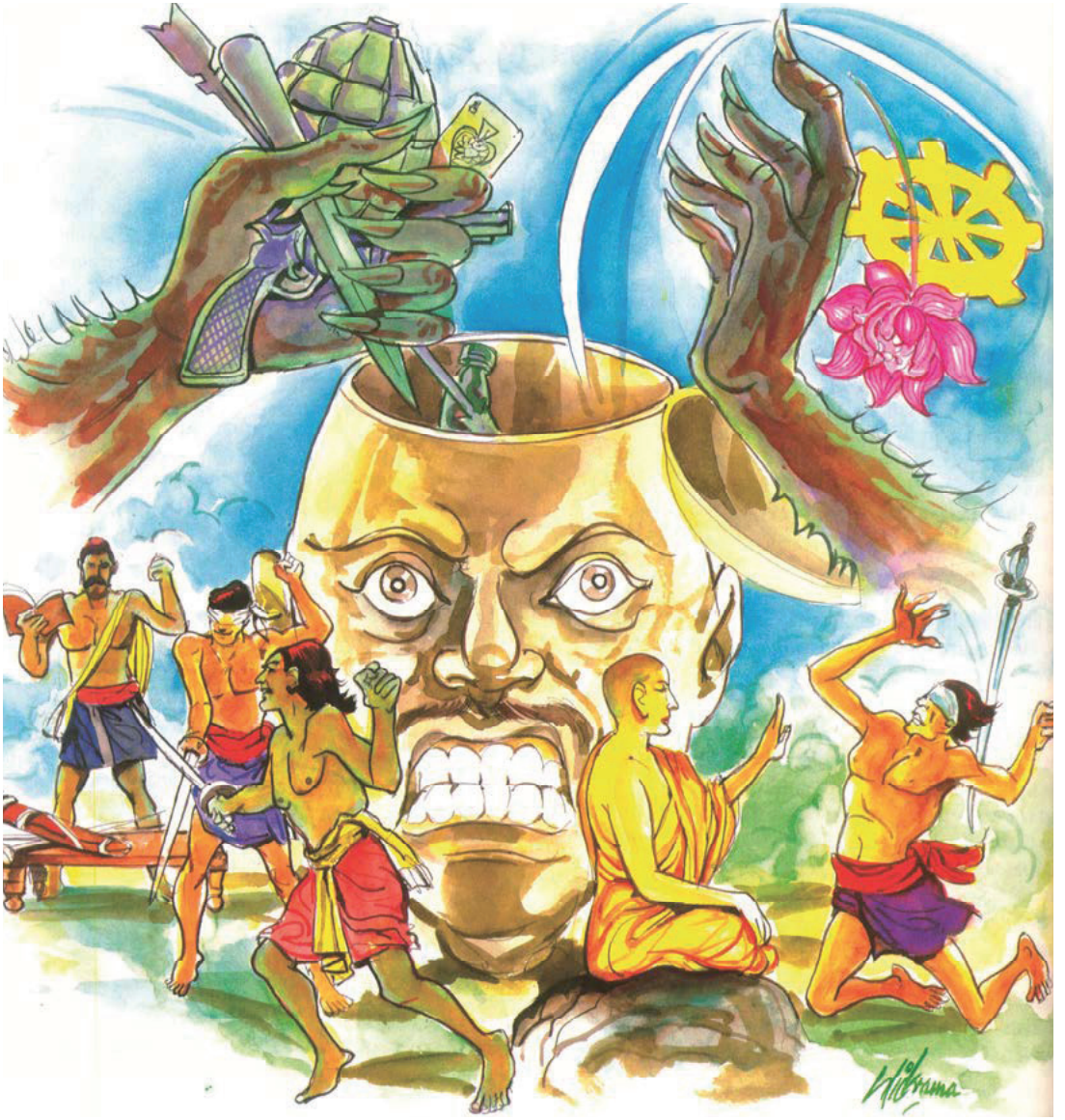
Evil shows its effect at the right moment Story of a ghost with snake's body

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, Venerable Lakkhana and Venerable Maha Moggallana descended from the vulture peak for almsfood in Rajagriha. On seeing something strange, Ven Moggallana smiled. Now the practice is that when Arahants or the Buddhas smile, it is not an expression of humour. Rather, it is a sign to one who is accompanying them to ask the reason of smile.

Lakkhana asked him the reason of smile, to which he replied, 'Brother! This is not the right time to ask this question. Ask this question when we are at the monastery in the presence of the Buddha.' On reaching the monastery, bhikkhu Lakkhana repeated his question. Moggallana explained, 'I smiled because I saw a preta-ghost with the head of a human being and the body of a snake.' The Buddha pointed out, 'I also saw this preta-ghost on the day of the Enlightenment. But I did not mention it so far because some may not believe it to be true. They might create evil karma for themselves. I did not mention it out of compassion for them.'

The monks wanted to know the story of the snake-ghost. The Buddha told them, 'This is the story of the period of one of the Pachchekabuddhas. The Pachchekabuddha lived at a place near Benaras. People, going to the monastery to pay respects to him had to pass through the field of a farmer. The farmer ploughed the field on the wayside but the people going to see the Pachchekabuddha trampled it. He tried to prevent them from doing so. But he did not succeed. So, one day, when the monk had gone to the city for alms round, he broke all his utensils and set fire to his hut. Consequently, the Venerable had to go away from that place. His followers became very angry and said, 'This is the man who forced our Teacher to leave this place. Now we will not be able to visit him regularly. Seize him.' Angry mob beat the farmer. As a result, he died. He was reborn in Avichi hell and subsequently as the snake-ghost.'



**Verse 72: Yāvadeva anathhāya ñattam bālassa jāyati
Hanti bālassa sukkaṃsaṃ muddham assa vipātayaṃ.**

Verse 72: A fool acquires skill for his own ruin only. It destroys his bright side by unbalancing his mind (literally breaking his head).

Prosperity ruins the fool Story of Satthi Kuta Peta

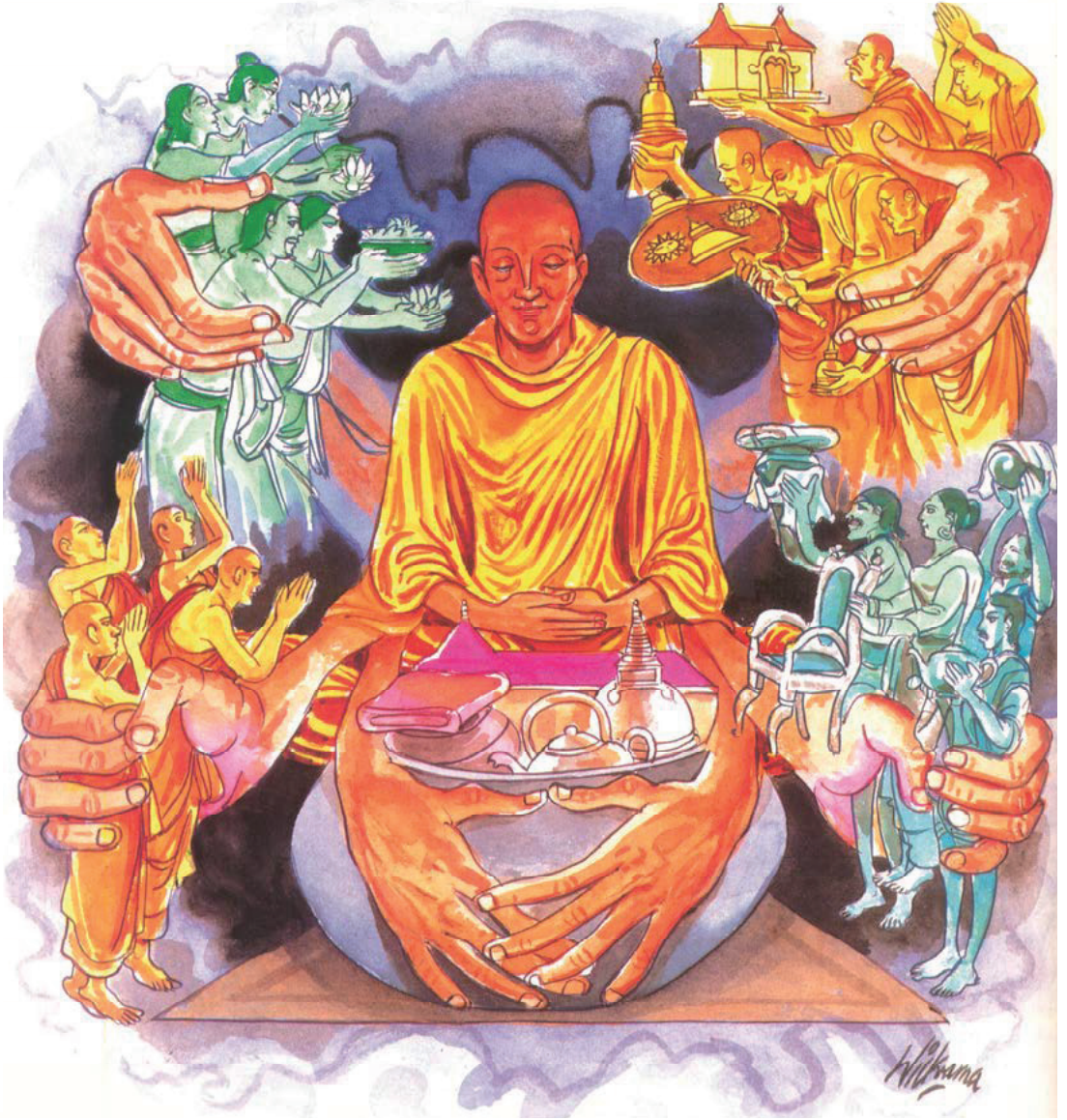
Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

On another occasion, Venerable Lakkhana and Venerable Maha Moggallana went round Rajagriha for almsfood. On seeing something strange, Moggallana smiled. Lakkhana asked him the reason of it. He replied, 'Brother! This is not the right time to ask this question. Ask it when we are at the monastery in the presence of the Buddha.'

On reaching the monastery, Moggallana explained, 'I smiled because, on the way, I saw a preta-ghost named Satthi Kuta. Fire balls were falling and breaking into small pieces on his head.' The Buddha pointed out, 'I also saw this preta-ghost on the day of the Enlightenment. But I did not mention it so far because some may not believe it to be true. They might create evil karma for themselves. I did not mention it out of compassion for them.'

The monks wanted to know the story of the preta-ghost. The Buddha then told the story to them, 'In one of his previous lives, Satthi Kuta was very skilful in throwing stones. One day, he sought permission from his teacher to test his skill. His teacher told him, "Do not hit a cow or a human being. Otherwise, you may have to pay compensation for the losses. You should look for some other targets." Now at that time, Pachchekabuddha named Sunetta resided near the city of Benaras. When Satthi Kuta saw him entering the city for almsfood, he argued to himself, "This man has neither mother nor father. If I hit him, I shall not be asked to pay any compensation. I can, therefore, try my hand on him." He threw a stone aiming it at his right ear. The stone entered the right ear and came out of the left. The monk was seriously injured and suffered severe pain. He could not continue with the alms round. He reached back the monastery through the air. On reaching there, he passed into Nirvana.'

Monks asked the Buddha, 'What happened to Satthi Kuta?' He replied, 'When people came to know that he was responsible for the death of the monk, they became very angry. They reacted, "This is the wicked man who hit our teacher, the Pachchekabuddha. Catch him!" Immediately thereafter, they beat him to death. He was reborn in Avichi hell. His evil karma has not been exhausted. He is reborn as a ghost on the vulture peak.'



**Verse 73: Asataṃ bhāvanam iccheyya purekkhāraṅ ca bhikkhusu
Āvāsesu ca issariyaṃ pūjā parakulesu ca.**

Verse 73: The foolish monk entertains ambition for praise for qualities he does not have. He wants to be treated superior amongst the monks. He seeks authority in the monasteries and honour from the laymen.

Be not a fool

Story of Chitta: a lay disciple

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Venerable Mahanama was one of the first five disciples (Panchabhikkhus) of the Buddha who received his sermons at Sarnath, Varanasi. He was the son of Amritodan and elder brother of Aniruddha. One day, as he was going on alms round, he met a householder named Chitta. He invited him to his house for alms. There, after listening to the discourse of the monk, he attained Srotappan stage. Later, Chitta made a monastery in his garden, Ambatthaka Grove and donated it to the Sangha. One monk, Sudhamma was installed as the resident monk to take care of the monastery.

On another day, two Chief Disciples of the Buddha, Sariputta and Moggallana came to the monastery. After listening to Sariputta's discourse, Chitta attained Sakridagami, the second stage of the Sainthood. He invited them for almsfood along with Sudhamma. But Sudhamma refused the invitation saying, 'You have invited me after you have invited the other two monks.' Chitta kept on pleading him to come but he declined the invitation.

Early next morning, he went to Chitta's house to see the arrangements. When requested to come in, he refused saying, 'I shall not sit as I have to go on alms round.' When he saw the offerings to be given to the monks, he became greatly envious. He could not check himself and said, 'I do not want to stay in your monastery any longer.' Saying so, he left his house. Chitta requested him three times to stay back but all the times he refused.



**Verse 74: Mam eva kata maññantu gihi pabbajitā ubho
Mam ev'a ativasā assu kiccā kicesu kismici Iti bālassa sañkappo icchā māno ca
vaḍḍhti.**

Verse 74: 'Let, both laymen and monks think that things are done because of me and obey me in all matters, great or small'. Such being the thoughts of the fool, his greed and pride keep on growing only.

The fool is slave of desires

Story of Chitta: a lay disciple

Finally, Sudhamma left the house, went to the Buddha and narrated to him all that had happened between him and Chitta. The Buddha admonished him, 'You have offended a lay disciple who is endowed with devotion and generosity. You must go back to him, own up your mistake and seek his pardon.'

Having put the entire blame on the monk, the Buddha sent him back to beg pardon of Chitta. The monk did what he was told to do and said, 'Lay Disciple! It was my fault. Please pardon me.' Chitta felt that Sudhamma should be made to realise his mistake and, therefore, did not accept the apology and said, 'I will not pardon you.' Having failed to obtain pardon from Chitta, he returned to the Buddha for the second time. The Buddha, who knew that Chitta would finally pardon the monk, thought, 'This monk is very stubborn in his approach. He is very egoistic.' So, he further said, 'My son, a good bhikkhu should have no attachments. A bhikkhu should not be so egoistic that he says, "This is my monastery, this is my place, these are my disciples etc." If one has such thoughts then his covetousness and pride will increase instead of decreasing.'

After listening to the admonition, Sudhamma bowed before the Buddha, rose from there, went near the lay disciple, accepted his fault again and begged for pardon. The lay disciple pardoned him this time and said to the monk, 'Sir! I pardon you. If I have committed any mistake, please pardon me also.' The bhikkhu kept on pondering seriously on the admonition given by the Buddha and in a few days attained Arahant hood.



**Verse 75: Aññā hi lābhūpanisā aññā nibbānagāmini
 Evam etaṃ abhiññāya bhikkhu Buddhassa sāvako.
 Sakkāraṃ nābhinandeyya vivekam anubrūhaye.**

Verse 75: Surely, the path to worldly gain is one and the path to Nibbana quite another. Realising this properly, the bhikkhu, the disciple of the Buddha, should not rejoice with worldly gains but develop a life of detachment.

There are two Paths

Story of novice monk Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Tissa was the son of a rich man from Sravasti. At the age of seven, he became a novice monk under Venerable Sariputta. While he was staying at the Jetavana monastery, he took a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went to the forest monastery. Whenever any villager offered anything to him, he blessed him saying, 'May you be liberated from the ills of life!' He did not say more and moved away in his direction. While he stayed in the monastery, he worked diligently and in three months' time attained Arahant hood.

After the vassa period, Sariputta, Moggallana and other senior monks paid a visit to Tissa. The villagers requested Sariputta to deliver a discourse but he declined. Instead, he asked Tissa to deliver the talk. The villagers again requested Sariputta to assign this work to any other monk as Tissa would only say, 'May you be happy! May you be liberated from the ills of life!' But Sariputta told Tissa, 'Tissa, Tell them how to get liberated from the cycle of birth and death.' Thus, in obedience to his teacher's wishes, he came to the platform and delivered a talk on the path leading to Arahantship and Nibbana etc.

Dawn was approaching, when he finished his discourse. Sariputta praised him profusely for his excellent exposition. The villagers, too, were very much impressed. They were surprised that Tissa knew the Dhamma so well, and considered themselves lucky, to have Tissa amongst them. There were some, who were unhappy. They felt that Tissa should have taught the Dhamma well to them in the past also.

The Buddha, with his supernatural power, saw these two groups of villagers from the Jetavana monastery and appeared before them to clear up the misunderstanding amongst the villagers. The Buddha arrived when the villagers were preparing the almsfood for the bhikkhus. So, they had the opportunity to offer almsfood to the Buddha as well. After the meal, the Buddha addressed the villagers, 'O devotees, you are lucky to have Tissa amongst you. It is only because of him that I, myself, my chief Disciples and others now pay you a visit.' These words made them understand how fortunate they were to have monk Tissa with them. They did not waste time thinking about what had happened in the past.

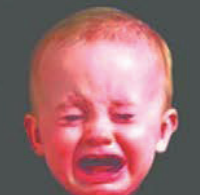
DHAMMAPADA BALA VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

The Wise

PANDITA VAGGA



Chapter VI

PANDITA VAGGA

The Wise

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PANDITA VAGGA

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**Verse 76: Nidhinam' va pavattaram yam passe vajja dassinam
Niggayha vadiṃ medhāviṃ tādisaṃ paṇḍitaṃ bhaje
Tādisaṃ bhajamānassa seyyo hoti na pāpiyo.**

Verse 76: One should associate with a wise man even if he points out our faults and rebukes us, as a man follows a guide who points to some hidden treasure. To a person who follows him, it will be of advantage and not disadvantage.

Be with the wise

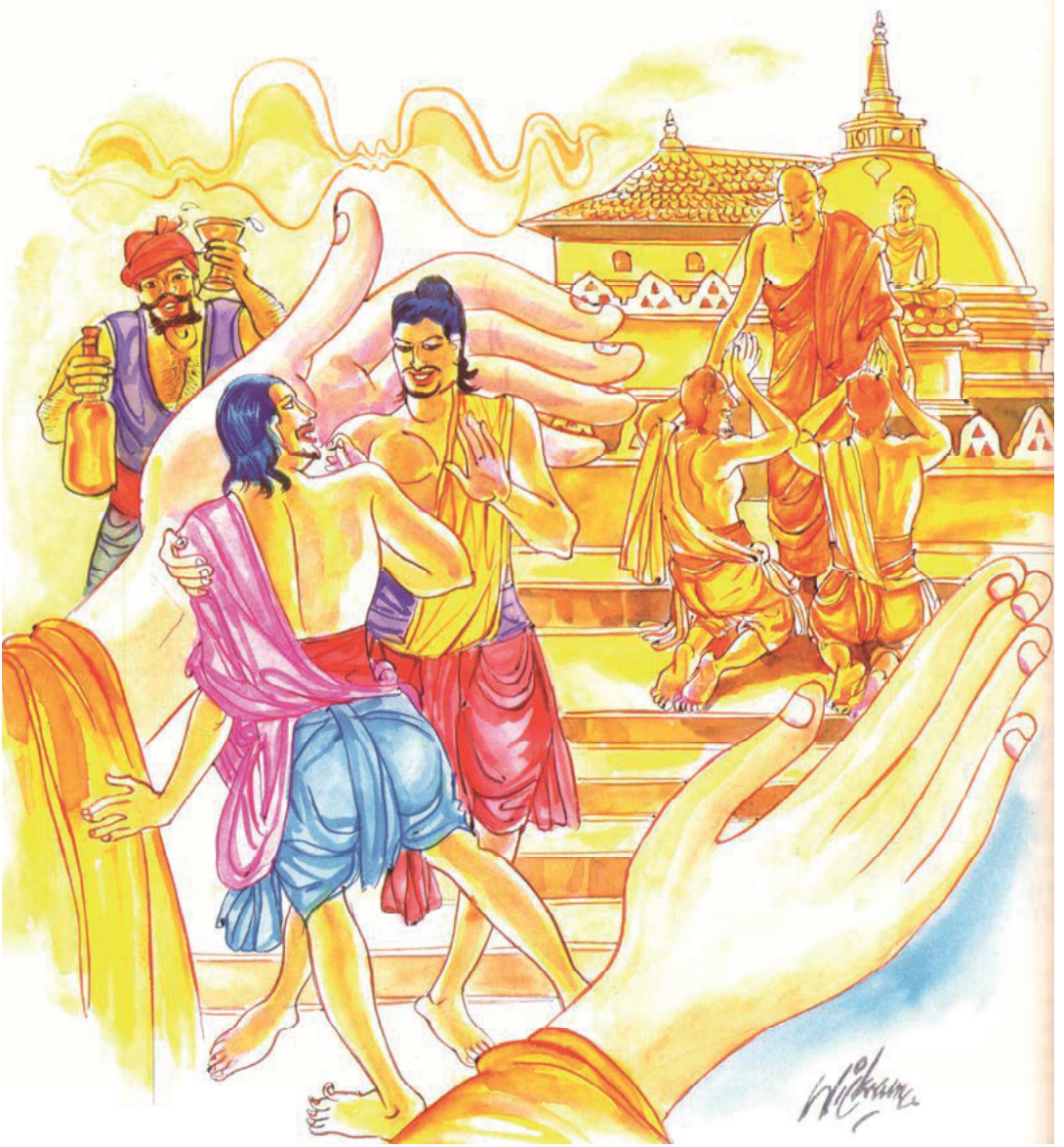
Story of a poor man, Radha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

During the Buddha's period, a poor, old Brahmin named Radha lived in the monastery along with the monks. He did the odd jobs like cutting the grass, sweeping the rooms etc. The bhikkhus treated him well but were not willing to admit him to the Sangha. He had, of course, strong desire to join the Sangha.

One day, early in the morning, in his survey of the world, the Buddha saw the Brahmin in the net and knew that he was ready to attain Arahant hood. So, he asked him if the bhikkhus took care of him. Radha reported to the Buddha, 'Sir! The bhikkhus provide me food to eat but do not admit me to the Sangha.' The Buddha then called all the bhikkhus and asked them, 'Do you remember any good deed done by this old man to you any time?' Then Sariputta replied, 'Yes Sir! I remember. He gave me some quantity of rice sometime ago.' 'Then should you not help one to get liberated who has benefitted you?' Sariputta agreed to ordain him as a bhikkhu and he was admitted to the Order. Sariputta guided this bhikkhu in meditation and he seriously followed the instructions. Within a few days, the bhikkhu attained Arahant hood.

When the Buddha came to see the bhikkhus next time, they reported to him how strictly Radha had followed the teachings of Sariputta. To them, the Buddha replied, 'A bhikkhu should be attentive to guidance like Radha and should not resent if rebuked for any fault or failing.'



**Verse 77: Ovadeyyānusāseyya, asabbhā ca nivāraye
Sataṃ hi so piyo hoti, asataṃ hoti appiyo.**

Verse 77: The wise man should admonish and advise others. He should prevent others from doing evil deeds. Such a person is liked by the virtuous but is disliked by the wicked.

Listen to the advisors

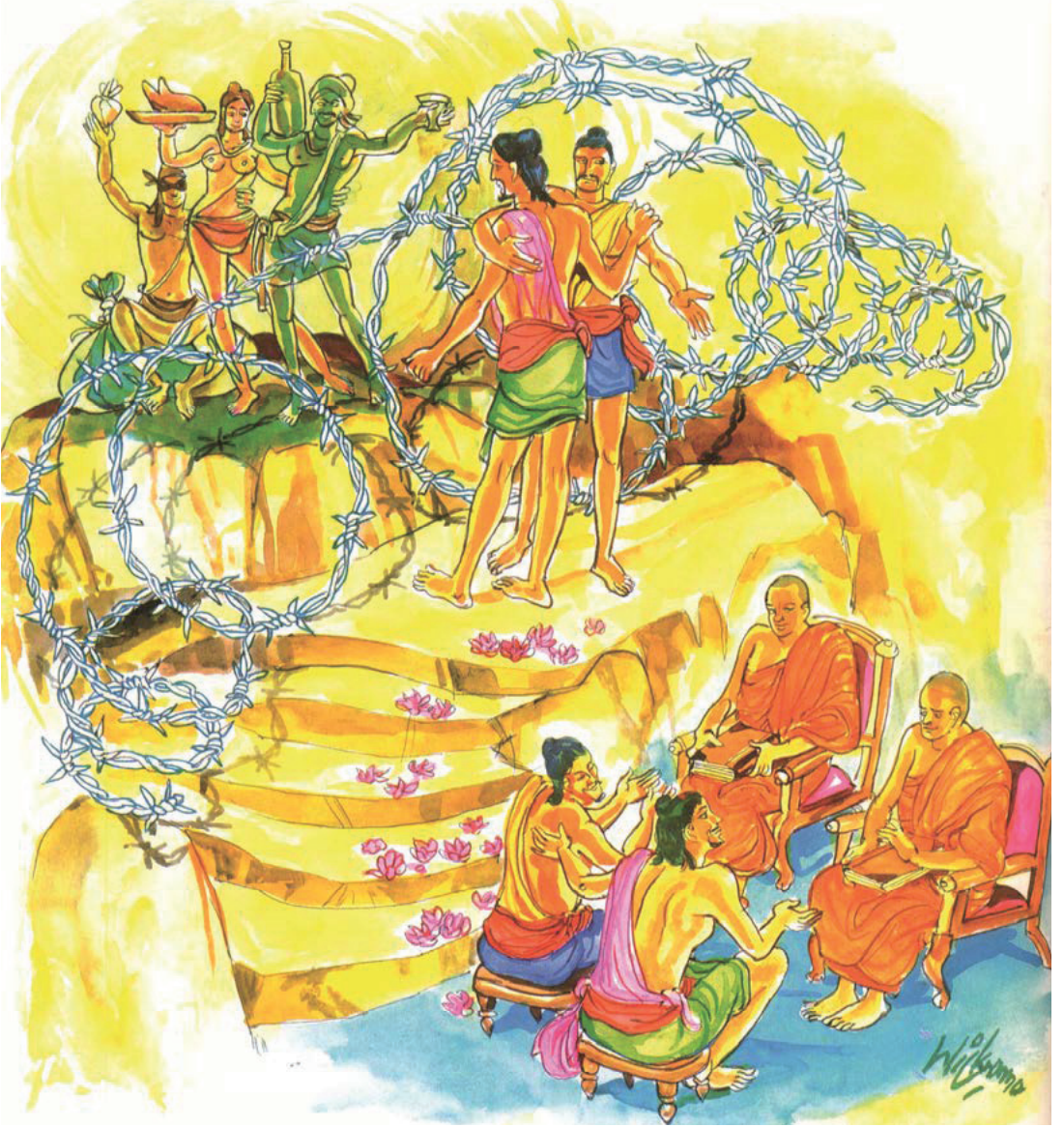
Story of Assaji and Punabbasuka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, bhikkhu Assaji, Punabbasuka and their disciples were staying in village Kitagiri. Though they were required to observe the rules of Vinaya strictly, they were not doing so. They planted fruit bearing trees and utilised its sale proceeds towards their personal gain. They also made unnecessary noise in the monastery which disturbed the serious bhikkhus in meditation.

The Buddha learnt about it and sent his two senior disciples, Sariputta and Moggallana to correct them to change their behaviour. He instructed them, 'Admonish and instruct those who will obey you. Expel those who will not obey your commands. He who instructs and admonishes is liked by the wise but disliked by the unwise.' After admonition given by Sariputta and Moggallana, most of them changed their ways of living. There were some who returned to the life of laymen.

Note : It is so much true in the society today! We often see that a wise man that warns and prevents someone from doing anti-social acts, is liked by the virtuous but disliked by the wicked.



**Verse 78: Na bhaje pāpake mitte na bhaje purisādhame
Bhajetha mitte kalyāṇe bhajetha purisuttame.**

Verse 78: Neither associate with bad friends, nor with mean men. Associate only with good friends and the noble men.

Cultivate good friendship Story of bhikkhu Channa

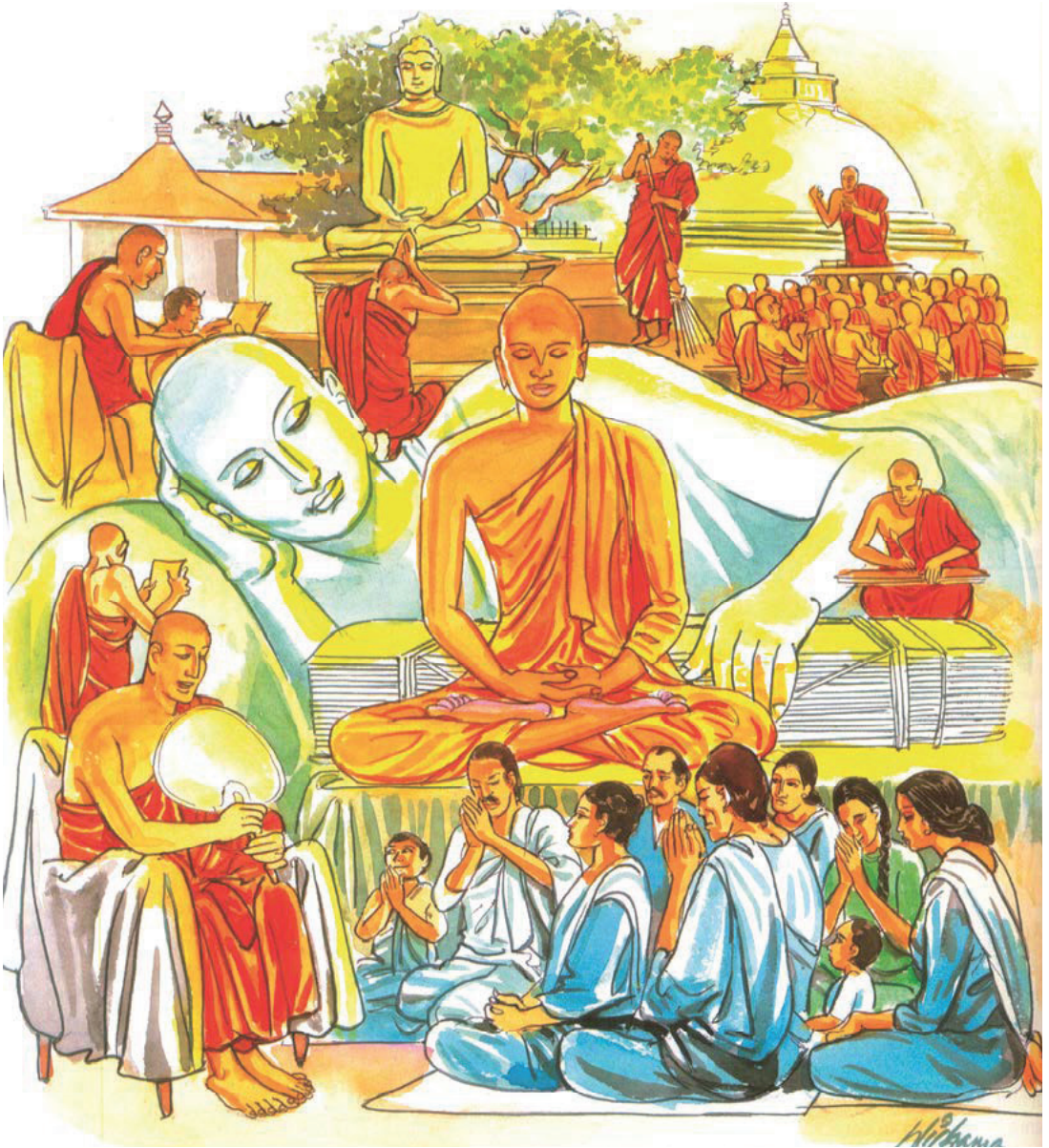
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Channa, the attendant, accompanied Prince Siddhartha when he set out on Mahabhinishkramana (the Great Renunciation). When the Prince attained the Buddhahood and the Sangha was established, Channa also joined it as a monk. Although Channa was a bhikkhu, he was very arrogant and rigid. He always felt that he was superior to others as he had longer association with the Buddha. He often said, 'I was the only person who accompanied the Master when he left for the forest. But now Sariputta and Moggallana claim that they are the Chief Disciples. They hold the authority and control us.'

When the Buddha pulled him up for his behaviour, he kept silent for sometime but again started to taunt the two Chief Disciples. The Buddha admonished him several times to change his attitude saying, 'Channa, these two noble bhikkhus are good friends to you. You should associate with them and be on good terms with them.'

In spite of repeated advice, Channa did as it pleased him and continued to scold and abuse the two Chief Disciples. The Buddha said that Channa would not improve immediately but he would definitely improve after the Mahaparinibbana of the Master. On the eve of his passing away, the Buddha called Ananda and instructed him to discipline Channa by imposing 'Brahmadanda' on him. The bhikkhus would simply ignore him and not invite him for anything.

After the Parinibbana of the Buddha, Channa learnt about the restrictions imposed on him. He was so shocked with the punishment that he fainted three times. He felt deep and bitter remorse for having done wrong. He admitted his mistakes and apologised before the bhikkhus. From that moment onwards, he changed his ways and also obeyed all instructions in his meditation practice and soon attained Arahamthood.



**Verse 79: Dhammapiti sukhaṃ seti vipvasannaena cetasā
Ariyappavedite dhamme sadā ramati paṇḍiṭṭo.**

Verse 79: One, who drinks the spirit of Dhamma lives happily with a serene mind. A wise man is always delighted on hearing the Dhamma, revealed by the Noble Ones.

Drink Dhamma: Live happily Story of King Maha Kappina

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

In the down hills of the Himalayas was the kingdom of Kukkutavati. Maha Kappina lived there as the king with his wife, Anoja. He had a number of ministers under him. On one occasion, the king and his ministers met some merchants from Sravasti in a park. They learnt from them about the Triple Gems, i.e. the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. The king and his ministers were looking for a real Teacher. In the Buddha, they found one and set out for Sravasti to meet him.

That day the Buddha, in his supernatural vision, found that the king and his ministers would be coming towards Sravasti, join the Sangha and attain Arahant hood. The Buddha came out of Sravasti and waited for them under a banyan tree on the banks of the river, Chandrabhaga. When they saw the Buddha with six coloured rays radiating from his body, they approached him and paid homage to him. The Buddha then delivered a discourse to them. On hearing the discourse, they all attained the Srotappan stage of Sainthood and requested the Buddha to join the Holy Sangha. The Buddha said, **'Ethi monk' (means 'Come here, monk') and they all became bhikkhus.** Meanwhile, queen Anoja came to know about the king's departure for Sravasti. She also left for Sravasti along with wives of the ministers. They also reached the place where the Buddha was sitting, with halo of six colours of rays round him and paid homage to him.

At that time, the Buddha, with his supernormal power, made all the male members disappear so that the women did not see their husbands with shaven heads and yellow robes. Otherwise, their minds would have been disturbed and they would not be able to realise the Dhamma. Not seeing the husbands, the queen asked where the king was. The Buddha replied, 'Just sit down. You will be able to see them here and now.' The Buddha then delivered them a discourse, on hearing which the queen and companions attained Srotappan stage and the king and the ministers attained Arahant hood. Now the queen and her inmates were made to see the newly admitted monks and were overjoyed to see them. They all were also admitted to the Order of the Bhikkhunis.

On return to the Jetavana monastery with the Buddha, the king would often say, 'Aho Sukham! Aho Sukham! (O! What a happiness)!' The monks complained to the Buddha that the king still thought of the pleasures of a king. The Enlightened One clarified, 'My son Kappina, having had the taste of the Dhamma, lives happily with a serene mind. He is referring to Nibbana as his happiness and not to the worldly pleasures.'



**Verse 80: Udakaṃ hi nayanti nettikā usukārā namayanti tejanaṃ
Dāruṃ namayanti tacchakā attānaṃ damayanti paṇḍitā.**

Verse 80: Irrigators direct the course of water, arrow-makers straighten the arrows; carpenters bend the wood. Likewise, the wise men control and discipline themselves.

Control yourselves Story of Samanera Pandita's achievements

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Pandita, aged seven years, was the son of a rich and well known man of Sravasti. On the eighth day after becoming samanera, he was following monk Sariputta, his teacher, for almsfood when he saw some farmers irrigating their fields by directing water to any place they wanted to, by making drains through it. He asked his Teacher, 'Sir, can water which has no mind be directed to any place one wants?' 'Yes Pandita.' The samanera then saw some arrow makers heating the arrows in fire and straightening them. Next, they moved to carpenters and saw them cutting, sawing and planing the wood and converting it into wheel cart etc.

Seeing these three examples, he pondered, 'If water, which has no mind, can be guided to anywhere one wants, if bamboo, which has no mind can be straightened, if wood, which is without mind can be converted into useful things, then why should I, having consciousness, not be able to tame my mind and practise Tranquility and Insight Meditation?'

Immediately after this, he requested his teacher, Venerable Sariputta for his permission to return to the monastery for meditation. He kept on pondering on the dissolution of the body. Sakka and other devas also helped him by maintaining quiet atmosphere in the monastery. Before the noon meal, he attained Anagami fruition, the third stage of Sainthood. At that time, Sariputta was bringing food for the samanera. The Buddha, from his insight vision, saw that if Pandita was permitted to pursue his meditation, he would soon attain Arahamhood. The Buddha himself sat outside the room of Pandita so that Sariputta did not enter the room and disturb the novice. Instead, he engaged Sariputta in some questions and answers. He continued with the conversation till the samanera attained Arahamhood. This was on the eighth day of his becoming samanera.

In this connection, the Buddha, during the evening meeting of the monks said, **'When one is practising the Dhamma earnestly, even Sakka and the devas give protection and guard him. I myself kept Sariputta engaged so that Pandita does not get disturbed.'**



**Verse 81: Selo yathā ekaghano vātena na samirati
Evaṃ nindā pasamsāsu na samiñjanti paṇḍitā.**

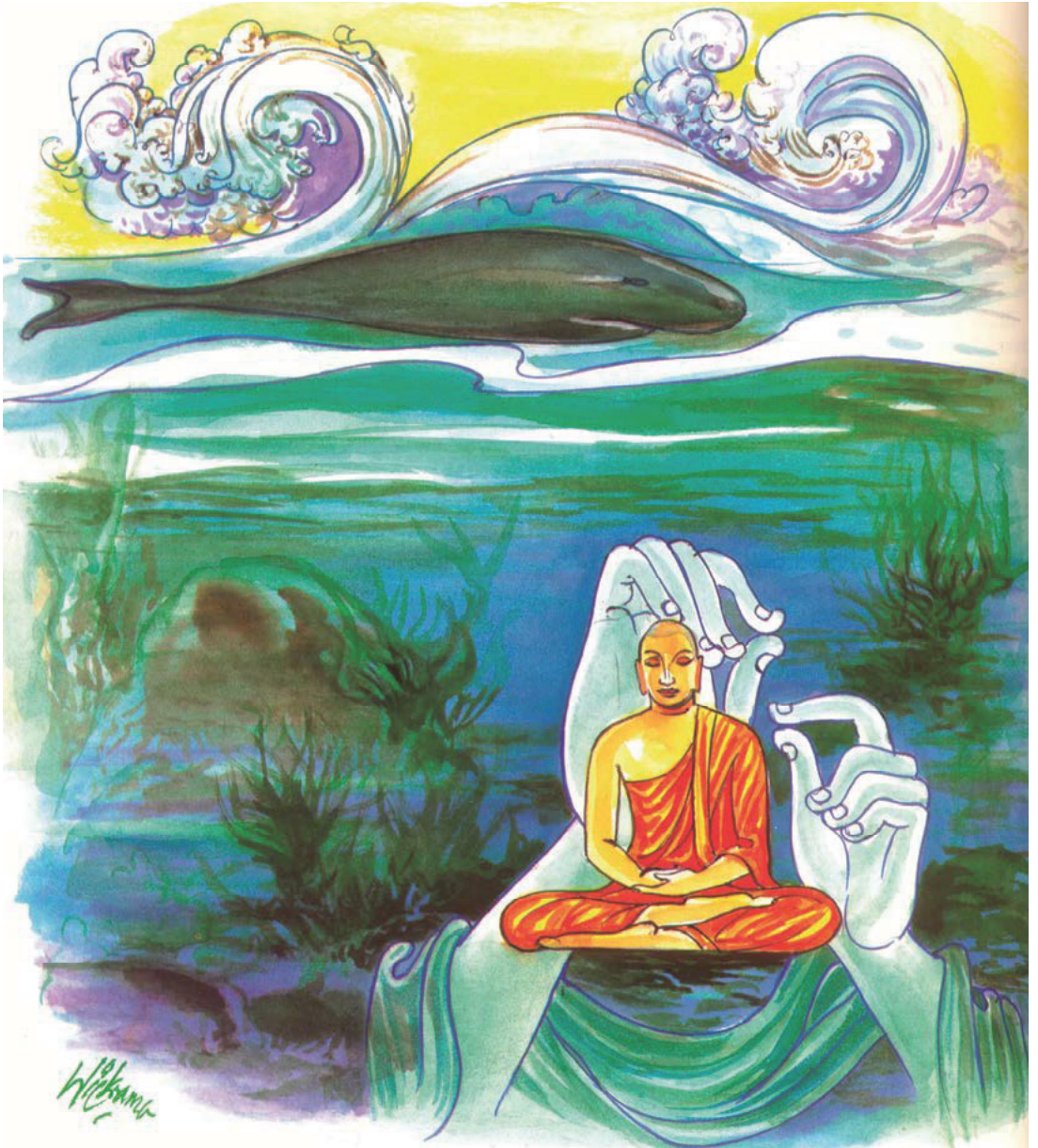
Verse 81: Just as a solid rock is unshaken by the wind, so are the wise unaffected by praise or blame.

Be as a rock Story of bhikkhu Lakuntaka Bhaddiya

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Lakuntaka Bhaddiya was a very noble monk staying in Jetavana monastery. Because he was short in height, he was known by this name. 'Lakuntaka' means the 'dwarf'. He was very good at heart. Even the young bhikkhus teased him by pulling his nose or his ear or by patting him on his head or his back. Very often they would jokingly say, 'Uncle, How are you? Are you happy, or are you bored with your life here as a bhikkhu?' Bhaddiya never retaliated in anger or abused them. In fact, his very look was exceedingly pleasing and serene to the eyes. He was large at heart.

When the Buddha was told about the immense patience of Bhaddiya, he observed, **'An Arahant never loses his temper. He has no desire to speak harshly or to think ill of others. He is like a mountain of solid rock. As a mountain rock is unshaken by the storm, so also an Arahant is unaffected by scorn or by praise.'** Only after hearing this from the Buddha, the bhikkhus came to know that Bhaddiya had attained Sainthood.



**Verse 82: Yathā' pi rahado gambhiro vipasanno anāvilo
Evaṃ dhammāni sutvāna vipasidanti paṇḍitā.**

Verse 82: On hearing the Buddha's teachings the wise become exceedingly calm and peaceful like a deep lake, still and clear.

Grasp the Dhamma Story of Lady Kana

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Kana Mata was a devoted lay disciple of the Buddha. Her daughter, Kana, was married to a man from a nearby village. While she was on a visit to her mother's house, her husband sent her message to come back. Kana Mata informed that Kana would go back in a few days. She wanted to send some cakes for her son-in-law. Next day, Kana Mata made some cakes for her son-in-law but some bhikkhus came to her door and she had to give all those cakes to them. She again made cakes on three consecutive days but everyday some bhikkhus came to visit her house and the cakes were given away to them. Kana's departure for her husband's house got postponed every day. As a result, her husband was greatly annoyed and took another woman as his wife. Kana became very bitter towards the bhikkhus. She accused them of ruining her marriage. She then abused any bhikkhu she saw. So, all the bhikkhus kept themselves away from her house.

The Buddha, knowing what had happened, one day, went to the house of Kana Mata. He sent for Kana and questioned her, 'Did my bhikkhus take what was given to them or what was not given to them?' Kana answered that the bhikkhus took only the cakes that were given to them, and then added, 'The bhikkhus are not in the wrong, only I was in the wrong.' Thus she admitted her mistake, requested for pardon and paid her respects to the Buddha. Then the Buddha gave a discourse. At the end of the discourse, Kana attained the first stage of Sainthood. On the way back, the Buddha met King Pasendi of Kosala and told him the story of Kana, her bitter attitude towards the bhikkhus and his discourse to her. The king asked the Buddha, 'Sir! Has she realised her fault? Could she see the Truth (Dhamma)?' The Buddha replied, 'Yes, I have made her realise the Dhamma. I have also made her rich spiritually.' The king gave assurance to the Buddha that he would make Kana rich in her present worldly life. The king summoned Kana to the palace. When she arrived, he made the announcement, 'Whoever can support my daughter Kana in comfort, may take her.' One of the ministers adopted Kana as his daughter and gave her all his wealth. He told her, 'You may give in charity as much as you want.' Every day Kana made offerings to the holy people who came to her house.

When the Buddha was told about Kana giving generously in charity, he said, '**Bhikkhus, the mind of Kana which was foggy and muddy, was made clean and calm after listening to the Dhamma.**'

Note: Because of this incidence, as the bhikkhus had accepted the cakes on a number of occasions when they were meant for the son-in-law, the Buddha advised the bhikkhus not to take advantage of the devotion of the lay disciples for their requisites.



**Verse 83: Sabbathā ve sappurisā cajanti na kāmakāmā lapayanti santo
Sukhena phuṭṭhā athavā dukhena na uccāvacaṃ paṇḍitā dassayanti.**

Verse 83: Wise people give up attachment for everything. The saintly people do not have craving for sensual pleasures. Whether affected by happiness or by pain, the wise people show neither elation nor depression.

Show no ups and downs

Story of bhikkhus unaffected by gain or loss

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

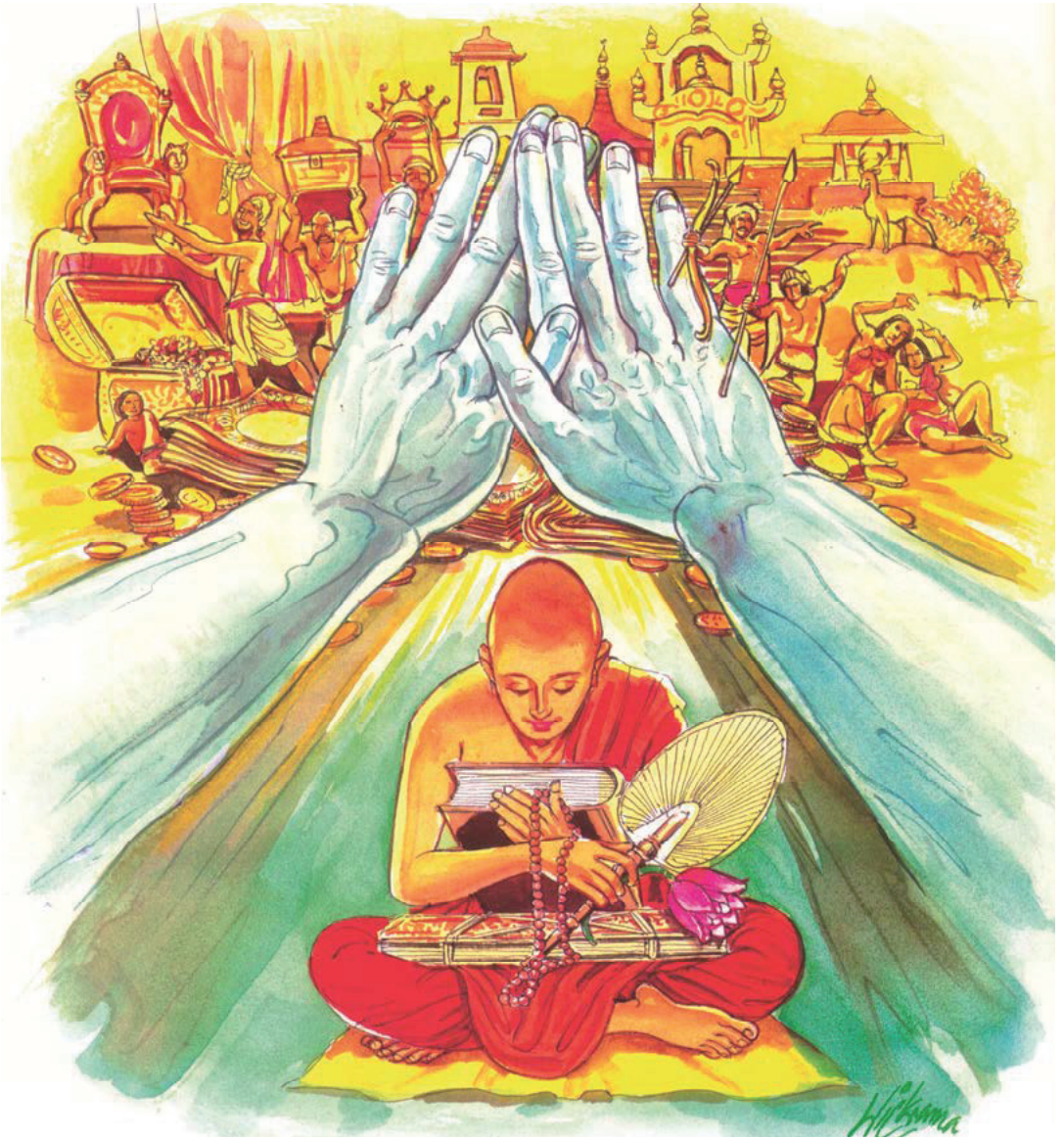
The Buddha once observed the vassa at village Veranja with many other bhikkhus, at the request of a lay disciple. When they were at Veranja, the disciple, under the influence of Mara, failed to look after them. The people of the village, who were facing a famine, could offer very little to the bhikkhus when they went to the village for alms round. Venerable Moggallana requested permission from the Buddha to bring some food from a place, through his supernatural power, others could not reach, but the Buddha refused to grant him permission. In spite of all these hardships, the bhikkhus were not disheartened. They were quite contented with the small quantity of food that the horse-traders offered them daily.

At the end of the vassa, after informing the lay disciple of Veranja, the Buddha returned to the Jetavana monastery with other bhikkhus. The people of Sravasti welcomed them with joy and offered food to them. Now during that time due to the kindness of the bhikkhus, some people were allowed to stay in the monastery. They would eat whatever was left and after eating they would go to sleep. On getting up, they would go to the river and indulge in shouting, wrestling, jumping and playing. They had, in fact, nothing to do except to create nuisance in the monastery and outside it.

One day, the bhikkhus were discussing amongst themselves, ‘These people were behaving well when they were at Veranja during the famine, when they did not get sufficient food to eat. Now they are getting sufficient food here to eat and are misbehaving themselves.’

When the Buddha heard this conversation, he said, **‘It is in the nature of the fools to get depressed when they are not well off. On the other hand, they get elated, as soon as they are in happiness. The wise people, on the other hand, are not guided by the outside happenings. They are not affected by the ups and downs of life.’**

The Buddha also clarified that in one of the previous births these people were born as donkeys and then also they used to make similar nuisance.



**Verse 84: Na attahetu na parassa hetu, Na puttamicche na dhanam na raṭṭham
Na iccheyya adhammena samiddhim attano, Sa silavā paññavā dhammiko siyā.**

Verse 84: Neither for the sake of the self nor for the sake of others, he should desire son, wealth or kingdom by wrong means. He should not seek his own success by unjust means. Then only such a person is indeed virtuous, wise and righteous.

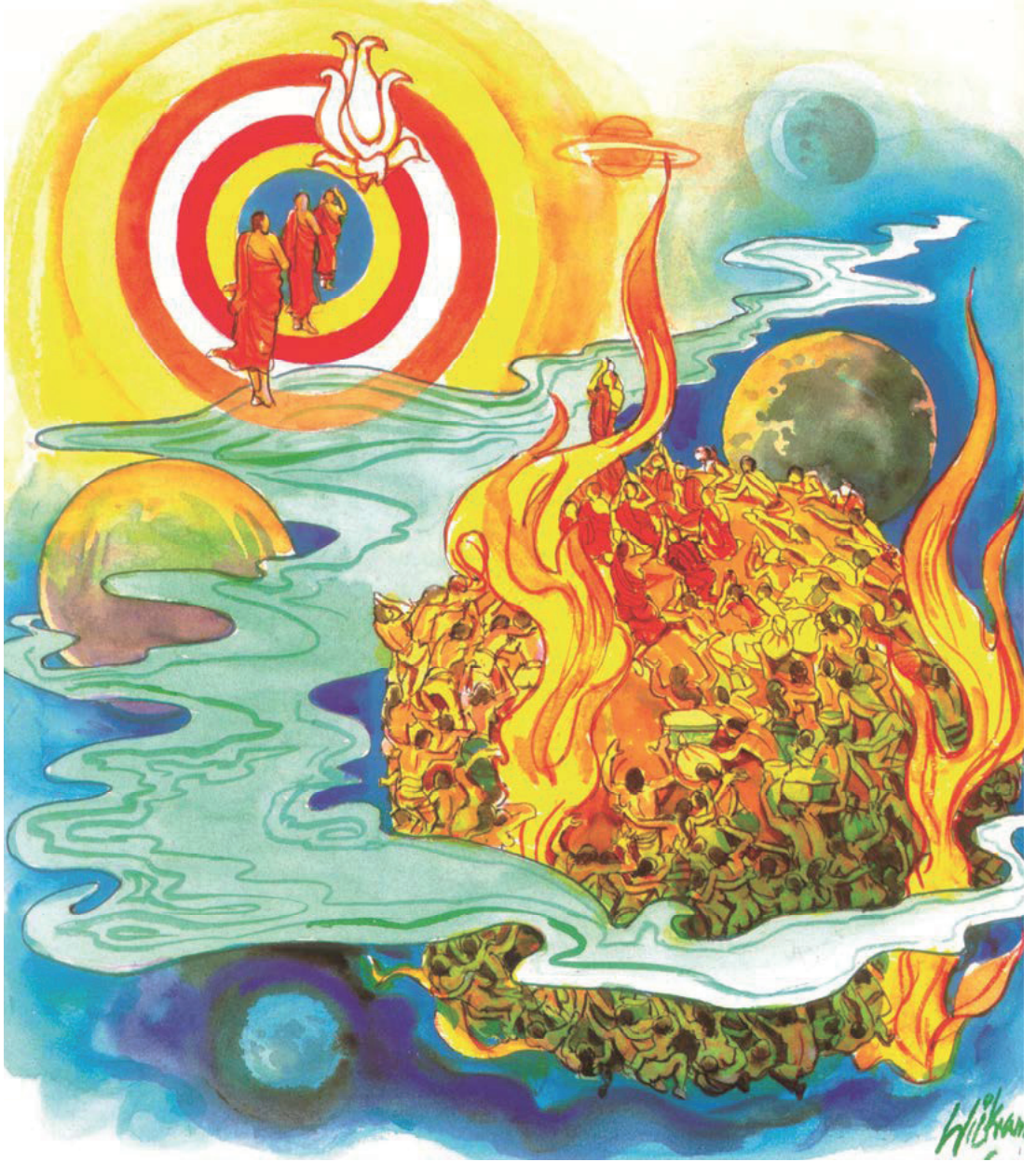
Beware of means Story of Dhammika

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Dhammika was a householder living in Sravasti with his wife. Once, he felt the impermanence of the worldly life so much that he told his pregnant wife that he wished to become a bhikkhu. His wife pleaded with him to wait till the birth of the child. When the child was born, he again requested his wife to permit him to go, but she pleaded to him to wait till the child started walking. Then Dhammika thought, 'It will be useless for me to ask my wife for her approval to join the Sangha. She will never approve it. I shall work on my own for my salvation to get out of the suffering of this samsara (world).' Having taken this decision, he left home and joined the Sangha. He took a subject of meditation from the Buddha, meditated very diligently and soon attained Arahantship.

Some years later, the monk came to his old house to teach the Dhamma to his wife and the son. The son was so moved by the discourse that he immediately joined the Sangha. He also attained Arahantship. After her son had left her, the wife thought, 'Now that my husband and the son have left the house, I would also better leave.' With this thought, she also left the worldly life and became a bhikkhuni. Subsequently, she also became an Arahant.

At the evening religious gathering, the bhikkhus explained how Dhammika attained Arahantship and through him, his son and wife also attained Arahantship. To this, the Buddha added, **'A wise man does not wish for wealth or prosperity by doing evil deeds, either for his own self or for the sake of others. He works only for his own liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara) by comprehending the Dhamma and living according to it. The liberation from birth and death has to be earned by each person for himself. Nobody else can help him.'**



**Verse 85: Appakā te manussesu ye janā pāragāmino
Athāyaṃ itarā pajā tiramevānudhāvati.**

Verse 85: Those who cross and go beyond the ocean of the world and reach the other shore Nibbana are very few. Most of the people run up and down on the bank on this side of shore.

Only a few go beyond Story of different Dhamma listeners

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha spoke these verses with reference to some people who had come to Sravasti to listen to religious discourse.

On one occasion, some of the residents of Sravasti made special offerings to the monks and with their help held a congregation for the whole night in their locality. A number of bhikkhus delivered religious talks all throughout the night. But the people did not sit attentively to listen to the discourses.

Some were overpowered by sexual urge and returned back home early. Some were attacked by the pride that they already knew much and hence left after sometime. Some were lazy and felt drowsy and half-asleep, while sitting there. There were only a few who sat seriously for the whole night and heard the discourses attentively.



**Verse 86: Ye ca kho samma dakkhāte dhamme dhammānu vattino
Te janā pāramessanti maccu dheyyaṃ suduttaraṃ.**

Verse 86: But those who follow the well-expounded Dhamma in letter and spirit will reach the other shore Nibbana, passing the kingdom of passions, very difficult to cross.

Practise Dhamma

Story of different Dhamma listeners

Next day, at dawn, the bhikkhus reported to the Buddha what had happened the previous night. The Buddha explained to the monks, **‘Most people are attached to this world. Only a very few reach the other shore (Nibbana). Of those who wish to cross over to the other side, only a handful, are successful. Those who are left behind, keep on running along the shore. Those who have not been able to reach liberation continue to be caught in the cycle of birth and death (Samsara).** The kingdoms, over which Mara has control, are difficult to be crossed. Only those, who quite righteously follow the well expounded Dhamma will be able to cross the kingdoms that are so difficult to cross.’

When the Buddha wanted to explain the idea of crossing over, he explained, ‘Using the simile of a raft, monks, I teach the Dhamma, designed for crossing over and not for retaining.’



**Verse 87: Kaṇhaṃ dhammaṃ vipphāya sukkaṃ bhāvetha paṇḍito
Okā anokaṃ āgamma viveke yattha dūramam.**

Verse 87: The wise man, leaving the home of craving and going to the homeless state of Nibbana, should give up the dark qualities and develop pure, bright ones. He should feel great delight in seclusion, detachment and Nibbana in which an ordinary man finds no delight.

Develop radiant qualities Story of visiting monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha spoke these three verses with reference to a group of bhikkhus who came to see him.

A number of monks, after passing the rainy season in the kingdom of Kosala, came to the Jetavana monastery and paid homage to the Buddha. After this, they sat down on one side, narrated their experiences and sought the advice of the Buddha on meditation. The Buddha advised them, **'Give up worldly attachments and sensual pleasures. If you can do so, it will pave the way to attain Nibbana.'**

In these verses the Buddha advises us to give up the dark states. What are those dark deeds (Kanhm Dhamman)?

The dark deeds (Kanhm Dhamman) are ten in number: 1. Killing, 2. Stealing, 3. Sexual-Misconduct, 4. Lying, 5. Slandering, 6. Harsh speech, 7. Vain talk, 8. Covetousness, 9. Ill-will, and 10. False belief.

A disciple should ensure that the mind does not get directed towards these ten evil deeds.

The Buddha also advises here to develop the bright states (sukham) i.e. to cultivate the pure, good, meritorious (kusala) deeds. They are also ten. What are they? **The ten bright states (sukham) are:**

1. Generosity, 2. Morality, 3. Meditation, 4. Reverence, 5. Service, 6. Transference of Merit, 7. Rejoicing in others' merit, 8. Hearing the doctrine, 9. Expounding the doctrine and 10. Straightening one's views.

Every effort should be made to direct the mind towards these ten meritorious deeds.



**Verse 88: Tatrābhiratim iccheyya hitvā kāme akiñcano
Pariyodāpeyya attānaṃ cittaklesehi paṇḍīto.**

Verse 88: One should purify himself of all impurities of the mind, be non-attached, be desireless and give up all sensual pleasures.

Purify yourself

Story of visiting monks

The Buddha further asks the disciples to seek great delight in solitude, detachment and Nirvana in which an ordinary person does not find delight. He should purify himself of the mental impurity.

What are those mental impurities? They are also known as hindrances that obstruct the way to Deliverance. **Mental Impurities are five in number:**

1. Sense-desires, 2. Ill-will, 3.Sloth, 4.Restlessness, 5.Indecision

Men with mind well developed in the Factors of Enlightenment, who have rid themselves of all cravings, rejoice in their abandonment of greed. Such men, with all moral defilements eradicated and with powerful Light of Arahant hood have realised Nibbana even while living in this world.



**Verse 89: Yesaṃ sambodhi aṅgesu sammā cittaṃ subhāvitaṃ
Ādāna paṭinissagge anupādāya ye ratā
Khiṇāsavā jutimanto te loke parinibbutā.**

Verse 89: Men, with minds well-developed in the Factors of Enlightenment, who have rid themselves of all cravings, rejoice in their renunciation. Such men, freed from all impurities, with the help of light of Arahant hood, realise Nibbana, even in this world.

Rejoice in renunciation Story of visiting monks

The thirty-seven factors of Enlightenment are:

1. The four Foundations of Mindfulness namely (I) Contemplation of the body (II) Contemplation of the feelings (III) Contemplation of thoughts and (IV) Contemplation of phenomena.

2. The four Supreme Efforts namely (I) The effort to prevent evil that has not arisen (II) the effort to discard evil that has already arisen (III) the effort to cultivate unarisen good and (IV) the effort to promote good that has already arisen.

3. The four means of Accomplishment namely (I) Will (II) Energy (III) Thought and (IV) Wisdom.

4. The five faculties namely (I) Confidence (II) Energy (III) Mindfulness (IV) Concentration and (V) Wisdom.

5. The five forces having the same names as Indriyas.

6. The seven Constituents of Enlightenment namely (I) Mindfulness (II) Investigation of the truth (III) Energy (IV) Joy (V) Serenity (VI) Concentration and (VII) Equanimity.

7. The eightfold path namely (I) Right Belief (II) Right Thought (III) Right Speech (IV) Right Action (V) Right Means of Livelihood (VI) Right Exertion (VII) Right Memory and (VIII) Right Meditation.

There are four kinds of grasping namely (I) Sense desires (II) False Beliefs (III) Adherence to wrongful rites and ceremonies and (IV) Self-illusion.

‘Āsava’ means flowing i.e. flowing of sense-desires, becoming, misconception and ignorance.

A vibrant field of purple and red flowers under a dark sky. The foreground is dominated by a dense field of purple flowers, possibly lavender, with several bright red flowers in the lower right. The background shows more purple and red flowers stretching towards a dark, forested area. The overall scene is illuminated by a soft, ethereal light, creating a serene and beautiful atmosphere.

DHAMMAPADA

PANDITA VAGGA

DHAMMAPADA

THE SAINTS

ARAHANTA VAGGA



Chapter VII

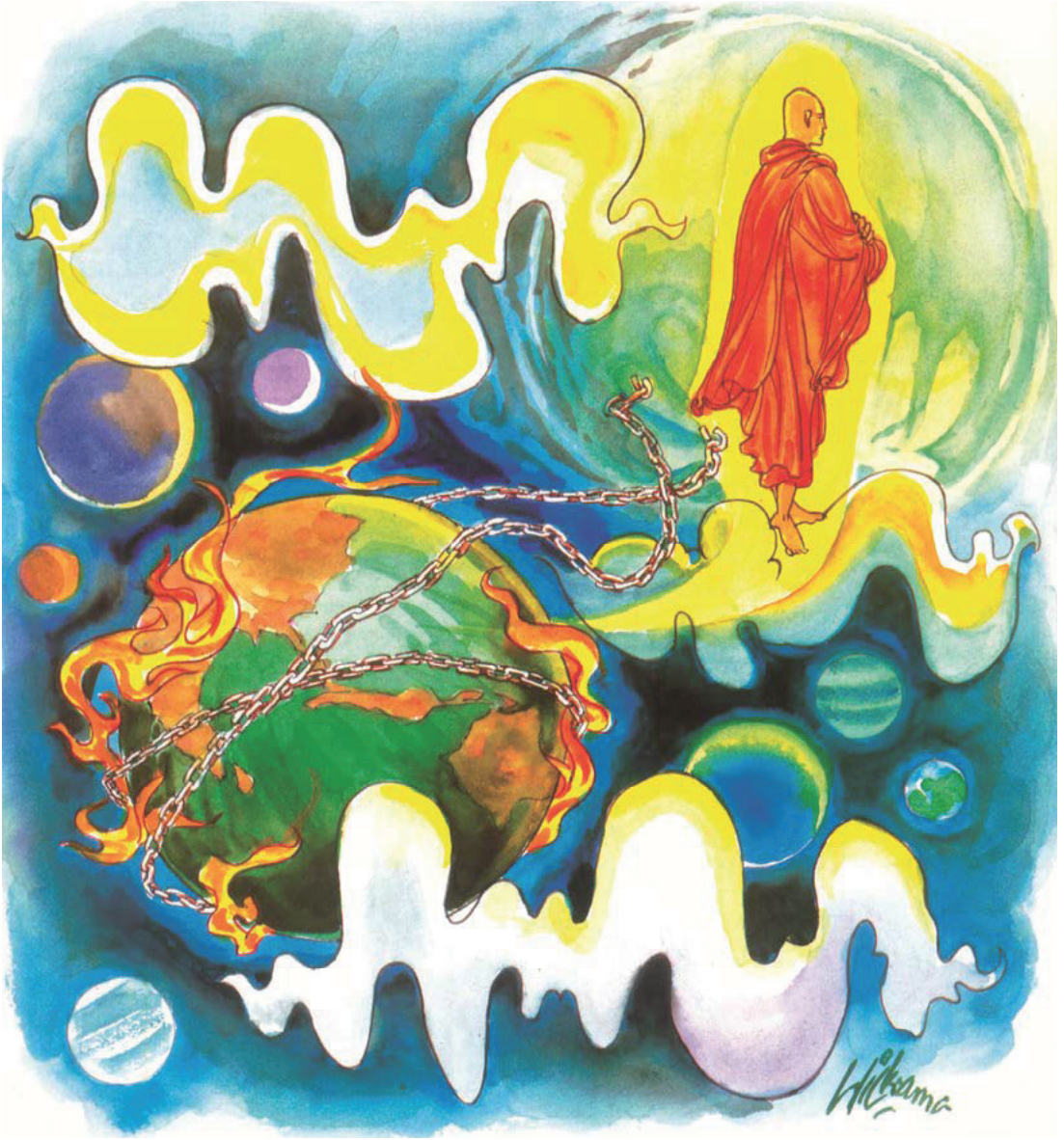
ARAHANTA VAGGA

The Saints, The Worthy

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ARAHANTA VAGGA

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**Verse 90: Gataddhino visokassa vippamuttassa sabbadhi
Sabba ganthappahinassa parilāho na vijjati.**

Verse 90: One, who has completed the journey, is sorrowless, wholly freed from every bond, has destroyed all ties, such a person does not have fever of passions left in him.

Seek liberation Story of the Buddha and Jivaka

Place: Jivakamravana, Rajagriha

Devadatta, cousin of the Buddha, was very jealous of him and tried three times to kill him. On one occasion, he pushed a big rock from the vulture peak so that it could hit and kill him. But only a splinter of it hit the Buddha's big toe and injured it seriously. The Buddha suffered severe pain and he was taken to Jivaka's mango grove. Jivaka applied some ointment on the wound, put a bandage on it and told the Buddha, 'Sir! I have to see another patient in the city. I shall come back as soon as I see him. Let the bandage be exactly as it is till I return.' But Jivaka got delayed in the town and by the time he was free, the city doors were closed. Jivaka thought, 'I have committed great fault. I applied the ointment and put the bandage on the Buddha as I would have done to any other patient. I should have reached the Buddha in time to remove his bandage. If the bandage is not removed now, he will be in great pain all throughout the night.'

At the monastery, on the other side, the Buddha at that time, called Ananda and told him, 'Ananda! Jivaka had promised to return in time to remove the bandage but it appears that he is held up and the city gates have been closed. Therefore, remove the bandage.' Ananda removed the bandage as he was told and found that the wound had healed up.

At very early dawn, Jivaka arrived at the monastery and asked the Buddha, 'Sir! I am sorry that I could not come to see you last night. Did you suffer severe pain in the night?' To this, the Buddha gave the reply, '**Ever since I attained Enlightenment, all pain, sorrow and distress have disappeared for me.**'

Note: The verse gives a ray of hope to all pilgrims on the way to spirituality. At the end of the journey, one is freed from all bonds. He becomes totally sorrowless. He does not suffer from the fever of passions any more.



**Verse 91: Uyyuñjanti satimanto na nikete ramanti te
Haṃsā va pallalaṃ hitvā okaṃ okaṃ jahanti te.**

Verse 91: The mindfuls exert diligently. They take no delight in homes as they are free from the idea of 'I' and 'mine'. Like swans that quit the muddy pools, they give up all home life (worldly life)

Be free from attachment Story of Maha Kassapa

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, the Buddha spent the vassa at Rajagriha. Two weeks before the end of the vassa, he announced that he would be leaving the monastery along with the disciples. Some bhikkhus stitched and dyed the new robes, others washed the old robes. While monk Maha Kassapa was washing his robes, some of the monks discussed, 'There are a large number of people inside and outside Rajagriha who love and respect Maha Kassapa. Venerable Kassapa will not leave his lay disciples here and follow the Buddha elsewhere. Even if he were to go, he won't go, beyond the Mapamada cave.' Normally, the bhikkhus came up to Mapamada cave to see off the Buddha. Here the Buddha normally said, '**Now you may return. Be not heedless—ma pamajjittha.**'

At the end of fifteen days and before his departure, the Buddha thought, 'There might be some occasions like almsfood offering, initiation of novices etc. when the bhikkhus would be needed here. Therefore, it won't be proper for all the bhikkhus to leave the monastery.' So, he decided that some bhikkhus should stay back at Veluvana monastery. Venerable Kassapa would be the best person to stay back and lead them.' Therefore, the Buddha asked Venerable Kassapa and his disciples to stay back. The monks, who were earlier discussing whether Venerable Kassapa would go or not said, 'Did you see, brethren? Did we not say that Venerable Kassapa would not go anywhere? Then why was he washing his robes? Everything has happened, as we said.'

The Buddha overheard the conversation and replied, 'Monks! You say that Kassapa has stayed back because he is attached to this place. You are absolutely wrong. Kassapa is staying back here because I have asked him to do so and not because of his attachment to the people here. He has this nature since long. In one of his previous births, he earnestly wished and became like a moon, free from all attachments so that he could go to every household, without any discrimination. My son has no attachment. He is like a royal goose which goes to the lake and swims and remains there.'



**Verse 92: Yesam sannicayo natthi ye pariññāta bhojanā
Suññato animitto ca vimokkho yassa gocaro
Ākāse va sakuntānaṃ gati tesam durannayā.**

Verse 92: Arahants do not accumulate anything. While taking food they reflect over it. Their objective is Deliverance, which is Void and Nameless. Their path cannot be traced like the course of birds in the air.

Be not attached to food

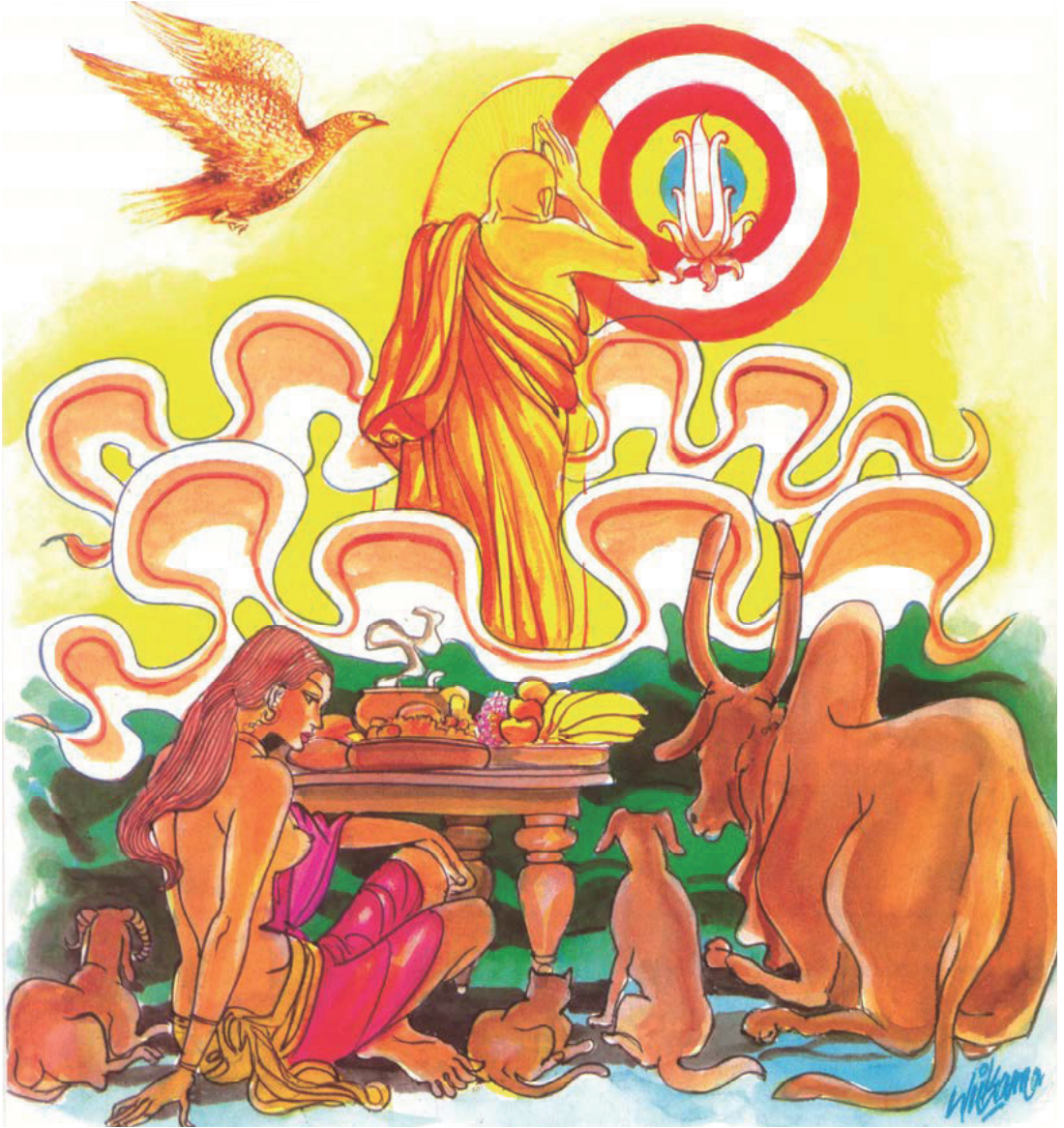
Story of bhikkhu Bellatthi Sisa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Monk Bellatthi Sisa, while going on the almsround in the village, would stop on the way, eat the food and even thereafter continue further almsround. When he would collect enough food, he would return to the monastery, dry up the extra food brought by him and store it. He would then go into dhyana (one-pointedness) concentration for two-three days. After that, when he would feel hungry, he would take out some quantity of the dried food, soak it in water and eat it. Some monks saw it and felt that the act of monk Bellatthi Sisa amounted to hoarding which was against the Buddha's teachings. They reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha saw that the monk's action could be imitated by the other bhikkhus and that it would not be proper to do so. Hence the rule of Vinaya was introduced and hoarding of food was forbidden. The Buddha taught the monks that they should maintain purity, sanctity and simplicity of monk's life and should have no possessions.

Regarding Bellatthi Sisa, it was pointed out that he had indulged in the act of hoarding before the rule of Vinaya was made. He was, therefore, innocent. He had dried and stored the food not out of greed but only to save time so that he could pay more attention to his meditational practices.

The Buddha also explained that Arahants do not store anything and when they take food, they take it with mindfulness. While taking food, they are mindful of three things, (i) Knowing the exact nature of the food (ii) Being convinced of the disliking of material food and (iii) Rejection of all pleasures of eating.



**Verse 93: Yassāvā parikkhiṇā āhāre ca anissito
Suññato animitto ca vimokkho yassa gocaro
Ākāse’va sakuntānaṃ padaṃ tassa durannayaṃ.**

Verse 93: He, whose evils are destroyed, who is not attached to food, whose objective is Deliverance, which is Void and Nameless, his path cannot be traced like the course of birds in the air.

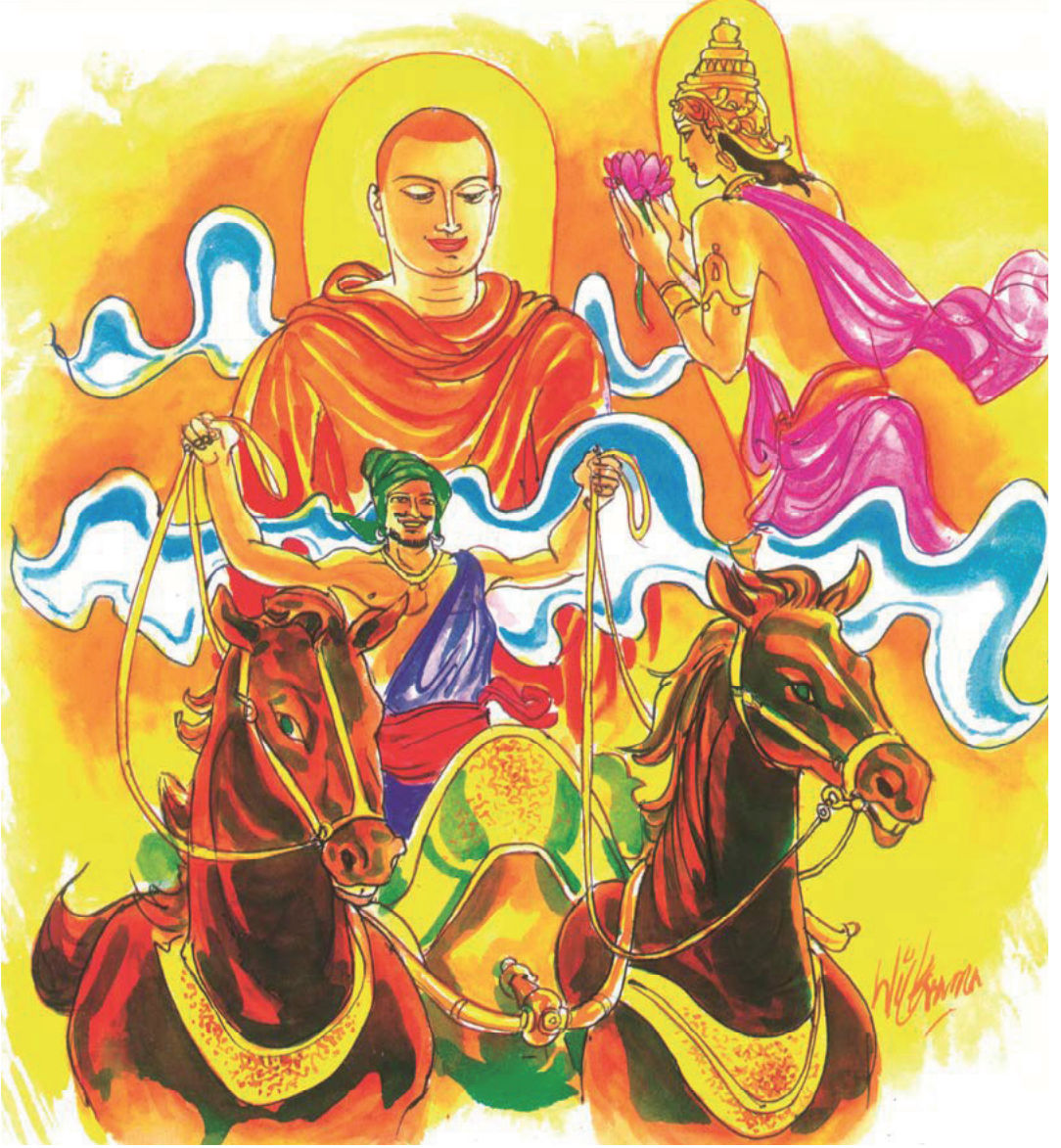
The undefiled ones are free Story of bhikkhu Aniruddha

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, bhikkhu Aniruddha was looking for some left over piece of cloth in garbage so as to make a robe out of it, as his old robe had been soiled and torn. Goddess Jalini, who was his wife in one of his previous births, saw it and decided to help him. She took three pieces of good material cloth and thought, 'If I display these pieces of cloth as they are, the Venerable won't take them.' Therefore, she put them in a rubbish heap, making them barely visible. Venerable Aniruddha found the clothes in the heap of garbage and took it to the monastery to stitch it. At that time the Buddha also arrived with his senior monks and joined Aniruddha in stitching the robe.

It was getting lunch time. Jalini took the form of a young lady and came to the monastery. She saw the Buddha and the senior monks helping Venerable Aniruddha. So, she went to the village and made the announcement, 'The Buddha along with the senior and junior monks has arrived at the monastery. They are making robes for Venerable Aniruddha. Send good, delicious food in enough quantity to the monastery.' Later on, some of the bhikkhus, on seeing the surplus food remarked, 'Why should such a large quantity of food be sent for so few people to eat? Venerable Aniruddha should have asked his relatives and lay disciples to send just enough food. May be the senior monk wants to show off that he had enough devotees and followers.'

To them the Buddha replied, 'Bhikkhus! Don't think that my son Aniruddha has asked his relatives and lay disciples to send food. He did not ask for anything to anyone. Arahants do not ask for food and clothing. The excessive quantity of food brought to the monastery this morning was due to the instruction of a goddess.'



**Verse 94: Yass indriyāni samathaṃ gatāni, Assā yathā sārathinā sudantā
Pahiṇa mānassa anāsavassa, Devā' pi tassa pihayanti tādino.**

Verse 94: Even, the gods love those who have brought their senses under control, like horses well controlled by a charioteer, who have abandoned pride and have destroyed the impurities of asavas.

Control your senses

Story of Maha Kachchayana and Sakka

Place: Pubbarama, Sravasti

On a full moon day, which was also the end of the vassa, on the occasion of the terminal festival, the Buddha was sitting on the ground floor of Pubbarama, the monastery built by Visakha with eminent lay disciples surrounding him. During that time, Venerable Maha Kachchayana was staying at Ujjain in Avanti kingdom. Although Maha Kachchayana stayed at a far off place from Sravasti, yet he had made it a point to always attend the discourses of the Buddha on the Dhamma. Therefore, one seat was always kept reserved for him in the meetings.

On that day, Sakka, the king of the devas, descended from the deva loka along with a large number of devas to pay respects to the Buddha and listen to his discourse. Sakka paid homage to the Buddha with flowers and incense. Seeing the seat for Maha Kachchayana vacant and not seeing him around the place, Sakka declared, 'I wish Venerable Kachchayana were here so that I could pay my homage to him as well.' At that very moment, the monk appeared and occupied the seat meant for him. Sakka was overwhelmed to see him. He rubbed the Venerable's feet with both hands and worshipped him with flowers and incense. After paying regards to him, he stood obediently on one side.

Some bhikkhus accused Sakka of showing favour to Venerable Maha Kachchayana. To them, the Buddha replied, 'Bhikkhus! Those monks who, like my son Kachchayana, keep the doors of their senses guarded, are loved by both men and the devas.'



**Verse 95: Paṭhavi samo no virujjhati, Indakhilūpamo tādi subbato
Rahado' va apeta kaddamo, Saṃsārā na bhavanti tādino.**

Verse 95: Like the earth, the Arahant is always patient and does not get provoked by anger. Such a pious one is firm like Indra's pillar, Indakhila. He is serene and pure, like a lake free from mud. For such a balanced person there will be no more re-births.

Arahants are like the earth

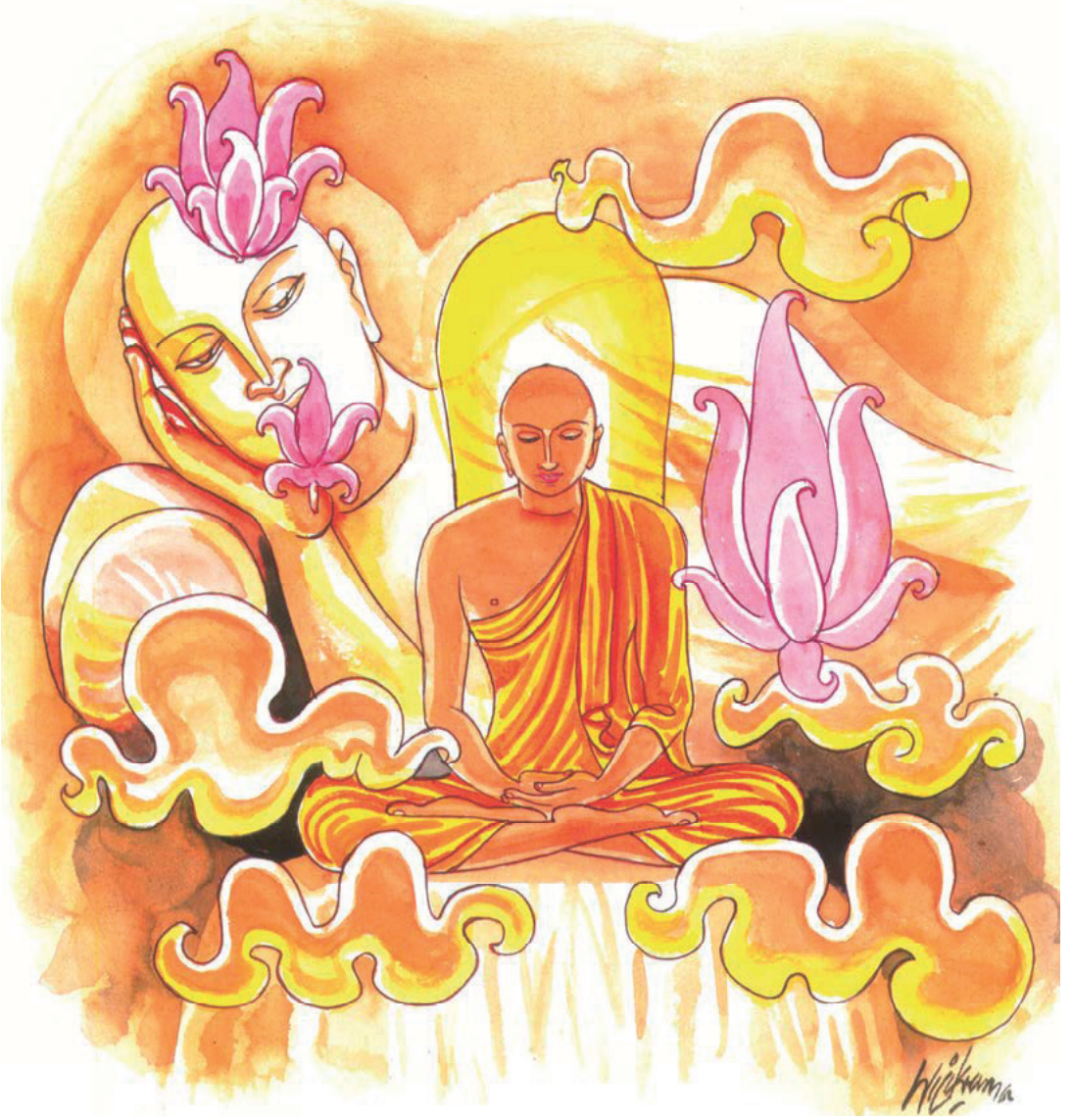
Story of monk accusing Sariputta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On the completion of the vassa, bhikkhu Sariputta was about to leave the monastery on a journey, when a young bhikkhu who had carried some grudge against him on some minor issue, approached the Buddha that Sariputta had abused and beaten him. Sariputta had just gone out of the monastery, wherefrom he was called back and asked to explain. Without asserting his innocence, the Venerable replied, 'Sir! How can a bhikkhu, who constantly keeps his mind fixed pondering on the body, set out on a journey without apologising, after doing something wrong to a fellow bhikkhu? **I am like the earth which feels no displeasure when rubbish and excreta are piled on it. I am also like the door-mat, the beggar and the bull with the broken horns. I also feel repugnant for the impurity of the body and am not attached to it.'**

When Sariputta spoke thus, the accusing monk felt very remorseful and admitted before the Buddha that he had wrongly accused the senior monk. Then the Buddha asked Sariputta to pardon the monk. Otherwise, the young monk would suffer in the future due to evil karma. The young bhikkhu prayed to Sariputta to pardon him. Sariputta pardoned the young bhikkhu. In turn, Sariputta also requested to be forgiven if he had done any wrong to him or hurt him.

All those present praised Venerable Sariputta, and the Buddha said, '**Bhikkhus! An Arahant like Sariputta has no anger or ill-will in him. Like the earth and the door-post (pillar) he is patient, tolerant and firm. He is serene and pure.'**



**Verse 96: Santaṃ tassa manaṃ hoti santā vācā ca kamma ca
Sammadaññā vimuttassa upasantassa tādino.**

Verse 96: One who is calm in mind, calm in speech and calm in actions, is freed from all ties. Through right wisdom he becomes totally free from ignorance and remains in a state of perfect peace. He is unshaken by the ups and downs of life.

Remain always calm

Story of a novice monk from Kosambi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a seven year old boy became samanera (novice monk) at the request of his father. Before his head was shaved, he was given a topic of meditation. His mind was fixed steadfastly on that topic of meditation. As a result, by the time his head was shaved, he attained Arahant hood. This happened because of the ripening of good karma done by him in the past. He was handed over to a senior monk named Tissa. Since, this senior monk belonged to Kosambi, he was known as Kosambitissa.

After sometime, Venerable Tissa left for Sravasti along with the samanera. On the way, they spent the night in a village monastery. Tissa fell asleep as any other ordinary person. But the novice kept on sitting cross-legged by the side of the bed whole night. He went to sleep around dawn only. When it was morning, Tissa thought of waking up the novice. So, with the handle of the palm-leaf fan he tried to wake him up. But by mistake, he hit the eye with the stick and damaged his eye. The samanera became blind but he covered his eye with the palm of his hand and kept on doing the work like bringing water, sweeping the floor, without telling Tissa that his eye had been damaged. When he brought a tooth-stick and gave it to Tissa with one hand, the senior monk admonished him that he should have offered it with both the hands. Only then the samanera told the senior monk that his eye had been damaged. Tissa felt very sorry and humbled to know what had happened and realised that the novice was a great noble soul. He expressed his apologies to the novice but the novice told him that it was the fault of none of them. It was simply their past karma. He told his teacher not to feel apologetic about it. But this did not satisfy Tissa. He could not overcome the shock of the tragic incidence. He could not get rid of the feeling of guilt. They continued with the journey and reached Sravasti where the Buddha was staying at that time. Tissa told the Buddha, 'Venerable! I have not seen a monk like him. His good qualities surpass everything.'

The Buddha told the monk, 'My son, **An Arahant does not become angry with anyone. He controls his senses and is perfectly calm and peaceful.**'



**Verse 97: Assaddho akataññū ca sandhicchedo ca yo naro
Hatāvakāso vantāso sa ve uttama poriso.**

Verse 97: Verily, the best of men is he who is no more a blind believer, has relentlessly severed all ties that interfere (in spiritual progress), killed all desires, put an end to birth and death and attained humanity's highest goal i.e. Nirvana.

Be the best of men

Story of Sariputta & thirty bhikkhus

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, thirty bhikkhus came to the Jetavana monastery to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha knew that these monks had the potential to attain Arahant hood. So, he called for Venerable Sariputta and asked him the question, 'Do you agree that by meditating on the senses, one could realise the Nibbana?' Sariputta replied, 'Sir! In the matter of realisation of Nibbana by meditating on the senses, I do not accept it only because I have faith in you. Only those who have not personally realised it, have to accept it from others, based on faith.' The bhikkhus could not understand the reply of Sariputta and thought, 'Sariputta has not given up wrong views yet. He has no faith in the Enlightened One.'

When the Buddha heard it, he said, 'Bhikkhus, the meaning of Sariputta's answer is: He accepts that Nibbana can be realised by meditating on the senses. But he has accepted it because he has personally realised it, experienced it. He has accepted it not simply because I have said so. Sariputta has full faith in me. There is no doubt about it. He also has faith in the consequences of good and bad deeds.'

Note: Faith in Buddhism is to be developed through proper understanding leading to wisdom and realisation of truth and not through the fear of the divine. Real faith arises in the mind when it reaches the unshakable state. Blind faith or fanatical religious beliefs have no place in the Buddha's teachings.

The Buddha himself says in Anguttara Nikaya, 'Do not believe in anything (simply) because you have heard it. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. Do not believe in anything (simply) because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.'



**Verse 98: Gāme vā yadi vā raññe ninne vā' yadi vā thale
Yattha arahanto viharanti taṃ bhūmiṃ rāmaṇeyyakaṃ.**

Verse 98: Whether in a village or in a forest, in a valley or on the dry hill;
wherever Arahants stay, that place becomes delightful.

Which place is delightful? Story of bhikkhu Revata

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Sariputta (original name Upatissa) renounced huge amount of wealth, he had inherited, and became a monk. He got his three sisters Chala, Upchala and Sisuchala and two brothers Chund and Upsen also ordained. Only one brother, Revata, aged seven, was left with the parents. His mother thought, 'My son Upatissa has got all his brothers and sisters ordained except Revata. There will be no succession in the family if he also becomes a monk. We should get him married.' Sariputta had apprehensions about it. He had, therefore, instructed a group of monks, 'If my younger brother Revata wants to be ordained, do it. My parents are not far sighted. Take it as if I am his parents.'

On his marriage day, Revata was introduced to the grand-mother of the bride. She was one hundred and twenty years old and was unable to see. She had lost her teeth and could not think consistently. In the marriage hall, Revata heard people blessing the bride, 'Long live like your grandmother.' Revata thought, 'My wife will also become like her.' Thinking so, his inner eyes opened. He fled away from the marriage hall, approached the group of monks and got ordained. Thereafter he went to the deep forest, practised meditation diligently and after the vassa attained Arahanthood.

Sariputta requested the Buddha to grant permission to see his brother. The Buddha said, 'I shall also come.' The Buddha left with Sariputta, Sivali and many other monks. Revata, learning about the visit of the Buddha, made excellent arrangements for their stay in the forest, through his supernatural powers.

On the way back, the Buddha and the bhikkhus visited the Pubbarama monastery and the house of Visakha. After the almsfood, Visakha asked if the stay at Revata's place in the forest was pleasant. In reply, the Buddha recited this verse.



**Verse 99: Ramaṇiyāni araṇṇāni yattha na ramati jano
Vitarāgā ramissanti na te kāmagavesino.**

Verse 99: The forests, which hold no charms for the worldly men, are indeed delightful. The passionless rejoice therein, as they seek no sensual pleasures.

The forests are delightful Story of a courtesan & a bhikkhu

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

During the Buddha period, Pindapatik bhikkhu took a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went to an old garden for meditation. Now a certain prostitute made an appointment with a man and said, 'I will go to the old garden. You meet me there.' The lady kept the appointment but the man did not turn up. She waited for him for sometime but in vain. Finally, filled with disappointment, she started roaming around in the garden. Looking this way and that and seeing nobody else around, she came near the place where the bhikkhu was meditating. She saw him sitting cross-legged and thought, 'Here is also a man. I shall satisfy my desire on him.' So, standing in front of the monk, she took off her saree and undergarments several times and put them on again. She loosened her hair and tied it up again, clapped her hands and laughed loudly. Seeing all this, the whole body of the monk became excited. 'What is this all?' he thought.

The Buddha, on the other side, thought, 'How is the monk who took a meditation topic from me and went to the forest, getting on?' He, through his divine vision, saw that woman, her evil conduct and that her behaviour was upsetting the bhikkhu. He sent his thoughts to the monk, 'Bhikkhu, there is no delight where those reside who run after their lusts. But where those reside who are free from passions, that place is full of delight.' So saying, he sent radiant rays and instructed the bhikkhu in the Dhamma. The bhikkhu was protected from evil forces and subsequently attained Arahant hood.

DHAMMAPADA

ARAHANTA VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

Thousands

**SAHASSA
VAGGA**



Chapter VIII

SAHASSA VAGGA

Thousands

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SAHASSA VAGGA

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**Verse 100: Sahassam api ce vācā anattha pada saṃhitā
Ekaṃ dhamma padaṃ seyyo yaṃ sutvā upasammati.**

Verse 100: A single meaningful teaching, by hearing which one is blessed with peace, is calmed, is far better than thousand teachings of useless words.

What is useful? Story of executioner, Tambadathika

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Tambadathika worked with a king as a public executioner for fifty-five years and had just retired from his job. Post retirement, one day he took bath in a river, got delicious food made and sat down to eat it.

Sariputta, who had just got up, from sustained concentration, thought, 'Where should I go today for almsfood?' He saw the slayer in his vision, left towards his house and stood at its door. Tambadathika was about to start taking his food when his eyes fell on the monk. He thought, 'I have committed sins only all these years. I have never done any act of charity. Luckily, delicious food has been cooked today and the monk is also standing at the door. Why should I not offer it to him and earn good karma?' He invited the monk inside and offered him the food.

After the food, the monk started teaching the Dhamma to him but all his past karma started appearing before him. He could not pay attention to the talk. In order to put him in proper frame of mind, Sariputta asked him tactfully, 'Did you kill the thieves because you wished to kill them out of anger or hate, or simply because you were ordered to do so?' 'Sir, I was ordered to kill them by the king. I had no ill-will or wish to kill them.' 'If that is the case, what wrong did you do?' Hearing this reassurance, his mind calmed down and he requested the monk to continue his teaching. He came very close to attaining Srotapatti marg. After the talk, he accompanied the monk up to some distance and on the way back was killed due to some past bad karma.

In the evening congregation, question was raised, 'Where is Tambadathika born?' The Buddha replied, 'Although he committed evil deeds throughout his life, because he comprehended the Dhamma, he was reborn in the Tusita deva world.' The bhikkhus wondered, 'How such an evil-doer could have such a great benefit after listening to the Dhamma just once?' The Buddha explained, **'The length of a discourse is of no consequence. One single sentence of the Dhamma, correctly understood can produce much benefit.'**



**Verse 101: Sahassam api ce gāthā anatta pada saṃhitā
Ekaṃ dhamma padaṃ seyyo yaṃ sutvā upasammati.**

Verse 101: A single meaningful verse, by hearing which one is blessed with peace, is far better than thousand verses of useless words.

Meaningful words are useful

Story of Bahiya Daruciriya

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, the only survivor of a boat mishap in sea got hold of a plank and landed at the port of Supparaka. He was naked and put a piece of bark on his body and sat down. Passers-by thought him to be a holy man and someone called him an Arahant. He developed the misunderstanding that he was really an Arahant. As he was a man of wrong views and wore a piece of bark as his clothing, he was known as Bahiya Daruciriya.

Maha Brahma, who had been his friend in one of the previous births, saw it and came to him in the night and said, 'Bahiya, You are not an Arahant yet. Besides, you do not have the qualities of an Arahant. Why do you cheat the people?' Faced with the naked truth directly, he replied, 'Yes Sir! I must admit that I am not an Arahant. I now realise what a great mistake I have done. Is there any Arahant in this world? Can he help me?' Brahma advised, 'Yes, There is one. Go and seek help from the Buddha. He is now staying in Sravasti.'

Bahiya, understanding the gravity of his crime, immediately left for Sravasti. He travelled all the night and reached Sravasti when the Buddha was on almsround. Bahiya pleaded with the Buddha to teach him the Dhamma but the Buddha replied, 'It is not the proper time.' Bahiya repeated his request, 'Sir, Nobody knows the danger to your life or to my life. So, please teach me the Dhamma.' Bahiya persistently pleaded his request. Therefore, the Buddha, while standing on the road, taught him, '**When you see an object, be conscious of just the visible object. When you hear a sound, be conscious of just the sound. When you smell or taste or touch something, be conscious of just the smell, the taste or the touch. When you think of anything, be conscious of just that mind-object.**'

Bahiya did as he was told. Because of his deep concentration and karmic forces of his past good deeds, he attained Arahant hood. He wanted to join the Sangha and went to bring the robes. On the way, he was killed by an evil female spirit in the form of a cow.

In the evening congregation, Bahiya was the subject of discussion. The Buddha said, 'As far as the time factor is concerned in attaining the Insight, Bahiya is the fastest, the best.' Bhikkhus were puzzled and asked how it could be. The Buddha replied, 'Bahiya attained Arahant hood while he was listening to my instructions given to him on the road.' The bhikkhus wondered, 'How can one attain Arahant hood after listening to just a few words of the Dhamma?' The Buddha replied, '**The number of words or the length of a speech does not matter if it is beneficial to someone.**'



**Verse 102: Yo ca gāthā sataṃ bhāse anatta padasaṃhitā
Ekaṃ dhamma padaṃ seyyo yaṃ sutvā upasammati.**

Verse 102: Recitation of a single meaningful word of Dhamma, by hearing which one is pacified, is far better than thousand meaningless stanzas, comprising useless words.

Meaningful stanzas are useful Story of Kundala Kesi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

There lived a merchant in Rajagriha. His only daughter was sixteen years of age. She was exceedingly beautiful to look at. Such girls easily attract attention. The parents were vigilant. They kept her secluded on the top floor of the house with a maid.

One day, she happened to see a thief who was being taken for execution. She instantaneously fell in love with him and told her parents, 'I shall prefer to die if I do not have him.' Her parents paid bribe to the king's officer and secured his freedom. The girl was married off to him. She loved her husband from the core of her heart but her husband did not. Her husband, being a thief, only loved her wealth. He decided to grab it all and pretended that he was sick. When his wife asked him, he said, 'Wife! That day when I was chained and was being taken through the streets, I took a vow that if my life was saved, then I shall go to the robbers' cliff and make offerings to the deity there.' 'Very well, we will go together.' 'Wife, Put on your costly garments, precious jewels and ornaments.'

On reaching the bottom of the hill, the husband said, 'We will go to the top alone. Send the servants back home.' The wife did, as she was told. She followed the husband to the hill top. She had done no trekking earlier.

The hill top was the place where the thieves, being executed for some crime, were pushed down and killed. On reaching the hill top, the wife started feeling scared. Her husband said, 'Take off all your ornaments.' The wife did not understand what he meant. So, he clarified, 'Foolish lady, you thought that I have come here for some offerings. I shall take all your ornaments and shall kill you.' Terrified with the fear of death, she told him, 'Husband, All my ornaments and my person is also yours. Why should you do that?' She kept on pleading, 'Please do not do this. After all, what will you gain by killing me? Take these ornaments and leave me.' But the thief was adamant.



**Verse 103: Yo sahaṣṣaṃ sahaṣṣena saṅgāme mānuse jine
Ekañ ca jeyya ṃ' attānaṃ sa ve saṅgāmajuttamo.**

Verse 103: One who conquers oneself is indeed a far greater hero and victor than one who has conquered over a million men in the battlefield.

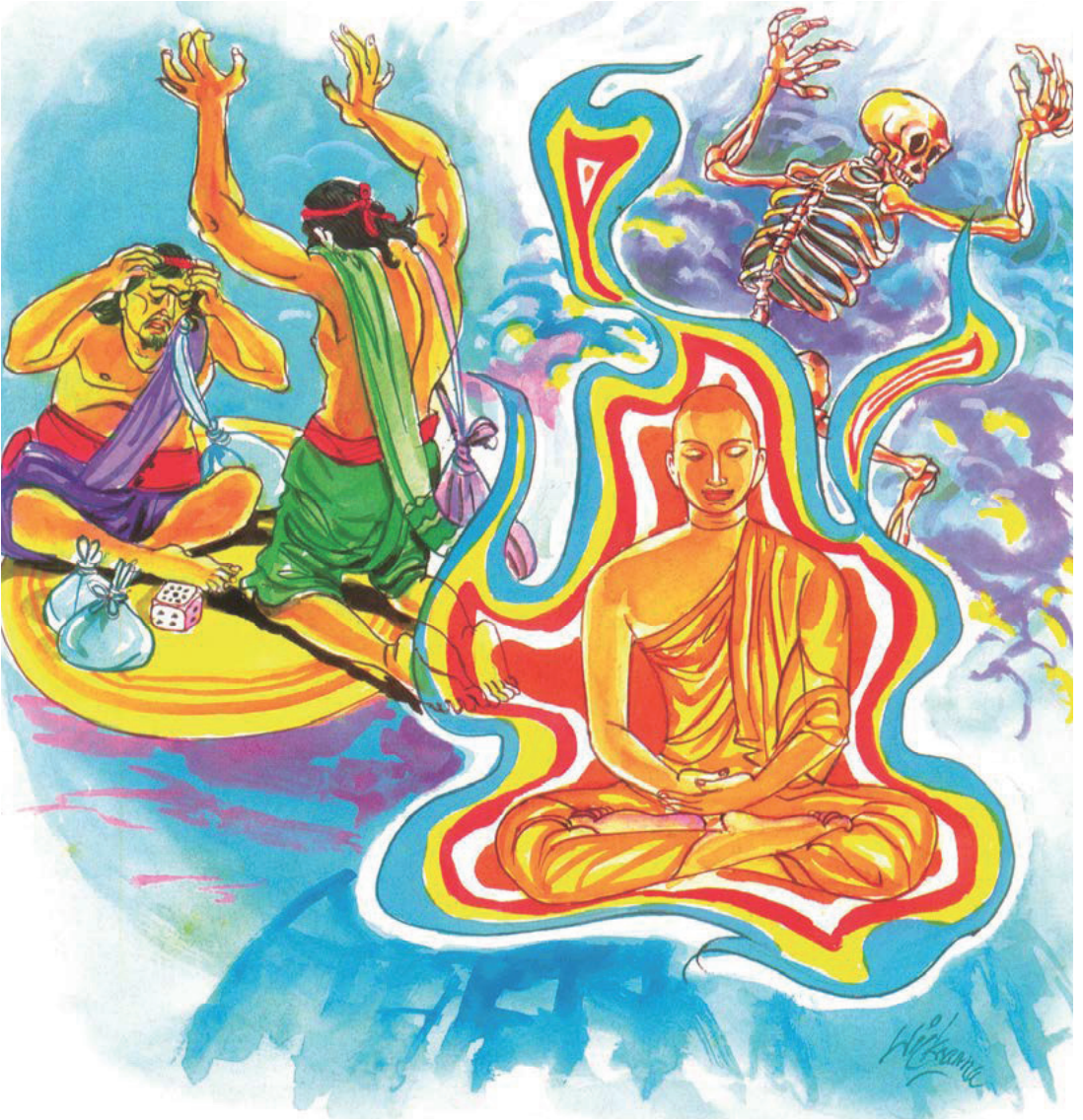
Conquer oneself Story of Kundala Kesi

She thought to herself, 'What a wicked deed is this! However, wisdom was not made to be cooked and eaten, but rather to make men look before they leap. I shall find out a way to handle him.' She realised that if she did not get rid of her husband, there was no way for her to escape. But she must be cautious and crafty. So, she told him, 'We shall be together only for a few more moments. I want to pay respect to you for the last time.' He agreed. So saying, while going round the man as if to embrace him, she pushed him off the hill and he was killed. The deva dwelling at the top of the hill saw all this. He praised the woman profusely and commented, 'Wisdom is not always confined to men. A woman also shows now and then that she is wise.'

Then she thought, 'There is no point in going back home. People will think that I have killed my husband. Nobody will believe me. I should become a nun.' She became a paribbajika and mastered thousand questions and answers. Her name was Kundala Kesi. She went round the entire Jambudwipa, challenged people but none could answer all her questions.

Finally, she came to Sravasti. Outside the city, she made a mound of sand and put a branch of tree on it, her usual sign to people to take up her challenge. Sariputta took up her challenge. She asked innumerable questions and he gave correct answers to all of them. Then, in turn, he asked the question, 'What is the meaning of the One?' She did not know the answer. 'What is the answer?' she asked. 'I will tell you the answer, but before that you will have to enter the Sangha.' 'Very well, Sir! Admit me.' She became a bhikkhuni. She practised meditation diligently and very soon became an Arahant.

In the evening congregation, the bhikkhus asked the question, 'How could it be possible for bhikkhuni Kundala Kesi to become an Arahant after listening to the Dhamma just a little?' The Buddha clarified, 'Bhikkhus! **Don't judge the Dhamma as 'little' or 'much.' One sentence of the Dhamma is better than a hundred sentences that are meaningless.'**



**Verse 104: Attā have jitaṃ seyyo yā cā'yaṃ itarā pajā
Attadantassa posassa niccaṃ saññatacāriṇo.**

Verse 104: Better indeed is the victory over the self than the victory over the other people. Victory over oneself is the greatest victory.

Be your victor Story of Anattapucchaka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a brahmin named Anattapucchaka came to the Buddha with the purpose to know, 'Do the Samayaksambuddhas only know in what lies the good of someone or do they also know what can cause harm to him? Why should I not ask question to the Buddha in this regard?' He appeared before the Buddha, paid regards to him and raised his question, 'Venerable Sir! I think you only know the practices that are beneficial and not the practices that are non-beneficial.'

The Tathagata replied, 'The Buddhas know the practices which are beneficial and useful. They also know the practices which are non-beneficial and harmful. They very well know in what lies the welfare of the people and in what lies their harm.' 'Venerable! I am keen to know the practices which are unbeneficial and harmful to us.' **Then the Buddha listed out the following six practices which lead to the dissipation of the wealth:**

(1) Sleeping after the sunrise

(2) Habitual idleness

(3) Cruelty

(4) Indulgence in intoxicants which cause drunkenness and negligence

(5) Wandering alone in the streets at suspicious hours and

(6) Sexual Misconduct

'You indulge into any of these activities and you are bound to bring unhappiness and harm to yourself,' he concluded.



**Verse 105: N'eva devo na gandhabbo na māro saha Brahmunā
Jitaṃ apajitaṃ kayirā tathārūpassa jantūno.**

Verse 105: Neither a Deva, nor a Gandharva, nor Mara with Brahma can turn into defeat the victory of such a self-conqueror, ever endowed with self-control. The victory of self is irreversible.

Who cannot be defeated? Story of Anattapucchaka

When the brahmin heard this, he was overwhelmed with joy. He applauded the Buddha and said, 'Sadhu! Sadhu! (Well said! Well said!) Teacher of the multitude! Leader of the multitude!! You really know both the gain and the loss.' The Teacher said, 'Yes, Brahmin! Indeed there is no other, who knows the loss or gain, as well as I do.'

Then the Buddha found out from insight vision as to what had prompted the brahmin to ask this question. He asked him, 'How do you earn your living?' 'Gautama! I earn my living by gambling.' 'But, who wins, you or the other man?' 'Sometimes, I win and sometimes the other man wins.' Then the Buddha said, 'To win in a game of dice is nothing compared to the victory over the moral shortcomings. In dice, it is a trifling matter to be a victor and to defeat another. **He, who overcomes his moral pitfalls and thus conquers himself, wins a better victory. Self conquest is greater than the conquest of others. The victory of one who conquers himself cannot be turned into defeat either by a god, a spirit, a Mara (devil) or a Brahma (creator). He remains a self controlled individual, who lives ever disciplined.'**

Note: In the Parabhava Sutta the Buddha says that gambling is one of the causes of man's downfall.



**Verse 106: Māse māse sahasena yo yajetha satam samam
Ekañ ca bhāvitattānaṃ muhuttam api pūjaye
Sā y'eva pūjanā seyyo yañ ce vassa satam hutam**

Verse 106: Though month after month, with a thousand sacrifices, one may make an offering for hundred years, yet, if only for a moment, one honours a Saint who has perfected himself—that honour is, indeed, far better than a century of sacrifices.

Whom to honour? Story of Sariputta's uncle

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Both Sariputta and his maternal uncle were brahmins by caste. Once, Sariputta went to his uncle and asked him the question, 'Sir! Do you ever do a single good deed?' 'Yes indeed, Venerable, I do.' 'What do you do?' 'I save a thousand rupees every month and give it as alms.' 'Whom do you give this money?' 'I give it to the naked ascetics.' 'What are you likely to gain out of this charity? How are you likely to be benefitted?' 'I hope I shall go to the Brahma's kingdom.' 'But are you sure that you will reach the world of Brahma's kingdom in this way?' 'Yes Bhante.' 'How did you come to know it? Who told you?' 'My teachers told me, Sir!'

'Brahmin, Neither you, nor your teachers know how to reach the kingdom of the Brahma. Only the Buddha knows the way to the Brahma's kingdom. Come with me to him. I shall request him to tell you the way to the Brahma.' So, they both went to the Buddha and saluted him. Sariputta introduced his uncle to him and said, 'Bhante! This brahmin has told me such and such. Be gracious to tell him the way to the Brahma.'

The Buddha asked the brahmin, 'Brahmin! Has Sariputta reported correctly?' 'Yes bhante.' 'Brahmin, even if you give alms in this way for hundred years, you won't get any benefit. You will not be able to reach the land of the Brahma. However, it will be more fruitful for a man, if with a believing heart, he bestows upon a really holy man a mere spoonful of boiled rice.'



**Verse 107: Yo ce vassa sataṃ jantu aggiṃ paricare vane
Ekañ ca bhāvitattānaṃ muhuttam api pūjaye
Sā y'eva pūjanā seyyo yañ ce vassasataṃ hutam.**

Verse 107: Though a man may make offerings in the sacred fire in the forest for hundred years, yet, if, only, for a moment, one honours a Saint who has perfected himself—that honour is, indeed, far better than a century of fire sacrifices.

Honour the pure

Story of Sariputta's nephew

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Both Sariputta and his nephew were brahmins by caste. Once, Sariputta went to his nephew and asked him the question, 'Sir! Do you ever do a single good deed?'

'Yes indeed, Venerable, I do.' 'What do you do?' 'I slay a goat every month and offer it to the sacred fire.' 'What is the purpose of doing this?' 'I do what others have said. They say that it will take me to the Brahma's kingdom.' 'But are you sure that you will reach the world of Brahma's kingdom in this way?' 'Yes Bhante.' 'How did you come to know it? Who told you?' 'My teachers told me, Sir!'

'Brahmin, Neither you, nor your teachers know how to reach the kingdom of the Brahma. Only the Buddha knows the way to the Brahma. Come with me to him. I shall request him to tell you the way to the Brahma.' So, they both went to the Buddha and saluted him. Sariputta introduced his nephew to the Buddha and said, 'Bhante! This brahmin has told me such and such. Be gracious to tell him the way to the Brahma.'

The Buddha asked, 'Brahmin! Has Sariputta reported correctly?' 'Yes bhante.' 'Brahmin, even if you perform this great sacrifice to the fire for hundred years, you will not be able to reach the land of the Brahma. That merit of yours will not be equal to the merit you will acquire by honouring genuinely holy man even for a single moment.'



Verse 108: Yaṃ kiñci iṭṭhaṃ va hutaṃ va loke, Saṃvaccharam yaḥetha puññapekko Sabbam pi taṃ na catubhāgmeti, Abhivādanā ujjugatesu seyyo.

Verse 108: Whatever gifts or alms one may make in this world for a year in quest of merits, even the whole of that will not be worth a single quarter of the homage paid to an upright person. Homage paid to an upright person is the best.

Pay homage to the Upright Story of Sariputta's friend

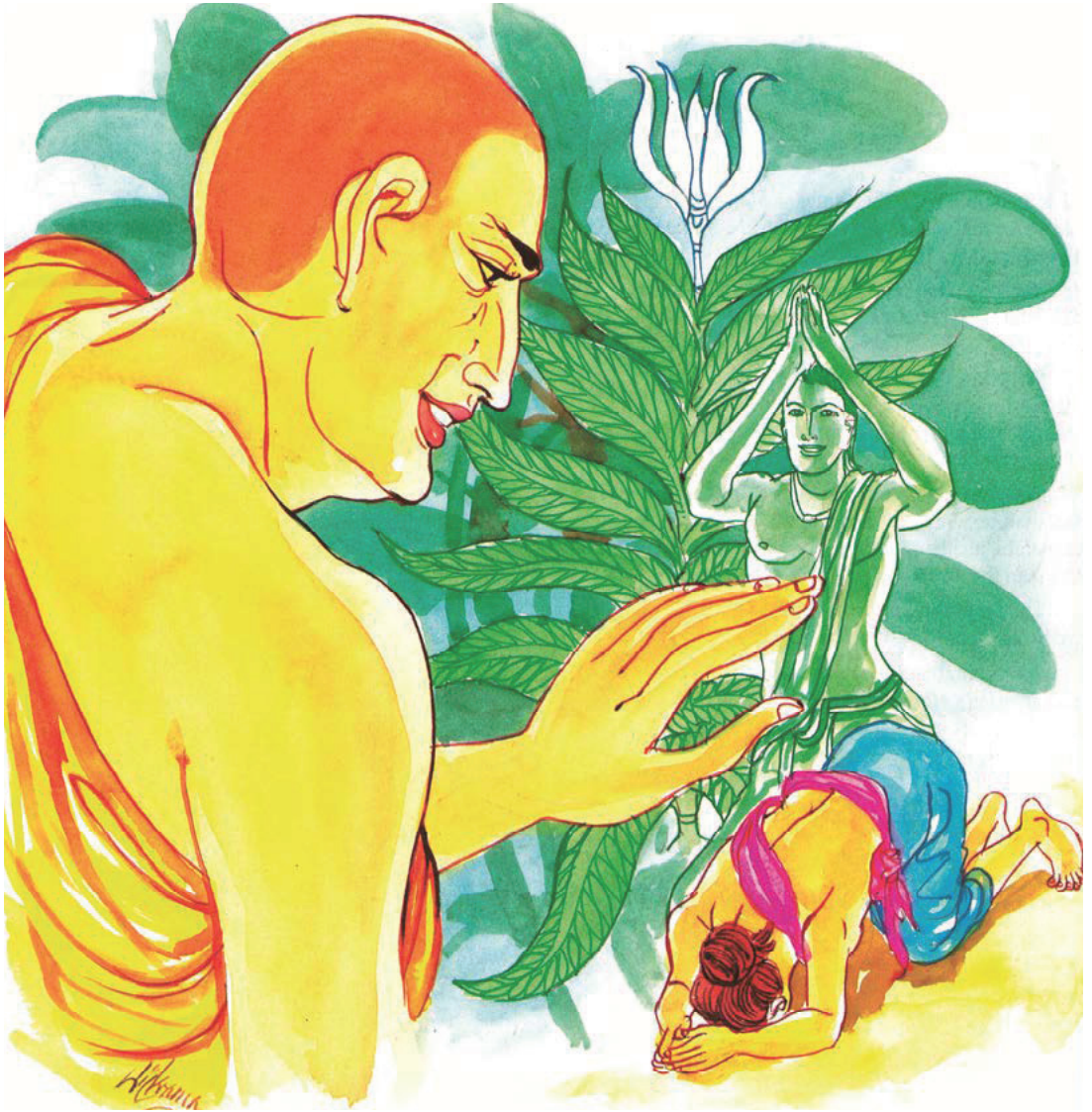
Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, Sariputta visited his friend and, in the course of conversation, asked him the question, 'Sir! Do you ever do a single good deed?' 'Yes indeed, Venerable, I do.' 'What do you do?' 'I make sacrificial offerings on a big scale.' 'What is the purpose of doing this?' 'I do what others have said. They say that it will take me to the Brahma's kingdom.' 'But are you sure that you will reach the world of Brahma's kingdom in this way?' 'Yes Bhante.' 'How did you come to know it? Who told you?' 'My teachers told me, Sir!'

'Friend, Neither you, nor your teachers know how to reach the kingdom of the Brahma. Only the Buddha knows the way to the Brahma. Come with me to him. I shall request him to tell you the way to the Brahma.' So, they both went to the Buddha and saluted him. Sariputta introduced his friend to the Buddha and said, 'Bhante! This friend of mine has told me such and such. Be gracious to tell him the way to the Brahma.'

The Buddha asked, 'Has Sariputta reported correctly?' 'Yes bhante.'

The Buddha explained to him, 'Brahmin, paying respect to the Noble Ones (Ariyas) even for a moment is better than making sacrificial offerings, great or small, throughout the year. You will not be able to reach the land of the Brahma making sacrificial offerings, great or small, even throughout the year.'



**Verse 109: Abhivādanasilissa niccaṃ vaḍḍhāpacāyino
Cattāro dhammā vaḍḍhanti--- āyu vaṇṇo sukhaṃ balaṃ.**

Verse 109: Four blessings in the form of long age, beauty, happiness, and strength increase for one who is in the habit of constantly giving respect and honour to elders.

Honour those worthy of honour Story of Ayu Waddhana Kumara

Place: Arannakutika

Once, there were two hermits who lived together and practised religious austerities for forty-eight years. Later, one of them thought, 'If I continue with the life of hermit then there will be no family continuity.' Thinking this, he left hermit's life, got married and was blessed with a son. The parents visited the hermit friend and sought his blessings. To parents, he gave the blessing, 'May you live long.' He said nothing to the boy. When asked, the hermit told them, 'The child will live for only seven days more. I do not know how to prevent it, but the Buddha may help you.'

So, the parents took the child to the Buddha. The Buddha also predicted the coming death of the boy. The parents requested for some way out. The Buddha then advised them to build a pavilion at the entrance of the house and put the son in a couch in it. Some monks were sent by the Buddha to recite Paritrana Sutta (Protective chants) for seven days. When the Buddha himself came on the seventh day, the devas also arrived. At that time the evil spirit, Avaruddhaka was waiting near the entrance to take the child away. But because of the presence of the devas and the Buddha, he had to stay back. The recitation of the paritrana sutta continued for the whole night, protecting the child. Next day, the boy was taken to the Buddha. This time, he blessed the child, 'May you live long.' When asked how long he would live, the Buddha replied, 'hundred and twenty years.' So the child was named Ayu Waddhana Kumara.

When the child grew up, he went round the country with five hundred devotees. One day, he came to the Jetavana monastery. The bhikkhus recognised him. They asked the Buddha, 'Is there any way by which one can increase his longevity?' The Buddha replied, '**By respecting and honouring the elders and those who are wise and virtuous, one gains not only longevity, but also beauty, happiness and strength.**'



**Verse 110: Yo ca vassasataṃ jive dussilo asamāhito
Ekāhaṃ jivitaṃ seyjo silavantassa jhāyino.**

Verse 110: Living a moral and virtuous life of a single day is far better than the immoral and uncontrolled life of hundred years.

Live virtuous life Story of novice monk, Samkicca

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, thirty bhikkhus, each taking a subject of meditation from the Buddha left for the village Sahasrakul, a long distance from Sravasti. A samanera (novice monk) named Samkicca also accompanied them. His Upadhyaya (Teacher), Sariputta, had sent him with the group. He told him, 'You will not be a burden on them. Rather you will be of great help in getting over some danger which will appear.' The samanera had one eye damaged by sword. Therefore, he was named Samkicca. He was an Arahant.

At that time, a group of robbers were staying in a jungle nearby. They wanted to make a human sacrifice to the guardian spirits of the forest. So, they demanded that one of the bhikkhus be given to them for sacrifice. From the eldest to the youngest—each bhikkhu volunteered to go. But Samkicca revealed that Sariputta, his teacher, had purposefully sent him to go with the robbers. The bhikkhus were reluctant to send the novice monk but considering the far sightedness and wisdom of bhante Sariputta, they agreed to let him go. Before parting, he saluted the thirty bhikkhus and said, 'Brothers, if I have done anything wrong till now, then kindly pardon me.'

When the preparations for sacrifice were complete, the leader took up his sword and hit hard at the samanera who was in deep jhana samadhi (concentration) at that time. But the sword curled up. He took another sword and struck again. This time also it turned up to the hilt and did not harm the samanera. The robber chief thought, 'This sword which is without consciousness has realised the qualities of this samanera whereas I have not realised, although I am a conscious being.' Terror struck, he asked the samanera, 'How come you are not scared of this sword? How is your face so radiant? Why don't you cry, even when your life is in danger?' Samanera got up from the samadhi and told him, '**An Arahant's life is like a bag on his head. He feels relieved when the bag is taken away.**' All the robbers sought permission for admission in the Sangha. Samkicca complied with their request.

On return, the bhikkhus called on Sariputta and finally paid homage to the Buddha. The Buddha admonished the robbers, now turned bhikkhus, '**Bhikkhus, when you rob or steal or commit evil deeds, your lives become meaningless, even if you live for hundred years. Living a virtuous life even for a single day is much better than that.**'



**Verse 111: Yo ca vassasataṃ jive duppañño asamāhito
Ekāhaṃ jivitaṃ seyyo paññāvantassa jhāyino.**

Verse 111: Living a life of meditation and insight for a single day is far better than non-meditative and unwise life of hundred years.

Live life of wisdom Story of bhikkhu Khanu-Kondanna

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Monk Khanu-Kondanna took a topic for meditation from the Buddha, went to the forest and attained Arahantship. Desiring to share his experiences with the Buddha, he left the forest. On feeling tired on the way, he left the road, sat down on a flat stone and went into trance (jhana concentration). At that time, a group of robbers after looting a village came to the place, where the monk was. Taking him as a tree stump, they put the bundles of loot on his body and around him. At dawn, they took the monk as an evil spirit and tried to run away out of fear.

The monk then spoke to them and told them that he was only a bhikkhu and they should not be scared of him. The robbers were wonder struck with his gentle words and prayed for his pardon for mistaking him as a tree stump. With one accord, all the robbers requested the bhikkhu to admit them as bhikkhus. The bhikkhu complied with their request. From that day onwards, the bhikkhu was known by the name, Stump-Kondanna i.e. Khanu-Kondanna.

He took the robber-bhikkhus to the Buddha who asked him, 'Kondanna, you have brought pupils?' 'Yes, Sir' and he told the entire story. The Buddha asked the robbers turned monks, 'Monks, Is it true?' 'Yes Bhante! We never saw such an exhibition of magical power before and, therefore, we all have become monks.'

The Buddha taught them, '**Monks, It is better for you to live but a single day in exercise of the wisdom you have just acquired, than to live for a hundred years, committing such acts of foolishness.**'



**Verse 112: Yo ca vassasataṃ jive kusito hinaviriyo
Ekāhaṃ jivitaṃ seyvo viriyam ārabhato dalhaṃ.**

Verse 112: A single day's life of one who strives and exerts himself hard is far better than life of one who lives a hundred years, idle and inactive.

Live a life of effort

Story of bhikkhu Sappadasa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a bhikkhu was not feeling satisfied with his religious progress. This was due to his bad karma, in one of his previous births. At the same time, he felt that it will be shameful for him to return to the worldly life. So, he thought of ending his life. He saw some bhikkhus carrying a poisonous snake in a pot to release it in the forest. He took it from them and put his hand in the pot but the snake did not bite him. Taking it as a non-poisonous snake, he released it in the forest and came back to the vihara. Because of this incidence, people started calling him Sappadasa.

Having failed, he took a razor to cut his throat. But as he put his razor on the throat, the purity of his moral practices as a bhikkhu, flashed through his mind. His whole body was filled with delightful satisfaction (piti) and bliss (sukha). He detached his mind from this bliss and directed it to the development of Insight Knowledge and attained Arahantship. He returned to the vihara.

The bhikkhus asked him where he had gone. He told them that he had gone to kill himself. 'Why did you not do it?' 'I wanted to cut my throat with this knife. But in the process, I cut off all moral impurities through the knife of Insight Knowledge.' The bhikkhus reported to the Buddha, 'Sir, Sappadasa claims that he has attained Arahantship while trying to take his life. Is it possible to attain it in such a short instant?' 'Yes, it is possible for one who is zealous and strenuous in the practice of Tranquility and Insight Meditation. Arahantship can be had in an instant. As the bhikkhu walks in meditation, he can become Arahant even before his raised foot touches the ground.' 'Why did the snake not bite him?' 'This was because of the good karma of a previous life. In that life, the snake was his slave and the monk was the master. He had treated his slave well.'



**Verse 113: Yo ca vassasatam̐ jive apassam̐ udayavyayaṃ
Ekāhaṃ jivitaṃ seyyo passato udayavyayaṃ.**

Verse 113: Though one may live for hundred years without comprehending how all things rise and pass away, yet far better, indeed, is a single day's life of one who comprehends how all things rise and pass away.

Live life of reflection Story of Patachara

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Patachara, daughter of a rich man from Sravasti, fled away with a young attendant. They started living in a village far away from Sravasti. When she was to deliver her first baby, she suggested going to her parents' house. But the husband was scared to go there. She started alone but the baby boy was born on the way. She came back. When the second boy was to be born, she again left for her parents' home, followed by her husband. It was night and was raining heavily when she felt the labour-pain. So, her husband started cutting the bush to make a place for delivery, when he was bitten by a snake and died.

In the morning, due to the heavy rain in the night, the river had swollen up and the current was fast. For crossing the river, she left the elder son on the bank of the river and crossed the river, with the newly born baby on her head. She left the infant on the other bank and was crossing back the river to fetch the elder son, when a hawk picked up the infant, taking it as a piece of meat. While she shouted to frighten the hawk, the elder boy thought that her mother was calling him and entered the river and was swept away.

Then, while she was moving towards her village to see her parents, she saw some smoke from the cremation ground and learnt that her parents and brother had died in the night due to house collapse, because of heavy rains. Having lost all, hearing this tragic news, she went mad. She moved half-naked on the streets, shouting, 'Woe is me!'

At that time, the Buddha was preaching at the Jetavana monastery. Patachara was trying to enter the vihara but was being prevented. The Buddha then intervened and asked them to let her in. When she was close enough to hear him, the Buddha said. 'Control your mind and be calm.' She realised that she was naked. Someone gave her cloth to cover herself. Patachara then narrated her story to the Buddha.

The Buddha consoled her, 'Patachara! Have no fear. You have now come to one who can protect you. **Through this samsara (existences), the amount of tear that you have spent on the loss of your sons, husbands, parents and brothers is more than the entire water of the oceans.'**

Then he expounded the Anamatagga Sutta, which dealt with countless existences and she felt relieved and calmed. '**One should not worry too much about those who have gone away, but that one should purify oneself and strive to realise the Nibbana.'** She attained Srotappan stage and became a bhikkhuni.

One day, she was cleaning her feet. When she poured water three times, she found that it travelled three distances and then disappeared. She perceived the three stages of life. The Buddha sent his radiance and encouraged her to continue. She attained Arahant hood.



**Verse 114: Yo ca vassa sataṃ jive apassaṃ amataṃ padaṃ
Ekāhaṃ jivitaṃ seyyo passato amataṃ padaṃ.**

Verse 114: Though one should live a life of hundred years without seeing the Deathless State, yet far better, indeed, is a single day's life of one who sees the Deathless State.

Experience deathlessness Story of Kisa Gotami

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Kisa Gotami lived in Sravasti. She was known as Kisa because she was very lean and thin. She was married to a rich man and a son was born to them. But her son died as a toddler from snake bite. When people wanted to take the baby to the cremation ground, she refused to allow them saying, 'I have to get him treated.' She had never seen death earlier. She went around taking her son in her arms, looking for medicine. People thought that she had gone mad. But a wise man took pity on her and said, 'Sister! The Buddha can give you the medicine which will cure your son. Go and see him.' The Buddha, understanding her disturbed state of mind, asked her to get some mustard seed from a house where nobody had died. Overjoyed at the prospect of curing her son, she ran from house to house seeking for mustard. People gave her mustard seed very willingly but she had to return it and thank them since someone had definitely died in their family. By the evening, she came to know that there was not a single family where nobody had died and that the dead were more than the living in number.

As soon as she realised this, her attitude towards her dead son changed. She was now no longer attached to his dead body. She also realised how the Buddha taught her in a simple way that **'One who is born, will die one day.'** The Buddha further added, **'Gotami! You should not think that you are the only one who has lost a son. As you have now realised, the death comes to all beings. Before their desires are satiated, they are taken away, as a severe flood takes away a sleeping village in the night.'** On hearing this, Kisa attained Srotappan state of fruition. Kisa then requested the Buddha to admit her to the Sangha as a bhikkhuni. Accordingly, she was admitted.

One night, she was watching some lamps when she noticed that some flames flared up and some others flickered out. She meditated on that, **'Even as it is with these flames, so also, it is with living beings in this world. Some flare up, while others flicker out. Only those who have attained Nibbana are no more seen.'** The Buddha sent his radiance and encouraged her to continue her meditation as she was in the right direction. He also commented, **'Though one may live a hundred years without perceiving the Deathless state (Nibbana), yet better indeed, is a single day's life of one who perceives the Deathless State.'** At the end of the teaching, Kisa Gotami attained Arahant hood.



**Verse 115: Yo ca vassasatam̐ jive apassam̐ dhammam̐ uttamam̐
Ekāham̐ jivitam̐ seyyo passato Dhammam̐ uttamam̐.**

Verse 115: Though one may live for hundred years not comprehending the Dhamma, yet far better, indeed, is a single day's life of one who has comprehended the Dhamma.

Perceive the Dhamma Story of bhikkhuni Bahu Puttika

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

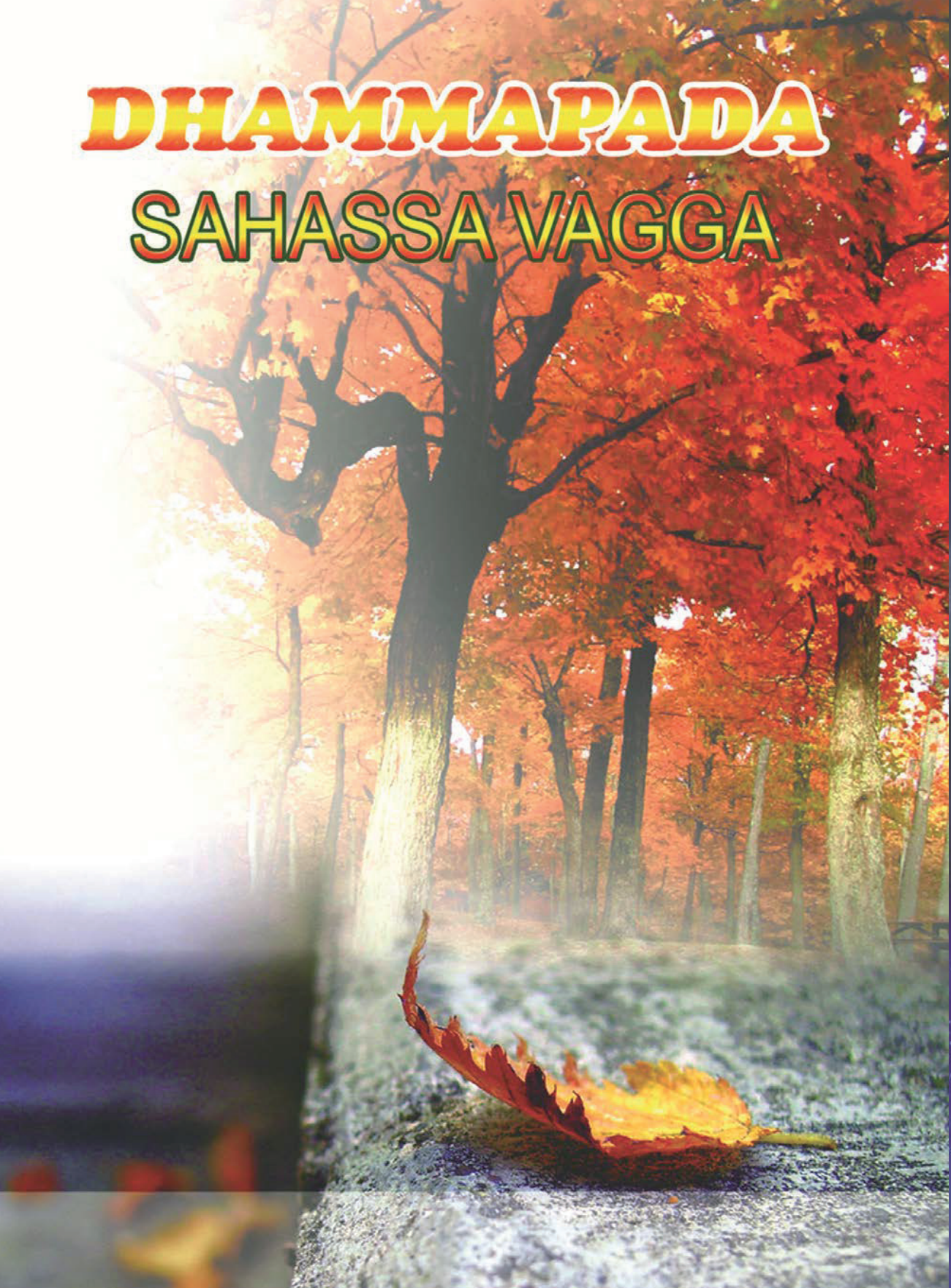
Once in Sravasti, there lived a rich couple who had seven sons and seven daughters who were all married. One day, the husband died. The mother did not like division in the family and kept all property with herself. But the selfish children persuaded her, 'Why not we utilise our property and get better returns? Are we not capable of taking care of our mother?' In the beginning, the mother ignored these observations but when they kept on repeating the same, she thought, 'I am also growing old. Of what use, the property is to me? It is better that I divide it among them and they take care of me.' So thinking, she immediately, divided her property amongst the children and did not keep any share for herself.

In the beginning the children took care of the mother but after sometime, they all started ill-treating her, as it normally happens in all such cases. With the passage of time, she was so frustrated, that she approached the Buddha and joined the Sangha as a bhikkhuni. As she was the mother of many children, she was called Bahuputtika.

She thought, 'Since I have entered the Sangha in old age, I must be heedful.' Therefore, she spent the whole night in meditation on the Dhamma. The Buddha, through supernormal power, saw her from the Jetavana monastery, sent his radiance and exhorted her, '**The life of one who does not practise the Dhamma is useless, even if he were to live for a hundred years.**' Reflecting mindfully on the advice given by the Buddha, Bahu Puttika attained Arahanthood.

DHAMMAPADA

SAHASSA VAGGA





DHAMMAPADA

EVIL

PAAP VAGGA

Chapter IX

PAAP VAGGA

Evil

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PAAP VAGGA

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**Verse 116: Abhittharetha kalyāṇe pāpā cittaṃ nivāraye
Dandhaṃ hi karoto puññaṃ pāpasmīṃ ramati mano.**

Verse 116: Be in a hurry to do meritorious deeds. Check your mind from doing evil. The mind of him, who is lethargic in doing meritorious deeds, delights in evil.

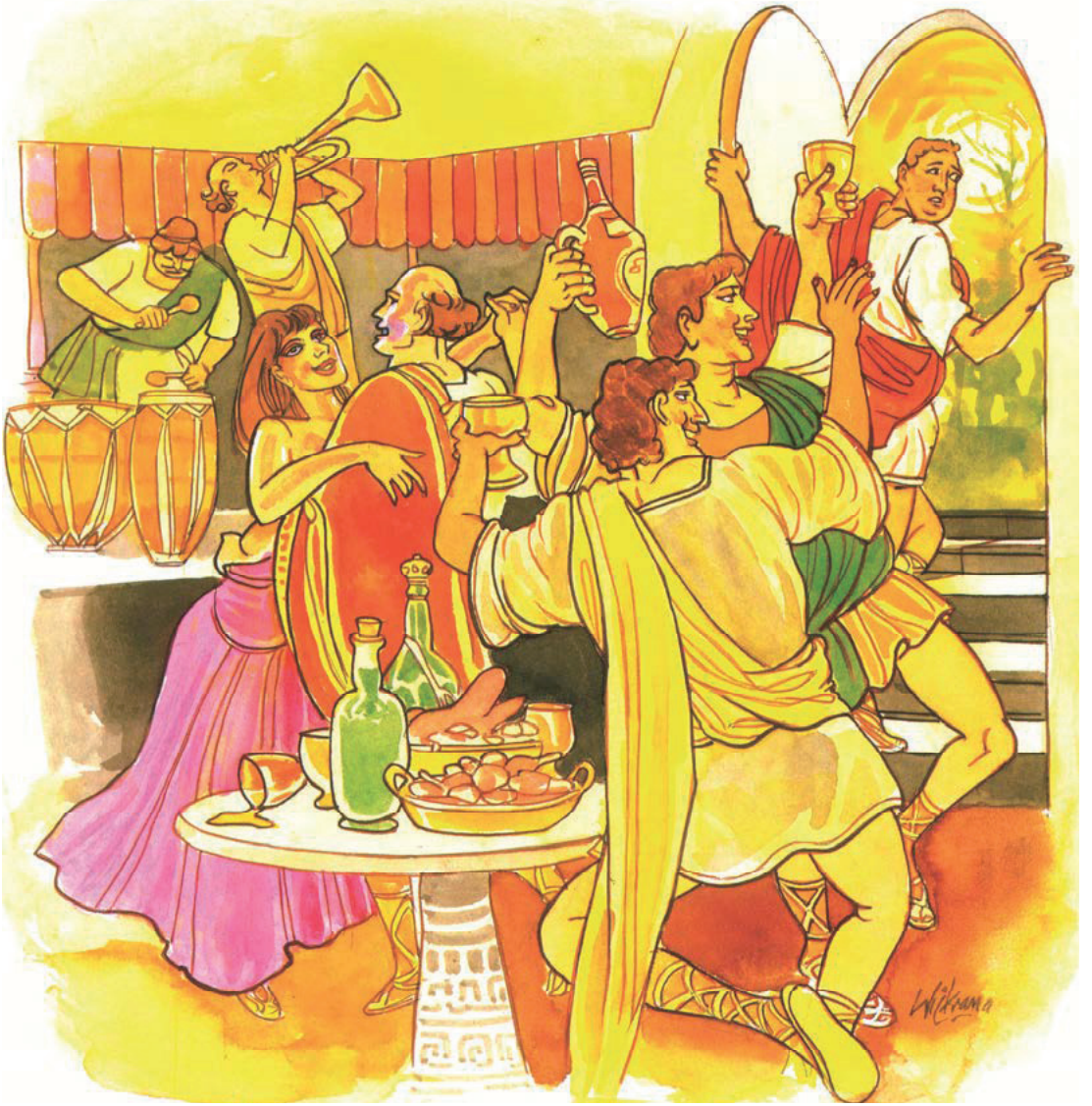
Be quick in doing good Story of Chulla Eka Sataka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived a poor brahmin couple in Sravasti. They shared only one outer garment between them. Hence the man was called Eka Sataka. The wife used it in day time when she went to the Buddha Vihara and the husband used it in the night time. One night, while listening to the Buddha's talk, the brahmin was so moved that he felt like offering that garment to the Buddha. But greed persuaded him, not to do so by suggesting, 'If I give away the only outer garment that I have, there would be none left for me and my wife.' He hesitated and with the conflict in his mind, the first watch of the night was over. He also could not offer it in the middle watch of the night. But in the last watch of the night, he said to himself, 'If I hesitate, I shall miss the golden opportunity of ending worldly suffering. I shall now offer my outer garment.' Deciding so, he placed the garment at the feet of the Buddha and cried out, 'I have won! I have won!'

King Pasendi, who was also sitting in the audience, heard it and ordered his soldiers to investigate it. On coming to know about the brahmin's offering to the Buddha, the king commented that the brahmin had indeed done something which was not easy to do and he should be rewarded. Therefore, one piece of cloth was given to him as reward for his faith and generosity. The brahmin offered this piece of cloth also to the Buddha. So, the king gave two, four, eight and sixteen pieces of cloth and each time the brahmin offered it to the Buddha. When the king offered thirty-two pieces of cloth, the brahmin offered thirty pieces to the Buddha and kept two for himself and his wife. On seeing this, the king again commented that the brahmin had truly performed a very difficult task and so must be rewarded properly. Two very costly velvet blankets were brought from the palace and the same were given to the brahmin. This time the brahmin got two canopies made of them and offered one to the Buddha and kept the other one for his own use. When the king went to the monastery next time, he recognised the velvet canopy as the offering made by the brahmin and this time he was so pleased that he gave Sabbachatukka (all pairs of four) reward to the brahmin.

When the bhikkhus heard about it, they asked the Buddha, 'How is it that, in the case of this brahmin, a good deed done at present, bears the fruit immediately?' The Buddha replied, 'If the brahmin had offered his outer garment in the first watch of the night, he would have been rewarded Sabbashodaka (all pairs of sixteen). If he had done so, in the middle watch of the night, he would have been rewarded all the goods in pairs of eight. Since he delayed in taking decision, his reward was less. **So, when one wants to give in charity, one should do so quickly. If one hesitates, the reward comes slowly and sparingly. Also, if one is too slow in doing good deeds, one may not be able to do so at all, for the mind tends to take delight in doing evil.'**



**Verse 117: Pāpan ce puriso kayirā na taṃ kayirā punappunaṃ
Na tamhi chandaṃ kayirātha dukkho pāpassa uccayo.**

Verse 117: If a person commits an evil act, he should not do it again and again. He should not find pleasure in doing it again. Painful is the accumulation of evil acts.

Do no evil again Story of bhikkhu Seyyasaka

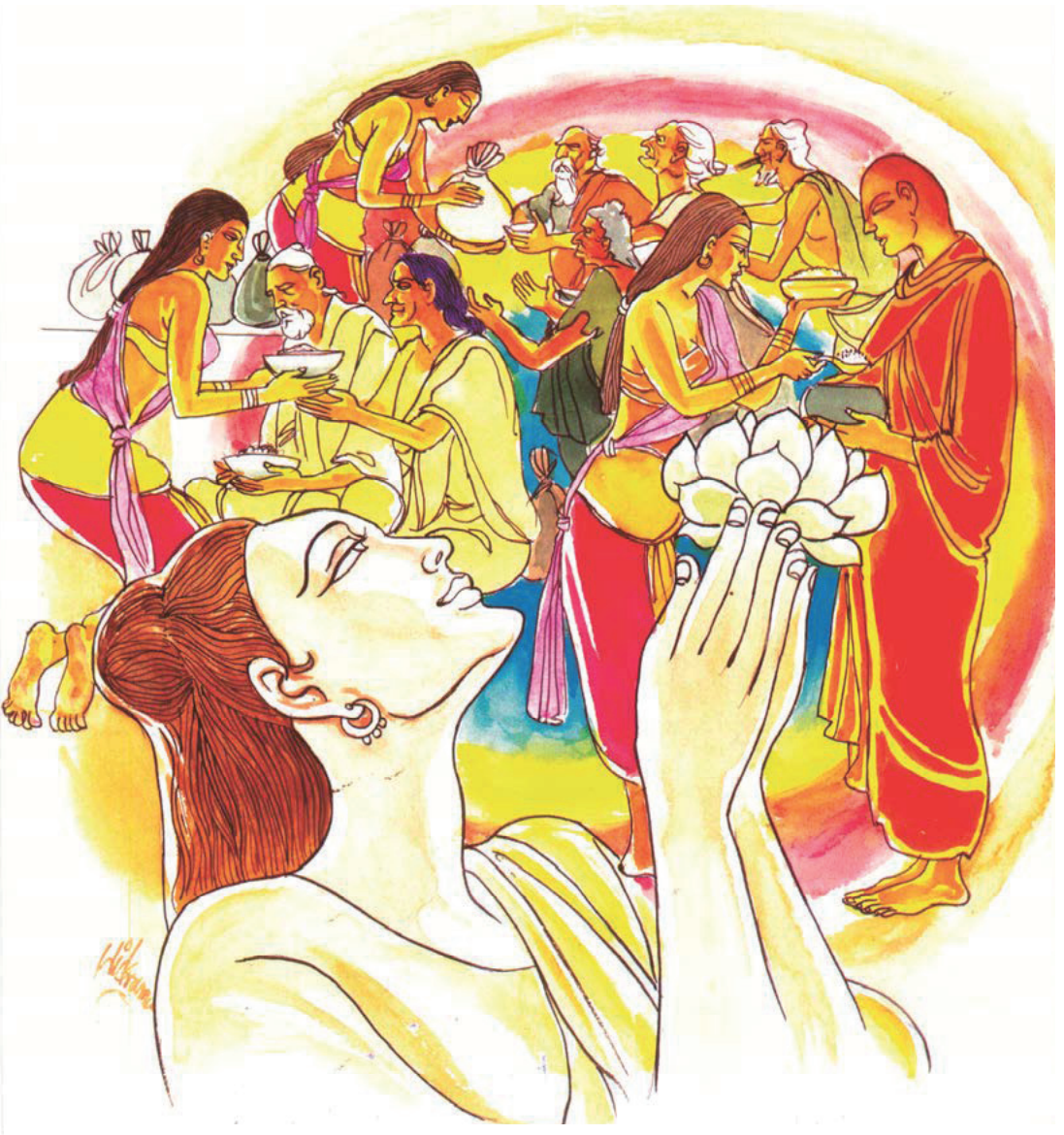
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Seyyasaka was a colleague of bhikkhu Kaludayi, who was his companion and mentor. Seyyasaka was not happy and satisfied with his religious life. He was in the habit of stimulating himself sexually. Whenever he felt unhappy with himself, he would indulge into this act of self-abuse. The other bhikkhus came to know about it and reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha sent for him and asked him, 'Is it correct that you did such and such act? It has been reported so.' 'Yes Bhante!'

Then the Buddha said, 'Fool! You have acted in a manner unbecoming of a bhikkhu. Why did you do so?' The Buddha admonished him further, 'Concentrate on your sadhana (practices), since such sinful acts will further take you away from gaining of purity.'

At the same time the Buddha introduced the rule of Vinaya for the bhikkhus not to indulge in such sensual pleasures. He called these as offences, which attract censure.

Through this verse, the Buddha advises that there are chances that one may commit a wrong act in life by mistake. But having done so, he should be alert and not repeat it again. For, it brings painful results. One should not find pleasure in it because such acts ultimately lead to pain only.



**Verse 118: Puññaṃ ce puriso kayirā kayirāth'etaṃ punappunaṃ
Tamhi chandaṃ kayirātha sukho puññaassa uccayo.**

Verse 118: If a person does some meritorious act, he should do it again and again. He should find great pleasure in doing it again. Blissful is the accumulation of good acts.

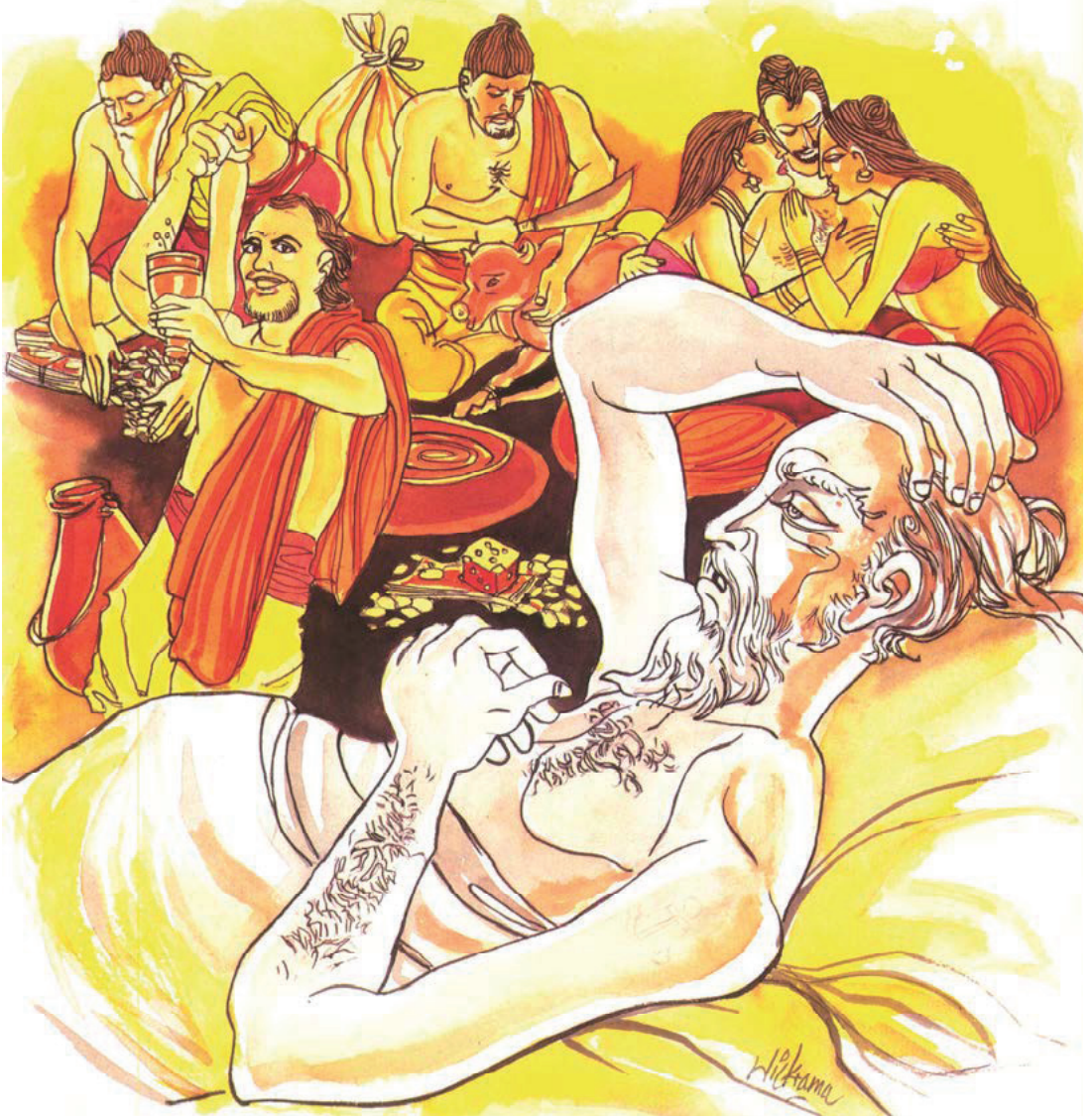
Do good again and again Story of goddess Laja

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, Venerable Maha Kassapa stayed at Pippali cave, near Rajagriha, totally absorbed in concentration (samapatti) for seven days. After it he wished, 'Let me give someone a chance to make an offering to me. That person will thus earn a lot of good karma.' In his survey, he saw a young maid cooking her food and realised that she would make food offering to him and thus earn good reward. So, he came to her house and stood at its door. When the woman saw the bhikkhu, she was filled with delightful joy (pitti). While making the offering, she prayed respectfully, 'Bhante! With this small offering of mine, may I also be able to realise the Truth.' While expressing his thanks giving (anumodana), the bhikkhu said, 'Let it be so.'

Later, the lady was bitten by a snake and died. She was reborn as a deva in Tavatimsa loka with a lot of luxuries. Looking at her past karma, she realised, 'I am born in the heavenly world only because of the blessings of the monk. Let me serve him from here. Thus I shall earn some good karma.' So, every morning she went to the vihara, cleaned the premises, filled the water jars and did some other odd jobs of daily routine. At first the monk thought that the cleaning etc. had been done by some novice but when he discovered her doing it, he immediately asked her to go away. She pleaded repeatedly, 'Kindly permit me to do some minor work and earn good karma.' The bhikkhu did not agree to her and pointed out, 'It will not be proper for a lady deva to work at the vihara. People may start talking about it if they often see you at the monastery.' She was very upset, pleaded with him and cried, 'Please don't destroy my wealth, my riches.' The Buddha heard her cries. He sent forth his radiance and consoled her saying, 'Although meritorious deeds are very important, it is not advisable for a young lady to come to the vihara alone and do all the activities here. My son Kassapa does not want to offend you. He only wants to maintain the sanctity of the place.'

Note: In this verse the Buddha has advised that one should not stop doing good deeds by merely doing it once, but go on repeating it again and again. As a result, one's future will be bright and blissful.



**Verse 119: Pāpo' pi passati bhadraṃ yava pāpaṃ na paccati
Yadā ca paccati pāpaṃ atha pāpo pāpāni passati.**

Verse 119: Even an evil doer also feels good, so long as his evil deeds do not bear fruit. But when the evil deeds bear fruit, he will reap their consequences. He will then lament over his past actions.

Do no evil

Story of Anatha Pindika

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Anatha Pindika was the donor of the Jetavana monastery. He was not only generous, he was also truly devoted to the Buddha. He would go to the Jetavana monastery and pay homage to the Enlightened One thrice daily. In the mornings, he would carry cooked rice, in the day time some other food items and in the evenings some medicines and flowers. After sometime Anatha Pindika became poor, but because of his faith in the Dhamma, he was not shaken by the poverty and continued to do his daily acts of charity.

One day, the Buddha asked him, 'Are the alms being properly provided by you?' He replied, 'Yes, Bhante! But the food is nothing but the coarse food meant for the birds.' The Buddha explained to him, 'Lay disciple! Do not allow yourself to think that it is nothing but coarse food that you offer to the Buddha and do not be disturbed at that. If the intention is pure, the food that will be given to the Buddha and others will not be coarse and bird-feed.'

One night, a guardian spirit, staying in that house appeared before Anatha Pindika in person and said, 'I am the guardian spirit. You have been making offerings to the Buddha indiscriminately without any concern for the future. That is why, you are poor today. Therefore, you should stop your offerings to him and concentrate on your business. You will become rich once again.'



**Verse 120: Bhadro' pi passati pāpaṃ yāva bhadraṃ na paccati
Yadā ca paccati bhadraṃ atha bhadro bhadrāni passati.**

Verse 120: Even a virtuous person may still meet with suffering, so long as his good deeds do not bear fruits. But when the good deeds will bear fruit, he will reap the benefits of the good deeds. He will then appreciate his actions.

Do good deeds

Story of Anatha Pindika

The Treasurer replied, 'If you came to give this advice to me, then get lost. Though a hundred thousand like you may try, you will not be able to divert me from my path of devotion to the Buddha. Leave my house immediately.' As Anatha Pindika was highly developed spiritually, the guardian spirit could not disobey him and had to leave the premises immediately. She had no place to go and wanted to return back but was scared of Anatha Pindika. So, she approached Sakka, the king of the devas. He advised her to do something good for the treasurer first and then seek his pardon. He further advised, 'There are debts taken as loans by some traders which are still outstanding. Recover them. Certain valuables buried by his ancestors have been washed away to the ocean. Find them out and return them to Anatha Pindika. There is some unclaimed treasure lying at a particular place. Bring that all back and keep them in Anatha Pindika's treasury.' The spirit did as she was told and Anatha Pindika again became rich. When the spirit told Anatha Pindika that she had recovered huge wealth for him, he pardoned her and allowed her to stay in his house again. Then Anatha Pindika took her to the Buddha.

The Buddha told both of them, '**One may not enjoy the benefits of a good deed or suffer the consequences of a bad deed for a long time, but the time will surely come when good or bad deeds will bear fruit and ripen.**'

Note: Sometimes, we may see a wicked person leading a prosperous life. This is due to his past good karma. He will experience happiness owing to the potentiality of his past good karma over the present evil; a seeming injustice which often prevails in the world. When his evil karmas fructify, then he perceives the painful effects of his wickedness.

Similarly, we may see a virtuous person suffering in life. This is due to his past bad karma. He will experience unhappiness owing to the potentiality of his past evil over the present good; a seeming injustice which often prevails in the world. He will get convinced that good deeds will only bring good results when at the appropriate moment the good deeds will fructify giving him abundant bliss.

The fact that at times the wicked are prosperous and the virtuous are unfortunate is in itself strong evidence in support of the belief in karma and rebirth.



**Verse 121: Māvamaññetha pāpassa na mam taṃ āgamissati
 Udabindu nipātena udakumbho pi pūrati
 Pūrati bālo pāpassa thokathokam'pi ācinam.**

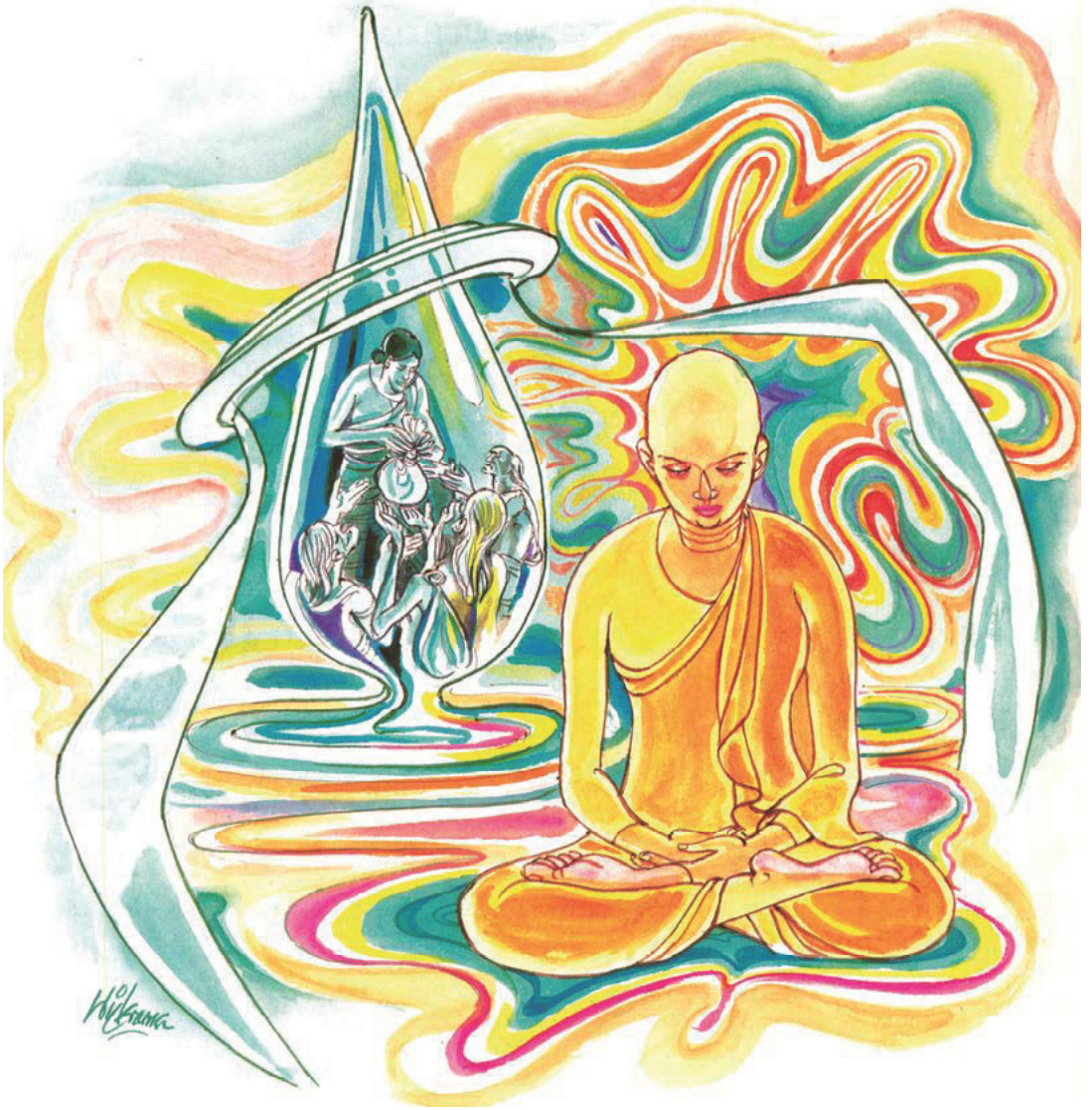
Verse 121: Do not ignore the ill effects of evil, saying; 'Its consequences will not come back to me.' Even a water-pot is filled up by water, drop by drop. Likewise, a fool becomes full of evil karma drop by drop, little by little, gathering them slowly, gradually.

Take evil seriously Story of a careless bhikkhu

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

This verse was narrated by the Buddha while residing at the Jetavana monastery in respect of a bhikkhu who was careless in using the furnitures of the vihara. This monk, after using any furniture like chair bench etc. of the monastery, would leave it outside in the open. He did not bring it in, even in scorching sunlight or when it was raining or in severe winter. The other bhikkhus would request him, 'Friend! After using these pieces of furniture, you should place them back at their original place.' But instead of changing his ways, he would react, 'Friends! This is a small negligence (pramad) done by me. These objects do not have a living body like liver or consciousness. Why are you giving so much importance to it? I do not have any intention to either damage or destroy these objects.' He always argued in this way. He continued with the same behaviour.

This news ultimately reached the Buddha. He called for the monk and asked him, 'Do you behave in such and such way?' Without showing any sense of remorse, he said, 'Yes, Sir!' Then the Buddha admonished him, **'Bhikkhu, you should not behave in this way. You should not think lightly of an evil act, however, small it may be for it will grow big, if you will neglect it and do it habitually.'**



**Verse 122: Māvamaññetha puññassa na mam taṃ āgamissati
Udabindu nipātena udakumbho' pi pūrati
Pūrati dhīro puññassa thokathokam pi ācinam.**

Verse 122: Do not underrate virtue, saying; 'Its consequences will not come back to me.' Even a water-pot is filled up by water, drop by drop. Likewise, a wise man becomes full of virtues drop by drop, little by little, gathering them slowly, gradually.

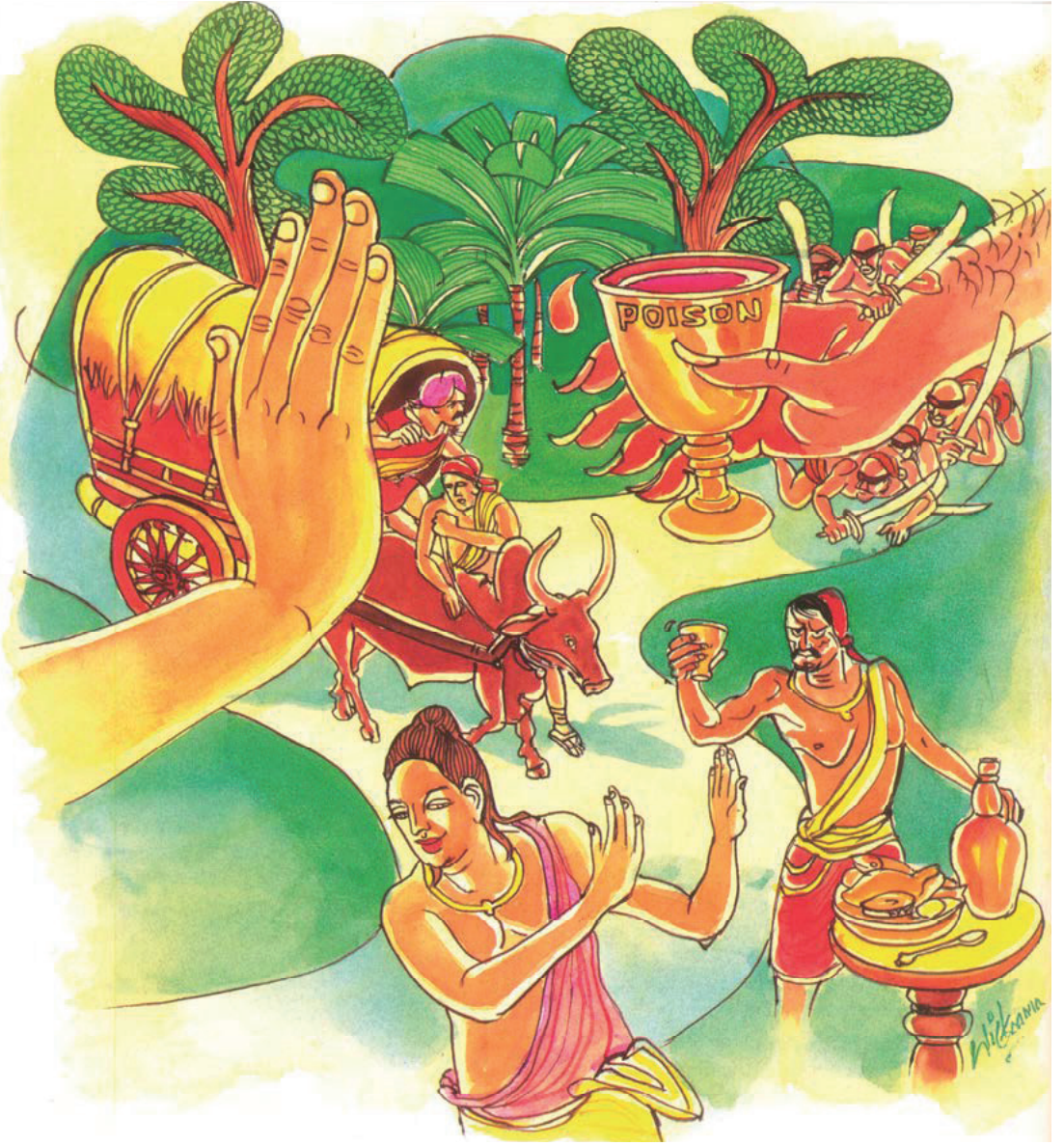
Think seriously of good Story of Bilala Padaka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a man from Sravasti heard a discourse from the Buddha on giving charity by oneself and also to encourage friends and relations to give charity. If one did so, then the merit won is manifold. He was very much impressed, and decided to practise what was taught. So, he invited the Buddha and his disciples for the almsfood the next day. Then he went round to each neighbour's house to inform them that the almsfood would be offered to the Buddha and the other bhikkhus the next day and that they should contribute according to their wishes. A rich man, Bilala Padaka, seeing the man going from house to house murmured, 'O this wretched man! Why did he not invite as many bhikkhus as he himself could afford, instead of going round, begging from people?' So, he asked the man to bring his bowl to him and put a little of rice, butter and honey into the bowl. These items were kept separately and not mixed with what others had given. The rich man could not understand why his items were kept separately. Probably, the organiser wanted to show to others how little a rich man like him had contributed and thus put him to shame. Therefore, he sent his servant to find out what happened to his offering.

The promoter of the charity, put a little of everything that was given by the rich man in various pots of rice, curry and sweets etc. so that the rich man could gain much merit. His servant reported what he had seen. But Bilala could not get the meaning and was not sure of the intention of the promoter. So, he himself went to the place where the almsfood was to be served. At the same time, he carried a knife with him, intending to kill him, if he publicly humiliated him by telling how little a rich man like him had contributed. But the promoter of the charity said to the Buddha, 'Venerable Sir! This offering is a joint offering of us all. Whether one has given a little or much is of no value. Each one of us has given in faith and generosity. So, let all of us gain equal merit.' When Bilala heard those words, he realised that he had wronged the man and asked for forgiveness. He told the donor, 'I have done great wrong by thinking ill of you. Forgive me.'

The Buddha heard the rich man urging for pardon and knowing the reason said, **'My disciple, you should not think lightly of a good deed, however, small it may be. The small deeds will become big if you do it habitually.'**



**Verse 123: Vānijo va bhayaṃ maggaṃ appasattho mahaddhano
Visaṃ jivitukāmo' va pāpāni parivajjaye.**

Verse 123: Just as a very wealthy merchant, with a small escort, avoids an unsafe path; just as one with love for life avoids poison, even so one should avoid evil at all costs.

Shun evil Story of Maha Dhana

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Maha Dhana was a rich merchant of Sravasti. On one occasion, the robbers planned to rob his house but did not succeed. When they learnt that Maha Dhana would be travelling shortly with cartloads of goods and merchandise, they decided to loot him on the way and went ahead and camped in the forest. In the meantime, Maha Dhana invited the bhikkhus also to accompany him on the same journey and promised to look after their needs on the way. So, a group of bhikkhus also accompanied him. The robbers got the news of the movement and went ahead to hide in the forest and wait for the caravan of the merchant. But the merchant stopped the caravan at the outskirts of the forest and camped there for a few days. The robbers got the news of the impending entry into the forest and were waiting to attack the caravan when it entered the forest. Meanwhile, the merchant also came to know about the plan of the robbers. Therefore, instead of proceeding further, he decided to return home. When the bandits came to know that now the merchant would go back home, they shifted to that route and kept on waiting for the caravan to pass. Some villagers saw the movement of the bandits and sent message to the merchant. Apprehending the danger ahead, the merchant decided to remain in that village for sometime more. When he told his decision to the bhikkhus, they decided to go ahead to Sravasti alone and left the village. On reaching Sravasti, they told the Buddha what all had happened.

To them, the Buddha said, 'Bhikkhus, Maha Dhana keeps himself away from the journey beset with bandits. **One, who does not want to die, should keep away from poison. So also, a wise bhikkhu, realising that existence is like a journey beset with danger, strive to keep away from doing evil.'**

Note: While carrying valuable goods, an unarmed wealthy merchant always remains alert to avoid any danger. Likewise, in the journey of life one should carefully avoid evils so that the internal enemies within us may not attack us and bring our ruin.



**Verse 124: Pāṇimhi ce vaṇo nāssa hareyya pāṇinā viṣaṃ
Nābbaṇaṃ viṣaṃ anveti natthi pāpaṃ akubbato.**

Verse 124: One, who has no wound in his hand, may carry poison in it. Poison does not affect him. Similarly, no evil befalls on him who does no evil act

Do no wrong Story of hunter, Kukkuta Mitta

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Once, there lived in Rajagriha, the daughter of a rich man. She had attained Srotappan stage. One day, a hunter by name Kukkuta Mitta came into the town to sell meat. On seeing him, she instantaneously fell in love with him. She followed him, married him and lived in a small village. As a result of that marriage, seven sons were born to them and in due course of time, they all got married.

One day, the Buddha surveyed the world early in the morning and found that the hunter, his sons and their wives were due to attain Srotappan state. So, the Buddha went to the place where the hunter had put his trap in the forest. He put his foot prints near the trap and sat down in meditation below a bush, not far from the trap. When the hunter came, he did not see any animal in the trap but saw the footprints and concluded that someone must have come before him and let the animal out. So, when he saw the Buddha, he inferred that he must have set the animal free and flew into a rage. He took out his bow and arrow to shoot at the Buddha, but as he drew the arrow, he became immobilised and remained fixed in that position as a statue. His children followed him one by one and found their father immobilised as a statue. They also saw the Buddha at some distance and thought him to be their father's enemy. All of them took out their bows and arrows one after the other to shoot at the Buddha and became immobilised and remained fixed in their respective postures. When the hunter and the sons did not return, the hunter's wife and her daughters-in-law came to the forest. Seeing her husband and the sons with their arrows pointed at the Buddha, she raised her both hands and shouted, 'Don't kill my father.' When the hunter heard her words, he thought, 'This must be my father-in-law.' When the sons heard her words, they thought, 'He must be our grandfather,' and thought of loving-kindness appeared in their hearts. Then the lady told them, 'Put away your bows and arrows and pay respect to my father.' The Buddha knew that by now the minds of the hunter and his sons had softened. When they put away their bows and arrows, he expounded them the Dhamma and all of them attained Srotappan state. In the evening congregation, the bhikkhus asked, 'Is the hunter's wife not guilty of taking life as she gave nets, bows and arrows to her husband?' The Buddha replied, 'Bhikkhus, Those who are Srotappan do not kill. They don't wish others to get killed. The wife of the hunter was obeying her husband in bringing the things for him. It never occurred to her to think that she was helping her husband in creating evil karma. **Just as a hand that has no wound is not affected by poison, since she had no intention to commit evil deeds, she did not create bad karma.'**



**Verse 125: Yo appaduṭṭhassa narassa dussati, Suddhassa posassa anaṅgaṇassa
Tam eva bālaṃ pacceti pāpaṃ, Sukhumo rajo paṭivātaṃ' va khitto.**

Verse 125: Whoever harms a harmless, guiltless, pure person; upon that very fool the evils recoil like the fine dust thrown against the wind.

Don't harm the innocent Story of hunter Koka

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One morning, a hunter by name Koka, was going out for hunting with his hound dogs. He met a bhikkhu who was entering the city for almsfood. He took it as a bad omen and grumbled, 'Since I have seen this wretched one, I don't think I shall get anything today', and went his way towards the forest. As expected by him, he did not get anything that day. On the way back home, he saw again the same bhikkhu who was now returning to the monastery after the almsround in the city and lost his temper. So, he set his hounds free at the bhikkhu who swiftly climbed a tree to save his life, just one level above the reach of the hounds. 'I shall not leave you even if you have climbed the tree.' Then the hunter went to the foot of the tree and pricked his heels with the tip of an arrow. 'Please do not do it', the bhikkhu kept on pleading but the hunter continued to do so. The bhikkhu was in great pain, as if his both feet had been placed on fire. He was not able to hold on to his robes and it slipped off his body on the hunter who was at the foot of the tree. The dogs, seeing the yellow robe, thought that the bhikkhu had fallen down from the tree and pounced on the body of the hunter, biting and pulling it furiously. The bhikkhu, from his shelter in the tree, broke a branch of the tree and threw it towards the dogs. Then the dogs discovered that they had been attacking their own master, instead of the bhikkhu. They ran away towards the forest. The bhikkhu came down from the tree and found that the hunter was dead. He felt sorry for him and was also worried that he could be held responsible for the death of the hunter, as the hunter died out of the covering of his yellow robes.

So, the bhikkhu went to the Buddha to clear his doubt. The Buddha consoled him, 'You are not responsible for the death of the hunter. Your morality (sila) is also not soiled due to that death. In fact, the hunter did great wrong to one to whom he should have done no wrong and so came to that grievous end. In fact, he had done wrong to an innocent person in the past also and met similar tragic end.'

In one of his previous lives, the hunter was a physician whose earning was very poor. One day, on seeing some boys playing, he thought, 'I shall get them bitten by the snakes, then cure them and earn money.' He showed a hole to them and told them, 'You can hold that water snake.' A boy brought out the snake by its neck but realising it to be poisonous, he threw it towards the physician and fled away. The physician died due to the snake bite.



**Verse 126: Gabbham eke uppajjanti nirayaṃ pāpakammino
Saggaṃ sugatino yanti parinibbanti anā savā.**

Verse 126: Some are born in the wombs. The wicked are reborn in painful states. The pious go to the blissful states. Those who are free from mental impurities pass into Nibbana.

Do right acts

Story of the gem polisher

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived a gem polisher in Sravasti. Every day, he offered almsfood to monk Tissa who was an Arahant. One day, when the gem polisher was handling a piece of meat, a messenger of King Pasendi arrived with a ruby for cutting and polishing and then sending it back to the king. The gem polisher took the ruby by hand, which was covered with blood, kept it on the table and went away to wash his hands. The pet bird of the family, seeing the gem stained with blood, took it as a piece of meat, picked it up and swallowed it, in the presence of the monk. When the gem polisher returned, he found that the ruby was missing. He questioned his wife and his son and they answered that they had not taken it. Then he asked the monk and he also answered that he did not take it, but the gem polisher was not satisfied. As there was nobody else in the house, he concluded that the monk had taken the precious ruby. So, he told his wife, 'I must torture the monk to admit the theft.' The wife replied, 'The Venerable has been our religious teacher for the last twelve years. He has done nothing wrong all these years. Please do not suspect him. It will be better to take the king's punishment than to accuse the noble.' But her husband paid no attention to her words. He took a rope, tied up the monk with it and beat him many times with a stick, as a result of which the monk bled profusely from the head and nose. The bird, seeing the blood and wishing to take it, came near the monk. The gem polisher, who was in great rage by then, kicked the bird with all his strength and the bird died on the spot. Then the monk asked him, 'Please see if the bird is dead or not.' But the man replied, 'You will also die like this bird.' When the monk was sure that the bird was dead, he told the man gently, 'My disciple, the bird has swallowed the ruby. If the bird were not dead, I won't have told you that it had eaten the ruby, even if you killed me.'

Hearing this, the gem polisher cut up the bird and found the ruby inside its stomach. Then he realised his mistake and trembled with fear. He requested the bhikkhu to pardon him and also to continue to come daily for the almsfood. The monk replied, 'It is not your fault, nor is it mine. This has happened because of our past bad karma; it is just our debt in the samsara. I have no ill-feeling towards you. As a matter of fact, this has happened because I have entered a house. From now onwards, I shall never enter a house. I will only stand at the door.'

Soon after, the monk succumbed to the injuries and passed into Nirvana. The bird was born as the son of the gem polisher. When the gem polisher died, he was reborn in hell. When the wife died, she was reborn, because of her soft-heartedness towards the monk, in deva loka.



**Verse 127: Na antalikkhe na samudda majjhe na pabbatānaṃ vivaraṃ pavissa
Na vijjati so jagatippadeso yatthaṅṅhito muñceyya pāpa kamma.**

Verse 127: Neither in the sky, nor in the mid-ocean, nor in the mountain-cave exists, a place on the earth where hiding, one may escape the consequences of one's evil karma.

Beware of evil karma

Story of three groups of persons

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A group of bhikkhus was on its way to see the Buddha and stopped in a village. There, some people were cooking almsfood. A crow came, flying, fell down in the fire and was killed. 'Only the Buddha can explain the deed of the crow that it had such a tragic death,' they thought.

Another group of bhikkhus was travelling in a boat to see the Buddha. The boat stopped in the mid-ocean and did not move. By drawing of lots, it was found that the captain's wife was the unluckiest in the group. She was thrown in the ocean with a sandbag around her neck and drowned. The boat moved. 'Only the Buddha can explain this tragic death,' they thought.

A third group of bhikkhus was also going to see the Buddha. In the night they had to stay in a cave. In the midnight, a boulder fell down and closed the door of the cave. The bhikkhus of the nearby monastery tried very hard to remove it but did not succeed. On the seventh day, the boulder moved away miraculously, effortlessly, and they came out safely. 'Only the Buddha can explain this,' they thought.

The three groups met the Buddha and explained their experiences. The Buddha's answers were: First group: Once there was a farmer who had a lazy ox. It could not be forced to do any work. It would just lie down and go to sleep. On one occasion, the farmer was so angry with the ox that he tied a straw rope round his neck and set him on fire. Because of the bad karma still outstanding, the farmer was reborn as a crow and fell down in the fire and died.

Second group: Once there was a woman who had a dog. He had been her husband, in one of her previous births. He always followed her, wherever she went. The young boys, seeing the dog following her, used to make fun of her. So, she decided to get rid of the dog. One day, she called him affectionately. He went near her and she tied a sand bag around his neck and threw him in water. The dog was drowned. This lady was born as the wife of the captain. She was made to drown in the ocean, to repay for her past debts.

Third group: Seven cowherds saw a lizard and pushed it in a hole and put a stone outside it. They forgot about it for seven days and only on the seventh day, they brought it out. 'You are those seven cowherds. On account of that bad karma, you suffered.'

The Buddha further added, '**There is no escape from evil consequences of one's deeds, even if one were in the sky, or in the ocean or in a cave.**'



**Verse 128: Na antalikkhe na samudda majjhe na pabbatānaṃ vivaraṃ pavissa
Na vijjati so jagatippadeso yatthaṭṭhitāṃ nappasahetha maccu.**

Verse 128: Neither in the sky, nor in the mid-ocean, nor in a mountain cave, is found that place on the earth where hiding, one will not be taken over by the death.

Death: The mightiest Story of King Suppabuddha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

King Suppabuddha was the father of Devadatta and father-in-law of Prince Siddhartha. He treated the Buddha as his enemy because of two reasons: First, Prince Siddhartha had renounced the world and left his daughter and secondly, his son, Devadatta had also become a bhikkhu. Devadatta was the arch rival of the Buddha. He tried three times to kill him.

One day, it was alms time. The Buddha was to move through a street for alms round. When Suppabuddha came to know about it, he got himself drunk and stood on the mid road blocking the way. When the Buddha and the bhikkhus came that way, he refused to give way and sent the message, 'I shall not give way to the Buddha. He is much younger to me in age.' Finding that they could not proceed further, the Buddha and the bhikkhus turned back. The king sent a spy to secretly follow the Buddha and find out what he said on the incidence and report to him.

As the Buddha turned back, he smiled. Ananda, who was accompanying him, asked for the reason. The Buddha replied, 'Ananda, Suppabuddha has committed a grave sin by obstructing the way of the Buddha. On the seventh day from today, he will die.' The spy reported the prediction of the Buddha to the king. But instead of taking the prediction seriously, the king said, 'I will take special precautions to show that the Buddha is wrong.' He instructed his men to be more attentive towards him and also be vigilant in their duties. When the Buddha was told about the king's instructions to his men, he said, 'Bhikkhus! Whether the king, lives in a tower, or up in the sky, or in an ocean, or in a cave, he will have to face the effect of his karma.'

On the seventh day, about the time of the alms food, the royal horse got frightened for some unknown reason and started neighing loudly and kicking out furiously. Hearing frightening noises from the horse, the king felt that he must handle his pet horse himself and forgetting all precautions, he went towards the door. The king fell down near the stairs, collapsed and died. He was reborn in hell. Thus, no matter how hard he tried, the foolish king was unable to escape the effect of evil karma.

DHAMMAPADA

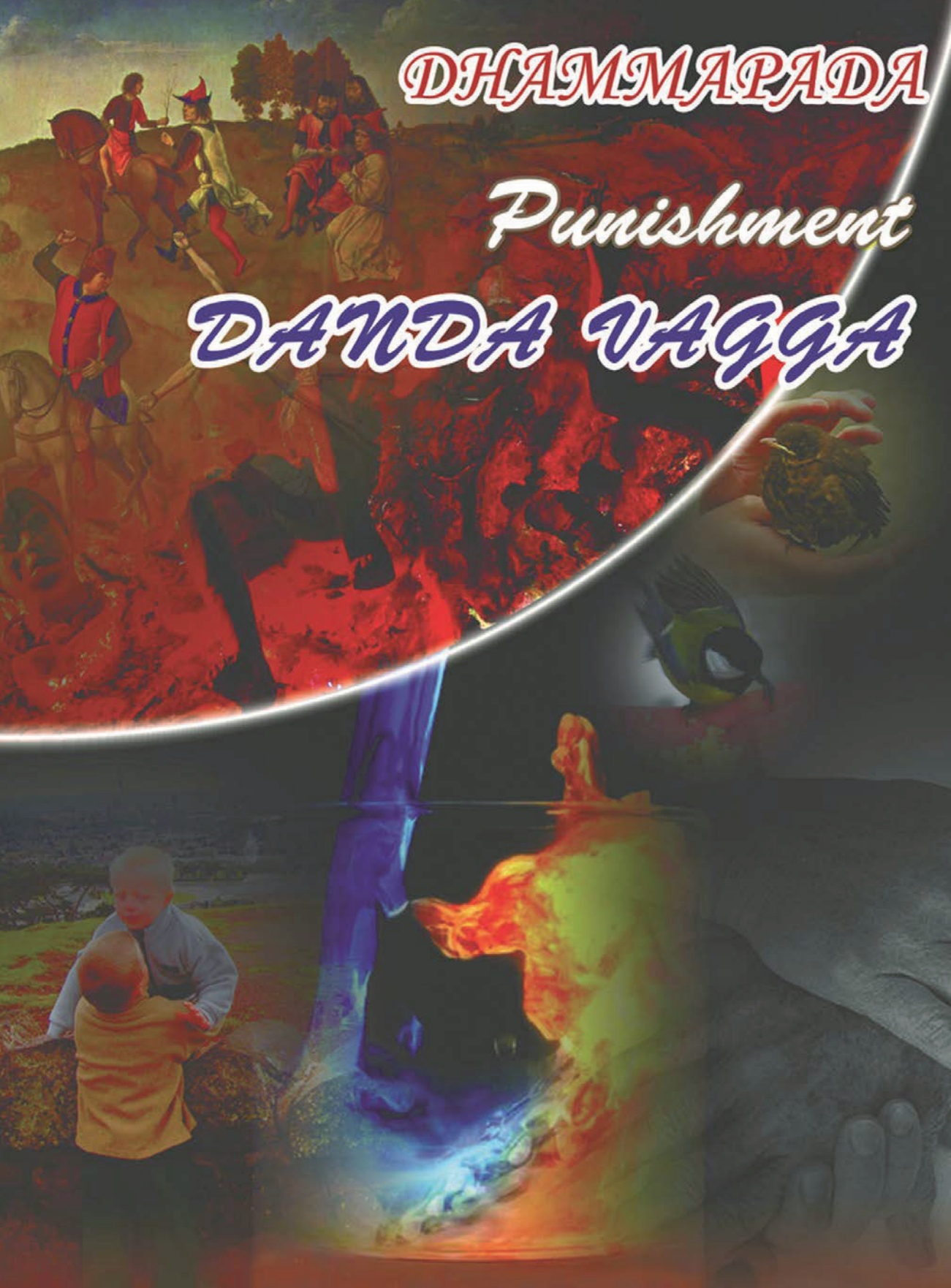
PAAP VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

Punishment

DANDA VAGGA



Chapter X

DANDA VAGGA

The Rod or Punishment

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DANDA VAGGA

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**Verse 129: Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa sabbe bhāyanti maccuno
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā na haneyya na ghātaye.**

Verse 129: All tremble to see the rod (punishment). All fear death. Comparing oneself with others, one should neither strike nor cause others to strike.

All love life

Story of quarreling bhikkhus

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, seventeen bhikkhus, in a group, were cleaning up a building in the Jetavana monastery with the intention of occupying it. At that time another group of six bhikkhus, elder in age than them, arrived. This group of bhikkhus, which arrived late at the scene, interrupted them in cleaning. They told them, 'We are elderly and senior to you. Leave this place. We will occupy it and sleep here on the beds.' 'We shall not give this place to you. We came here first, earlier than you.' 'No, nothing will stop us from occupying the place.'

When the junior bhikkhus did not give in to their demands, they were beaten up by the senior bhikkhus, till they started crying out in pain. The Buddha heard the cry and asked, 'What is going on?' He was told about the quarrel between the two groups of the bhikkhus. He called both the groups and admonished them, 'Bhikkhus, You should treat others as you treat yourself. Thinking so, you should not hit anyone. You should not beat anybody.'

Then the Buddha introduced the disciplinary rule (Vinaya Niyama) whereby the bhikkhus were asked not to hurt one another.



**Verse 130: Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa sabbesaṃ jivitaṃ piyaṃ
Attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā na haneyya na ghātaye.**

Verse 130: All tremble at the site of rod (punishment). Life is dear to all. Taking oneself as the example, one should neither strike nor cause others to strike.

Respect life

Six monks quarrel again

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The story in verse 130 is similar to story in verse 129. This was also given by the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery in respect of the same group of six senior monks.

After the two groups of bhikkhus fought over a place and exchanged blows at the Jetavana monastery, the same two groups of bhikkhus quarrelled again over the same building. As the rule relating to physically not hurting one-another had already been introduced by the Buddha, this particular rule was being followed by both the groups strictly. However, this time one of the groups made threatening gestures to the other group, to the extent that the other group started crying in fear. The Buddha heard the cry and asked, 'What is going on?' He was told about the threatening gestures by the group of senior monks. He called both the groups and admonished them, 'Bhikkhus, You should treat others as you treat yourself. Thinking so, you should not show frightening gestures to others.'

Then the Buddha introduced the disciplinary rule (Vinaya Niyama) preventing the making of threatening gestures to each other.



**Verse 131: Sukha kāmāni bhūtāni yo daṇḍena vihiṃsati
Attano sukham eṣāno pecca so na labhate sukhaṃ.**

Verse 131: He, who, seeking happiness, desires it by harming others, who also seek happiness, will not get happiness hereafter.

Don't harm anyone **Story of the youths who beat a snake**

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, the Buddha was on almsround in Sravasti, when he saw some young boys beating a snake with sticks. He asked them, 'Boys! What are you doing? Why are you beating this innocent snake with sticks?' 'Why? We are beating it because we are scared that it may bite us,' the boys replied.

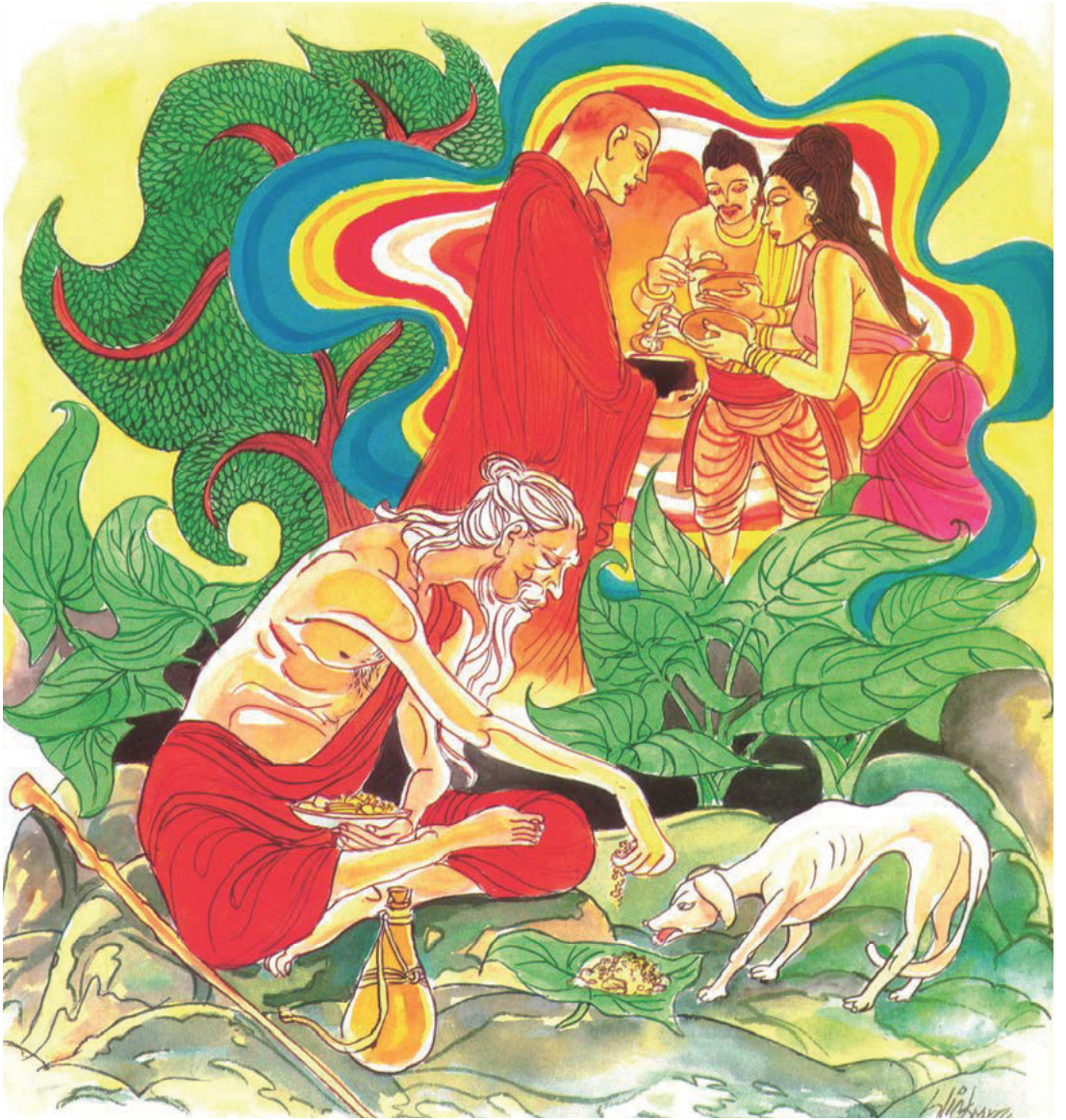
When the Buddha heard so from the boys, he advised them, 'If you do not want to be harmed, don't harm others. If you harm others, you will not find happiness now and also in your next birth. You are harming this creature for making your present life happy but you will not get happiness. One who seeks happiness should not make others unhappy.'

Reflecting on the evils of hatred and concentrating mindfully on the admonition of the Tathagata, the youth attained Srotappan state at the end of the teaching.

While mentioning about the Absolute Rule of the Law of Karma, Sir Edwin Arnold in his book "The Light of Asia" points out:

That which ye sow, ye reap. See yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew!
So is a man's fate born.

**He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.**



**Verse 132: Sukha kāmāni bhūtāni yo daṇḍena na hiṃsati
Attano sukham eṣāno pecca so labhate sukhaṃ.**

Verse 132: He, who seeks his happiness, does not desire it by harming others, who also seek happiness, will get happiness hereafter.

Love all

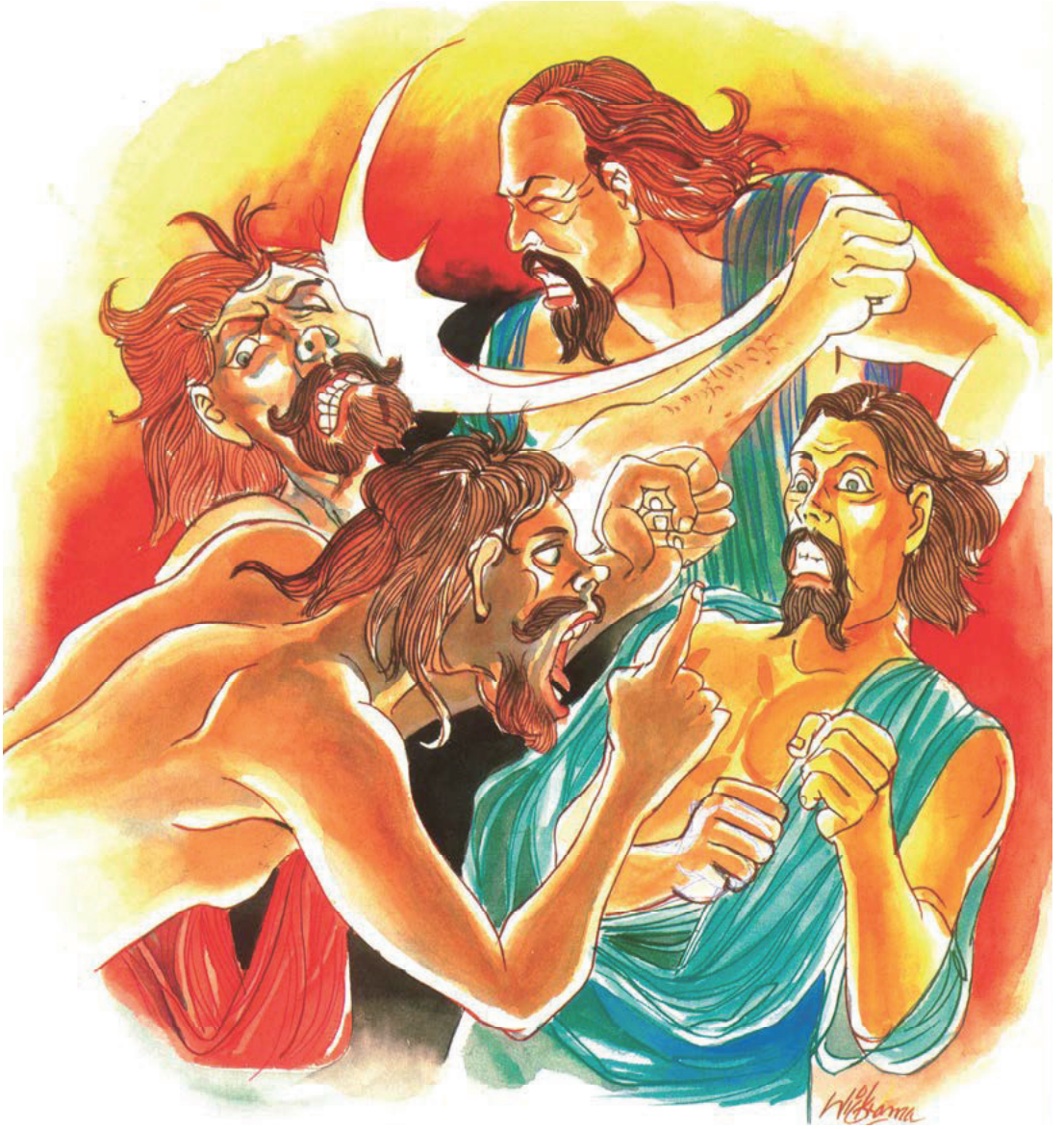
Story of the youths who beat a snake

Note: In this world, we find it natural for all beings to look for happiness. They are, therefore, in search of it. They also desire to avoid suffering. By harming such happiness loving creatures, it is, as if, we harm ourselves, because all lives are linked to each other and are one. Even if, we get happiness for the time being, it is temporary happiness only and we are bound to suffer in the long run.

In practice, however, we find that in order to get happiness, one hurts others through various acts of violence and inflicts injury on them. But seeking happiness through this process is against the law of nature. One cannot get happiness in this way by inflicting pain on others.

It has been rightly said, 'There is no Dhamma higher than Compassion and helping others. There is no sin higher than inflicting pain and injuries on others.' All religions of the world agree on this.

We should practice metta (loving kindness) towards every living being and should have feeling of oneness with all, without any distinction of caste, creed, sex, colour or race.



**Verse 133: M' āvoca pharusaṃ kañci vuttā paṭivadeyyu taṃ
Dukkā hi sārambha kathā paṭiḍaṇḍā phuseyyu taṃ.**

Verse 133: Speak not harsh words to anyone. The victim may retort. Surely, harsh words cause trouble (dukkha). The exchange of blows, that follows, may harm you.

Speak with compassion

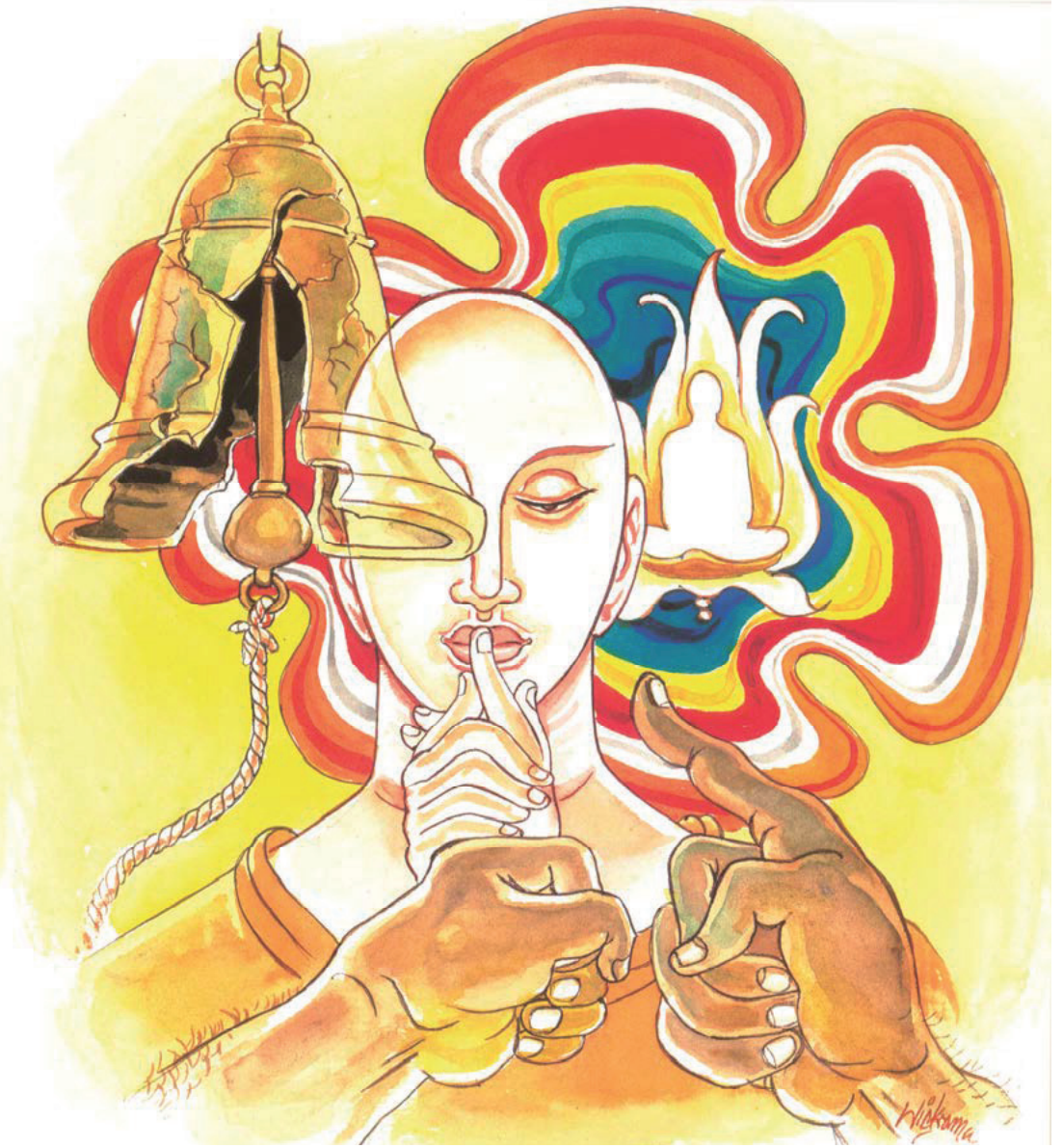
Story of monk Kundadhana

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Ever since Kundadhana became a bhikkhu, a female was seen accompanying him. Everyone saw her, except the bhikkhu himself. When they would give alms to him, they would say, 'Sir, This is for you and this is for your female friend.' This was due to the past evil karma of the bhikkhu. The monk was a deva during the days of the Kassapa Buddha. During that time there were two bhikkhus who were very good friends. This monk, as a deva in that life, was jealous of their friendship and thought of separating them. So, on one occasion when one of the bhikkhus went inside the bush to ease himself of the nature's call, the deva took the form of a young beautiful female and followed the bhikkhu, when he came out of the bush, after the nature's call. The other bhikkhu, who was waiting for him, saw the lady accompanying him from behind, adjusting her hair and garments. The moment the waiting bhikkhu saw her, she disappeared. When the bhikkhu reached the monk, waiting for him, the waiting monk commented, 'Brother, You have broken your chastity (sila).' 'I have done no such thing, brother.' 'But I just saw a young woman coming out with you.' The bhikkhu denied it but the friend-in-waiting did not believe him. The waiting bhikkhu severed all relationships with his friend-bhikkhu. The goddess felt sad about it and apologised but the relationship could not be re-established.

After the term of her life, the goddess was reborn in Avichi hell and on exhausting her karma there, she was born as a male during the period of the Buddha. After growing up, the boy turned into a bhikkhu. Because of what he had done as a female deity in a previous life, a female vision followed him, wherever he went. Therefore, people called him by name Kundadhana.

When the bhikkhus saw a lady accompanying the monk, they complained to the royal treasurer, Anatha Pindika, and said, 'Drive this monk away from this monastery. Otherwise, bad name will come to us all.' 'Monks, Is the Buddha not present in the monastery?' 'Yes, he is.' 'Then he is the only right person to take decision in this matter.'



**Verse 134: Sace neresi attānaṃ kaṃso upahato yathā
Esa patto'si Nibbānaṃ sārambho te na vijjati.**

Verse 134: If you can keep yourself calm and quiet, like a broken gong which is silent, then you have attained Nibbana. There will be no sense of revenge in you.

Be silent

Story of monk Kundadhana

The bhikkhus went to Visakha also with the complaint. But she also gave the same reply. Therefore, the people reported the matter to Pasendi, king of Kosala. They requested the king to investigate the matter. The king took the responsibility upon himself to look into it. So, he went to the monastery where the bhikkhu was staying.

Hearing the noise, the bhikkhu came out of his room and stood at the door. The vision also appeared, not far from him. Knowing that the king had come, the bhikkhu went inside to wait for him. As the king came inside the room, the vision disappeared. When questioned, the innocent bhikkhu replied that he had seen no woman. The king wanted to be sure and asked the bhikkhu to leave the room for a while. When the king looked outside, he again saw the vision standing near the bhikkhu. But when the bhikkhu returned to the room, the woman was nowhere to be found. The king concluded that the woman was not a real one and the bhikkhu was innocent. He, therefore, paid respect to him and invited him for almsfood.

When other bhikkhus heard about it, they were puzzled and said to him, 'O bhikkhu with no morals! Now that the king, instead of condemning you, has invited you for almsfood, you are doomed!' Kundadhana reacted, 'Only you are without morals. Only you are doomed because you go along with ladies!'

When the matter was reported to the Buddha, he admonished Kundadhana, 'My son, did you see any woman with the bhikkhus that you talked to them thus? You have not seen a woman with them, the way they have seen a woman with you. I see that you don't realise that you are affected because of your bad deed in one of your past births.' Saying so, the Buddha explained his past deed due to which an image of a female was following him in this life.



**Verse 135: Yathā daṇḍeṇa gopālo gāvo pāceti gocaraṃ
Evaṃ jarā ca maccū ca āyuṃ pācenti pāṇinaṃ.**

Verse 135: Just as a cow-herd, with a stick in hand, drives the cows to their shed, so do decay and death drive out the lives of beings.

Death is sure Story of ladies, observing moral precepts

Place: Pubbarama, Sravasti

Once, a group of ladies from Sravasti came to Pubbarama monastery, built by Visakha to observe the Uposatha Sila (Precepts). They were required to keep fast. The donor of the monastery, the renowned Visakha, asked these ladies the reasons for which they were observing the Precepts. She was given different answers by them. The old ladies came to the Vihara to observe the Precepts because they wanted to have rewards in heaven. The middle aged ladies wanted to have peace in their homes. The newly married ladies wanted their first-born to be sons; and the young girls had come with the hope to get good husbands.

Visakha heard all these reasons and took them all to the Buddha. When she told him the various answers she had received, the Buddha said, **'Visakha! Birth, ageing and death are continuously working actively in beings. Because one is born, he is subject to ageing, decay and finally to death. Yet, seeing this happening all the time before their own eyes, men do not wish to strive for liberation from the round of existences (samsara). They still wish to linger in this samsara. It is very hard for the people to realise that real happiness can only be attained by overcoming the desire for earthly satisfaction.'**

Note: In the Mahabharata, the great Indian epic, there is a mention of the 'Yaksha Question', also known as the 'Ultimate Question'. The Yaksha asks the Pandavas, 'What is the strangest thing in this universe?' The eldest brother, Yudhishtira, said to be the embodiment of the Dhamma, replied, **'The strangest thing in the universe is that everyone knows that he will die one day but still behaves as if he was immortal, had come to live in this world permanently.'**



**Verse 136: Atha pāpāni kammāni karaṃ bālo na bujjhati
Sehi kammehi dummedho aggi daḍḍho' va tappati.**

Verse 136: A fool does not realise the consequences of his evil deeds while he commits the deed. He is subsequently tortured by his own mis-deeds, like one burnt by fire.

Evil will haunt you Story of Snake-ghost

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, Venerable Lakkhana and Venerable Maha Moggallana descended from the vulture peak for almsfood in Rajagriha. On seeing some strange creature, Moggallana smiled. Now the practice is that when Arahants or the Buddhas smile, it is not an expression of humour. Rather, it is a sign to one who is accompanying them to ask question for the reason of smile. Lakkhana asked him the reason of smile to which he replied, 'Brother! This is not the right time to ask this question. Ask this question when we are at the monastery in the presence of the Buddha.'

On reaching the monastery, Moggallana explained that he smiled because he had seen a snake preta-ghost with its long body burning in flames. The Buddha pointed out, 'I also saw this preta-ghost on the day of the Enlightenment. But I did not mention it so far because some may not believe it to be true. They might create evil karma for themselves. I did not mention it out of compassion for them.'

The monks wanted to know the story behind the snake-ghost. The Buddha told them, 'This is the story of the times very long ago. This particular preta was a thief during the time of Kassapa Buddha. As a thief and cruel-hearted man, on a trifle matter, he had set fire to the house of a rich man several times. And not satisfied with that, he had also set fire to the monastery donated by the same rich man to Kassapa Buddha, while he was on almsround. As a result of this, he had to suffer for a long time. The Buddha observed, **'Bhikkhus! Fools when doing evil deeds don't accept them as evil deeds. But they cannot escape their evil consequences.'**



**Verse 137: Yo daṇḍena adaṇḍesu appa duṭṭhesu dussati
Dasannam aññataraṃ ṭhānaṃ khippam eva nigacchati.**

Verse 137: He, who, with a weapon, harms an innocent person who should not be harmed, will soon suffer from one of the ten evil consequences.

Don't offend the innocent Story of bhikkhu Moggallana

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Moggallana was one of the two Chief Disciples of the Buddha. If Sariputta is considered as the right arm of the Buddha, then Moggallana is considered as his left arm. They were both born on the same day and were close associates in previous lives also. Their friendship is considered as one of the oldest recorded friendships in the world. In spite of the fact that Moggallana was an Arahant and was also the foremost in the noble Sangha in psychic powers, he had a very tragic death. Why?

The Arahants also have to pay price for all that they have done. They are accountable to karma so long as they are in possession of the physical body. For example, the Buddha's sickness in the form of dysentery, which led to his passing away, was also the effect of his residual past karma. The difference between the ordinary people and the Arahants is that the Arahants do not create fresh karma after attaining Arahant hood. They have only to suffer the effect of their past bad karma. The Arahants realise this and very patiently carry the burden of their past karma.

There is another story from the life of the Buddha. Some man came to see the Buddha and on meeting him, started speaking in an abusive language. The bhikkhus were showing signs of resentment over it and wanted to intervene. But the Tathagata signalled them with the advice not to resent. Later on, the Buddha explained to the bhikkhus that in one of his previous lives, the Buddha had used some harsh language against this man. He was now using abusive language in retaliation to what was said to him by the Buddha in that life. Therefore, it was not proper for the Buddha to react.



**Verse 138: Vedanaṃ pharusam jāniṃ sarirassa ca bhedanam
Garukam vā'pi ābādham cittakkhepaṃ va pāpuṇe.**

Verse 138: He may: (1) get severe pain (2) get serious physical injury (3) may suffer from serious disease (4) may lose mental balance.

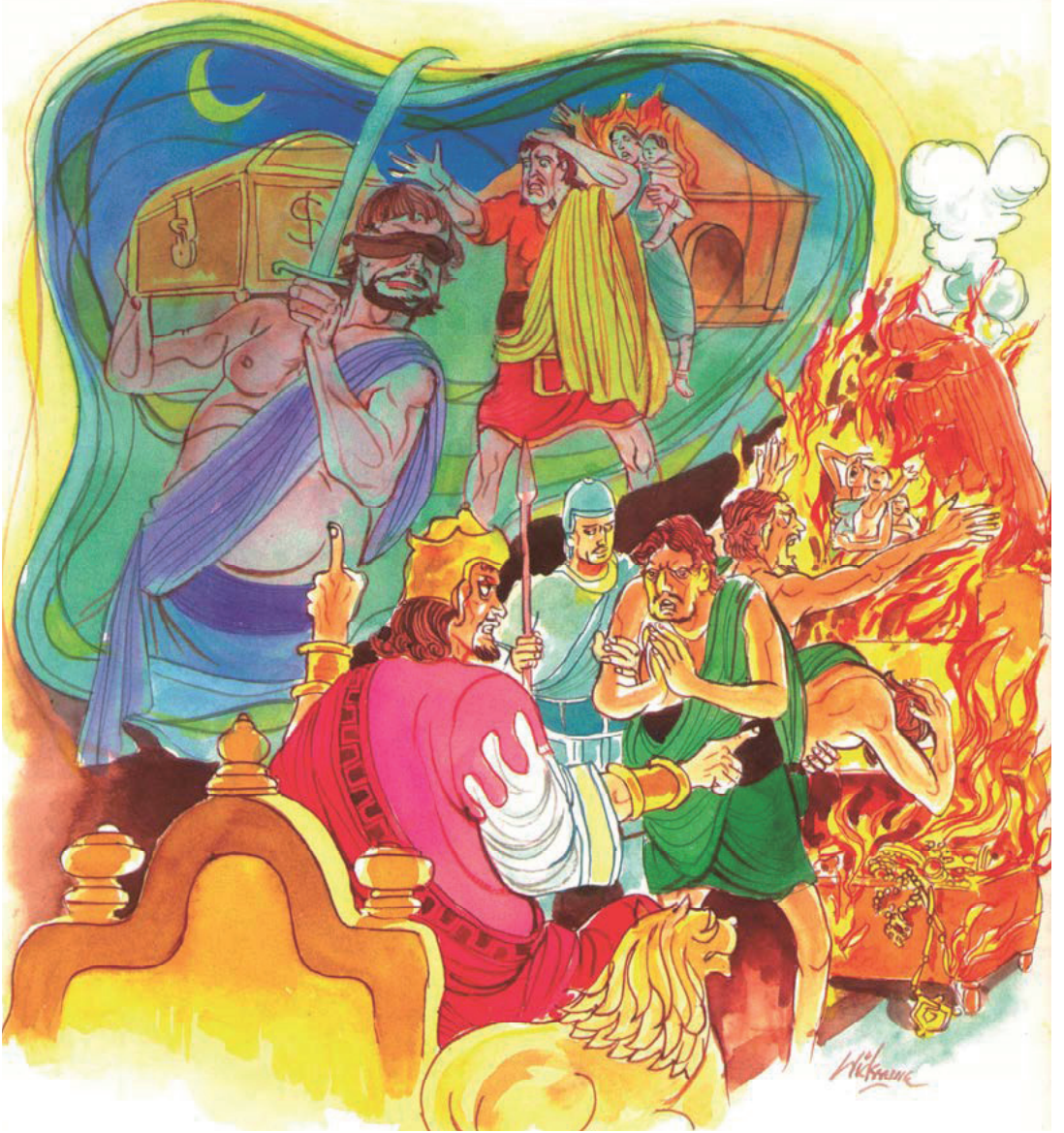
Do not harm the innocent

Story of bhikkhu Moggallana

Maha Moggallana played great role in spreading the message of the Buddha. He used to go to the heaven and asked the deities the meritorious deeds performed by the occupants there, in their previous life on earth. Then, he would come back to the earth and tell the people here, 'By doing such and such act, men attain such and such glory.' He would go to the hell, ask similar questions, come back to the earth and tell them, 'By doing these acts men experience these types of sufferings.' Men listened very attentively to what he said and brought much valuable gifts and offerings.

Once, the Nigantha ascetics discussed amongst themselves, 'Moggallana is the greatest hurdle in expanding our discipleship. Hence, he is our arch enemy. Let us, therefore, kill him. By doing so, the fame of the Buddha will get diminished. If we succeed in killing him, all these rich gifts and offerings will also fall to us.' So, they summoned some thieves, gave them pieces of gold coins and told them, 'Moggallana lives at Black Rock. Go there and kill him.' They agreed and surrounded his place of residence to kill him. But he slipped out through the key hole and escaped. He escaped during the second attempt also to kill him. Thus, they could not kill him for two whole months. During the third attempt, he did not try to escape, as he knew his past karma. He had to face the consequences, some day or the other. Finally, there was no escape from it. The assassins caught him and beat him up, tore him apart from limbs, crushed the body until it became like grains of rice. Then, they threw him in the bushes and went away.

The Venerable thought, 'I will pay my last respects to the Buddha before I pass into Nirvana.' So, through his supernatural (jhanic) power, he revived himself. He went to the monastery to pay his last regards to the Buddha and said, 'Bhante! I am about to pass into Nirvana.' 'You are about to pass into Nirvana, Moggallana?' 'Yes Sir.'



**Verse 139: Rājato vā upassaggaṃ abbhakkhānaṃ va dāruṇaṃ
Parikkhayaṃ va ñatinaṃ bhogaṇaṃ va pabhaṅguraṃ.**

Verse 139: (5) The ruling authority or administration may punish him (6) he may be severely defamed in the world (7) he may lose family members or relatives (8) he may lose his wealth and fortunes.

Consequences may be too severe Story of bhikkhu Moggallana

‘Which region of the earth are you going to?’ ‘I am going to the Black Rock, Bhante.’ ‘Well then, Moggallana, Preach the Law to me, before you go, for hereafter, I shall have no such disciple like you to look upon.’ ‘That I shall do, Bhante,’ replied Moggallana. So, he first bowed before the Buddha and then rose in the air. There, he performed all forms of miracles and preached the Dhamma. Then he again paid his last respects to his great Teacher, the Enlightened One, went back to the Black Rock forest and passed into Nirvana.

The report of the killing of Venerable Moggallana, spread everywhere, like a wild fire. King Ajatashatru deputed his spies who found out the killers and the conspirators. They all were put to death.

In the evening Dhamma congregation, the point for discussion was: ‘Bhikkhu Moggallana did not deserve the death, he met.’ When this observation was made before the Buddha, he clarified, ‘Bhikkhus, if you consider only his present birth, Moggallana obviously met the death, which he did not deserve. But he had some past residual karma also to repay. If you consider that, then his death was in exact harmony with what he had done in the past.’ Then the Buddha explained to them the evil karma created by Moggallana in the past.



**Verse 140: Atha v'āssa agārāni aggi ḍahati pāvako
Kāyassa bhedaḍḍuppañño nirayaṃ so' papajjati.**

Verse 140: (9) he may have his house burnt by a great fire. (10) After death this fool will go to a woeful state.

Ten effects of doing wrong to innocent Story of bhikkhu Moggallana

In distant past, a youth of good family took care of his blind parents and performed all the duties with his own hands. Against his wishes, the parents brought a young woman as his wife. She tolerated them for sometime, but later on could not even stand their sight. She used to litter the whole house and lied to her husband that her in-laws had done it. 'I can't live in the same place with them any longer.' The son was not vigilant. His wife poisoned his mind and suggested that he should get rid of his parents. He got influenced by her words and took his blind parents in a cart into a forest saying that he was taking them to meet some relatives. There he killed them by beating and making them believe that it was some robbers who had attacked them. He had to suffer for a long time because of that wrong deed. He also suffered in his last birth to wipe out the residual consequences of the past karma.

The Buddha further added that by doing wrong to those who should not be wronged, one is bound to suffer in at least one of the ten ways:

1. Evil doer comes to suffer acute pain, 2. Break up of body, 3. Suffers severe disease, 4. Suffers madness, 5. Punished and rejected by the king, 6. Serious accusations are made against him 7. Suffers loss of wealth and premature old age, 8. Loses relatives, 9. Dwelling place gets burnt down and 10. Takes birth in hell after death.



**Verse 141: Na naggacariyā na jaṭṭā na paṅka, Nānāsakā thaṇḍila sāyikā vā
Rajo ca jallaṃ ukkuṭṭikappadhānaṃ, Sodhenti maccaṃ avitiṇṇa kaṅkhaṃ.**

Verse 141: Not going about in nudity, not matted hairs, nor fasting, nor lying on the bare ground, nor coating of mud, dust or ashes on the body, nor striving to squat on the heels, can purify a man who has not overcome doubts.

What cannot purify a person? Story of monk, Bahu Bhandika

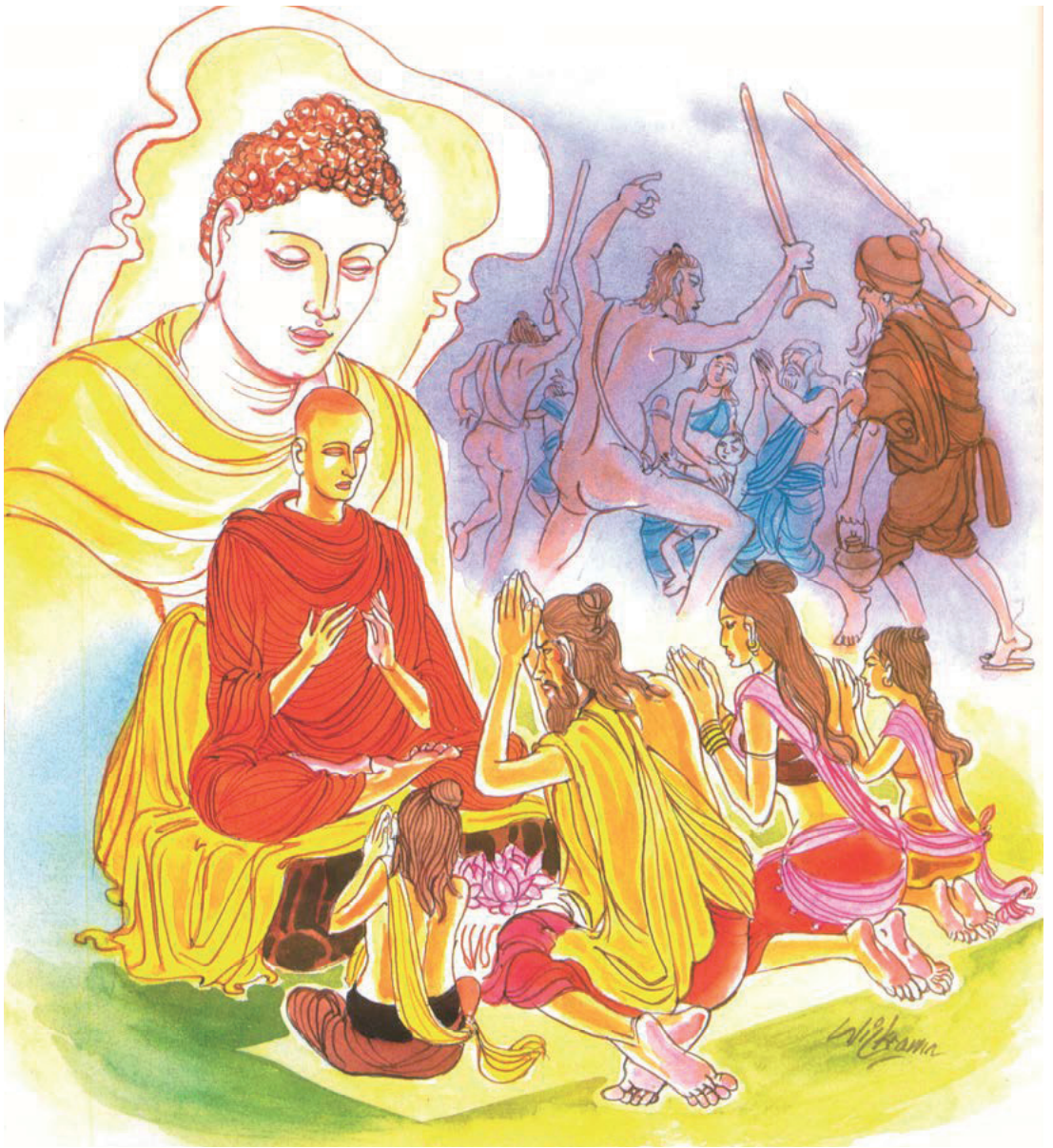
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived a rich man in Sravasti. After the death of his wife, he decided to become a bhikkhu. But before he joined the Sangha, he built a monastery which also had a kitchen and a store room. He also brought his own furniture, utensils and a large stock of rice, oil, butter and other provisions. He had his servants who cooked whatsoever he wanted to eat. Thus even as a bhikkhu, he was living in luxury and worldly comfort. Since he had a lot of things, he was known as Bahubhandika.

One day, the bhikkhus reported to the Buddha, 'Bhante, Bahubhandika is still leading the luxurious life of a rich man.' The Buddha called him and asked him if what was reported was true. The monk accepted it in the affirmative. Then the Buddha told Bahubhandika, 'My son! I have been teaching all of you to live a simple life. Why have you brought so many household items with you?' When the Buddha admonished the bhikkhu in this way, he lost anger and spoke, 'Indeed, Venerable Sir! I will now live as you want me to live.' So saying, he cast off his robe and asked, 'Is this the way you want me to live?'

Seeing him thus, the Buddha admonished him further, 'My son! In your last birth, you were an evil spirit. Even as a spirit, you had a sense of shame (hiri) and a sense of fear (ottappa) to do evil. Now that you are a bhikkhu, you have lost even that shame and fear. Why do you behave like this?' When the bhikkhu heard these words, his sense of shame and fear returned. He admitted his guilt and requested the Buddha to forgive him. The Enlightened One then told him, 'It is not proper to stand without your upper robe. Just giving up your robe does not make you a devoted bhikkhu. A bhikkhu must also give up his ignorance.'

At the end of the talk, many bhikkhus attained Srotappan state of fruition.



**Verse 142: Alaṅkato ce'pi samaṃ careyya, Santo danto niyato brahmacāri
Sabbesu bhūtesu nidhāya daṇḍaṃ, So brāhmaṇo so samano sa bhikkhu.**

Verse 142: Even when one is well decorated, if he is self-controlled, peaceful and leads a pure life, laying aside the rod towards all beings; indeed he is a Brahmana, an ascetic and a bhikkhu.

How one becomes holy? Story of Santati

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, the Minister, Santati, returned from the border, after suppressing a rebellion. King Pasendi was so happy that he presented him expensive gifts. This included a dancing girl also to entertain him. For many days, the Minister enjoyed himself to his heart's content. On the seventh day, he went to a riverside for a bath. On the way, while sitting on the elephant back, he met the Buddha, who was going for almsround. Being drunk, he just bowed casually, as a sign of respect to him. The Buddha saw him and smiled. When Ananda, who was accompanying him, asked him the reason for his smile, the Buddha clarified, 'This Minister will come to see me today only. After I shall preach him the Dhamma, he will become an Arahant and attain parinibbana.'

Santati and his group enjoyed themselves for the whole day. In the evening, while dancing, the dancer, due to exhaustion, fell down and died. The Minister was overtaken completely by grief. Not knowing how to console himself, he went to the Buddha, 'Bhante! Please help me get over my sorrow. Be my refuge.'

The Buddha replied, 'Son, Rest assured that you have come to the One who can really help you. The tear drops that you have shed due to the death of this dancer, through the cycle of rebirths, are more than the water of all the oceans.' The Buddha further instructed, 'In the past you have been clinging to your cravings. Get rid of them. In future, do not allow such clinging to enslave you. Don't harbour any clinging in the present also. By giving up clinging, you will uproot craving and passion and will realise Nirvana.' After hearing the Dhamma, Santati attained Arahant hood and passed away to Nirvana.

In the evening congregation, the bhikkhus asked the Buddha, 'Bhante! The Minister attained parinirvana in the dress of a Minister. Is he a bhikkhu or a Brahmin?' The Buddha replied, 'He can be called both a bhikkhu and a Brahmin. It is not important what clothes one wears, so long as one is pure and is freed from ignorance.'

Note: Observances like wandering naked, fasting etc. are mere external practices. They cannot purify one's mind, nor bring light within. One who controls self is truly a sage.



**Verse 143: Hiri nisedho puriso koci lokasmiṃ vijjati,
Yo nindaṃ appabodhati asso bhadro kasām iva.**

Verse 143: Rare in this world is a person who out of shame checks himself from doing evil and remains alert like a good horse that gives no cause for whipping.

Be shameful Story of bhikkhu Pilotikatissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, Bhikkhu Ananda, while going for almsfood, saw a young boy in old and worn clothes, going round, begging for food. Out of compassion for him, Ananda asked him, 'Will you like to be a bhikkhu and join the Sangha? It will be good for you to join the Holy Order.' 'Who will ordain me, Sir?' 'I will ordain you.' Accordingly, Ananda got him admitted into the Sangha as a bhikkhu.

After becoming a bhikkhu, the young man left his old clothes and the begging bowl at the foot of a tree in the monastery. He was now known as bhikkhu Pilotikatissa.

As a bhikkhu, he was not required to worry about his food and robes. Yet, sometimes, he felt unhappy with the life of a bhikkhu and felt like going back to the life of a layman. Whenever he had this feeling, he would go to the tree where he had kept his clothes and the begging bowl. There, at the foot of the tree, he would reprimand himself, 'O shameless one! Do you still want to wear those shabby clothes and go out with old begging bowl in your hand?' Thus, he would rebuke himself, and after calming down, return back to the monastery.



**Verse 144: Asso yathā bhadro kasāniviṭṭho, Ātāpino saṃvegino bhavātha
Saddhāya silena ca viriyena ca, Samādhinā dhamma vinicchayena ca
Sampanna vijjācaraṇā patissatā, Pahassatha dukkham idaṃ anappakaṃ.**

Verse 144: As a horse of good breed, touched by the whip behaves, even so be disciplined and enthusiastic. By confidence, by virtue, by effort, by meditation, by following the Dhamma, by knowledge, by good conduct and by mindfulness, get rid of the endless sufferings.

Be virtuous

Story of bhikkhu Pilotikatissa

After a few days, when he again felt like leaving the life of a bhikkhu, he would go near the tree. Here Pilotika's old clothes again reprimanded him with a deep sense of shame and put him on the right track. After being reprimanded, he would meditate on his past wretched life and return back to the monastery. Other bhikkhus would ask him, 'Where did you go?' 'I went to see my teacher.' Thus focussing his mind on the old clothes, as the subject of meditation, he came to realise the true nature of the aggregates or component things.

After becoming an Arahant, he stopped going to the tree. Other bhikkhus, noticing that Pilotika had stopped going to the tree, asked him, 'Why don't you go to your teacher any more?' To them, he answered, 'When I had the need, I used to go to see him. I don't go to see him now because there is no need to see him.' When the bhikkhus heard this, they went to the Buddha and asked him, 'Sir! Is it true that Pilotika has attained Arahamhood?' The Buddha explained, 'He has now become an Arahant, and so there is no attachment between him and his teacher.'



**Verse 145: Udakaṁ hi nayanti nettikā, usukārā namayanti tējanam
Dāruṁ namayanti tacchakā, attānaṁ damayanti subbatā.**

Verse 145: Irrigator leads the water wherever he wants. Arrow-maker straightens the arrow. Carpenter bends the wood and gives shape to it. A pious man controls himself.

Control yourself Story of Sukha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Sukha became a samanera at the age of seven years by monk Sariputta. One day, the samanera went out with Sariputta for almsfood. On the way, they came across farmers irrigating the fields, the arrow-makers straightening the arrows and the carpenters giving shapes like wheel-cart etc. out of blocks of wood. The samanera asked the senior bhikkhu whether those innate things could be guided to wheresoever one wished or made into the things one wished to make. Sariputta told him that it was possible if one had the skill. Sukha pondered that if inanimate things could be given proper shape, then one could train his mind also and practise Tranquility and Insight Meditation.

So, he took permission from Sariputta and went back to the monastery. He sat inside his room and meditated seriously in quietness. The Buddha himself sat outside his room to ensure that nobody including Sariputta entered inside and disturbed the samanera. The devas ensured that quietness was maintained in the monastery. Sukha attained Arahant hood in that sitting only.

Sukha was the subject of discussion in the evening congregation. The Buddha told the bhikkhus, 'When a person earnestly practises the Dhamma, even the devas give protection and help. I myself kept Sariputta at the entrance so that Sukha was not disturbed. Having seen the farmers irrigating their fields, the fletchers straightening their arrows and carpenters making cart-wheels and other things, he trained his mind and practised the Dhamma diligently and ardently and has attained Arahant hood.'

DHAMMAPADA

DANDA VAGGA



DEDICATION OF MERIT

May the merit and virtue
accrued from this work
adorn Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

NAMO AMITABHA

南無阿彌陀佛

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