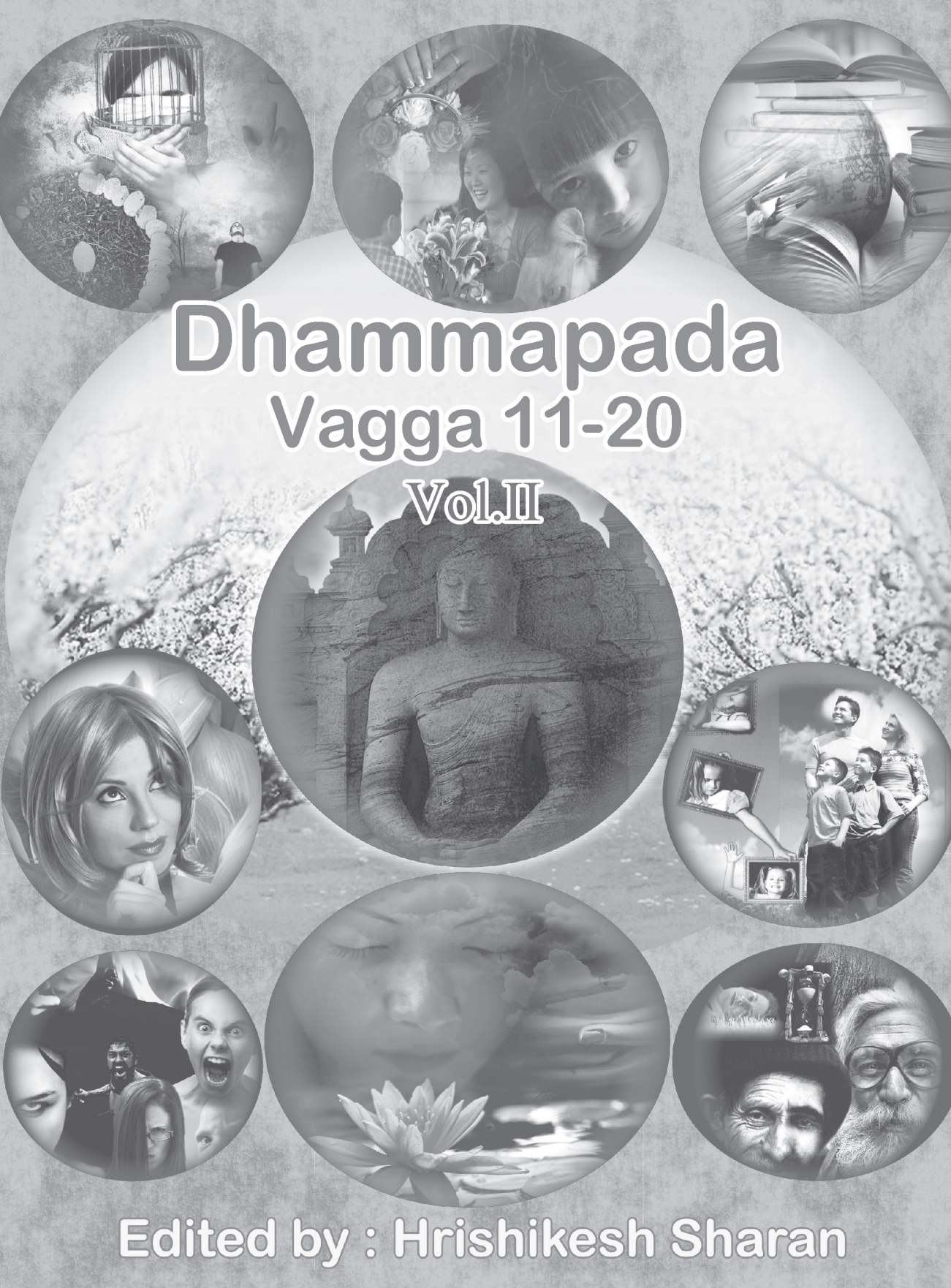


Dhammapada

Vagga 11-20

Vol.II

Edited by : Hrishikesh Sharan

Writer & Publisher:
Hrishikesh Sharan,
Mobile: +91-9871212294
Email: hsharan@hotmail.com
hsharan1950@gmail.com

© Copyright Reserved

The gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts.
This work may be copied or printed for free distribution, but only with full attribution, and not for commercial advantage or personal compensation.

Edition: 2019

ISBN 978-957-9414-79-1

Printed for free distribution by
The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation
11F, No. 55, Sec. 1, Hang Chow South Road, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.
Tel: 886-2-23951198, Fax: 886-2-23913415
Email: overseas@budaedu.org
Website: http://www.budaedu.org.
This book is strictly for free distribution, it is not to be sold.

DHAMMAPADA VAGGA 11-20

JARA VAGGA 9

ATTA VAGGA 35

LOKA VAGGA 59

BUDDHA VAGGA 87

SUKHA VAGGA 127

PIYA VAGGA 155

KRODHA VAGGA 183

MALA VAGGA 215

DHAMMATTHA VAGGA 261

MAGGA VAGGA 299

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.'**

འབྲུག་གྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་གཞུང་།

Royal Government of Bhutan

PRIME MINISTER

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 Dhammapda, 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:

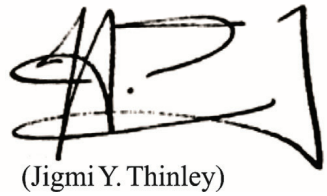
> *"Hatred does not cease by hatred. It ceases only by love, compassion, goodwill and friendship."*

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

Old age

JARA VAGGA

Chapter XI

JARA VAGGA

Old Age

Index

JARA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of Visakha and companions	146.	Look for light	13
2.	Story of Sirima's corpse	147.	See this foul body	15
3.	Story of elderly nun, Uttara	148.	Where ends life?	17
4.	Story of over-confident monks	149.	What delight in bones?	19
5.	Story of Rupananda	150.	See this body of flesh and blood	21
6.	Story of queen Mallika	151.	Be Righteous	23
7.	Story of bhikkhu Laludayi	152.	Don't lack wisdom	25
8.	Solemn speech of the Buddha	153.	How is the house built?	27
9.	Solemn speech of the Buddha	154.	House is built by craving	29
10.	Story of Mahadhana	155.	Progress materially or spiritually	31
11.	Story of Mahadhana	156.	Seize the golden moments	33

Verse 146: Ko nu hāso kimānando niccaṃ pajjalite sati?
Andhakārena onaddhā padipaṃ na gavessatha?

Verse 146: What is there to laugh at? What is there to rejoice at when the whole world is burning all the time continuously? Surrounded by darkness all over, why don't you seek the light?

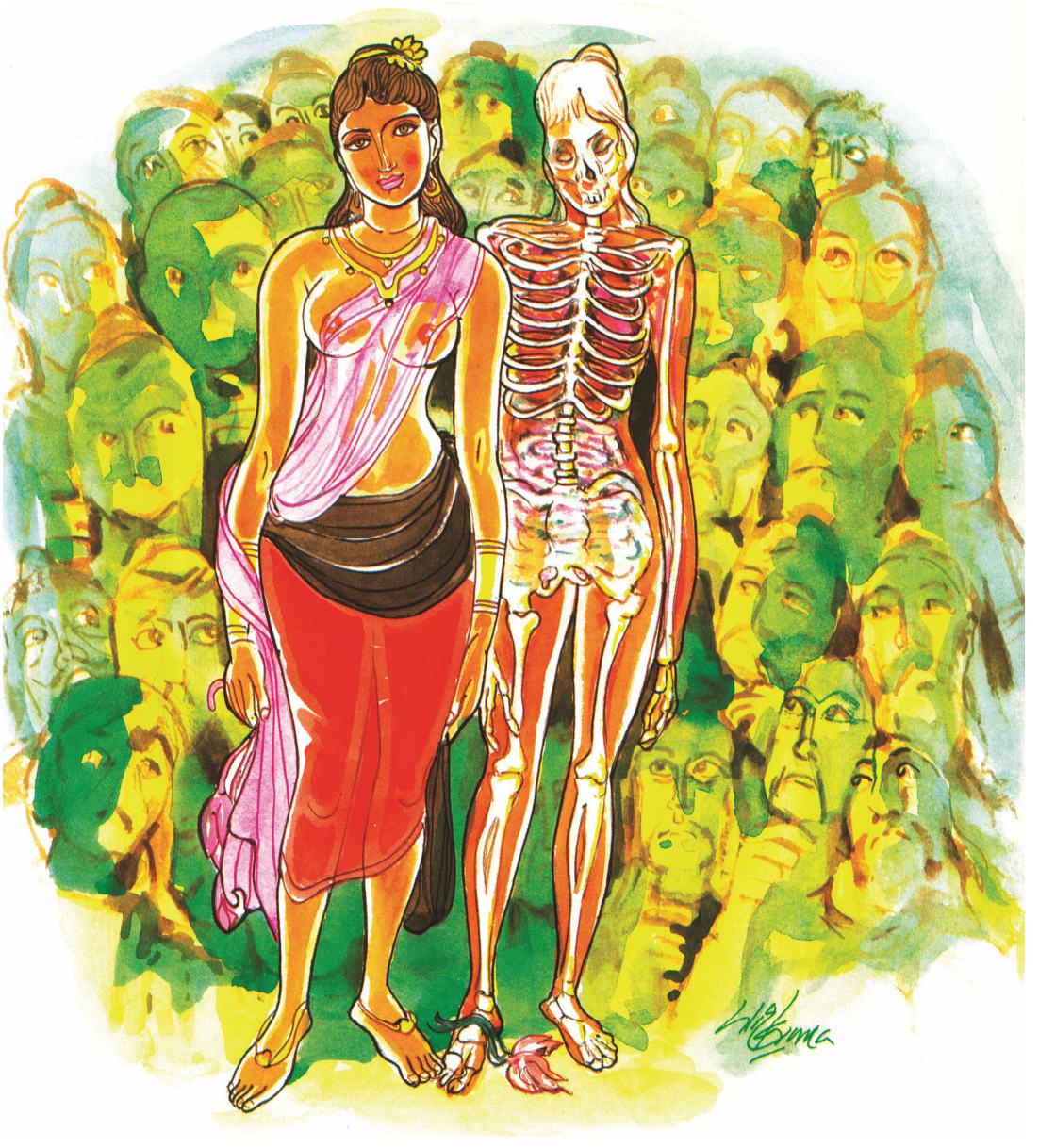
Look for light
Story of Visakha and companions

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Visakha was a great disciple of the Buddha. She was a role model for the ladies. So, some men of Sravasti sent their wives to her for guidance so that they could become religious and virtuous. On one occasion, at their request she accompanied them to a garden. Without telling Visakha, they brought with them liquor bottles and got drunk. Visakha reprimanded them and added that their husbands would be very angry with them when they would come to know about it. They were beaten by their husbands, when they came to know what their wives had done. On the next occasion, the ladies again requested her to accompany them to the garden. Knowing, what had happened last time, she refused. Then they requested her to take them to the Jetavana monastery so that they could pay their homage to the Buddha and hear the Dhamma. On arrival at the vihara, the ladies again, unknown to Visakha, drank liquor, which they had brought secretly, hidden in their clothes. Visakha requested the Buddha to teach them the Dhamma. By that time, the ladies were all drunk. As the women were drunk, Mara took the opportunity to encourage them to create nuisance. They became bold and soon they were singing, jumping, dancing and clapping.

The Buddha saw the hand of Mara in the shameless act of the women and said, 'Mara must not be given the opportunity to exploit these women. He must be stopped. Did I attain the paramitas that these ordinary devas may make fun of me?' So, he sent dark-blue rays from the hair of his eye-brows and the whole room was filled up with darkness. The women were frightened and started becoming sober. Then, the Enlightened One disappeared from there, stood on the top of Mount Sumeru, and sent rays of light from there. The sky was filled up with the light of thousand moons. After thus demonstrating the phenomenon, the Enlightened One, admonished the women, 'You ladies should not have come to this vihara unmindfully. Because you have been unmindful, Mara got the opportunity to make you behave shamelessly in the monastery. Now strive hard to put out the fire of lust and other evil passions in you.' Thus, the Buddha was able to establish their faith in the Dhamma.The Buddha found that the ladies had by now developed unshaken faith in the Dhamma. So, he returned to the monastery. Visakha commented, 'Bhante, it was the ill-effect of liquor that women of high families also could not control themselves, even in the presence of the Enlightened One like you and started behaving in a shameless way.' She also asked him to tell her about the origin and effects of liquor.

The Buddha explained, **'Countless beings suffer pain and unhappiness because of liquor. The liquor is truly a sinful product. A number of simpletons and good people are also lost because of it.'** Thereafter the Buddha told her the story about the origin of liquor as mentioned in Kumbhjataka.



Verse 147: Passa citta kataṃ bimbaṃ arukāyaṃ samussitaṃ
Āturaṃ bahu saṅkappaṃ yassa natthi dhuvaṃ ṭhiti.

Verse 147: Look at this beautiful body, full of wounds, a shapeless, foul smelling, swollen mass, diseased, yet much-praised, in which nothing lasts, nothing continues.

See this foul body
Story of Sirima's corpse

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Sirima was a very beautiful courtesan of Rajagriha. She was the sister of the physician, Jivaka and had attained Srotappan fruition. Everyday, she offered almsfood to the bhikkhus. One day, it so happened, that one of the bhikkhus mentioned to the other bhikkhus, how beautiful Sirima was and also that she offered very delicious food. On hearing this, one bhikkhu fell in love with her, even without seeing her. Next day, the young bhikkhu, along with other bhikkhus, went to the house of Sirima for almsfood. She was not well on that day, but since she wanted to pay respects to the bhikkhus, she was taken before them. The young bhikkhu, on seeing Sirima, thought, 'Even when she is sick, she is very beautiful.' And he developed a strong desire for her.

That very night, Sirima passed away. King Bimbisara visited the Buddha and informed him about her death. The Buddha advised the king to preserve the dead body for three days, without cremating it, ensuring that it was not eaten away by dogs and other animals. On the fourth day, the dead body of Sirima was no longer beautiful or desirable. It had inflated like a big balloon. Stinking liquid was coming out from various parts of the body through the holes and big flies were moving around. The body was, smelling so foul that it was impossible to stand there. As advised by the Buddha, royal proclamation was made calling all the citizens and the bhikkhus to the cremation ground to see Sirima. The young bhikkhu, who was so desperately in love with Sirima, did not know that Sirima was dead. When he heard that the Buddha and the bhikkhus were going to see Sirima, he eagerly joined them. When the assembly was full, the Buddha asked, 'Great King! Who is this lady?' 'Bhante, she is Sirima, sister of Jivaka.' 'Is she Sirima?' 'Yes, Sir' 'Well, then let a proclamation be made that those who will pay a thousand coins may have her for a night.' But nobody moved forward to take her. The amount was then reduced to five hundred, two hundred and fifty, and even to one coin. But still nobody turned up to take her. At last, the announcement was made, 'One may take her for free' but still nobody moved from his place.

Then the Buddha addressed the audience, 'Look at Sirima. When she was alive, people were willing to give her thousand coins to spend one night with her. But nobody is ready to take her today even as a gift. See how the body of a person is subject to decay and deterioration that now nobody wants to touch or go near the same body.' After listening to the Buddha, the young monk who had developed attachment for Sirima realised the real nature of life.

Verse 148: Parijiṇṇam idaṃ rūpaṃ, roga niḍḍhaṃ pabhaṅguraṃ
Bhijjati pūti sandeho, maraṇantaṃ hi jivitaṃ

Verse 148: Thoroughly decaying is this perishable body, a nest of diseases. The rotten mass breaks up. Life ends in death.

Where ends life?
Story of elderly nun, Uttara

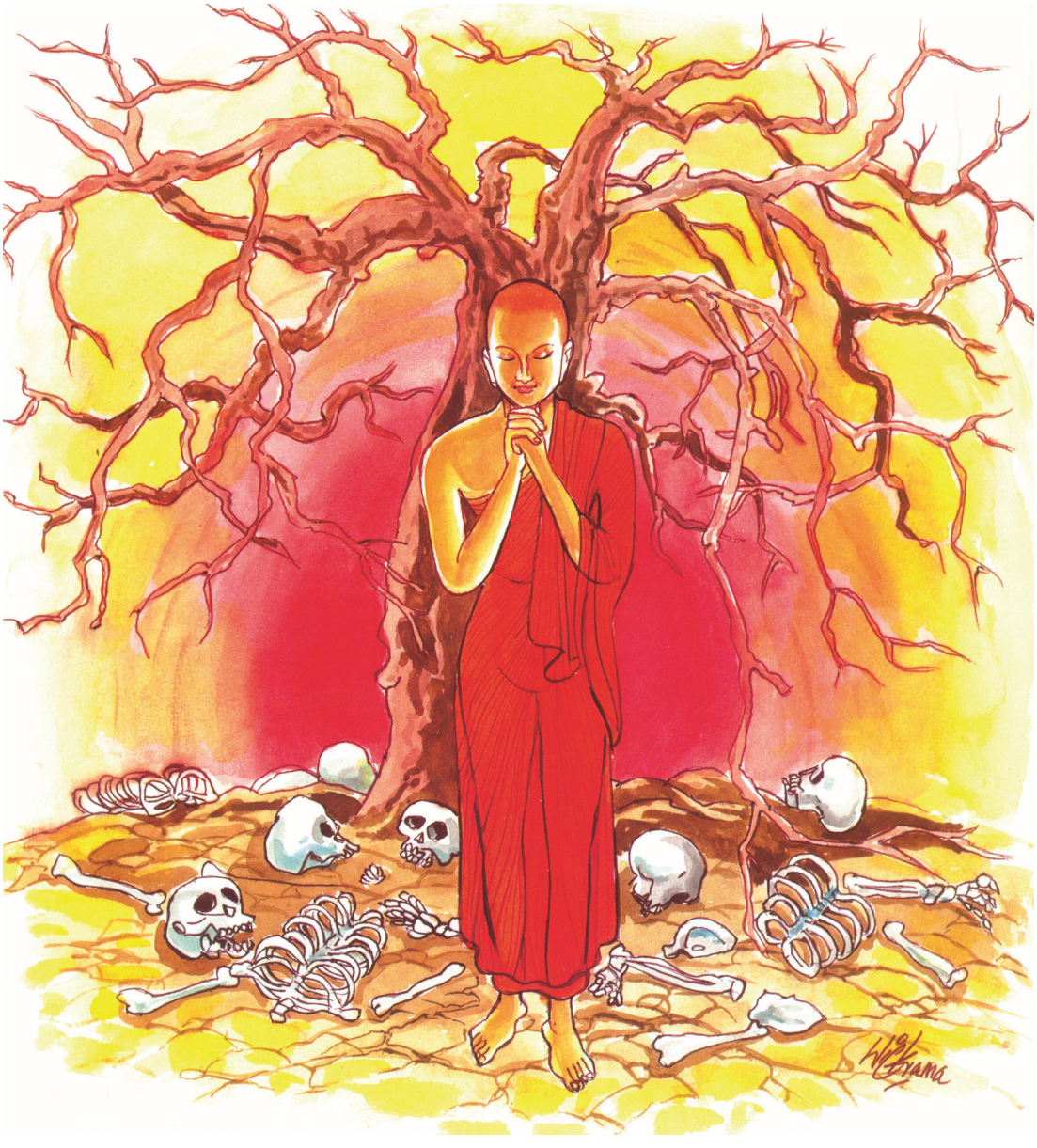
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

According to the Buddhist scriptures, nun Uttara, lived up to the age of one hundred and twenty years and followed the rules of Vinaya. Once, she was on almsround and, on the way, met a bhikkhu. She gave him her food, as offering. The bhikkhu accepted her offer and took all the food she had in her begging bowl. As a result, she had to go without food. This happened on the second and the third day as well. She offered him food and herself remained without food.

On the fourth day, while she was on almsround, she met the Buddha on a narrow road. Respectfully, she paid homage to him and stepped back to give passage to him and the other bhikkhus. While she was doing so, she stepped back on her own robe and fell down to the ground, injuring her head.

The Teacher went up to her and consoled her, 'Your body has become so old, infirm and torn that soon it will fall down on the earth and die. **This body which we possess suffers from various diseases. Therefore, it is called the "nest of diseases." This body may be young and beautiful but within it is the human excreta and other unwanted things like urine, cough, sweat etc. This foul smelling body from within has to destroy some day.**'

Hearing this, Uttara attained Srotappan state of fruition.



Verse 149: Yānimāni apatthāni, alāpūn' eva sārade
Kāpotakāni aṭṭhini, tāni disvāna kā rati?

Verse 149: These pigeon-hued bones, in the body, are like thrown away gourds in autumn. What pleasure is there in looking at them?

What delight in bones?
Story of over-confident monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a group of monks went to the forest and practised meditation ardently and diligently. Soon, they attained deep mental absorption (jhana) and they thought that they were free from sensual desires and had, therefore, attained Arahanthood. Actually, they were overestimating their achievements. They decided to meet the Buddha and tell him what they thought of their achievement. But, while they were on their way towards the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha told Ananda, 'Ananda! Tell them that there is no point in entering Jetavana right now to see me. They should go to the cremation ground, observe what is going on there and then come here to see me later.'

Bhikkhu Ananda conveyed the message of the Buddha to them. They did not react by saying, 'What is the purpose of going to the cremation ground?' On the other hand, they reflected, 'The Enlightened One knows everything. He must have some valid reason for sending us to the cremation ground first.' So, they went to the cremation ground, as advised by the Buddha.

There, they saw decaying dead bodies which were as good as skeletons and bones. But when they saw some fresh dead bodies, they were horrified to find that they had developed sensual attachment in them. The Buddha sent radiant message to them, 'Bhikkhus! Is it proper for you to develop sensual pleasure in dead bodies? It does not befit you well to do so.' Perceiving the real nature of bodies, all these bhikkhus attained Arahanthood.

Note: Dead bodies have been classified **in ten types: (i) bloated, (ii) discoloured, (iii) festering, (iv) dissected, (v) gnawed-to-pieces, (vi) scattered-in-pieces, (vii) mutilated and scattered-in-pieces, (viii) bloody, (ix) worm-infested, and (x) skeleton. During the time of the Buddha, these dead bodies were available in cemeteries for meditation. In modern days it is impossible to find these types of corpses as subjects for meditation.**

Verse 150: Aṭṭhinaṃ nagaraṃ kataṃ, mansa lohita lepanaṃ
Yattha jarā ca maccū ca, māno makkho ca ohito.

Verse 150: This body is a city made of bones, plastered with flesh and blood. Herein live decay, death, pride and envy.

See this body of flesh and blood
Story of Rupananda

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Princess Janapada Kalyani was the daughter of Gotami, foster mother of Gotama the Buddha. Because she was beautiful, she was also known as Rupananda. She was engaged to be married to Prince Nanda, a cousin of the Buddha but Nanda became a bhikkhu before they were married. One day, she thought, 'My elder brother, who could become Universal Monarch, has renounced the world and become a bhikkhu. He has now become the Buddha. Rahula, my brother's son, his mother Yashodhara and also my husband-to-be, Nanda, have become bhikkhus. My mother, Gotami has also become a bhikkhuni and I am alone here living as a householder!' So saying, she also became a bhikkhuni herself. Thus, she became a bhikkhuni not out of conviction, but because of her attachment to the family members.

Rupananda had heard from others that the Buddha often talked about the impermanent nature of the body. So, she thought that he would criticise about her good looks, if she happened to present herself before him. But other bhikkhunis, coming from the monastery, kept on talking in praise of the Buddha. So, one day she decided to accompany them to the monastery.

The Buddha saw her and thought, 'A thorn can be taken out only by a thorn. Rupananda is very attached to her body and is proud of her beauty. Therefore, I must take out her pride and attachment through beauty.' So, with his supernatural power, he created the vision of a very beautiful girl, seated by his side. The young girl was visible only to Rupananda. When she saw this girl, she thought of herself as an ugly, old, black crow, as compared to a beautiful white swan. Rupananda liked her very much. After sometime, she looked at the girl again and she was surprised to find that the girl had grown to an age of about twenty. Again and again, when she looked at the figure by the side of the Buddha, she found that she had grown older and older. Thus, she turned into a grown-up lady, middle aged lady, old lady and a very old lady. Rupananda also realised that with the appearance of each new image, the old image disappeared. She realised that there was continuous change and decay in the body. With this realisation, her attachment to the body got diminished. Meanwhile, when the figure turned into a very old lady, the old lady could not control her bodily functions and was rolling on the ground. Finally when she died, her body got bloated; pus and flies started coming out of her body. Crows and animals jumped on it to eat it.

Having seen this, she thought, **'This young girl has grown up and died before my own eyes. In the same way, my body will also grow old and decay. It will be also subject to decay and disease and I shall die.'** Thus she came to understand the real nature of the body. Responding to the further guidance from the Buddha, Rupananda attained Arahantship.

Verse 151: Jiranti ve rājarathā sucittā, atho sariram pi jaraṃ upeti
Satam ca dhammo na jaraṃ upeti, santo have sabbhi pavedayanti.

Verse 151: Even ornamented royal chariots wear out. So too, the body decays, reaches old age and dies. But the Good Dhamma does not grow old. Thus, indeed, say the Saints amongst themselves.

Be Righteous
Story of queen Mallika

Place: Jetavana. Sravasti

One day, queen Mallika went inside the bath room to wash herself. Her pet dog also went in. As the dog saw her bending to wash her feet, it began to have sex with her. The queen enjoyed it and did not stop him. Pasendi, the king, saw this strange incidence through the window in his bed room. When the queen came in, he asked her angrily, 'Oh you wicked, woman! What were you doing with that dog in the bath room? Don't deny what I saw with my own eyes.' The queen replied that she was only washing her face, hands and feet, and that she had done nothing wrong. Then she continued, 'But, that room is very strange. When one goes inside it, then seeing from the window, there seem to be two inside. If you don't believe me, O great king! Then you go inside that room, and I shall watch you from this window.'

So, the king went inside that bath room. When he came out of the bath room, she asked the king why he misbehaved with the she-goat in the bath room. The king denied it, but she insisted that she had seen him doing so with her own eyes. The king was puzzled, but being dim-witted, he accepted what the queen said and concluded that the bath room was indeed a strange place. From that time onward, the queen suffered from guilty conscience for telling lies to the king and also accusing him of misbehaving with the she-goat. Her mind was so disturbed, for being unfair to her husband, that, even at the time of her death, she did not remember the meritorious deeds and charities, done by her. She only remembered that she had been unfaithful to the king. As a result of this unwholesome last thought, she was born in hell.

After her funeral, the king wanted to know where she was reborn. The Buddha cared for his feelings and did not want that he should lose faith in the Dhamma, since his understanding was not very deep. So, he willed that this question should not be put to him immediately, and the king forgot to ask this question to him for the next seven days. The king happened to visit the Buddha everyday, for the next seven days, but did not remember to ask this question. However, after living in the hell for seven days, the queen was reborn in the Tusita deva world. On the eighth day, the Buddha went to the king for almsfood. The Buddha, instead of sitting inside the palace that day, sat outside in the chariot-shed, where the old and new chariots were kept. The king finally remembered to ask the Buddha, where the queen was reborn. When told that she was reborn in the Tusita world, the king was very pleased and remarked, 'Where else could she be born? She was always thinking of doing good deeds. Now, that she is gone, I, your humble disciple, feel lonely and don't know what to do.'

The Enlightened One advised him, 'Look at these **chariots. The chariots of your father and grand-father are all worn out and are lying useless, as compared to your chariot. When, these inanimate objects are subject to decay and destruction, our bodies, which have consciousness, are subject to faster decay and destruction. Only the Dhamma of the virtuous is not subject to decay.'**

Verse 152: Appassutāyaṃ puriso, balivaddo' va jirati
Mansāni tassa vaḍḍhanti, paññā tassa na vaḍḍhati.

Verse 152: The man of little learning grows old like a bull. His flesh grows, but his wisdom grows not.

Don't lack wisdom
Story of bhikkhu Laludayi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Laludayi was unintelligent, slow in understanding and also tactless. He always said things, which were inappropriate to the occasion, although he tried hard to avoid doing so. Thus, on joyful and auspicious occasions, he would talk about sorrow. And on sorrowful occasions, he would talk about joy and happiness. On top of that, he never realised that he had been speaking things, which were inappropriate to the occasions. When the Buddha was told about Laludayi, he said, 'A person, like Laludayi, who has little knowledge, is just like an ox. His muscles grow, but not his wisdom. He has been like this in the past as well.' The bhikkhus requested him to tell them the story of his past life. The Buddha narrated as follows:

In one of his past births, Laludayi was a farmer, named Agnidatta, who lived near Benaras. His son, Somadatta, was attendant to the king and his darling and delight. Agnidatta had two oxen for tilling the land. When one ox died, the father was very sad and depressed and urged his son to get one ox from the king but the son did not want to exploit his proximity to the king. He refused, and instead he asked his father to go to the king personally and ask for the favour. Knowing that his father was dull, he, however, taught his father how to address the king. It went something like this: 'Great King, I had two oxen to help me to till my land. But one of them is dead. I pray you to give me another, your Highness.' But, when he was taken before the king, he said, 'Great King, I had two oxen to help me to till my land. But one of them is dead. I pray you take my other, your Highness.' The king was surprised and asked him to say it again. But, the farmer repeated the same words. Luckily, the king was a wise ruler. He knew that the farmer, by mistake, had said exactly the opposite of what he actually intended to say. He told the son, Somadatta, 'It appears that you have large number of oxen.' Somadatta was witty, close and dear to the king. He promptly replied, 'surely, with your blessings, Sir.' The king presented him sixteen oxen, instead of one. Then the Buddha explained that in that life Laludayi was the farmer, Ananda was the king and the Buddha, himself, was the son, Somadatta.

Verse 153: Aneka jāti saṃsāraṃ, sandhāvissaṃ anibbisaṃ
Gaha kārakaṃ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunaṃ.

Verse 153: Through many a birth I have been wandering in the samsara, seeking, but not finding, the builder of the house. Repeated birth has been a great suffering.

How is the house built?
Solemn speech of the Buddha

Place: Bodhivrikhamula, Bodhgaya

These are the two songs of triumph (Udana) sung by the Buddha, under the Bodhi tree (Tree of Enlightenment), after he attained Enlightenment, 2600 years ago from now. He repeated them again, in response to a question raised by Ananda.

Prince Siddhartha, son of King Suddhodana and Queen Maya, saw an old man, a sick man and a dead man and realised that he would also suffer from sickness, old age and ultimately death. He wanted to find out if there could be freedom from the cycle of birth, sickness, old age and finally death. As he was not getting the correct answers to these questions of life, while he stayed in the palace, he renounced the world including the throne as a king and became a bhikkhu, in search of the Dhamma, at an early age of twenty-nine. For six years, he moved around the plains of the Ganges and approached various teachers of that time, like Ramaputra and Kalam and studied their doctrines and methods. He learnt all that they taught him, but was not happy and satisfied with that teaching. He wanted to learn further and arrive at the truth, all by himself. He submitted himself to the rigours of ascetic discipline but these traditional methods did not lead him to the Truth. However, he continued his search for the Truth. **Through his search, he came to the conclusion that one had to avoid the two extremes of excessive sensual indulgences and the other extreme of self mortification. He discovered that the Middle Path was the best Path which led to the Perfect Peace, Nibbana. The Middle Path, which is the Noble Eight Fold Path, is the best Path. It consists of Right Belief, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Exertion, Right Memory and Right Meditation.**

Verse 154: Gaha kāraka! diṭṭho' si, puna gehaṃ na kāhasi
Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā, gaha kūṭaṃ visaṅkhitaṃ
Visankhāra gataṃ cittaṃ, taṇhānaṃ khayam ajjhagā.

Verse 154: O house-builder! You have been seen. You will not be able to build a house for me again. All your beams are broken. The top-dome is shattered. I have achieved the end of all desires and sufferings. My mind is fixed in Nibbana.

House is built by craving
Solemn speech of the Buddha

Prince Siddhartha, aged thirty-five, sat in the afternoon of the full moon day of Vaisakh under the Bodhi Tree, by the side of the river Niranjana, in the modern state of Bihar. By sunset, the evil forces of Mara tried desperately to dissuade him not to pursue for the Truth but failed and fled away. During the first watch, he attained Samma-sambuddh. He had a glimpse of all his past existences. During the middle watch, he attained the power of divine sight, supernatural vision and in the last watch he, out of pity for all living beings, contemplated on the Doctrine of Dependent Origination. At the sunrise, he by his own intellect and insight fully understood the **Dukkha-Satya (truth of Sorrow): Existence of Sorrow, Cause of Sorrow, Cessation of Sorrow and the Way to end the Sorrow. From then onwards, he is known as Gautama, the Buddha. He expounded that the Dukkha should be comprehended, the Cause of Dukkha should be understood, Cessation of Dukkha should be attempted and finally the Path leading to the Cessation of Dukkha should be developed.**

These hymns vividly describe the Buddha's moral victory and his inner spiritual experiences. He realised that there was an architect within him who built the house of the self in every life. He was forced to occupy that house in every life, take that body, compelled to undertake the journey of the samsara and suffer again and again. Since this coming and going in various lives was a very painful process, he was trying to discover who this architect was so that he could get liberated from his shackles. In his final birth, as the son of King Suddhodana, he developed Vipassana meditation. **As a result of his wanderings and relentless search, he discovered, by his own insight, the elusive architect residing, not outside, but within his heart only. It was the mental process of perception and conception (sankhara) and the compulsive urge to exist (bhava tanha) that was the architect, the builder. And this mental process is latent in us all. On attaining Arahanthood, this desire to exist, tanha, ends.**

Nibbana is also explained as the extinction of the fetters of lust (lobha), hatred (dosa) and delusion (moha). 'The whole world is in flames,' says the Buddha. 'How is this flame produced?' 'It is kindled by the fire of birth, old age, death, sorrow, pain, grief and despair. Nibbana is nothing but the extinction of these flames.'

Verse 155: Acaritvā brahma cariyaṃ, aladdhā yobbane dhanaṃ
Jiṇṇa koñcā' va jhāyanti, khinamacch'eva pallale.

Verse 155: Those who have not lived a spiritual life nor acquired wealth in youth have wasted their youth. They live lamenting like old cranes at a pond, without fish.

Progress materially or spiritually
Story of Mahadhana

Place: Rishipattan, Sarnath

Mahadhana, meaning Great wealth, the treasurer's son, was born at Benaras. He had wealth worth eighty billion. His parents thought, 'We have enough money. Our son need not do any job. Let him enjoy the wealth as per his pleasure.' Thus, the son was taught only singing and playing of instruments. He studied nothing when he was young. In the same way there was another rich man who had a daughter. They also had wealth worth eighty billion. They also thought similarly and did not teach their daughter more than singing and playing of instruments. When the son and daughter of these rich men came of age, they were married. When the parents of both sides died, they became very rich and had a combined wealth of a hundred and sixty billion. But both of them were ignorant and only knew how to spend money but not how to save it and make it grow. They just squandered away the money.

The treasurer's son used to visit the king three times daily. One day, some rogues thought, 'If Mahadhana can be addicted to drinks, we can use his wealth for our pleasure.' They told the treasurer's son, 'Master, Live for hundred years! With your blessings, we can eat and drink to our heart's content.' Thus they developed association with him and made him a habitual drunkard. Very soon, the entire money was spent away. He had to sell all household items including the utensils. They became very poor and helpless. Since the couple did not know how to earn a living, they were forced to beg.

Verse 156: Acaritvā' brahmcariyaṃ, aladdhā yobbane dhanaṃ
Senti cāpātikhiṇā'va, purāṇāni anutthunaṃ.

Verse 156: Those who have not lived a spiritual life nor acquired wealth in youth have wasted their youth. They remain like a spent arrow lying in the forest, crying over the past.

Seize the golden moments
Story of Mahadhana

One day, the man was standing outside the gate of the Jetavana monastery, receiving left overs of food from the samaneras. The Buddha saw the rich man's son in severe poverty and smiled. Ananda asked the Buddha the reason for his smile. The Buddha replied, 'Ananda! Look at this young man! He is Mahadhana, son of the treasurer. He has wastefully spent away money worth one hundred and sixty billion. Now he is begging with his wife. If he had not wasted the money in the prime of his youth, he would have been the richest man in the city. If he had become a bhikkhu, he would have been an Arahant by now and his wife would have attained the third stage of Anagami fruition. If he had not spent away the money in the second stage of his life, he would have been the second richest man in the city. If he had become a bhikkhu, he would have been Anagami by now and his wife Sakridagami (second stage of spiritual development). If he had used money properly in the third stage of his life, he would have been the third richest man in the city. If he had become a bhikkhu, he would have been Sakridagami and his wife would have been Srotappan. But he has wasted away his entire life. He has not been a successful layman. He has also fallen away on spiritual lines. He has become like an old flightless crane in a dried up pond.'

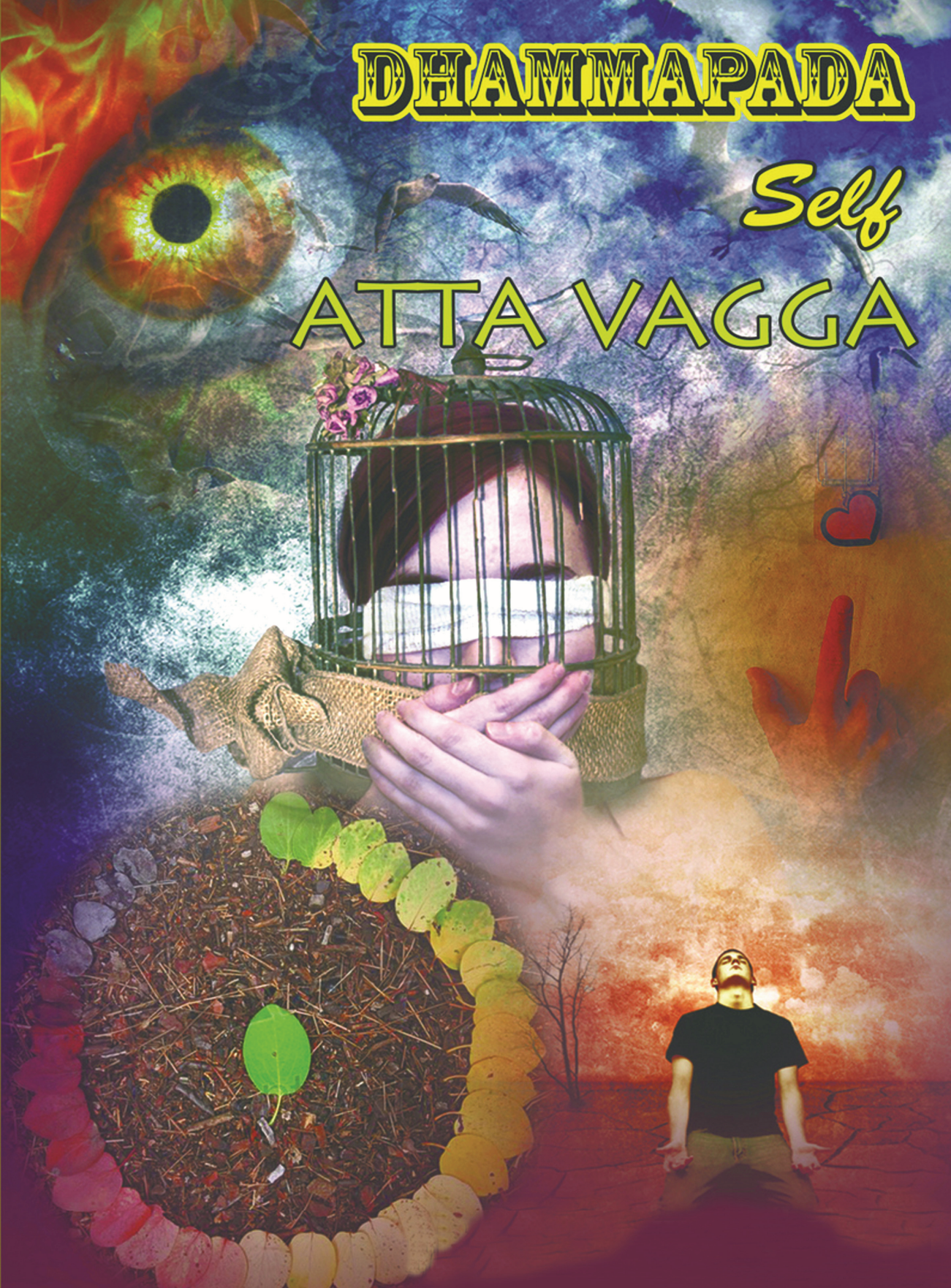
The example of an old man of wasted youth is amongst the most telling examples of the Dhammapada. The pond, on which the bird has to depend, is fish-less. But the crane cannot fly over to the fish-rich lake as due to old age, it is weak and has become flightless. **The verse captures the situation which is universally true. Most people waste away their youthful days with no thought for the inevitable old-age waiting for them. Youth is allowed to slip away from hand, without amassing worldly or spiritual wealth. The Buddha's admonition is to make us alert and mindful of the passage of time and the speedy fading of the glamour of the youth so that we act in time, before it is too late.**

DHAMMAPADA
JARA VAGGA

DHAMMAPADA

Self

ATTA VAGGA



Chapter XII

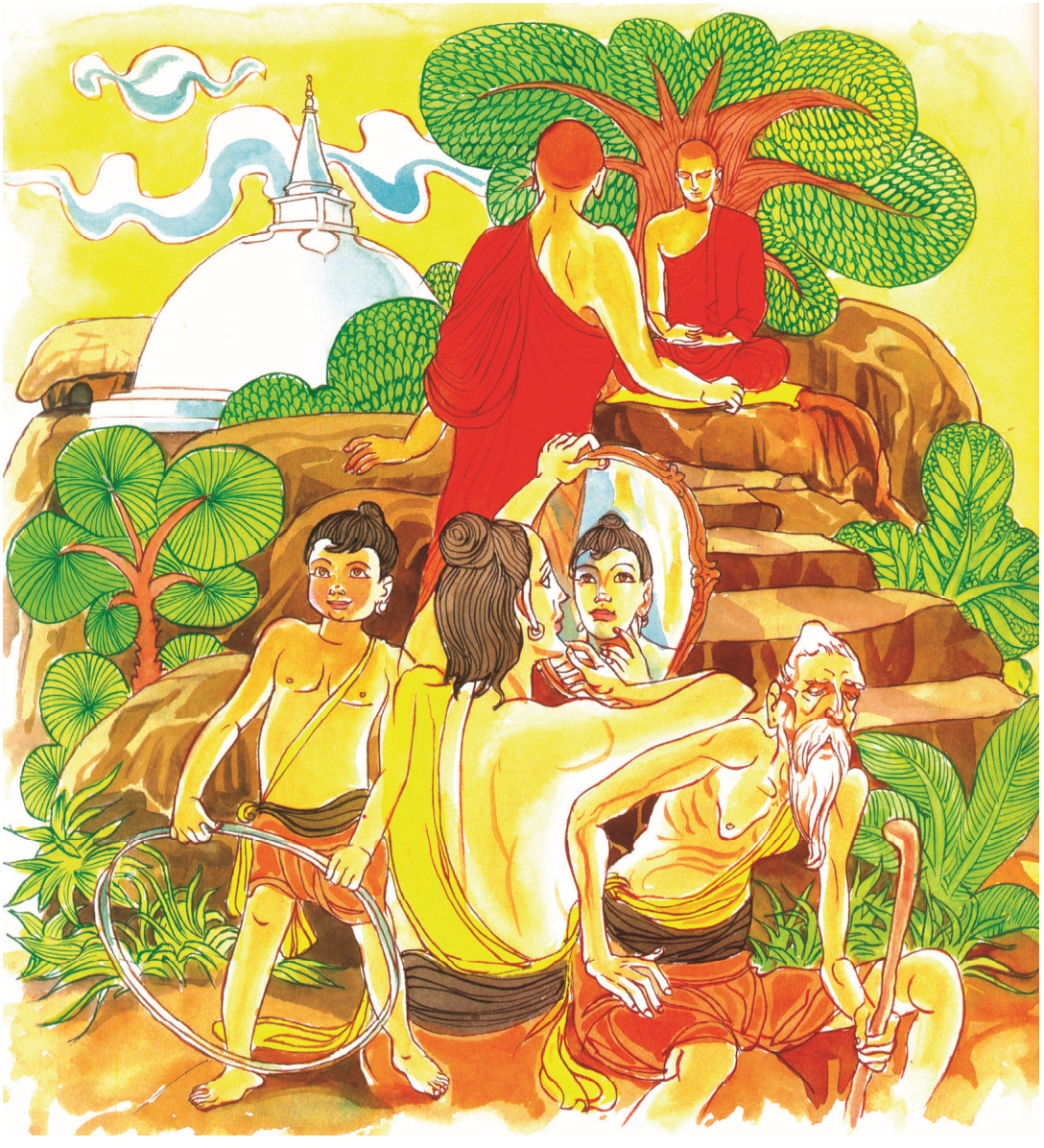
ATTA VAGGA

Self

Index

ATTA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of Prince Bodhiraja Kumara	157.	Be Vigilant	39
2.	Story of Upananda	158.	Set example first	41
3.	Story of monk Padhanika Tissa	159.	First act yourself	43
4.	Story of bhikkhu Kumara Kassapa	160.	Seek one's refuge	45
5.	Story of Mahakala	161.	Beware of one's evil deeds	47
6.	Story of Devadatta	162.	Don't bring your own ruin	49
7.	Story of Devadatta	163.	Good is difficult to do	51
8.	Story of the jealous monk Kala	164.	Why scorn the noble?	53
9.	Story of Chulakala	165.	Be your own light	55
10.	Story of Attadatta	166.	Work for your spiritual growth	57



Verse 157: Attānaṃ ce piyaṃ jaññā, rakkheyya naṃ surakkhitaṃ
Tiṇṇam aññataraṃ yāmaṃ, paṭijaggeyya paṇḍito.

Verse 157: If one holds oneself dear, one should protect oneself well against evil. During all the three periods of life, the wise man should be vigilant against evil.

Be Vigilant
Story of Prince Bodhiraja Kumara

Place: Bhesakalavan

Once, Prince Bodhiraja Kumara built a magnificent palace. On the occasion of its inauguration, he invited the Buddha for almsfood and blessings along with other bhikkhus. On this special occasion, he perfumed the palace with scents and incense. As the prince had no children, he spread out a long carpet in the dining hall, with the solemn wish that if the Blessed One put his feet on it, then his wife would be blessed with children. When the Buddha arrived, Prince Bodhi respectfully requested him to enter the hall by stepping on the carpet. But the Buddha did not step on the carpet. Rather, he looked towards Ananda, who understood what the Buddha wanted and asked the prince to get the carpet removed. Only then did the Buddha enter the palace and had almsfood. After the meal, the prince asked the Buddha why he did not step on the carpet. The Buddha, in turn, asked him a counter question whether he had not spread the carpet with the solemn wish that in case the Buddha stepped on it, his wife would be blessed with children. To this, the prince replied in the affirmative. The Buddha then explained that he and his wife would not be able to have any children, because of their past evil deeds and narrated what they had done in the past.

In one of their past births, the prince and the princess were the only survivours of a shipwreck. They were stranded on a deserted island, and there they survived by eating eggs, young birds and birds, without any feeling of remorse at all. They were so selfishly absorbed in their own welfare, that they destroyed not only the innocent birds, but also their young ones as well. For all those evil deeds, they would not be able to have any children. If they had felt even slightest remorse for their deeds at any stage of their lives, they could have been blessed with the children in this birth.

Verse 158: Attānam eva paṭhamaṃ, patirūpe nivesaye
Ath' aññam anusāseyya, na kilisseyya paṇḍito.

Verse 158: One should first do the right things himself. He should first establish himself on the right path and then only teach others. Such a wise man will not be blamed by others.

Set example first
Story of Upananda

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

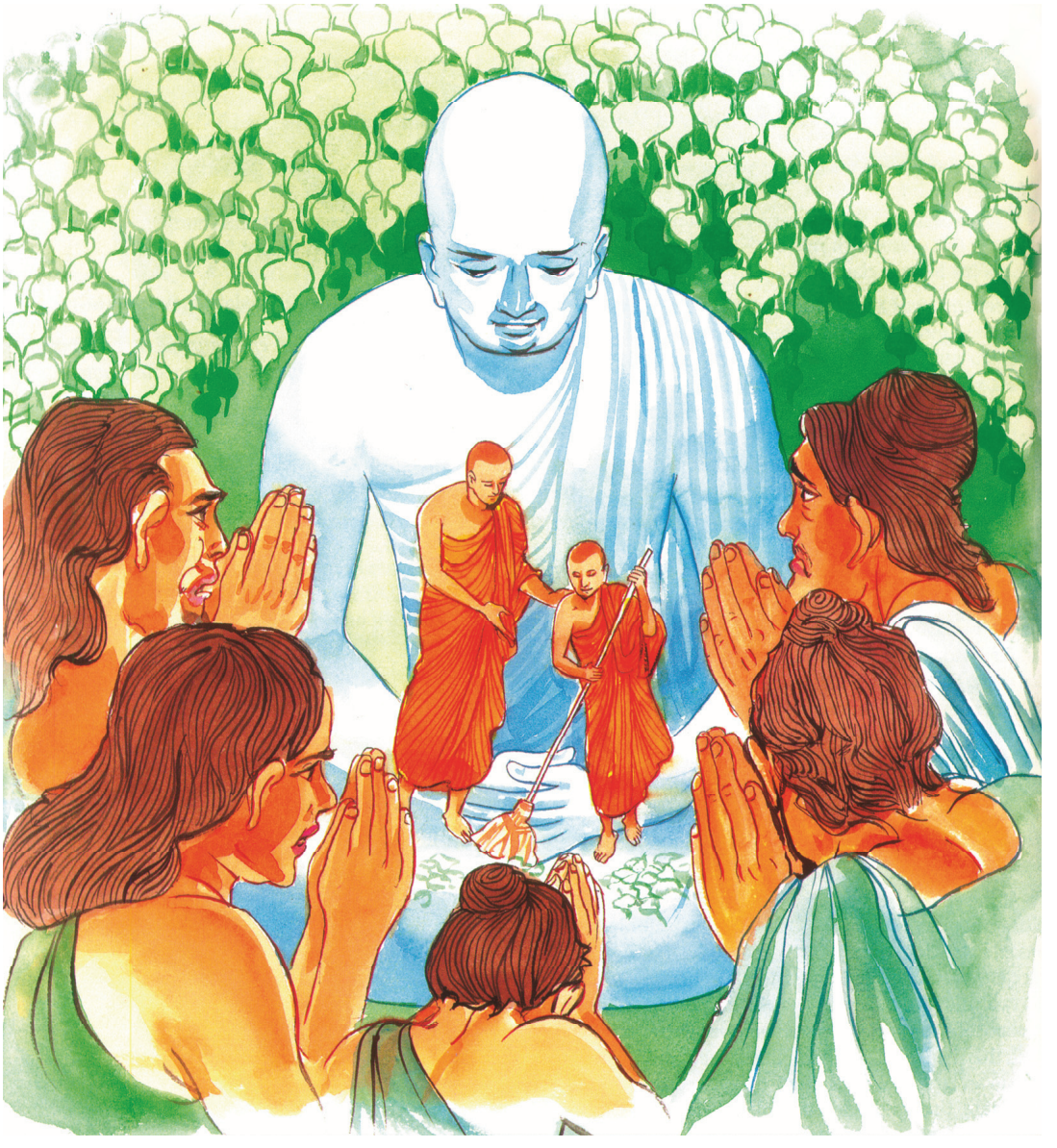
Monk Upananda was a very brilliant speaker. He taught others not to be greedy, have only a few wants and talked eloquently on the merits of contentment, frugality, simplicity, unselfishness and other qualities. However, he did not practise what he taught and took away all the robes and other gifts that were offered by the devotees. This was against the rule of Vinaya.

On one occasion, Upananda went to a village monastery just before the vassa period. Some young bhikkhus, being impressed by his eloquence, requested him to spend vassa in their monastery. He asked them, 'How many robes each bhikkhu is given at the end of the vassa?' 'One robe, Venerable!' He did not want to stay there, but left his slippers there as a mark of his presence. At the next monastery, he learnt that the bhikkhus normally received two robes at the end of the vassa and left his stick there. Further at the next monastery, the bhikkhus received three robes each as donation at the end of the vassa. There he left his water bottle. Finally, he decided to stay at the monastery where the bhikkhus received four robes. At the end of the vassa, on the way back, he told the monks of the three monasteries, 'I had left my personal belonging here. Give me my share of the robes.' Thus, he collected robes from these three monasteries as well, as if he had spent the vassa there. In this way, he collected all the gifts, loaded them in a cart and came back to the monastery.

On his way, he met two young bhikkhus who were having a dispute over the sharing of two robes and a costly velvet blanket which they had received between them, as offerings. Since they could not come to some agreeable solution, they requested Upananda to arbitrate. Upananda gave one robe to each monk and took the costly velvet blanket for himself, for working as the arbitrator. The two bhikkhus were not satisfied with the decision but they could do nothing.

With a feeling of dejection and dissatisfaction, they reported the matter to the Buddha who commented, 'In the past also he has acted in a similar manner. When two cats were not able to distribute a fish between them, Upananda, as the arbitrator in that life, gave them the head and the tail of the fish and took away the main body part of the fish as his fee. You two were the cats in that life.' The Buddha also added, **'One who teaches others, should himself practise first.'**

Note: This advice of the Buddha fits very aptly on all of us. We are experts in advising others but don't establish ourselves in virtues. It has been rightly said, 'An ounce of practice is better than a ton of preaching.'



Verse 159: Attānaṃ ce tathā kayirā, yathaññamanusāsati
Sudanto vata dammetha, attā hi kira duddamo.

Verse 159: One should act, exactly as one teaches others. One, fully self-controlled, may teach self-control to others. Indeed, self-control is the most difficult thing to do.

First act yourself
Story of monk Padhanika Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Monk Padhanika Tissa, after taking a subject of meditation from the Buddha, left for the forest with a large number of bhikkhus. There, he advised the monks, 'Be ever diligent and mindful in your meditative practice.' After exhorting others, he would himself lie down and go to sleep. The young bhikkhus did, as they were told. They practised meditation in the first watch of the night and when they were about to go to sleep, Padhanika Tissa would get up and ask them, 'Go back to your practice.' When they returned from meditation practice in the second and third watch of the night, he would tell them the same thing again. As he was doing it continuously, the young bhikkhus did not have proper rest and peace of mind. So, they could not concentrate on meditational practice or even on the reciting of the suttas. One day, they decided to investigate whether their teacher was himself truly as vigilant and zealous as he pretended to be. When they found that their teacher only exhorted others and himself spent most of his time only in sleeping, they remarked, 'Our teacher knows only how to advise us and he himself wastes away his time doing nothing and only in sleeping.' By this time, as the bhikkhus were not getting enough rest, they were tired and exhausted. As a result, none of the bhikkhus could make any progress in their meditative process. At the end of the vassa, they returned to the Jetavana monastery and reported the matter to the Buddha, who said, **'Bhikkhus! One who wants to teach others, should first teach himself and conduct himself properly.'**

Note: There is a story that the son of a lady was very fond of sugar. It was not good for his health. So, she approached a saint with this problem and requested, 'Sir, My son eats too much of sugar. It is not good for his health. Please ask him to reduce eating sugar.' 'Come after a month', asked the saint. The lady met the saint once again with her son, after the lapse of one month, as advised by him. This time the saint simply told the boy, 'My son! Eating too much of sugar is not good for you. You shouldn't do that.' The boy took the advice to heart and stopped eating sugar.

The lady was surprised. She came back to the saint once again, after sometime, and asked him, 'Sir! The simple advice which you gave to my son, after a month, could have also been given, when I met you for the first time a month ago. Why did you not tell him the same thing at that time?' 'Because I was myself very fond of eating sugar; my words would have fallen flat on your son at that time. During the last one month, I have myself stopped eating sugar.'

rse 160: Attā hi attano nātho, ko hi nātho paro siyā
Attanā' va sudantena, nāthaṃ labhati dullabhaṃ.

Verse 160: One is his own protector, the refuge. Who else could be the protector? With oneself fully controlled, one gets a refuge, which is hard to get.

Seek one's refuge
Story of bhikkhu Kumara Kassapa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a young lady took permission from her husband to become a bhikkhuni. She joined the Order of bhikkhunis of Devadatta. This young woman was already pregnant when she became a bhikkhuni but was not aware of it. In due course, the pregnancy became visible. Other bhikkhunis took her to their Master, Devadatta. He advised her to go back to household life. She then told them, 'I did not want to become a bhikkhuni under your teacher. I have come to this wrong place by mistake. Please take me to the Buddha.' Thus she came to the Buddha.

The Buddha knew that she was pregnant when she became a bhikkhuni and was, therefore, innocent. But he did not want to handle the issue himself. He sent for King Pasendi of Kosala and the devoted lay disciples, Anatha Pindika and Visakha. Then he asked Venerable Upali, master of Vinaya-rules, to settle the issue in public. Lady Visakha examined the bhikkhuni and reported to Upali that she was already pregnant, when she became a bhikkhuni. Upali then declared publicly that she had not violated her sila (morality) and was innocent. In due course, she gave birth to a son. King Pasendi adopted the boy. He was named Kumara Kassapa. When the boy was of seven years, on learning that his mother was a bhikkhuni, he also became a novice monk. When he came of age, he was admitted to the Order as a bhikkhu. One day, he took a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went to Andhavana forest. There, he practised meditation ardently and diligently and very soon attained Arahanthood. However, he continued to live in the forest for the next twelve years. Thus, his mother could not see her son for long twelve years, and longed to see him.

One day, on seeing her son, the mother bhikkhuni ran after him, weeping and calling out his name. Seeing his mother, Kumara Kassapa thought, 'If I speak to her pleasantly, she would continue to have attachment towards me. This will not be good for her spiritual progress.' So, for the sake of her spiritual progress, he deliberately addressed her in an indifferent way, 'How is it that you, a bhikkhuni, are still attached to your son and can't cut off this affection for him?' The mother thought that her son was very ungrateful to her and asked him, 'What do you mean?' Kumara Kassapa repeated what he had said earlier. On hearing his answer, she reflected, 'For twelve long years, I have shed tears for this son but he is so harsh and cruel to me. Why should I have affection for him?' Then, she realised the futility of her emotional attachment to her son and uprooting her affection for him, she attained Arahanthood, on that very day.

In the evening congregation, the monks said, 'Sir! You have been a refuge to them. If the mother of Kumara Kassapa had listened to Devadatta, she and her son won't have attained Arahanthood. The Buddha replied, **'In trying to reach the deva loka or the Arahanthood, you can't depend on others. You have to be self-dependent. You have to work hard yourself.'**

Verse 161: Attanā' va kataṃ pāpaṃ, attajaṃ atta sambhavaṃ
Abhimanthati dummedhaṃ, vajiraṃ v'asmamayaṃ maṇiṃ.

Verse 161: The diamond is born out of the rock. But it cuts the very rock and grinds the hard gems. Similarly, the evil done by one, arising in oneself, caused by him, destroys one who has done it.

Beware of one's evil deeds
Story of Mahakala

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On a certain holy day, Mahakala, a lay disciple, went to the Jetavana monastery. On that day, he observed the eight moral precepts (Upasatha Sila) and listened to the Dhamma discourses all throughout the night. When it was getting dawn, Mahakala went to a pond nearby to wash his face and meet the morning needs.

Now it so happened that during the same night, there was theft in a house in the city. The owners of the house, on waking up, went after the thieves who ran in all the different directions. Some of them also ran towards the Jetavana monastery along with the booty. When they reached near the pond, being followed by the house owner and others, they dropped the stolen property in front of Mahakala and ran away.

When the landlords reached the spot, they found the stolen property near Mahakala and took him as one of the thieves. They caught hold of him and beat him so severely that he died on the spot. When it was morning, some young monks and samaneras came to the pond to fetch water and saw the dead body of Mahakala.

On their return to the vihara, the bhikkhus reported the matter to the Buddha, 'Bhante! The lay disciple, who attended the Dhamma talks all throughout the night, has met with a tragic death. He, definitely, did not deserve such a tragic death.' Then the Buddha clarified the reason, 'If you look at his present life only, out of the series of lives he has lived, then definitely he has met a death which he did not deserve. But his death is due to some evil deeds, done by him in the past. In one of his previous lives, he killed a man by beating him to death, as he fell in love with his wife. He was a royal soldier and misused his rank for killing the husband. He has paid the price for the wrong done by him in that life.'

Verse 162: Yassa accanta dussilyaṃ, maluvā sālam iv' otataṃ
Karoti so tatha' ttānaṃ, yathā naṃ icchati diso.

Verse 162: The maluva creeper, while embracing the sal tree, strangles it to death. Similarly, a really immoral person, overwhelmed by craving, harms himself. He does exactly what his enemy would wish him to do.

Don’t bring your own ruin
Story of Devadatta

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, some bhikkhus were talking about Devadatta, when the Buddha arrived there and asked them about their subject of conversation. They replied that they were discussing about Devadatta and continued, ‘Bhante! Devadatta is indeed an immoral man. He is also extremely greedy for gains. He has tried to gain name and fame by gaining the confidence of King Ajatasatru, by unfair means. He has also tried to convince Ajatasatru that by getting rid of his father, a just and fair king, he would immediately become a powerful king. Having been thus misled by Devadatta, Ajatasatru killed his father, a noble king, by torturing him. Devadatta has tried to kill you, our most venerable Teacher, three times. Devadatta is, indeed, very wicked and ambitious. He cannot improve.’

After listening to the bhikkhus, the Buddha told them, ‘This is not for the first time that Devadatta has tried to kill me. He has tried to kill me in previous births as well.’ Then the Buddha told them the story of his previous life in which Devadatta was a deer-hunter.

Once, when King Brahmadatta ruled in Benaras, the future Buddha was born as a deer. Devadatta was a deer-hunter in that life. One day, the deer-hunter saw the footprints of a deer under a tree. He made a bamboo-platform on the top of a tree and waited there with the spear to hit the deer, when it came. The deer came, but it came with great caution. The deer-hunter saw him taking steps hesitantly and threw some fruits in his direction to attract him. But that made the deer more cautious. He looked very cautiously and saw the hunter sitting on the platform. But he pretended that he had not seen the hunter and turned back slowly, addressing the tree, ‘O tree! Your nature is to drop the fruits vertically down. But, today you have violated that law of nature by sending the fruits to me in a slanted direction. Since you have violated the law of nature, I am leaving you and going to some other tree.’

Verse 163: Sukarāni asādhūni, attano ahitāni ca
Yaṃ 've hitan ca sadhun ca, taṃ ve parama dukkaraṃ.

Verse 163: It is easy to do what is evil and harmful to us. It is extremely difficult to do what is good and beneficial to us.

Good is difficult to do
Story of Devadatta

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, when the Buddha was giving discourse in the Veluvana monastery, Devadatta came to him and suggested that since the Buddha was getting old, the duties of the Order be handed over to him (Devadatta). But the Enlightened One rejected his suggestion as there were many other senior bhikkhus than him like Sariputta, Moggallana, Ananda, Kassapa etc. He rebuked him and also called him, 'Spittle (saliva ejected from the mouth) swallower.' Devadatta felt insulted and became very bitter of the Buddha from that time. He even tried to kill him three times. But all his attempts failed. So, he tried another method. This time he proposed five rules of discipline for the bhikkhus to be observed all throughout their lives. He proposed that (i) The bhikkhus should live in the forests. (ii) They should live only on food received on almsround. (iii) They should wear robes made only from the pieces of cloth collected from rubbish heap. (iv)They should reside under the trees. (v) They should not take fish or meat. The Buddha did not have any objection to those who were personally keen to follow these rules but for various valid reasons, he did not want to make it a general rule for the Sangha. Devadatta claimed that these rules were better than the existing rules of Vinaya and some of the new bhikkhus agreed with him.

The Buddha asked Devadatta if he was trying to create division in the Sangha and he admitted so. Devadatta was told that he was committing a great sinful act but he did not care for the advice. One day, Devadatta informed Ananda that from that day onwards he would observe and perform all his religious activities and monastic duties separately from the Order of the Buddha. Ananda reported the matter to the Buddha who pointed out, 'Devadatta is creating very evil karma by breaking the Sangha. He will have to suffer its evil consequences.' Then the Enlightened One said, **'For a virtuous person, it is easy to do good deeds and it is difficult to do evil; but for an evil one, it is easy to do evil and difficult to do good.'** Devadatta left the Sangha with some new bhikkhus to Gayasia mountain. However, Sariputta and Moggallana made most of these bhikkhus realise their mistakes and they returned back to the Sangha. **'Indeed, it is easy to do something which is not beneficial, but it is very difficult to do something which is good and wholesome,'** the Buddha said.

Verse 164: Yo sāsanaṃ arahataṃ, ariyānaṃ dhamma jivinaṃ
Paṭikkosati dummedho, diṭṭhiṃ nissāya pāpikaṃ
Phalāni kaṭṭhakass' eva, attaghaññāya phallati.

Verse 164: The unwise man who sets himself against the Teachings of the Arahants and the Noble Ones, because of his own false views, brings ruin to himself, just as the bamboo tree destroys itself when it bears fruit.

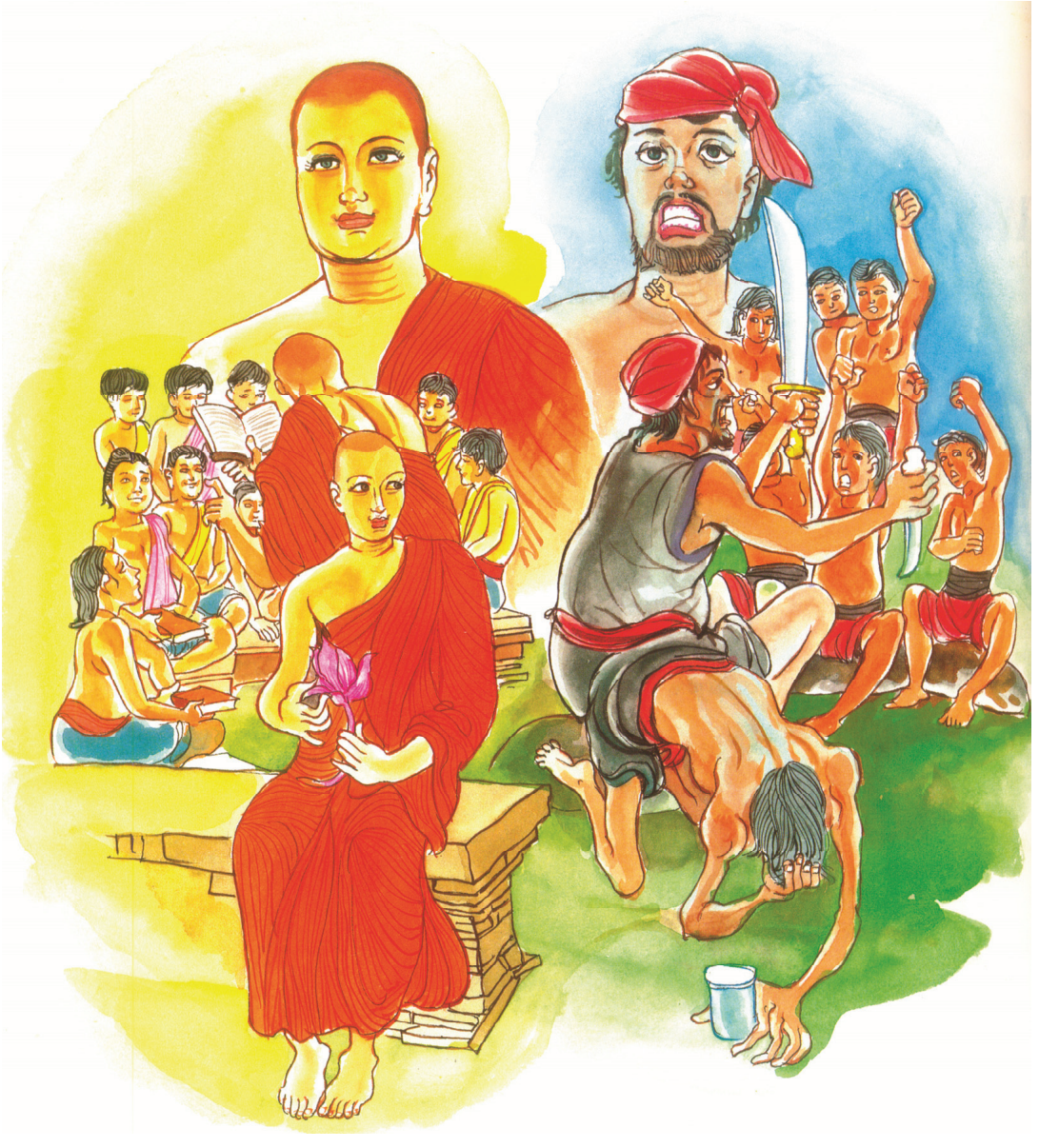
Why scorn the noble?
Story of the jealous monk Kala

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived in Sravasti an elderly lady who took care of a monk named Kala like her son. One day, she learnt from her neighbours about the virtues of the Buddha and decided that she would also go to the Jetavana monastery to hear the discourse of the Buddha. She expressed her wish to Kala, but Kala, instead of encouraging her to go there, dissuaded her from going there. He suggested that she would gain nothing by going there. But in spite of his advice, one day she left for the monastery. While going there, she advised her daughter to take care of Kala, when he came. When the monk met the daughter and learnt that her mother had gone to the Jetavana monastery, he thought selfishly, 'If she hears the Dhamma from the Master, she will discard me as I shall be of no use to her.' He reached the monastery quickly and saw the lady listening to the teachings of the Buddha. Kala paid his respects to the Buddha and said, 'Bhante! This lady is very dull. She will not be able to understand the Dhamma. Please teach her only about the charity (dana) and morality (sila).'

The Teacher knew that the monk was speaking only out of jealousy and with ulterior motive. So, he rebuked him, 'Because of your wrong views, you have abused my Teachings. You are only destroying yourself.'

Note: When one's mis-conceptions cloud one's vision, one is not able to see the truth in the noble teachings of the seers. As a person wearing green glasses sees everywhere green only, so does a man with mis-conceptions. He sees everything tainted by his mis-conceptions and wrong thinking. Such a person ruins himself only due to his folly. Coming of flower in a bamboo tree forecasts the arrival of its destruction. When the fruit ripens, it dies.



Verse 165: Attanā' va kataṃ pāpaṃ, attanā samkilissati
Attanā akataṃ pāpaṃ, attanā va visujjhati
Suddhi asuddhi paccattaṃ, n' aññ o aññaṁ visodhaye.

Verse 165: One soils oneself by one's own evil deeds. One purifies oneself by one's own good deeds. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. One cannot purify others.

Be your own light
Story of Chulakala

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On a certain holy day, Chulakala, a lay disciple, went to the Jetavana monastery. On that day, he observed the eight moral precepts (Upasatha Sila) and listened to the Dhamma discourses all throughout the night. When it was getting dawn, Chulakala went to a pond nearby to wash his face and meet the morning needs.

Now it so happened that the same night, there was a theft in a house in the city. The owners of the house, on waking up, went after the thieves, who ran away in all directions. Some of them also ran in the direction of the Jetavana monastery along with the booty. When they reached near the pond, being followed by the house owners, they dropped the stolen property in front of Chulakala and ran away.

When the landlords reached the spot, they found the stolen property near Chulakala and took him as one of the thieves. They caught hold of him and started beating him. Luckily, some women from the nearby village came to the pond to fetch water. When they saw Chulakala being beaten, they intervened, saying that they knew him and that he was not a thief. Chulakala was let off.

The matter was reported to the Buddha, who told Chulakala, **'You have been let off not only because the women said that you were not the thief but also because you really are not the thief and are, therefore, innocent.'**

Note: The story in this verse is similar to the story of Mahakala in verse 161 with the difference that Mahakala was killed but here Chulakala was saved and let off. Why was one beaten to death and the other was saved? Because Mahakala had done an evil deed of killing someone's husband in one of his previous lives. **These two stories testify that there is no escape from the results of our evil or good karma. The best safeguard for us all is, therefore, to do only good deeds. Nothing else could protect us more than our good karma.**

Also, we see in life that some purify themselves by following the footsteps of the pure ones. However, there are others who degrade and degenerate themselves by adopting evil means. **In fact, we are responsible for our purification or degradation. Thus man is himself the maker of his destiny. He himself is responsible for his welfare or downfall and none else.**

Verse 166: Atta datthaṃ paratthena, bahunā' pi na hāpaye
Atta datthaṃ abhiññāya, sadattha pasuto siyā.

Verse 166: Because of others' welfare, however great, let none neglect one's own welfare. One should clearly understand one's own welfare and then strive for the same.

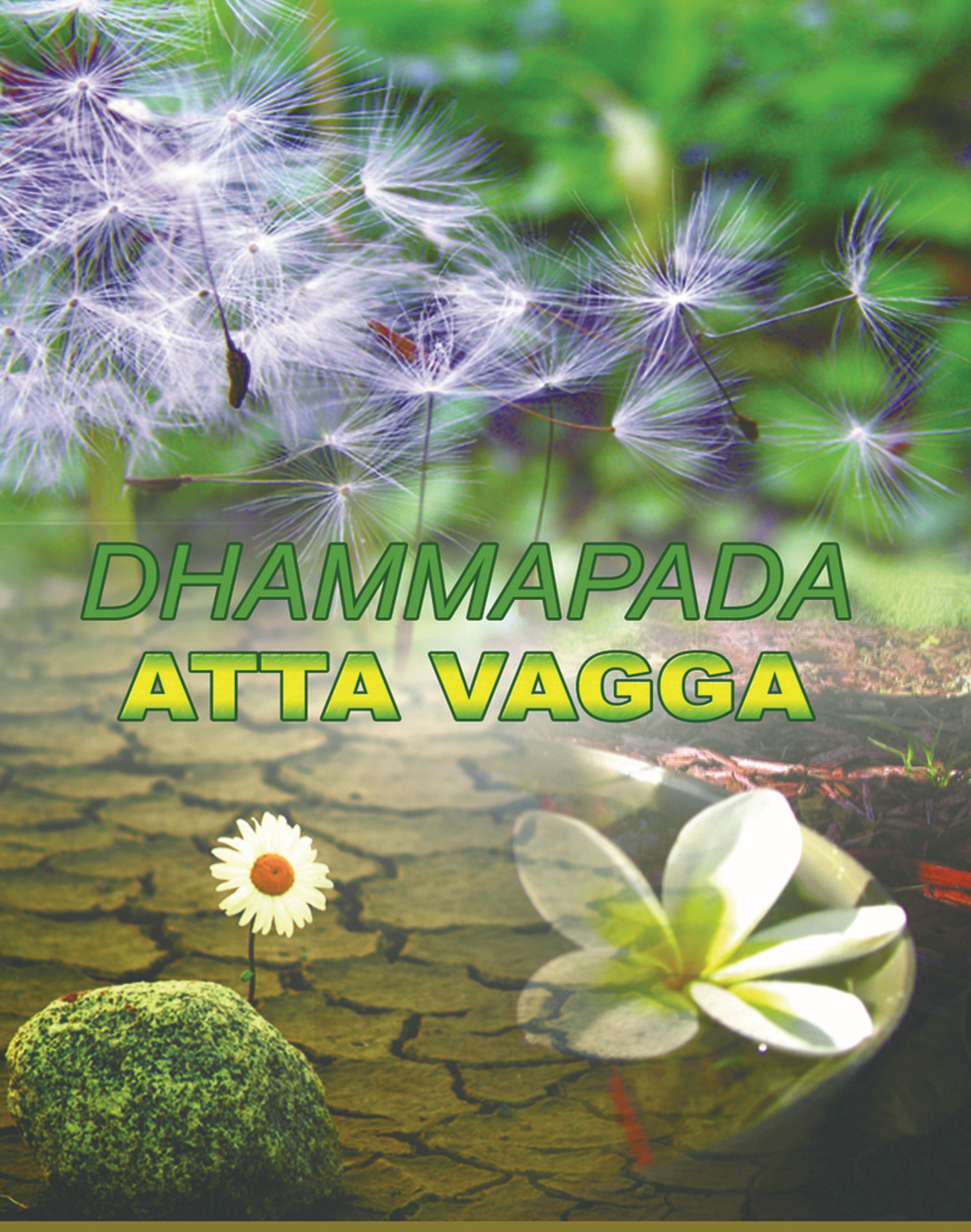
Work for your spiritual growth
Story of Attadatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

When the Buddha announced, 'I shall attain parinibbana in four months' time,' many bhikkhus, especially those who had not attained Arahanthood yet, became sad and did not know what to do. So, they started staying close to the Buddha. A bhikkhu named Attadatta, however, did not go to see him, as others did. He resolved to himself, 'I must attain Arahanthood during the lifetime of the Buddha. Only four months are left for his parinibbana and I am still tied to this world and its affairs.' He stopped meeting his fellow monks and started striving hard in meditation practice. Other bhikkhus misunderstood him and took him to the Buddha and said, 'Sir! This bhikkhu does not love and revere you as we do. He is egoistic and remains, confined to himself.' The Buddha asked Attadatta to explain his conduct. He respectfully explained, 'The greatest homage I can pay to the Buddha is to attain Arahanthood before his parinibbana.'

The Buddha praised the monk and told the other bhikkhus, 'If you love and revere me, you should act like Attadatta. You do not pay me homage by coming to see me. You pay me homage only by practising the Dhamma, I have taught you.'

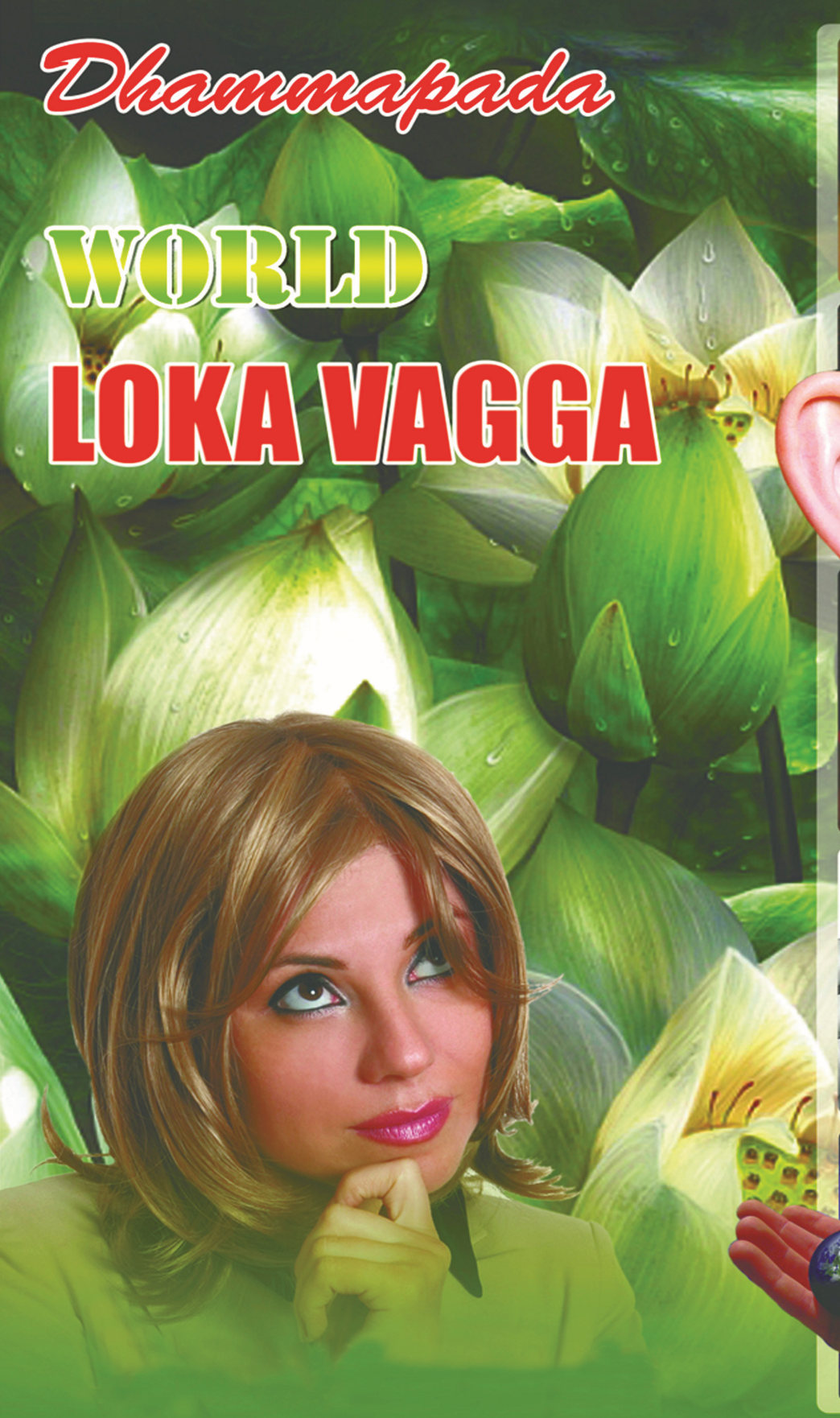
Note: The Buddha has very clearly pointed out that we should not neglect our own spiritual progress, in the course of many services that we render to others. One should be fully aware of one's own spiritual progress and promote his own higher goals. To do good for others is humanitarian and deserves praise. However, even for the sake of welfare of others, one should not give up the path of one's own spiritual upliftment. This means under no circumstances one should give up his meditational practices. One should strive for self-realisation, the supreme Nibbana. Otherwise his spiritual growth will suffer a set-back.


DHAMMAPADA
ATTA VAGGA

Dhammapada

WORLD

LOKA VAGGA



Chapter XIII

LOKA VAGGA

World

Index

LOKA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of a young monk	167.	Give up sensuality	63
2.	The Buddha visits Kapilavastu	168.	Who are happy?	65
3.	The Buddha visits Kapilavastu	169.	Be Righteous	67
4.	Story of meditation on mirage	170.	World is like a bubble	69
5.	Story of Prince Abhaya	171.	Don't get attracted to the world	71
6.	Story of monk Sammunjjani	172.	Who illumines the world?	73
7.	Story of Angulimala	173.	Erase evil by good	75
8.	Story of the weaver-girl	174.	Be clear sighted	77
9.	Story of thirty bhikkhus	175.	Seek escape from this world	79
10.	Story of Chincha Manavika	176.	Be not a liar	81
11.	Story of the almsgiving competition	177.	Why be stingy?	83
12.	Story of Kala, son of Anatha Pindika	178.	Work for Spiritual advancement	85

Verse 167: Hinaṃ dhammaṃ na seveyya, pamādena na saṃvase
Micchā diṭṭhiṃ na seveyya, na siyā loka vaḍḍhano.

Verse 167: Indulge not in base sensuality. Do not live heedlessly, nor have wrong views. Do not value worldly things. Thus, extend not the cycle of birth and death.

Give up sensuality
Story of a young monk

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a young and a senior monk came to the house of Visakha. After both of them had almsfood, the elder one went out to some other place, leaving behind the young novice. While Visakha's granddaughter was filtering some water in a pot for the young bhikkhu, she saw her reflection in water and laughed. Seeing her laughing, the bhikkhu also laughed. The girl became angry to see him laughing and asked, 'You shaven head! Why are you laughing at me?' The young bhikkhu retorted, 'You yourself are shaven head. Your parents are also shaven heads.' The young girl was very upset. She went weeping to her grandmother Visakha and complained to her. Visakha told the bhikkhu, 'Please do not get angry with my grand-daughter. She does not want to show disrespect to you. What she has said is true. A bhikkhu does have his head shaven and goes out for almsfood with a bowl in his hand.' The bhikkhu replied, 'What she said is true but why should she accuse me on that account?' At that time, the senior monk arrived. He and Visakha both tried to pacify the bhikkhu and the girl but they failed.

Soon after this, the Buddha arrived and learnt about the misunderstanding between the young monk and the girl. He knew that it was time for the young monk to attain Srotappan stage. Therefore, he spoke to Visakha, 'Is it proper for your grand-daughter to address my son as a shaven head just because he has his head shaven? He got his head shaven only to enter the Sangha.' Hearing this, the bhikkhu was softened. He paid regards to the Buddha and said, 'Sir! You only understand me. My teacher and this grand-mother also do not understand me.' Finding him in responsive mood, the Buddha further added, **'It is dishonourable to enjoy with sensual desires. It is not desirable to have base thoughts.'**

Note: Sensualities, laziness and mis-conceptions lead one to degradation. In this process one gets far away from the path of truth and gets caught in the cycle of births and deaths. Resultantly one's sufferings do not end. Therefore, the Compassionate One advises, 'Let not your mind be in the grip of sensual desires, laziness and mis-conceptions.'

Verse 168: Uttiṭṭhe nappamajjeyya, dhammaṃ sucaritaṃ care
Dhamma cari sukhaṃ seti, asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.

Verse 168: Arise, awake and follow the Dhamma perfectly. Live not heedlessly. The virtuous man is happy in this world as well as in the next.

Who are happy?
The Buddha visits Kapilavastu

Place: Nigrodharama, Kapilavastu

When Prince Siddhartha left his palace, he had taken a vow that he would not return to the city of Kapilavastu, till he attained Enlightenment. Subsequently, he attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, by the side of river Niranjana at Bodhgaya.

When he reached Kapilavastu, he stayed at the Nigrodharama monastery. His kinsmen came to meet and greet him. In order to break their pride, the Buddha through his supernatural power, made a passage of jewels in the sky and walked up and down, teaching the Dhamma. Everyone including the king was filled with faith and all paid reverence to him. Then there was heavy rainfall, which became the subject matter of talk amongst the bhikkhus and laymen. The Buddha clarified, 'Bhikkhus! This is not the first time when there has been such a rainfall on my kinsfolk. It has happened in the past as well.' Then he narrated the story from the Vessantara Jataka. Having heard the Dhamma, the kinsfolk departed. Nobody invited the Buddha for almsfood. The king also thought, 'where will my son go, if he will not come to my house'. He did not invite him for almsfood, although he asked his men to make arrangements for the food the next day.

Next day, the Buddha entered the city for almsfood. He reasoned to himself, 'Did the Buddhas of the past, on entering the cities of their fathers, straightway go towards their kinsfolk or they moved from door to door for almsfood?' Realising that they went from door to door, the Buddha also started for the almsfood from door to door along the streets of Kapilavastu.

The news 'the Prince is moving from door to door for alms' spread in the whole city like wildfire. They had not thought, not even in dreams that the Prince would be moving from door to door with a begging bowl. Today, they felt that the Prince was like one of them. Their curiosity and surprise was touching the sky. The whole city ran to see the Buddha on almsround and started following him.

Verse 169: Dhammaṃ care sucaritaṃ, na naṃ duccaritaṃ care
Dhamma cāri sukhaṃ seti, asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.

Verse 169: Follow the Dhamma rightly and not wrongly. Such a man is happy in this world as well as in the next.

Be Righteous
The Buddha visits Kapilavastu

When the king heard how the prince was on almsround, wrathful sorrow drove away love from his heart. However, the father's anger could not live longer as the gentle eyes of the Buddha met the father's eyes and lingered in worship on his troubled brows and then they sank below with his knees to earth in proud humility. The king, however, composed himself and broke the silence, 'It is how this ends that great Siddhartha moves silently in his kingdom, going from door to door with begging bowl. Son! Why is this? Why do you put me to shame?'

'My father!' came, the reply, 'It is the custom of my race.' 'Your race?' the king questioned, 'I can count one hundred thrones from the Maha Samrat and nobody did like this.' 'Not of a mortal line,' the Teacher said, 'I have spoken only about the Buddhas who have been and who shall be. I am one of them who offers the first fruit of the treasure, he has brought. I offer it to you to repay for all the tender debts owed by me.' The king enquired, 'What treasure?' Then the Teacher took the royal palm and while they paced through the worshipping streets, the Buddha told the things which make for peace and purity. He told about the four Noble Truths and the Eight Right Rules following which each shall reach the Nirvana. At one place, the Buddha advised the king, **'Be not unmindful. Lead a righteous life. The righteous live happily in this life as well as in the next.'**

Hearing this, the king attained Srotappan stage. Later on, when the Buddha preached the Dhammapala Jataka, he attained Anagami fruition. And finally, at his death bed, he heard the Dhamma for the last time from the Buddha and attained Arahanthood. After experiencing the bliss for seven days, he passed away as a lay Arahat.

Verse 170: Yathā bubbulakaṃ passé, yathā passe maricikaṃ
Evaṃ lokaṃ avekkhantaṃ, maccu rājā na passati.

Verse 170: One who has correct vision sees this world as unreal as a bubble or as unreal as a mirage. He escapes the eyes of the king of Death.

World is like a bubble
Story of meditation on mirage

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, a large number of bhikkhus took a subject of meditation from the Buddha and went into the forest to practise meditation. They practised meditation but could not make much progress. So, they thought of taking some other subject of meditation from him and left the forest for returning back to the Jetavana monastery. While they were returning to see the Enlightened One, they saw a mirage on the way. A mirage is formed due to heat on a sandy surface and gives an illusion of the presence of water there. They continued their journey, while they contemplated on that. When they reached the monastery and were entering inside it, a great storm broke out and very soon it started raining heavily. As the big drops of rain fell on the ground, bubbles were formed and very soon they disappeared. The bhikkhus thought, 'Look at the bubble! How impermanent it is? The body of ours is perishable like these bubbles. Look at the mirage! What an illusion! If we look at the world in this way, even the king of death will not see us.' Thus they perceived the impermanent nature of component things (khandhas). The Buddha saw them from his perfumed chamber and sent forth his radiance, appeared in their vision and exhorted them to continue their meditation, as they were on the right path.

The monks subsequently attained Arahantship.

Verse 171: Etha passath' imaṃ lokaṃ, cittaṃ rāja rathūpamaṃ
Yattha bālā visidanti natthi saṅgo vijānataṃ.

Verse 171: Come! Look at this world! ; decorated beautifully, like a royal chariot where the unwise lose themselves and sink, but the wise, alert ones, feel no attraction.

Don't get attracted to the world
Story of Prince Abhaya

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

The story is that, once Prince Abhaya suppressed a rebellion at the border of the kingdom of Rajagriha. His father, King Bimbisara was so pleased that he was given the glory and honour to rule the kingdom for seven days along with a dancing girl to entertain him. The prince was so pleased with this that he remained confined to the palace for seven days, profusely lost in pleasure and majesty. On the eighth day, he went to the river and had bath. Having done so, he entered the pleasure garden and sat down to watch the dance of the girl. The girl was exhausted and as soon as she rose to dance, she had severe stroke and collapsed then and there.

Prince Abhaya was totally taken over by grief due to the death of this lady. He was so shocked and distressed that he did not know what to do to get over this tragedy. Sorrowfully he thought, 'There is none other than the Buddha who can extinguish the fire of sorrow in me.' So, he went to the Buddha with the prayer, 'Bhante! Please quench the fire of sorrow in me.' The Tathagata consoled him by saying, 'In the rounds of births and deaths in the past, this woman has died countless times in this manner and the amount of tear that you have shed for her cannot be measured.' Seeing that the prince was consoled, the Buddha further added, 'Prince! Do not grieve. Only immature people grieve themselves and sink in the ocean of grief, this world of component things.'

Note: According to the Buddha this so-called being is composed of five groups viz: Rupa matter, Vedana feeling, Sanna perception, Samkhara mental states, and Vinnana consciousness. These are five psycho-physical component parts that constitute an individual. Matter is composed of forces and qualities. Mind too is composed of mental states (cetasikas). They are fifty-two in number. Of them Vedana and Sanna are treated as two distinct groups. The remaining fifty are collectively called Samkhara.

Verse 172: Yo ca pubbe pamajjitvā, pacchā so nappamajjati
So imaṃ lokaṃ pabhāseti, abbhā mutto' va candimā.

Verse 172: One who was heedless earlier and had committed mistakes, has become heedful now and has purified himself. He shines like the moon freed from clouds.

Who illumines the world?
Story of monk Sammunjjani

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Sammunjjani spent most of his time in sweeping the monastery and keeping it clean. At that time, Venerable Revata was also staying in the monastery. He spent most of his time in deep meditation and contemplation. Seeing Revata's behaviour, Sammunjjani thought that monk Revata was only wasting away his time. Thus, one day, he went to Revata and told him, 'You are very lazy, living on the food offered by the devotees out of faith and generosity. Don't you think that you should sometimes sweep the floor of the monastery or some other place?' Revata replied, 'Friend! A bhikkhu should not spend all his time in sweeping. He should sweep early in the morning and then go out for almsround. After the meals, he should contemplate on the body and try to understand the true nature of the aggregates. Otherwise, he should study the scriptures; recite the suttas until the night-fall. Then he can do the sweeping again, if he wishes. Bhikkhu Sammunjjani strictly followed the advice given by Venerable Revata and soon attained Arahanthood.

Other bhikkhus saw that Sammunjjani was not sweeping as much as he used to do earlier. When bhikkhus asked him, Sammunjjani replied, 'When I was unmindful, I was sweeping all the time but now I am no longer unmindful.' When the bhikkhus heard this, they were doubtful. So, they went to the Buddha and said, 'Venerable Sir! Sammunjjani claims to be an Arahant.' The Buddha assured them that he had indeed attained Arahantship.

Verse 173: Yassa pāpaṃ kataṃ kammaṃ, kusalena pithiyati
So imaṃ lokaṃ pabhāseti, abbhā mutto' va candimā.

Verse 173: One, who reduces the effect of evil deeds done by him by the power of the virtuous deeds done by him, shines like the moon, when freed from the clouds.

Erase evil by good
Story of Angulimala

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Angulimala was the son of a Brahmin in the court of King Pasendi of Kosala. His original name was Ahimsaka. He was sent to Taxila for studies. He was liked by his teacher and his wife, as a result of which other pupil became jealous of him. So, they went to the teacher and falsely accused him of having an illicit affair with his wife. At first, the teacher did not believe them, but when told again and again, he thought it to be true and decided to take revenge. Killing him would reflect badly on him. So, he decided of a plan which was worse than the killing of the innocent pupil. He told Ahimsaka to kill one thousand men and bring right hand thumb from each as his fee for teaching him. Though he was greatly reluctant to do so, being an obedient pupil and very keen to learn, he started doing it. In order to keep a count of the number of men killed, he started wearing a garland of fingers. Because of this, he came to be known as 'Angulimala—one who wears a garland of fingers.' Angulimala became the terror of countryside. The king heard about his exploits and decided to capture him. When, Mantani, the mother of Angulimala heard about the intentions of the king, she went to the forest with a desperate bid to save her son. By this time, the garland around the neck of Angulimala had nine hundred and ninety-nine fingers, just one finger short of one thousand.

Early in the morning on that day, the Buddha saw him in his vision and reflected that if he did not intervene, Angulimala, who was on the lookout for the last person to make one thousand, would see his mother and might kill her. In that case, he would have to suffer in hell for even longer period. So, out of compassion, the Buddha left for the forest. When Angulimala saw the Buddha, he ran after him with knife raised. But the Buddha kept on moving ahead of him. Finally, he cried out, 'O Bhikkhu, Stop! Stop!' The Enlightened One replied, 'I have stopped. It is you, who have not stopped.' Angulimala could not understand the meaning. He asked, 'Why do you say that you have stopped while I have not?' The world Honoured replied, 'I say that I have stopped because I have given up killing, ill-treating all beings. I have established myself in universal love, patience and knowledge. But you have not given up killing and ill-treating others and you are not established in universal love and patience. Hence, you are the one who has not stopped.' Hearing this, Angulimala reflected, 'This bhikkhu is very wise, speaks truth and is brave too. He must be the Buddha himself. He must have come to show me the light.' Thinking so, he threw away his weapon, fell at his feet and prayed to the Buddha to admit him in the Sangha of the bhikkhus. The Buddha admitted him then and there. A new chapter started in the life of Angulimala.

Angulimala, while seeking alms in the streets, would become target of stones and return to the monastery, with broken head and flowing blood. The Buddha would console him, 'Son! Have patience. The ill effects of your evil karma will be over very soon. Your evil karma would have made you suffer for innumerable years in hell, had I not met you.'

One morning, during almsround, he heard the labour pain of a pregnant lady who was facing difficulty to deliver the child. He reflected, 'All worldly things are subject to suffering.' Moved by compassion, he reported this pathetic woman's suffering to the Buddha who advised him to recite the following words of truth, which later on came to be known as Angulimala Sutta. Going near the suffering woman, separated from her by a screen, he uttered these words, 'Sister, since the day I became an Arahant I have not consciously destroyed the life of any living being. By this truth, may you be well and may your unborn child be well!' The woman delivered the baby instantaneously with ease. This Sutta is still in practice with results, especially in Sri Lanka.

As he was an Arahant, on his death, Angulimala attained parinibbana. The bhikkhus were surprised. The Buddha clarified, 'Angulimala did a lot of evil deeds as he had no good friends. But later on, with the help of his good friends, he became mindful in the practice of the Dhamma. His evil deeds have been washed away by the good karma and his mind has become clear of all impurities.'

Verse 174: Andha bhūto ayaṃ loko, tanuk ettha vipassati
Sakunto jāla mutto va, appo saggāya gacchati.

Verse 174: Blind, is this world. Only few possess the clear vision. Hence the limited few go to the blissful state, like the few birds that escape from the fowler's net.

Be clear sighted
Story of the weaver-girl

Place: Alavi

One day, the Buddha gave a discourse at Alavi on the impermanent nature of life. He admonished, 'Practise meditation on death. Reflect mindfully: Uncertain is my life, certain, is my death. Certainly, one day I have to face death.' He also said, '**As one, who is armed with a stick or spear, is prepared to meet an enemy and some other poisonous and dangerous animals, so also, one who is ever mindful of death should face death mindfully.**' Many people could not understand the essence of the talk but a weaver-girl of sixteen years clearly understood the discourse.

One day, in his morning survey the Buddha saw the young weaver and that she was ripe to attain Srotappan stage. So, he came to Alavi for the second time to expound the Dhamma. When the girl heard that the Buddha had come, she wanted to go and listen to the religious discourse. However, her father had also asked her to wind some thread spools which he needed urgently. She promptly wound the spools and took them to her father. On the way, she stopped for a moment at the outer hinge of the audience, who had come to hear the Buddha. The Buddha looked at her. So, she kept the basket aside and approached the Enlightened One respectfully. The Buddha asked her four questions and she answered them all. (1) The Buddha: Wherefrom have you come? Girl: I do not know, Sir. (2) The Buddha: Where are you going? Girl: Sir, I do not know. (3) The Buddha: Don't you know? Girl: Yes, I know. (4) The Buddha: Do you know? Girl: I do not know, Sir.

Hearing her answers, the audience thought that she was very disrespectful to the Buddha. Then, the Buddha asked her to explain the meaning of her answers. She said, 'Venerable Sir! Since you knew that I was coming from my house, I took it that by your first question, you meant to ask me from what past existence I have come here, hence my answer, "I don't know." The second question meant where shall I go after my death and I said, "I do not know." The third question was whether I did not know that I shall die one day and hence my answer was, "Yes, I know." Through the last question you asked me if I knew when I shall die and hence my answer, "I do not know." The Buddha applauded her for her answers. At the end of the talk, she attained the first stage of Sainthood.

Then, she continued on her way to the weaving shed. When she reached there, her father was deep asleep. As he woke up suddenly, he pulled the shuttle which fell on the girl. She died on the spot and was reborn in the Tusita deva world. Her father was broken hearted and with eyes full of tears, he went to the Buddha and requested him to admit him in the Order. Thus, he became a bhikkhu and after sometime attained Arahanthood.

Verse 175: Haṃsādicca pathe yanti, ākāse yanti iddhiyā
Niyanti dhirā lokamhā, jetvā māraṃ savāhiniṃ.

Verse 175: Swans fly in the sky on the path of the sun. The sage moves in the air by his super-natural power. The wise persons go beyond the world, having conquered Mara and his forces.

Seek escape from this world
Story of thirty bhikkhus

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, thirty bhikkhus came to pay homage to the Buddha. When they came, Venerable Ananda was attending to the Enlightened One. On seeing them coming, he thought, 'I will wait outside till the Buddha has exchanged greetings with them.' Thinking so, he left the perfumed chamber and waited outside.

After exchanging greetings with them, the Buddha preached the Dhamma to them in a pleasant manner. After listening to the discourse, all the thirty bhikkhus attained Arahanthood. They left the place through the sky route.

After sometime, Ananda went inside and did not find any of the bhikkhus there. He asked the Buddha where they had all gone.The Buddha replied, 'All those bhikkhus have gone.' 'By what path did they go, Sir?' 'They went through the air, Ananda.' 'Venerable Sir! Have they all attained Arahanthood?' 'Yes Ananda! After hearing the Dhamma, they all have attained Arahanthood, with supernatural powers.'

At that moment, the Buddha saw some swans flying through the air. He commented, 'Ananda, those who have attained Sainthood, fly through the air like swans.'

Verse 176: Ekaṃ dhammaṃ atitassa, musāvādissa jantuno
Vitiṇṇa paralokassa, natthi pāpaṃ akāriyaṃ.

Verse 176: There is no evil that cannot be done by the liar. He throws the law of truthfulness to the winds. He believes not in the existence of the world beyond.

Be not a liar
Story of Chincha Manavika

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha's teachings were so useful, practical and effective that the number of his followers kept on going up and up. The ascetics of the other followings became jealous of the growing following of the Buddha. So, they decided to ruin his reputation. They instigated Chincha Manavika, one of their beautiful lady disciples, 'If you have our interest in heart, you must help us to ruin the reputation of the Buddha.' She agreed to be part of their conspiracy.

That same evening, she took some flowers and went towards the Jetavana monastery. When people asked her where she was going, she replied, 'What is the use of your knowing where I am going?' Then she would go to the place of the ascetics near the Jetavana monastery, stay there in the night and come back in the morning to appear as if she had spent night in the Jetavana monastery. When asked, she would reply, 'I spent the night with the Buddha in the monastery.' After three or four months, she wrapped some cloth round her stomach to appear that she was pregnant. After nine months, she created the impression that she was in advanced stage of pregnancy and one day went to Jetavana monastery to confront the Buddha in public.

The Buddha was then expounding the Dhamma to a group of bhikkhus and laymen. Seeing him preaching, she accused him, 'O big Samana! How clever you are in preaching others! I am pregnant from you but you are doing nothing for me. You only know how to enjoy yourself!' The Buddha stopped preaching for a while and told her, 'Sister, Only you and I know whether you are speaking the truth or not.' She replied, 'Yes, how can others know what only you and I have done?'

At that time, Sakka, the king of devas, became aware of the trouble going on at Jetavana monastery. So, he sent four of his devas, in the form of rats. They went inside her garments and bit off the strings that held the cloth around her belly. Thus, her deception was exposed and many from the crowd shouted, 'You wicked! Liar and cheat! How dare you accuse our noble Teacher?' Fearing for her life, she ran as fast as she could, fell down on the ground and died.

This lady was the subject of discussion in the evening congregation. The Buddha told the bhikkhus, **'One who is not afraid of telling lies, one who does not bother what happens in the future births, will not hesitate to do any evil.'**

He also added, 'In one of her past births, she was the chief queen of a king. She fell in love with the king's son but the prince did not reciprocate her love. She bruised her body by herself and falsely accused before the king that his son had bruised her body, when she did not approve his advances. Without investigating, the king banished the son from the kingdom. Later on, when he came to know the truth, he punished her for the mischievous act.

Verse 177: Na ve kadariyā devalokaṃ vajanti, Bālā have nappasaṃsanti dānaṃ Dhiro ca dānaṃ anumodamāno, Teneva so hoti sukhi parattha.

Verse 177: The misers never go to the world of gods. Fools do not praise giving of gifts and charities. The wise become happy hereafter by taking delight in giving.

Why be stingy?
Story of the almsgiving competition

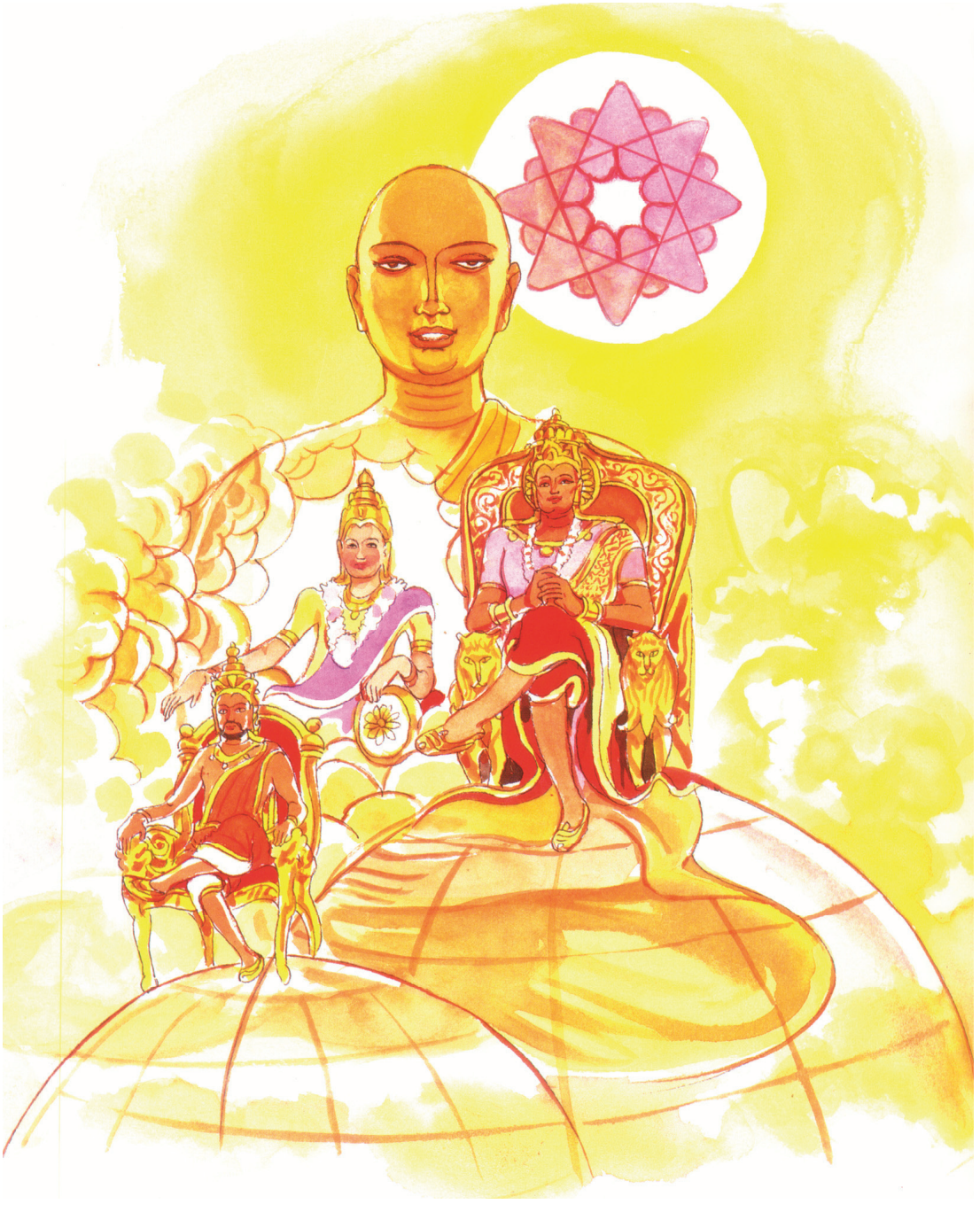
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, King Pasendi offered alms to the Buddha and the bhikkhus on a grand scale. His subjects, in competition with him, organised another almsgiving ceremony on a grander scale than the king. Thus the king and the subjects kept on competing with each other in almsgiving. Finally, queen Mallika thought of a plan. She used the services of hundred tame elephants, hundred white umbrellas and hundred princesses. These princesses served food to the bhikkhus. The citizens could not compete with the king on these counts. At that time, two ministers Junha and Kala of the king were present on the occasion. Junha was very happy that the king offered alms to the Buddha and the bhikkhus on a grand scale. He rejoiced with the king. Kala, on the other hand, felt that the king was just wasting away the money. He felt that the bhikkhus after their meal would just go back to the monastery and sleep.

After the meal, at the time for the appreciation, the Buddha saw how the two ministers felt about the ceremony and gave a short discourse. He knew that if he gave a long discourse, Kala would be more and more dissatisfied and thereby create evil karma for himself. So, out of compassion for Kala, the Buddha kept the talk short.

The king had expected a long sermon and was disappointed when he heard a short discourse. So, he went to the Buddha in the evening and asked him, 'Sir! Have I failed to do something which should have been done that you kept your talk short?' The Buddha replied, 'Great King! You should feel happy and satisfied that you have made an offering of a scale, which is made only once during the appearance of each Buddha. But your minister, Kala, did not appreciate it and felt that it was wastage of money. If I spoke longer, he would have been more dissatisfied and created evil karma for himself. Therefore, I deliberately kept the sermon short. He also added, **'Fools do not rejoice in charities given by others and go to the lower worlds. The wise rejoice in the charities of others. Through appreciation, they share the merit gained by the almsgivers. This helps them to go to the land of the devas.'** On returning back, the king called both the ministers and rewarded Junha to run the kingdom for seven days and expelled Kala from his kingdom.

In the evening congregation, some bhikkhus asked bhikkhu Angulimala, 'Did you feel scared when the rogue elephant stood by your side holding the umbrella over your head?' 'No friends.' Then they asked the Buddha, 'Is he not telling the lies?' The Buddha explained, 'No bhikkhus, he was not scared. The Arahants do not get scared.'



Verse 178: Pathavyā eka rajjena, saggassa gamanena vā
Sabba lokādhi paccena, sotāpattiphalaṃvaraṃ varam

Verse 178: Better than the absolute sovereignty over the earth, better than going to the heaven, better than even lordship over the worlds, is the Fruit of a Srotappan.

Work for Spiritual advancement
Story of Kala, son of Anatha Pindika

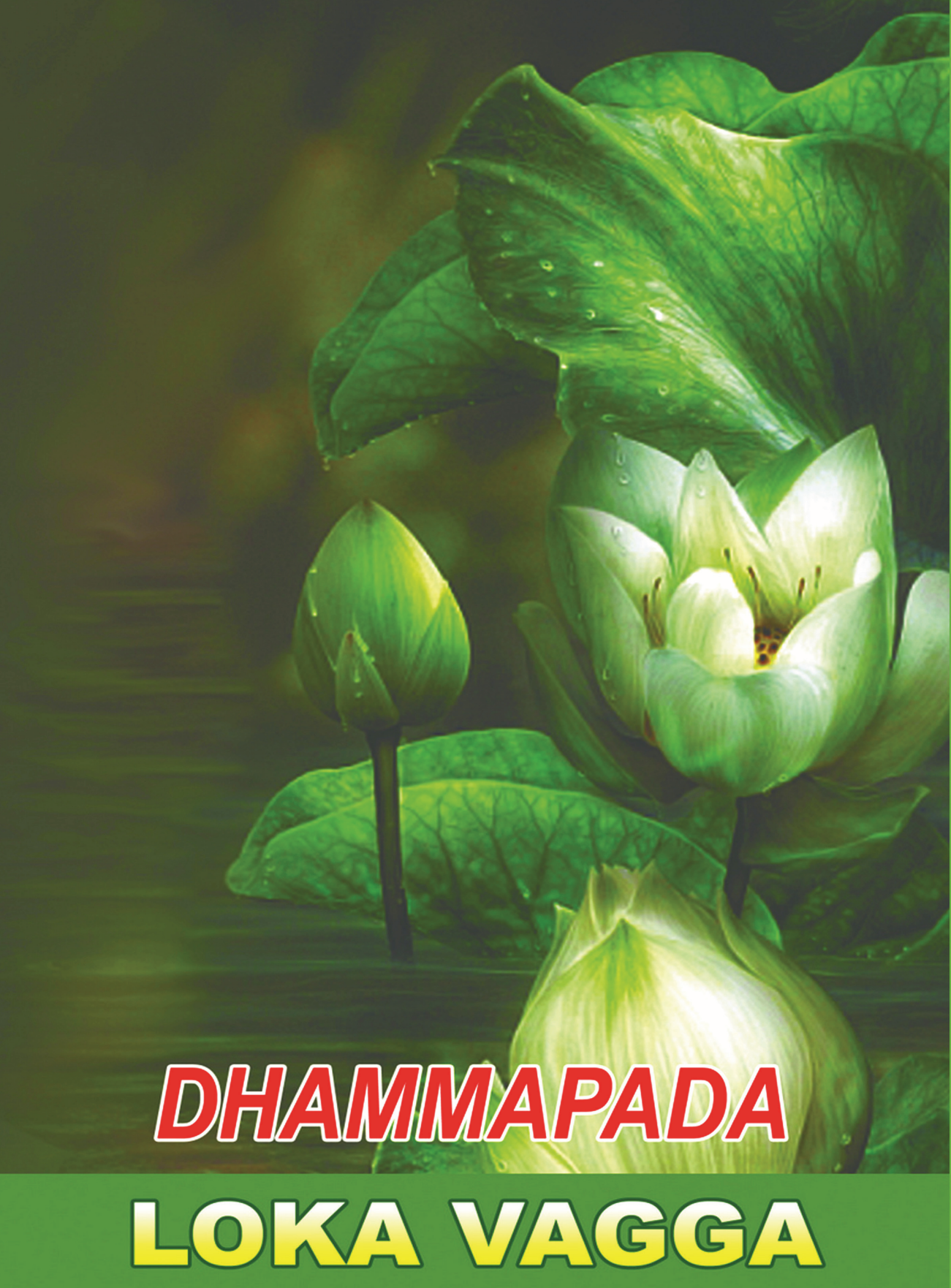
Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Kala, son of Anatha Pindika, always kept himself away from the Buddha and the bhikkhus, whenever they came to his house for almsgiving. Anatha Pindika was afraid that if his son kept on behaving like this, his future was doomed. He, therefore, offered his son a reward of money. He promised to give him some gold coins, if he went to the monastery and observed the moral precepts and the code of conduct for one day. So, out of greed for the gold coins, the young man went to the monastery and returned back the next morning. But he did not hear any religious talk there. On return, his father offered him the choicest food but he took it, only after he had received the gold coins from him.

Next day, the reward amount was enhanced and his father offered, 'Son, if you can recite one verse of the Buddha's teachings, then on return, I shall give you double the number of gold coins, I gave to you yesterday.' So, Kala went to the monastery again. The Buddha delivered a discourse but at the same time he willed that Kala should not be able to memorise it. He knew that Kala was interested in money only and not in learning the Dhamma. As he was not able to memorise it, Kala kept on repeating that verse again and again. In the process, he started understanding the meaning of the verse and attained the first stage of Sainthood.

Early next morning, he accompanied the Buddha and the bhikkhus to his own house. But he sincerely wished, 'I wish my father does not offer me money in the presence of the Buddha. I do not want that the Buddha should know that I observed the moral precepts for the sake of money.'

After the almsfood, Anatha Pindika offered the gold coins to his son but he refused to take them. Anatha Pindika was surprised and brought this to the notice of the Buddha, 'Sir! My son is a changed man. He behaves in a different way now.' Then, he told the entire story to the Buddha. To this, the Buddha replied, 'Anatha Pindika! Your son has realised the Dhamma, which is much better than the riches of the Universal Monarch or that of the devas or that of the Brahmas.'



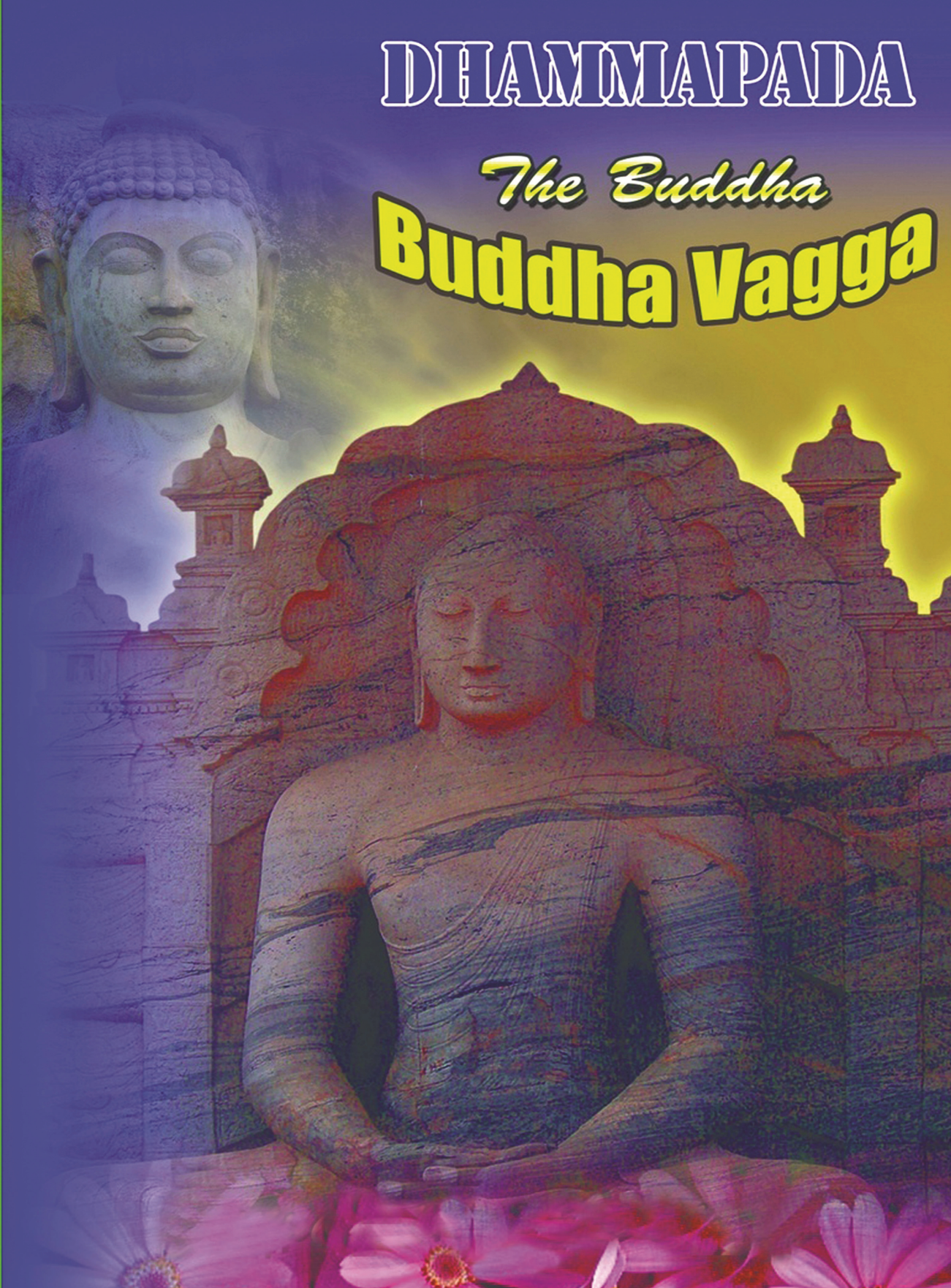
DHAMMAPADA

LOKA VAGGA

DHAMMAPADA

The Buddha

Buddha Vagga



Chapter XIV

BUDDHA VAGGA

The Buddha

Index

BUDDHA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of proposal of Magandiya	179.	The Buddhas are fathomless	91
2.	Story of proposal of Magandiya	180.	The Buddhas are perfect	93
3.	Buddha's return from Deva Loka	181.	All like the Buddhas	95
4.	Story of Erakapatta	182.	Be good to all	97
5.	Teaching of the Buddha	183.	Be good and do good	99
6.	Teaching of the Buddha	184.	Patience is the highest austerity	101
7.	Teaching of the Buddha	185.	Lead a pure life	103
8.	Story of a discontented bhikkhu	186.	Sensual pleasures are insatiable	105
9.	Story of a discontented bhikkhu	187.	Sensual pleasures cause suffering	107
10.	Story of Agnidatta	188.	Where to seek refuge?	109
11.	Story of Agnidatta	189.	Avoid superstition	111
12.	Story of Agnidatta	190.	Seek refuge in the Buddha	113
13.	Story of Agnidatta	191.	Seek refuge in the Dhamma	115
14.	Story of Agnidatta	192.	Seek refuge in the Sangha	117
15.	Story of the question of Ananda	193.	The wise are rare	119
16.	Story of many monks	194.	What is happiness?	121
17.	Story of stupas	195.	Honour who deserve honour	123
18.	Story of stupas	196.	Honour those above worldly life	125

Verse 179: Yassa jitaṃ n āvajiyati jitamassa no yāti koci loke
Taṃ Buddham ananta gocaraṃ, apadaṃ kena padena nessatha?

Verse 179: How will you point imperfection in the perfect, trackless Buddha of infinite range, whose self-victory can never be turned into defeat?

The Buddhas are fathomless
Story of proposal of Magandiya

Place: Bodhimandala

The Buddha spoke these verses, while residing near the Bodhi-tree, with reference to the three daughters of Mara. He repeated them to Magandiya also, a brahmin from the Kuru kingdom.

Magandiya, a brahmin, and his wife lived in Kuru kingdom with their beautiful daughter who was also named Magandiya. Her father turned down all the suitors for her marriage saying that they were not suitable for her.

One day, the Buddha in his morning survey found that Magandiya and his wife were likely to attain Anagami (third stage of Sainthood) state of fruition. The brahmin used to worship the fire god everyday outside his village. The Buddha reached there.

The brahmin, on seeing the majestic personality of the Buddha, thought, 'This is the best man I have ever seen in this world. I shall marry my daughter to him.' So, he told the Buddha, 'Sir! You are the most suitable person for my most beautiful daughter. I wish to marry her to you. Please wait here till I bring her.' The Buddha heard his words. He expressed neither approval, nor disapproval.

The brahmin got his daughter well dressed and reached the place where he had asked the Buddha to wait. The Buddha had meanwhile moved further, leaving his footprints there. The brahmin's wife asked him, 'Where is the man?' 'I told him to wait here.' Looking around, he saw the footprints and showed it to his wife. Brahmin's wife knew the meanings of the signs of footprints and replied, 'This is not the footprint of a worldly man.' 'You always see a crocodile in a drop of water. He accepted my proposal when I told him that I will give my daughter to you in marriage.' 'You may say what you want to say, but this is the print of a person who is free of lust.' Advancing a little, the brahmin saw the Buddha and approached him, 'Sir, I will give my daughter to you in marriage.'

Verse 180: Yassa jālini visattika, taṇhā natthi kuhiñci netave
Taṃ Buddham ananta gocaraṃ, apadaṃ kena padena nessatha?

Verse 180: How will you point imperfection in the perfect Buddha, who has conquered passions which cannot raise their heads any more and whom the net of desires cannot catch?

The Buddhas are perfect
Story of proposal of Magandiya

The Buddha instead of saying, 'I have no need for your daughter' said, 'Brahmin, I have something to tell you. Listen carefully.' Thereupon, he told him the story of his past life, starting from leaving the palace, the Great Renunciation. On that fateful night, Mara stood near the palace gate and told him, 'Siddhartha, return back your way. Seven days hence you will be the universal monarch.' The Buddha replied, 'I know that but I do not desire it.' 'Then what for you are renouncing the world?' 'That, I may know everything.' 'Well then, from today onwards if you think a lustful, evil or cruel thought , I know what to do to you.'

'From that day onwards, Mara has pursued me for last seven years looking for some opportunity to find fault in me but found none.' Then one day he was lamenting, 'I have found no flaw in him. He has now escaped from my net.' Now Mara's three daughters, Craving, Sex and Passion asked him, 'Father, why are you so depressed?' He told them the reason. They assured him, 'Be not disturbed. We will bring him under our control and fetch him here right now.' Then approaching the Buddha they said, 'We shall be your humble slaves.' He was sitting in meditation. The Buddha paid no attention to them. Neither did he open his eyes, nor did he look at them. They said to themselves, 'Men have various tastes. Some like maidens, others women of prime age, yet others cherish women who have reached mid-life, while others like women who have passed mid-life. We will tempt him in all forms.' Each took hundred female forms and told him, 'We shall be your humble slaves.'

Then the Buddha warned them, 'Depart. What do you see in me that you are striving thus? You may tempt those who are not released from lusts and other evil passions. The Tathagata has released himself from lusts and other evil passions. Why do you try to bring me in your control?'

After saying this, he added, 'Magandiya, When long ago, I saw these three daughters of Mara, possessed of bodies comparable to gold, free from bodily impurities, even then I had no desire for sensual pleasures. As compared to them, your daughter's body is a body filled with thirty-two impurities of the body as if it were a vessel filled with excreta, but painted beautifully outside. I have no interest to even touch the body filled with excreta.'

On hearing these words of the Buddha, both the brahmin and his wife understood the real nature of the human body and were established in the Dhamma. Later, they joined the Sangha and eventually both of them attained Sainthood. However, Magandiya, the daughter, felt insulted and vowed to take revenge from the Enlightened One.

Verse 181: Ye jhāna pasutā dhirā, nekkhammūpasame ratā
Devā pi tesaṃ pihayanti, sambuddhānaṃ satimataṃ.

Verse 181: The wise ones, who are deep in meditation and get delight in the calmness of renunciation, such mindful and perfect Buddhas are held dear even by the gods.

All like the Buddhas
Buddha's return from Deva Loka

Place: Sankassanagar

On one occasion, some ascetics of the other religions at Sravasti challenged the Buddha. In response to their challenge, he performed the Twin Miracles. After this, he left for the Tavatimsa deva loka to teach the Abhidhamma for three months. His mother, who had been reborn in Tusita deva loka, went to the Tavatimsa deva loka for the purpose of hearing the Abhidhamma. As a result of listening to the Enlightened One, his mother attained the first stage of Sainthood along with a number of other devas and brahmas.

While the Buddha was away to the higher lokas, Sariputta spent the vassa at Sravasti. The Buddha had asked him to teach the Abhidhamma to the bhikkhus during his absence. Sariputta covered the entire Abhidhamma during the rainy season. Towards the end of the vassa, Moggallana went to the Tavatimsa deva loka to see the Buddha who told him that on the full moon day he would return to the human world to the city of Samkassa, where Sariputta was spending the rainy season.

On the night of the full moon day, during October-November, the Buddha returned to the city of Samkassa. His body was shining with six colours of rays. A large number of devas and Brahmas accompanied him while Sariputta received him with a big crowd. The congregation was wonder struck to see the magnificent glory and grandeur of the whole ceremony of the Buddha's return. Sariputta paid his homage to the Buddha and exclaimed, 'We have never seen or even imagined such magnificent and dazzling reception. Indeed, Venerable Sir, you are loved, liked and respected by the devas, Brahmas and men—all!' The World Teacher replied, 'My son Sariputta! The Buddhas who are endowed with the unique qualities are truly loved by the men and the devas alike.'

Verse 182: Kiccho manussa paṭilābho, kicchaṃ maccāna jivitaṃ
Kicchaṃ saddhamma savaṇaṃ, kiccho Buddhãnaṃ uppādo.

Verse 182: It is rare to be born as a human being. The life of mortals is hard. Rare is the opportunity to hear the Noble Teachings. Rare is the appearance of the Buddhas.

Be good to all
Story of Erakapatta

Place: Varanasi

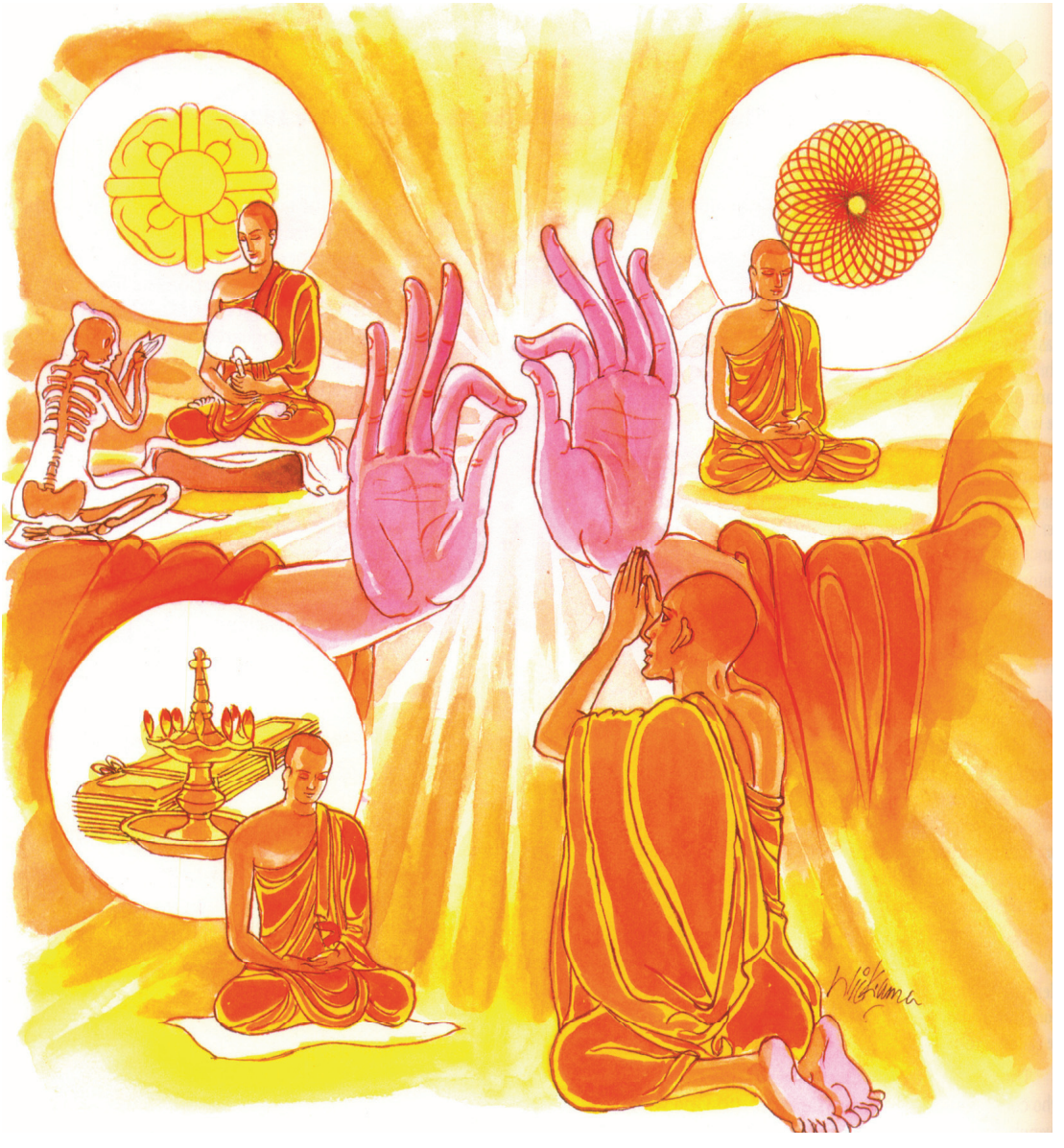
Once, there was a naga (serpent) king by the name of Erakapatta. He had been a bhikkhu during the days of Kassapa Buddha but because of his continuous and irrational regret over a misdeed he had done, he was reborn as a naga. He had a very beautiful daughter. As the nagas have the quality to transform into human form, the king declared that whosoever could answer his daughter's questions could take her as his wife. The daughter took the human form twice a month and danced in the open and sang out her questions. Many aspirants appeared before her and tried to answer her questions, but no one could give correct answers.

One day, the Buddha in his vision saw a young man Uttara and found that he would attain the first stage of Sainthood while going to answer the questions of the girl. By then, he was already on his way to the palace to see her. The Buddha stopped him on the way. He taught him the answers to the questions. On hearing them, Uttara attained the first stage of Sainthood. As a result, he had no desire for the naga princess. However, he still went to answer the questions for the benefit of others.

Qn: Who is a ruler? Ans: One who has controlled his six senses is a ruler. Qn: Is one who is overwhelmed by moral impurities to be called a ruler? Ans: No, one who is overwhelmed by moral impurities cannot be called a ruler. Only one who is free from selfishness is called a ruler. Qn: Which ruler is free from moral impurities? Ans: The ruler who is free from selfishness is free from the moral impurities. Qn: What type of person is to be called a fool? Ans: A person who hankers after sensual pleasures is called a fool.

Thereafter, the naga princess asked questions regarding floods of sensual desires, renewed existence, false doctrine and ignorance and how they could be overcome. Uttara gave correct answers to all these questions as taught by the Buddha.

When Erakapatta heard the answers, he knew that the Buddha had appeared on this earth. So, he requested Uttara to take him to the Enlightened One. On seeing him, he paid homage to the Buddha.The Buddha explained to him, 'Because of your continuous and irrational regret over a misdeed you had done, you are reborn as a naga. It is difficult to be born in the human form and to be born during the lifetime of the Buddhas or during the time of their Teachings.'



Verse 183: Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ, kusalassa upasampadā
Sacitta pariyodapanaṃ, etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.

Verse 183: Not to do any evil, to cultivate good and be virtuous, to purify one's mind, is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

Be good and do good
Teaching of the Buddha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these three verses at the Jetavana monastery with reference to the question raised by bhikkhu Ananda regarding the fundamental instructions given to the bhikkhus by the previous Buddhas.

It is said that one day, when Ananda sat in meditation he thought, 'The Buddha has told us about the parents of the seven Buddhas, their life span, the trees under which they got enlightenment, their company of disciples, their chief disciples and their principal supporters. The Buddha has described all this. But he has said nothing about their mode of observance of the day of fasting, whether the day of fasting was the same as now or was it different?' Accordingly, he approached the Buddha and asked him questions relating to it.

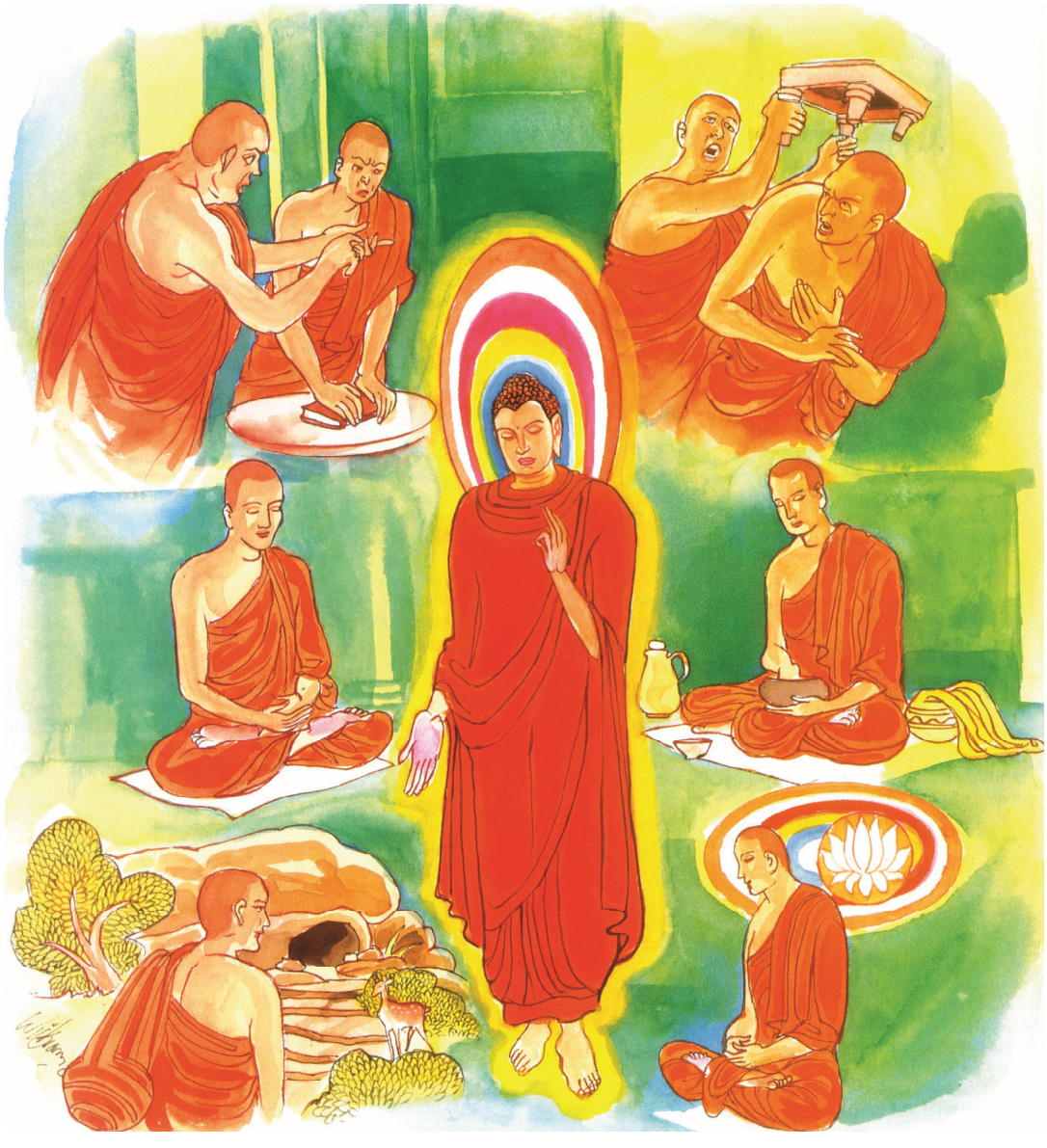
Verse 184: Khanti paramaṃ tapo titikkhā, Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ vadanti Buddhā
Na hi pabbajito parūpaghāti, Samaṇo hoti paraṃ viheṭhayanto.

Verse 184: Forbearing patience is the highest austerity. Nibbana is the supreme goal, say the Buddhas. One who oppresses or harms others is neither ordained nor a monk.

Patience is the highest austerity
Teaching of the Buddha

The Buddha explained that in the case of the different Buddhas while the periods were different the instructions given by all the Buddhas were the same.

The Supremely enlightened Venerable Vipassi Buddha kept fast-day every seven years, and the sermon he gave in one day was sufficient for seven years. Venerables Sikhi Buddha and Vessabhu Buddha kept fast day every six years. Venerables Kukusandha Buddha and Konagamana Buddha kept fast every year whereas Venerable Kassapa Buddha, Possessor of the ten forces, kept fast-day every six months.



Verse 185: Anūpavādo anūpaghāto, pātimokkhe ca saṃvaro
Mattaññutā ca bhattasmiṃ, panthañ ca sayanāsanaṃ
Adhicitte ca āyogo, etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.

Verse 185: Not to insult or blame, not to harm, to restrain oneself by observance of rules and vows of a Bhikkhu, to be moderate in food, to live in seclusion and to cultivate spirituality----this is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

Lead a pure life
Teaching of the Buddha

Thus the Buddha explained to Venerable Ananda that in the case of the different Buddhas the periods of fasting were different but the instructions given by all the Buddhas were the same.

After explaining this to Venerable Ananda the Buddha clarified that their observance of the fast-day was the same in every case.

Verse 186: Na kahāpaṇa vassena, titti kāmesu vijjati
Appassādā dukhā kāmā, iti viññāya paṇdito.

Verse 186: Not even the showering of gold coins can satisfy our appetite for sensual pleasures. Sensual pleasures give little pleasure and immense pain.

Sensual pleasures are insatiable
Story of a discontented bhikkhu

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a young bhikkhu staying at the Jetavana monastery was sent by his teacher to some other monastery to study the Dhamma. While he was away, his father fell seriously ill and died without seeing him. But his father left some money for him also with his younger son. On the return of the bhikkhu from the other monastery, his younger brother told him about the death of their father and the money left by him for both the sons, including the monk. At first, the monk told his brother that as a monk he had no use of the money. However, later on he thought that it was better for him to return to the life of a householder. As a result of this thinking he became unhappy, lost interest in life as a bhikkhu and started losing weight. When the other bhikkhus saw him thus, they persuaded him to meet the Enlightened One and seek his advice.

On meeting him, the unhappy bhikkhu told the Buddha, 'Venerable! I want to return to the life of a layman. With the money left by my father, I will be able to lead a comfortable life of a householder.' 'How big is your wealth,' the Buddha asked. 'I have hundred gold pieces, bhante.' 'Very well, just bring a few pebbles. We will count them and find out if you have enough money to earn your livelihood.'

Verse 187: Api dibbesu kāmesu, ratiṃ so n ādhigacchati
Taṇhakkhaya rato hoti, sammāsambuddhasāvako.

Verse 187: Knowing thus, the wise man does not find delight even in heavenly pleasures. The disciple of the Fully Enlightened One devotes himself to the destruction of the craving.

Sensual pleasures cause suffering
Story of a discontented bhikkhu

When the bhikkhu brought the pebbles, the Buddha showed him the calculation, 'Now, set aside fifty for food, twenty-four for two bullocks and an equal amount for seed, plough, spade etc. This count shows that hundred gold coins are not sufficient.' The Buddha further added, 'Bhikkhu, the gold coins which you have are only a few. How can you satisfy your desire with such small amount? In past times lived men, who exercised sway over universal monarchs, men who by waving of their arms, had rains of jewels, yet such kings also died without fulfilling their desires.'

The Buddha then related the story of Mandhatu, the Universal Monarch, who enjoyed the glory of the devas for a long time. After sometime, Mandhatu wished that he were the sole ruler of Tavatimsa Loka, instead of sharing it with Sakka. But this time his wish could not be fulfilled and he instantly became old and died soon after that.

After the admonition, the bhikkhu decided to remain in the Sangha and worked diligently for his Nirvana.

Verse 188: Bahuṃ ve saraṇaṃ yanti pabbatāni vanāni ca
Ārāma rukkha cetyāni, manussā bhaya tajjitā.

Verse 188: When threatened with danger, men go to the hills, forests, trees, gardens and shrines to seek refuge and to protect themselves from danger.

Where to seek refuge?
Story of Agnidatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Agnidatta was the head priest during the time of King Maha Kosala, father of King Pasendi. After the death of King Maha Kosala, Agnidatta gave up his property, left home and became ascetic. He lived with his followers near the border of the three kingdoms of Anga, Magadha and Kuru, not far away from the dwelling place of a powerful naga. To his followers and the people of these three kingdoms, Agnidatta used to exhort, 'Pay homage to the forests, mountains, parks, gardens and trees. By doing so, you will be liberated from all ills of life.'

One day, the Buddha saw Agnidatta and his followers in his divine vision and found that the time was ripe for them to attain Arahanthood. So, he asked Venerable Moggallana to go to Agnidatta and expound the Dhamma to him and his disciples. Before proceeding, Moggallana told the Buddha, 'Bhante, these monks are many in number. If I go alone, I am afraid that they will prove to be too powerful. But, if you also come, they will be manageable.' 'Moggallana, I will also come. But you go ahead. I shall follow you.'

Verse 189: Netaṃ kho saraṇaṃ kheṃaṃ, netaṃ saraṇam uttamaṃ
Netaṃ saraṇam āgamma, sabba dukkhā pamuccati.

Verse 189: But such a refuge is not a safe refuge, not the assured and the best refuge. One is not freed from the evil consequences of dukkha for having come to such a refuge.

Avoid superstition
Story of Agnidatta

As Moggallana proceeded, he thought, 'These monks are both powerful and numerous. If I tell them anything directly, they will all gather together and act against me.' Therefore, with his supernatural power, he caused some showers of rain to fall. 'Rains have come,' saying so, the monks went inside their huts. Then Moggallana went and stood outside the hut of Agnidatta and called out, 'Agnidatta!' When Agnidatta heard his name being called out by someone, he thought, 'There is none in this world who can dare to call me by my name. Who is he that addresses me by my name?' Agnidatta replied, full of pride, 'Who is that?' 'It is a brahmin.' 'What have you to say?' 'Show me a place here where I can spend one night.' 'There is no place for you to stay here.' 'Agnidatta, men go to the abode of men, cattle go to the abode of cattle and monks to the abode of monks. Is it not true? Give me a place to stay.' 'Are you a monk?' 'Yes, I am a monk.' 'If you are a monk, where is your alms bowl? What monastic utensils you have?' 'I have utensils but since it is inconvenient to carry them from one place to another, I procure them and then go my way.' 'So, you intend to procure them and then go your own way', said Agnidatta angrily to Moggallana. Moggallana replied, 'Agnidatta, do not be angry with me. Show me a place where I can spend the night.' 'There is no lodging place here.' 'Well, who lives on that pile of sand?' 'A certain naga–king lives there.' 'Give the pile of sand to me.' 'I cannot give you the pile of sand.' 'Never mind, give it to me.' 'Very well, you alone seem to know.'

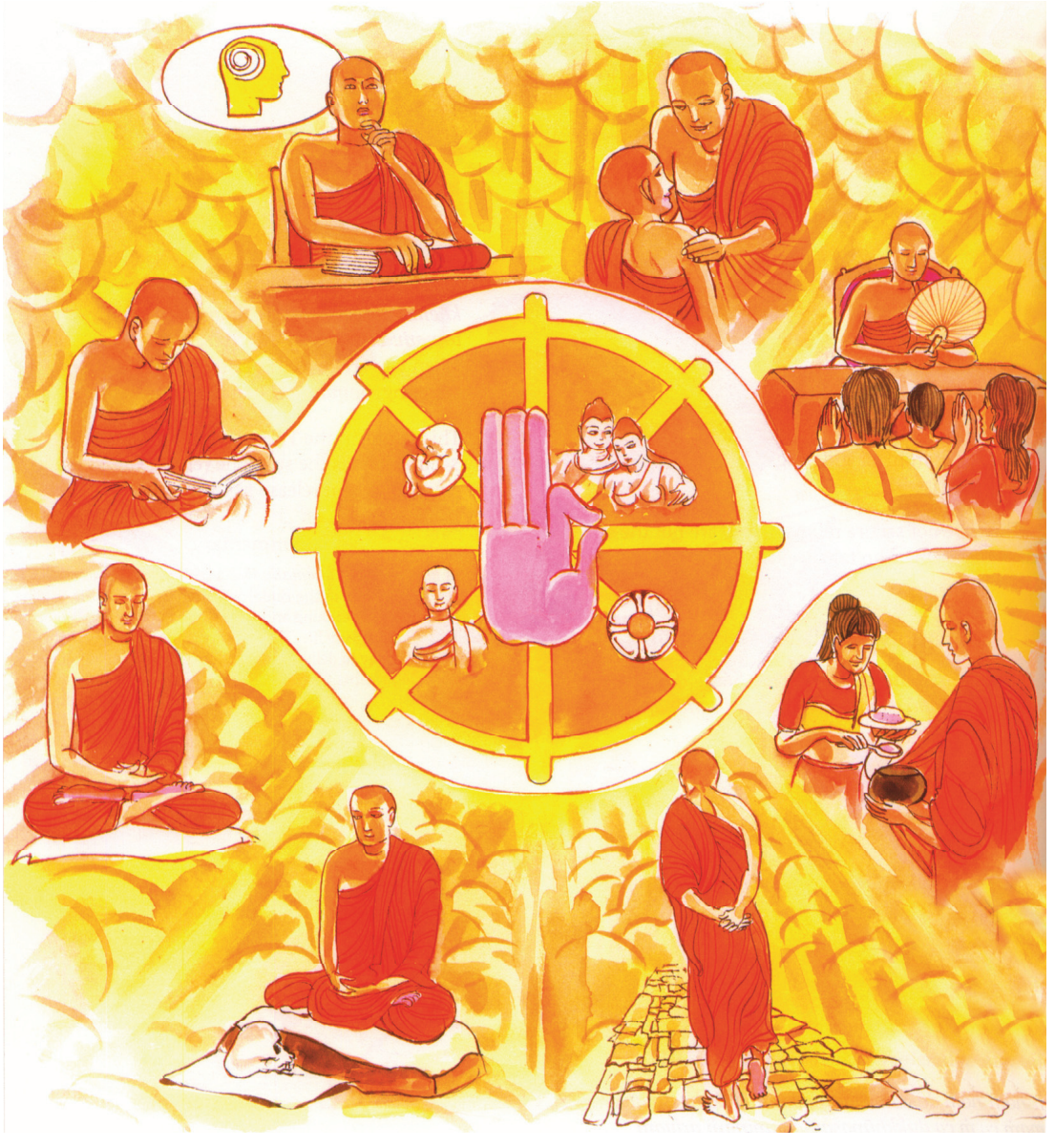
Verse 190: Yo ca Buddhañ ca Dhammañ ca, Saṅghañ ca saraṇaṃ gato
Cattāri ariya saccāni, sammappaññāya passati.

Verse 190: Whoever seeks refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha realises perfectly the four Noble Truths, through right wisdom.

Seek refuge in the Buddha
Story of Agnidatta

Moggallana started towards the pile of sand. When the naga-king saw him approaching, he was very hostile to him and thought, 'This monk is coming here. I am sure he does not know that I am here. I will spit fire at him and kill him.' Moggallana, on the other hand, thought, 'This naga-king doubtlessly thinks, "I alone can spit fire and smoke. Others cannot do this."' Thus there followed spitting of fire between the naga-king and the Chief Disciple. When naga-king spat fire, Moggallana also spat fire on the naga-king, many times more powerful than the fire spat by the naga-king. The puffs of smoke from the naga-king did not give any trouble to the monk, but it harmed the naga-king sorely. The naga-king burst into flames. At the end, the naga-king was subdued. The sages saw the fire and thought, 'The naga-king is burning the monk. The good monk has lost his life by not listening to us.' When Moggallana overpowered the naga-king, he sat on the sand pile. The naga-king coiled itself, created a hood and kept it over Moggallana's head like an umbrella.

Early morning, the sages went to the pile of sand to see whether Moggallana was alive or dead. They found that the naga-king had been subdued and was holding his head over Moggallana like an umbrella. The monk was sitting on the pile of sand. They were much astonished. They paid regards to Moggallana and said, 'Monk, the naga-king must have troubled you last night.' 'Do you see him standing with his hood raised over my head?' asked the monk.



Verse 191: Dukkhaṃ dukkha samuppādaṃ, dukkhassa ca atikkamaṃ
Ariyañca'ṭṭhaṅgikaṃ maggaṃ, dukkhūpasama gāminaṃ.

Verse 191: He sees the Four Noble Truths: Sorrow, the Cause of Sorrow, Getting rid of Sorrow and the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the Cessation of the Sorrow.

Seek refuge in the Dhamma
Story of Agnidatta

Then the ascetics said, 'What a wonderful thing this monk has done in conquering the powerful naga-king!' They all stood in reverence around Venerable Maha Moggallana.

At that time, the Buddha arrived at the scene. On seeing the Buddha coming, Moggallana rose from his seat and saluted him. Then the sages spoke to the monk, 'Is this man greater than you that you saluted him?' Moggallana replied, 'He is the Buddha. I am only his disciple.' The Buddha sat on the summit of the pile of sand. The company of sages talked amongst themselves, 'If this disciple has so much of supernatural power, how much power his Teacher will be having?' They bowed in reverence before the Buddha.

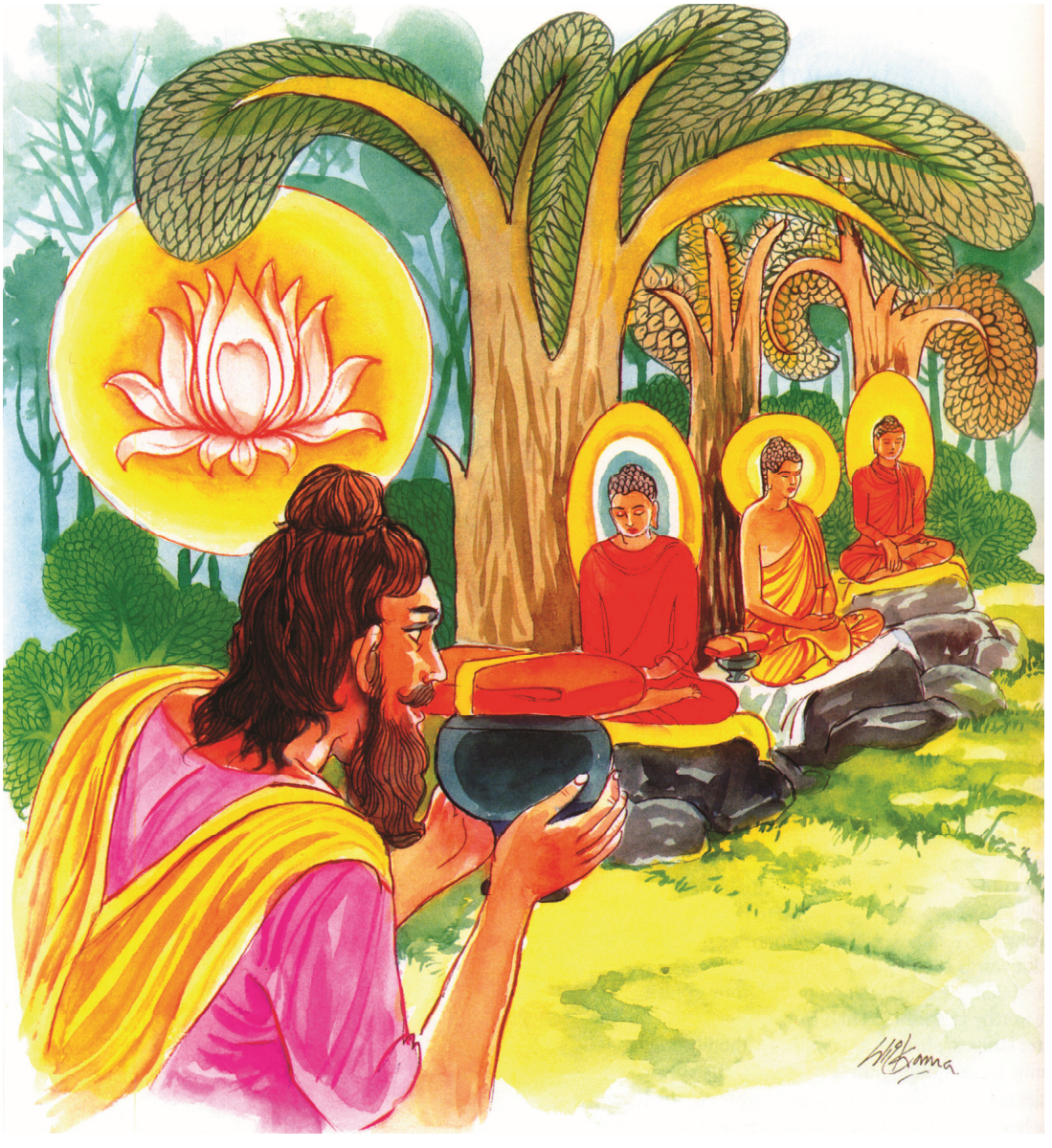
Then the Buddha asked Agnidatta, 'What do you tell your disciples?'Agnidatta replied, 'Sir, I tell them thus: Seek refuge in mountains, seek refuge in forests and trees. For he, who seeks refuge in these, obtains release from all sufferings.' The Buddha said, 'No, Agnidatta, One does not get rid from suffering by going to these places. But one who takes refuge in the Triple Gem (The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha) obtains release from the cycle of suffering.'

Verse 192: Etaṃ kho saraṇaṃ khemaṃ, etaṃ saraṇam uttamaṃ
Etaṃ saraṇam āgamma, sabba dukkhā pamuccati.

Verse 192: This indeed is the secured refuge. This indeed is the supreme refuge. By seeking such a refuge, one is released from all suffering.

Seek refuge in the Sangha
Story of Agnidatta

At the conclusion of the talk, all the sages attained Arahantship. They all saluted the Buddha and prayed for entry in the Sangha. The Buddha stretched out his hand from under his robe and said, 'Come monks! Lead the religious life.' Now this was the day when the disciples from Anga, Kuru and Magadha assembled to make offerings to Agnidatta and the sages. When they approached the sages, they found that all of them had been converted into monks and were dressed like the bhikkhus. They questioned to themselves, 'Who is greater? Agnidatta or the Buddha? Our teacher must be more powerful because the Gotama has come to our teacher.' The Buddha knew what was going on in their minds. Agnidatta also understood that he must set their minds at rest. So, he paid homage to the Buddha and told him, 'Sir! You are my teacher. I am only your disciple.' Thus the visitors came to know about the supremacy of the Buddha.



Verse 193: Dullabho purisājañño, na so sabbattha jāyati
Yattha so jāyati dhiro, taṃ kulaṃ sukha medhati.

Verse 193: It is hard to find a man of great wisdom. His birth is rare. He is not born everywhere. The family, where such a wise man is born, is blessed with happiness.

The wise are rare
Story of the question of Ananda

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse with reference to a question raised by bhikkhu Ananda about the birth of the noblest of men.

One day, Ananda thought so, 'The Enlightened One has told us that the best breeds of elephants are born only among Chaddanta and Uposatha breeds, that best of the horses are bred only among the Sindh breed, that the best of the cattle are born only among the Usabha breed. Thus, he has talked to us only about the best breeds of elephants, horses and cattle, but not of the noblest of men.' After pondering so, he went to the Buddha and asked him the question, 'Where are the noblest of men born, Sir?' The Buddha made him understand, 'The pure and the noble are not born in a particular family. The birth of the Buddha is rare indeed. However, when a noble man is born in a family, that family thrives happily.'

Verse 194: Sukho Buddhānaṃ uppādo, sukhā saddhamma desanā
Sukhā saṅghassa sāmaggi, samaggānaṃ tapo sukho.

Verse 194: Happy is the birth of the Buddhas. Happy is the teaching of the Dhamma. Happy is the unity of the Sangha. Happy indeed is the spiritual practice in harmony.

What is happiness?
Story of many monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse with reference to many monks as to what constitutes happiness.

Once, many monks were discussing the question, 'What constitutes happiness?' They found that happiness meant different things to different people. Thus, they came to the conclusion, 'To some people, acquisition of wealth and glory of the kings is happiness, to some other people having the sensual pleasures is the greatest happiness and to others happiness means having the food of rice cooked with meat.'

While they were thus talking, the Buddha arrived there. After learning about what they were talking, the Buddha said, 'The pleasures that you are talking about do not get you out of the cycles of birth and death. True happiness, in this world, constitutes in 'The arising of the Buddha, the opportunity to hear the teachings of the Dhamma and harmony amongst the bhikkhus.'

In other words, the arising of the Buddhas is joyful. The proclamation of the Dhamma is joyful. The harmony of the Sangha is joyful. Joyful indeed is the spiritual practice in harmony.

Verse 195: Pūjārahe pūjayato Buddhe yadi va sāvake
Papañca samatikkante tiṇṇa soka pariddave.

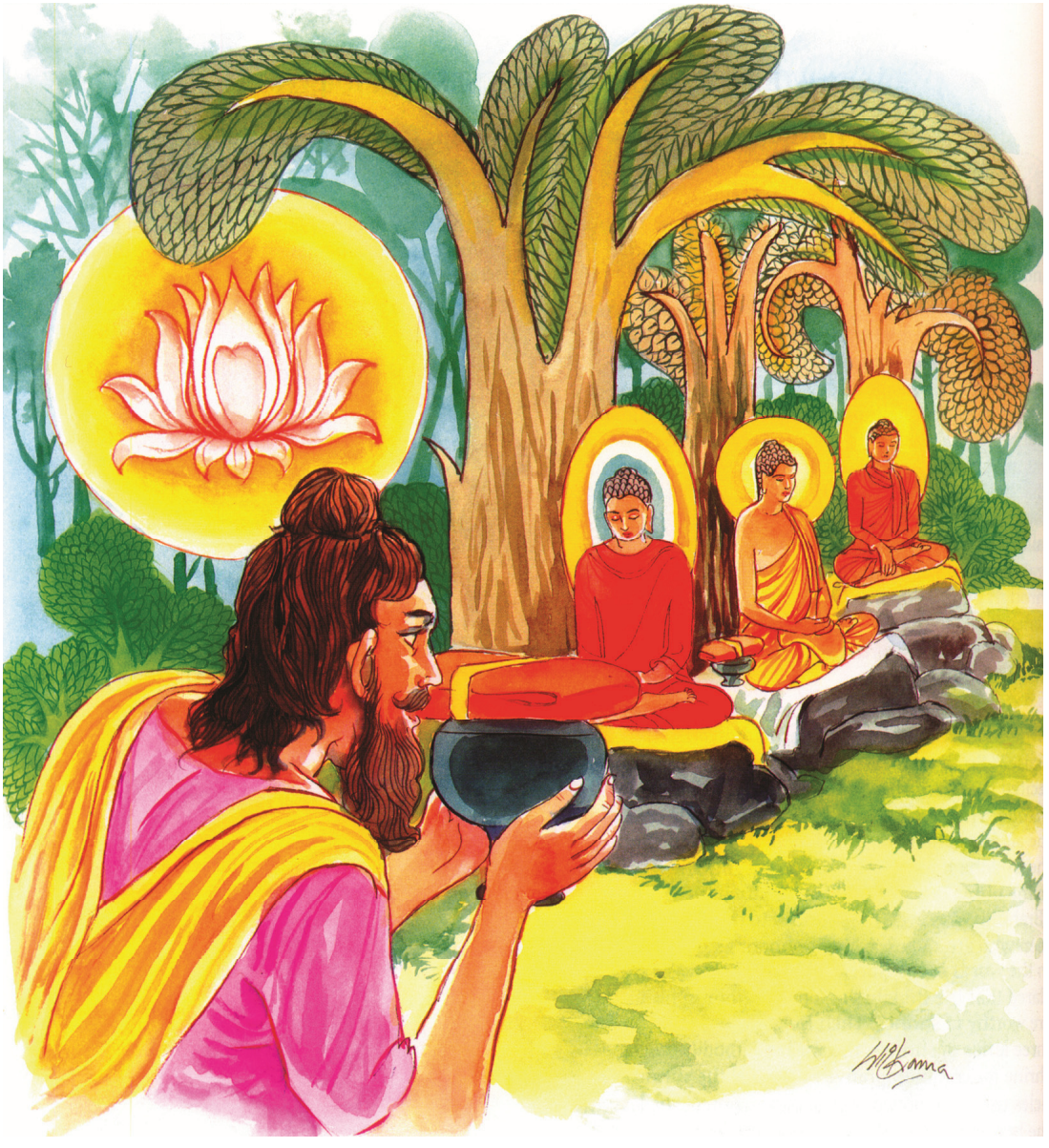
Verse 195: He who pays homage to those who deserve such homage, whether the Buddhas or their disciples, who has gone across the worldly life, who has crossed over suffering and grief…….

Honour who deserve honour
Story of stupas

Place: Todeyyagram

One day, the Buddha departed with a group of bhikkhus for Benaras. On the way, they reached a field in village Todeyya where a spirit shrine was located. Not far from the shrine, there was a brahmin farmer working in his agricultural field. The Buddha sat down under a tree and sent Venerable Ananda to call for the farmer. When the brahmin came, he paid respects to the shrine but not to the Buddha. The Buddha told him, 'Brahmin, in saluting the shrine you have done well.' That made him happy. After the farmer was put in a proper frame of mind, the Buddha formed a golden stupa of Kassapa Buddha, through his supernatural power, and let it be visible in the sky.

Then the Buddha explained to the farmer and the bhikkhus, 'There are four classes of persons worthy of a stupa. They are: the Buddhas, Pachcheka Buddhas, Ariya disciples and the Universal Monarchs.



Verse 196: Te tādise pūjayato nibbūte akutobhaye
Na sakkā puññaṃ saṅkhatuṃ im ettamiti kena ci.

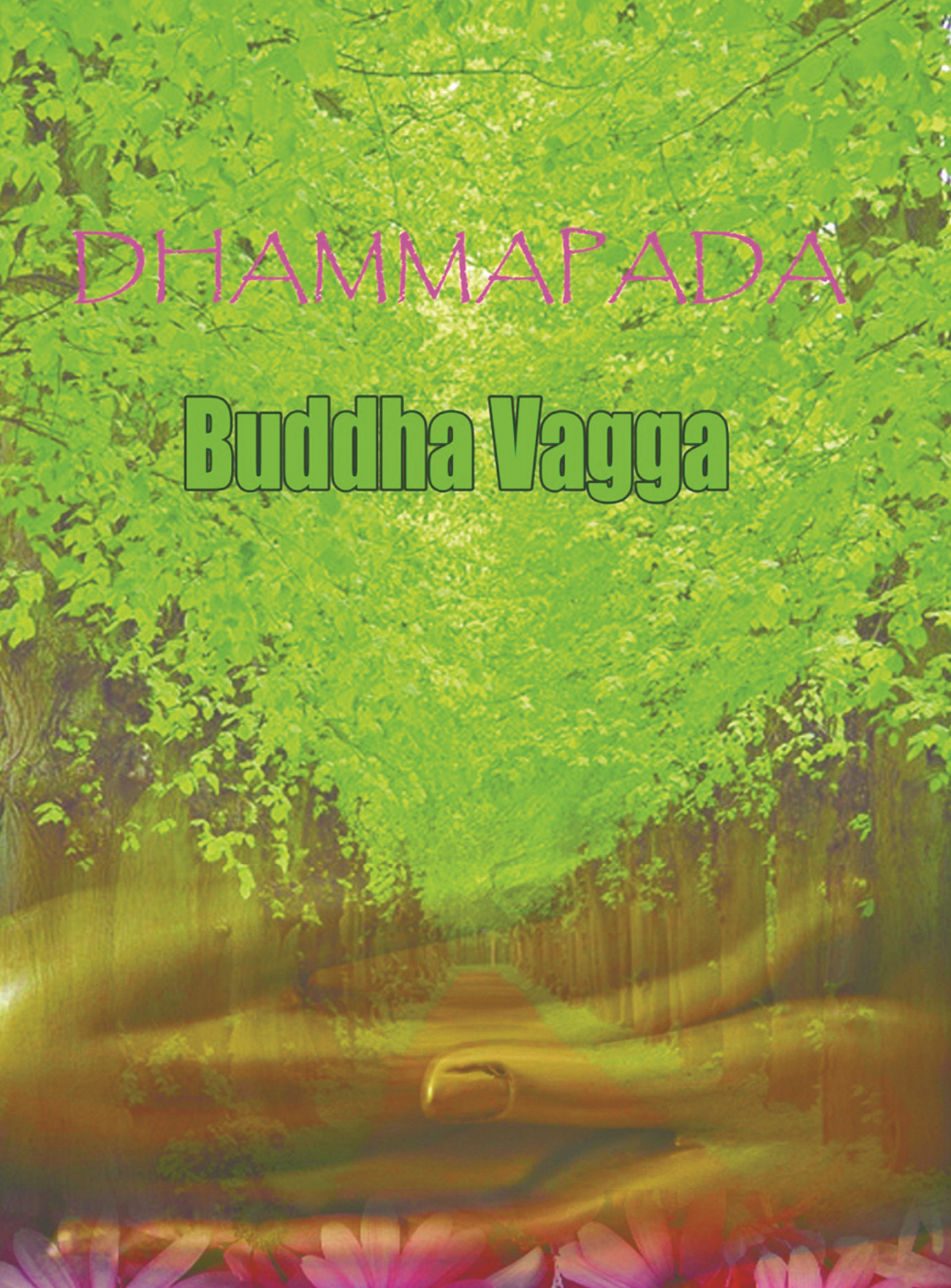
Verse 196: …….the merit of him, who reveres such peaceful and fearless ones, cannot be measured by anyone, as such and such.

Honour those above worldly life
Story of stupas

The Buddha also told them about the three types of stupas erected in honour of them.

The stupas, known as Sarira Dhatu Cetiya, are those where physical relics are enshrined. The stupas and figures, known as Uddissa Cetiya, are made in the likeness of the above four personages. The stupas, known as Paribhoga Cetiya, are those where personal effects like, robes, bowls etc. of those revered personages are enshrined. The Bodhi tree is also included in it. The Buddha then explained the importance of paying homage to those who are worthy of homage.

At the end of the discourse, the farmer attained the first stage of Saint-hood. The stupa of Kassapa Buddha remained visible to the public for seven more days. People kept on coming to the stupa to pay their homage. At the end of seven days, the stupa vanished. It was replaced by a big stone stupa.


DHAMMAPADA
Buddha Vagga

DHAMMAPADA

Happiness

Sukha Vagga

Chapter XV

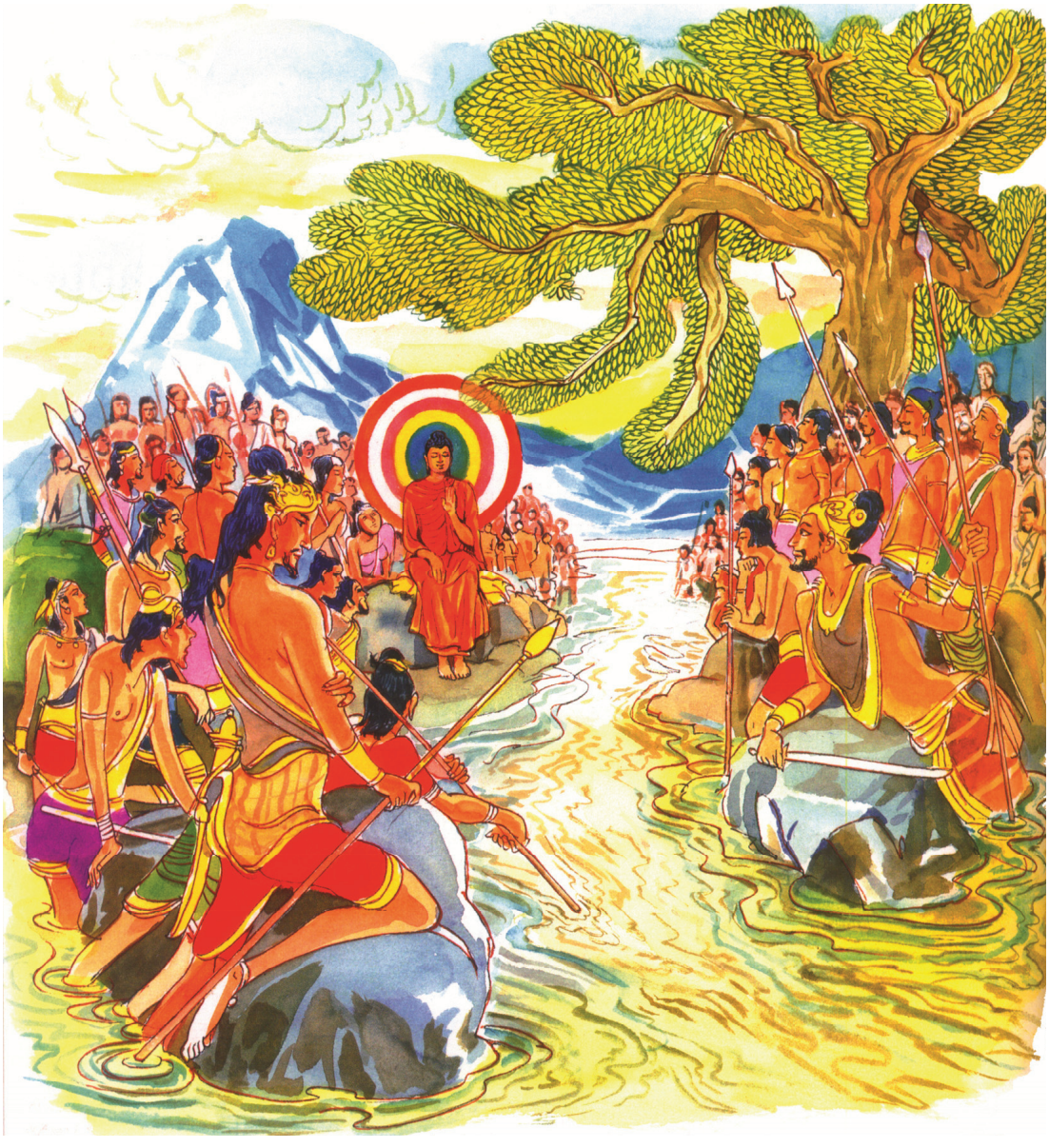
SUKHA VAGGA

Happiness

Index

SUKHA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of the relatives of the Buddha	197.	Live without hate	131
2.	Story of the relatives of the Buddha	198.	Live without sin	133
3.	Story of the relatives of the Buddha	199.	Live without passion	135
4.	Story of Mara inciting against the Buddha	200.	Have no impediments	137
5.	Story of the defeat of King Pasendi	201.	Victory breeds hatred	139
6.	Story of a young bride	202.	Beware of the fire of lust	141
7.	The Buddha and the hungry man	203.	Hunger: The greatest suffering	143
8.	Be moderate in eating	204.	Health is wealth	145
9.	Story of bhikkhu Tissa	205.	Taste the flavour of truth	147
10.	Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha	206.	Be with the noble	149
11.	Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha	207.	Don’t be with the fools	151
12.	Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha	208.	Be with the wise and the virtuous	153



Verse 197: Susukhaṃ vata jivāma verinesu averino
Verinesu manussesu viharāma averino.

Verse 197: Verily, we live happily amongst the hateful as we have no hatred towards them. Amongst the hateful men, we live without hatred.

Live without hate
Story of the relatives of the Buddha

Place: Bank of River Rohini

The Buddha spoke these three verses in the country of the Sakyas to pacify the kingdoms of Sakyas and Koliyas who were fighting over the distribution of water of the river Rohini.

Kapilavastu, the capital town of the Sakyas, and Koliya, the capital town of the Koliyans, were situated on either side of the river Rohini. The farmers of both sides irrigated their fields from this river. One year, there was severe drought. As a result, paddy and other crops on both sides of the river were getting dried up in the months of May and June. The farmers from both sides wanted to divert water from the river Rohini to their fields. The farmers and the labourers of both sides assembled near the dam. The residents of Koliya said, 'If the water of this river is distributed to both the sides, then there will not be enough water for both sides. But our crops will brighten up with only one watering. Therefore, allow us to irrigate our fields.'

The Sakyas retorted, 'With your single watering, you will have enough food; your godowns will be filled up and we shall be compelled to move from door to door in your kingdom with begging bowls in our hands and pockets filled with gold coins, asking for foodgrains. Our crops will also brighten up with a single watering. Therefore, we will not give you water. We shall take it for ourselves.' 'We will not give you water.' 'Neither shall we allow you to take it.' The language started becoming bitter and bitter until one man rose and gave a blow to a man from the opposite camp. The other returned the blow more forcefully. Thus what had started as a mere argument, turned into a general fight between the two sides. With the exchange of blows also started the casting of aspersions on the royal families of both sides.

Verse 198: Susukhaṃ vata jivāma āturesu anāturā
Āturesu manussesu viharāma anāturā.

Verse 198: Verily, we live happily without disease amongst the sick. Amongst the sick men we live in good health.

Live without sin
Story of the relatives of the Buddha

The labourers of Koliyas said, 'You people of Kapilvastu go away to your original homes along with your children and families. What harm you people can do to us, with your elephants and horses, shields and weapons, who have cohabited with your own sisters, like dogs and jackals?' When the quarrel further flared up, both sides reported the matter to their ministers, who were incharge of this work. The ministers, in turn, reported the matter to the royal household and the king. Thereupon, both sides came out with their Chief of Army. The Sakyans, who were ready to fight it out in battle, cried out, 'Come out Koliyas! We will show you the strength of those who have cohabited with their sisters.' Likewise, Koliyas also came out, prepared to fight the war and cried out, 'We will show you the strength and power of those people who have lived on the trees.' And thus, both sides were on the verge of starting the war.

The Buddha, as usual, surveyed the world at dawn and found that his relatives on both sides of the river were prepared for the war and that it had reached the flashpoint. He thought, 'If I do not intervene, these two groups of my relatives are going to fight a war and in the process will destroy themselves. Therefore, it is definitely my duty to avert the war. I must go there personally and stop them.'

Accordingly, for their well being and happiness and to avoid unnecessary suffering, he flew up all alone in the air and arrived where his relatives had assembled for the war. He seated himself cross-legged in the mid-air over the middle of the river Rohini. When his relations saw him, they threw away their weapons and saluted him. Then the Buddha addressed his kinsmen, 'What is the quarrel about, great kings?' 'We do not know, Sir.' 'Who can tell us the reason?' 'The Commander-in-Chief of the army may be, knowing.' But the Commander-in-Chief said, 'The Viceroy may be, knowing.' Thus the Buddha asked this question to various authorities one by one and none of them could give him the answer. Then, he put this question before the labourers. They clarified, 'The quarrel is about the distribution of water of river Rohini.'

Verse 199: Susukhaṃ vata jivāma ussukesu anussukā
Ussukesu manussesu viharāma anussukā.

Verse 199: Verily, we live happily, without seeking sensual pleasures, amongst men seeking sensual pleasures. Amongst those who seek sensual pleasures, we live happily.

Live without passion
Story of the relatives of the Buddha

Then the Buddha asked the kings, 'What is the value of water, great kings?' 'It is of little value.' 'What is the worth of men, great kings? What is the value of their blood?' 'Men and the blood are beyond any price, Sir.' 'Is it then proper that for some water, which is of no value, you are ready to sacrifice the lives of your men which are priceless? Is it proper for you to flow the river of blood for the sake of water of the river?' The kings had no answer to this question. They remained dumbstruck.

Then, the Buddha addressed them thus, 'Great Kings! Why did you behave in this immature way? Why have you taken this unwholesome course of action? If I had not come here today, this river would have been flowing with blood like water by now. You have acted in a foolish manner totally unbecoming of a king. You live your life full of selfishness and enmity. I don't strive for the development of selfishness. You are ailing from moral defilements but I am free from moral defilements. You indulge in all the five kinds of hatred. I do not live with hatred. I live without it. You live with sickness of evil passions. I live free of this disease of evil passions. I live free from the eager pursuit of anything.' Both sides then felt ashamed of their foolishness and thus bloodshed was averted.

Verse 200: Susukhaṃ vata jivāma yesaṃ no natthi kiñcanaṃ
Piti bhakkhā bhavissāma devā ābhassarā yathā.

Verse 200: Verily, we live happily as we have no obstacles. Like the Abhassara Brahmas we shall live on joy (piti) as our food.

Have no impediments
Story of Mara inciting against the Buddha

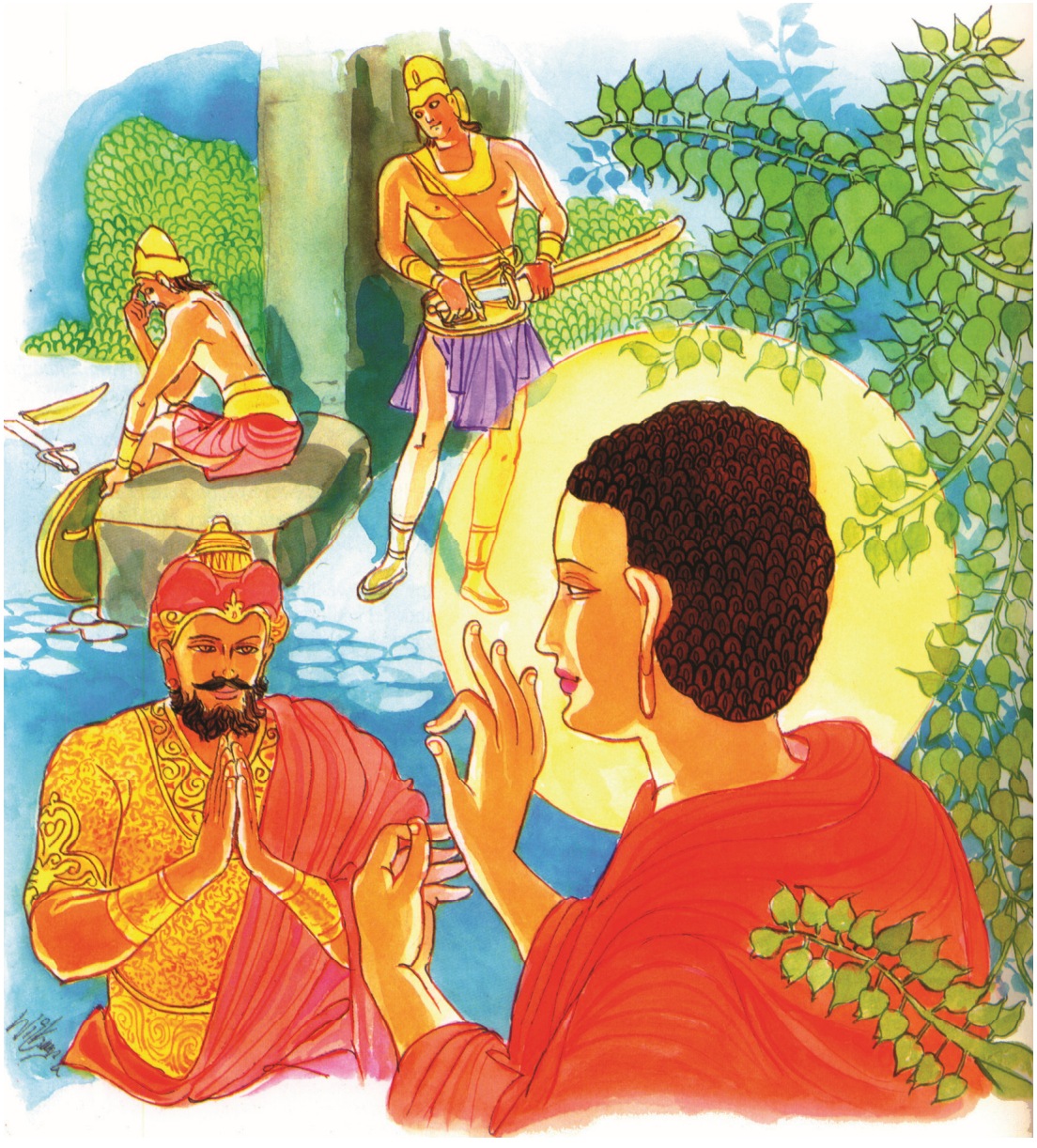
Place: Panchashala Brahmingram

On one occasion, the Buddha in his morning survey found that a large number of maidens of village Panchashala were likely to attain first stage of Sainthood. So, he went to stay near that village.

One day, after the bath in the riverside, the maidens returned to their village. Around the same time, the Buddha also entered the village for the almsfood, but due to the evil influence of Mara, none of the villagers offered him almsfood. On his return, the Buddha met Mara who promptly asked him if he had received enough almsfood. The Buddha knew that Mara had influenced the villagers not to offer any almsfood to him. So, the Buddha told him, 'O evil Mara! By committing this misdeed, you have acted very foolishly.' Mara did not say anything to the Buddha. But within himself he thought that it will be fun if he could persuade the Buddha to go back to the village again and make the villagers insult him by making fun of him. 'You must be feeling hungry. Return to the village. This time you will be offered almsfood,' said Mara.

Just at that time when Mara was talking to the Buddha, the maidens from the village arrived and paid homage to the Buddha. In their presence, Mara taunted him, 'O Gautama! Since you were not offered almsfood this morning, you must be feeling the pain of hunger.'

The Buddha replied, 'O Mara, even though we don't get any food, we shall live on the delightful satisfaction and bliss of the Dhamma, like the Abhassara Brahmas who live only on the delightful satisfaction (piti) and the bliss (sukha) of jhana.'



Verse 201: Jayaṃ veraṃ pasavati dukkhaṃ seti parājito
Upasanto sukhaṃ seti hitvā jaya parājayaṃ.

Verse 201: Victory gives rise to hate. The defeated one lives in pain. The victor lives in the fear of defeat in future. The peaceful ones, on the other hand, live happily, beyond both victory and defeat.

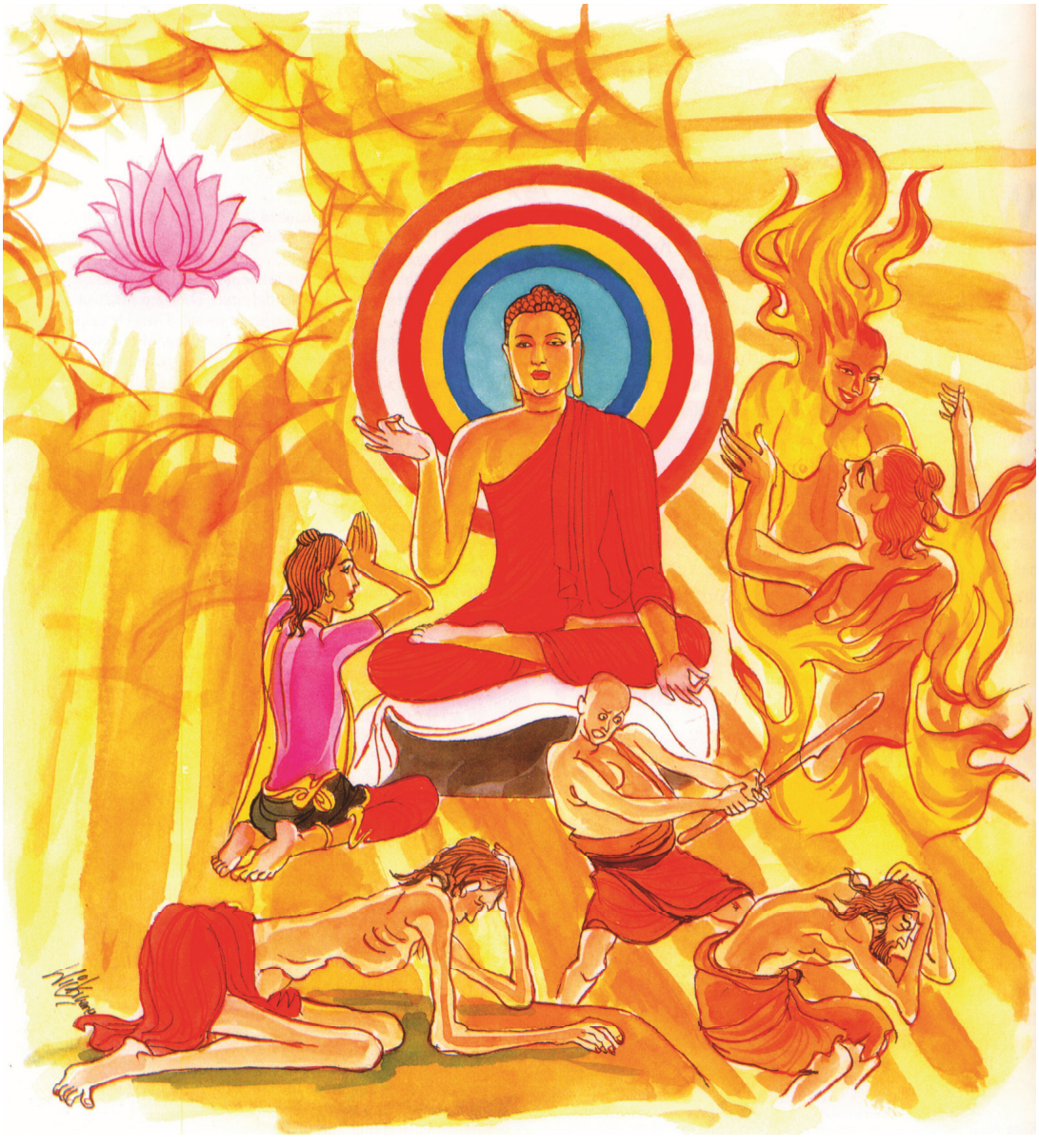
Victory breeds hatred
Story of the defeat of King Pasendi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Ajatasatru, son of King Bimbisara of Magadha defeated Pasendi, King of Kosala three times. Queen Vadehi, sister of Pasendi, was married to King Bimbisara, father of Ajatasatru. Thus Ajatasatru was his nephew. The King of Kosala was ashamed and greatly depressed over his defeat from a nephew much younger in age and lamented, 'What a shame on me! I cannot conquer even a boy who was born before my eyes. It is better that I should die.' Due to this depression, the king gave up food and was confined to bed.

When the news about the king's depression reached the Buddha, he remarked, 'Bhikkhus! A war helps none. In one who conquers, enmity and hatred increase. One, who is defeated, suffers from pain and distress.'

The king heard this and realised that there was no victory in war. Both the victor and the vanquished suffer. He got firmly established in the Dhamma.



Verse 202: Natthi rāga samo aggi natthi dosa samo kali
Natthi khandha samā dukkhā natthi santi paraṃ sukhaṃ.

Verse 202: There is no fire like lust. There is no evil like hate. There is no dukkha like confinement in the human body. There is no bliss higher than the Nibbana.

Beware of the fire of lust
Story of a young bride

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

It was the marriage day of a bride. Her parents invited the Buddha and the bhikkhus for almsfood at their house. Seeing the bride moving around the house and helping in the service of the almsfood, the bridegroom was greatly excited and could hardly attend to the needs of the Buddha and other bhikkhus. The Buddha knew the feeling of the bridegroom and also that the time was ripe for both of them to attain the first stage of Sainthood.

To remove his emotional attachment for the time being and divert his attention, the Buddha by using his supernatural power willed that the bride should not be visible to the bridegroom. Because the young man now no longer saw the woman, he paid attention to the Buddha and the other bhikkhus. His devotion in the Enlightened One grew stronger.

During the discourse the Buddha mentioned, 'O Young man! Listen carefully. **There is no fire stronger than lust. There is no evil like anger and hatred. There is no ill like the burden of five aggregates of existence and there is no bliss like the Perfect Peace of Nirvana.'**

Reflecting on the advice, both the bride and the bridegroom realised the Dhamma. At that moment, the Buddha removed his influence and they could now see each other. But there was no passionate excitement between the two, as they had realised the true nature of the worldly existence.

Verse 203: Jighacchā paramā rogā samkhārā paramā dukhā
Etaṃ ñatvā yathābhūtaṃ Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ.

Verse 203: Hunger is the greatest disease. Samsaric life is the greatest suffering. Knowing this truth, the wise realise Nirvana as the highest bliss.

Hunger: The greatest suffering
The Buddha and the hungry man

Place: Alavi

One day, the Buddha saw in his vision that a poor farmer of Alavi would attain the first stage of Sainthood. So, he went to the village Alavi. It so happened that on that very day the farmer lost his ox. So, he went to the forest in search of it. Meanwhile, the people offered almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus. After the meal, they got ready to listen to his discourse. But the Buddha waited for the poor man to arrive.

Finally, the man found out his ox and came running to pay respects to the Buddha. Knowing that the farmer was hungry and tired, the Enlightened One asked the donors to offer him food first. After the man finished his food and joined the group of devotees, the Buddha expounded the Four Noble Truths, step by step. At the end of the talk, the farmer attained Srotappan stage.

Afterwards when they were on their way back to the monastery, the bhikkhus talked amongst themselves, 'It was so surprising that the Buddha should have directed the donors to serve food to the poor man first before he gave the discourse.' On hearing their observation, the Enlightened One said, 'Bhikkhus! My sole purpose of coming to Alavi was to expound the Dhamma to that man because I knew that he was likely to attain Srotappan stage of fruition. If he had been hungry, the pain of hunger would have prevented him from understanding the Dhamma fully. That man was looking for his ox since morning. He was very tired and was also hungry. Bhikkhus! **After all, there is no ailment which is so difficult to bear as hunger.'**

Note: This story shows the Buddha's concern not only for the spiritual well being of men but also for their material well being. Ordinary diseases are usually cured by one dose of medicine but the disease of hunger from which we all suffer everyday has to be cured on daily basis.

Verse 204: Ārogya paramā lābhā santuṭṭhi paramaṃ dhanaṃ
Vissāsa paramā ñāti Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ.

Verse 204: Health is the greatest blessing. Contentment is the greatest wealth. The trusted are the best relatives. Nirvana is the highest bliss.

Health is wealth
Be moderate in eating

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, King Pasendi of Kosala went to the Jetavana monastery after taking his morning meal. He had eaten a lot of rice and meat-curry that day. So, while listening to the discourse of the Buddha, he was feeling sleepy and nodding most of the time. Seeing him drowsy, the Buddha spoke to the king, 'Could you take proper rest, great king, before you came for listening to the Dhamma talk?' 'Oh! No, Sir! But I suffer greatly after a meal.'

Then, the Buddha explained to the king, 'Great king, over eating always brings such type of suffering. If one eats too much, spends time in sleep, lies and rolls like a big pig, fed on grain, such a simpleton will be born in this world again and again.' Then the Buddha advised him, **'O king, one ought to observe moderation in eating for there is comfort in moderate eating. If a man is ever mindful, if he is moderate in eating food, his suffering will be only slight. He will grow old slowly. He will thus preserve his life.'**

The king did as he was told and found that by eating less, he became slimmer, felt better and enjoyed better health. When he visited the Buddha next time, he said, 'Bhante, now I am happy. I can once again chase and catch wild animals and horses. I used to quarrel with my nephew. But recently, I have given my daughter in marriage to him. The other day, a precious stone of the royal palace was misplaced and I was greatly worried. But that has also been found out. Thus, there is happiness all around.'

Verse 205: Paviveka rasaṃ pitvā rasaṃ upasamassa ca
Niddaro hoti nippāpo dhammapiti rasaṃ pibaṃ.

Verse 205: Having tasted the supreme bliss of calmness and peace and drunk at the fountain of the Dhamma, one becomes free from fear and evil.

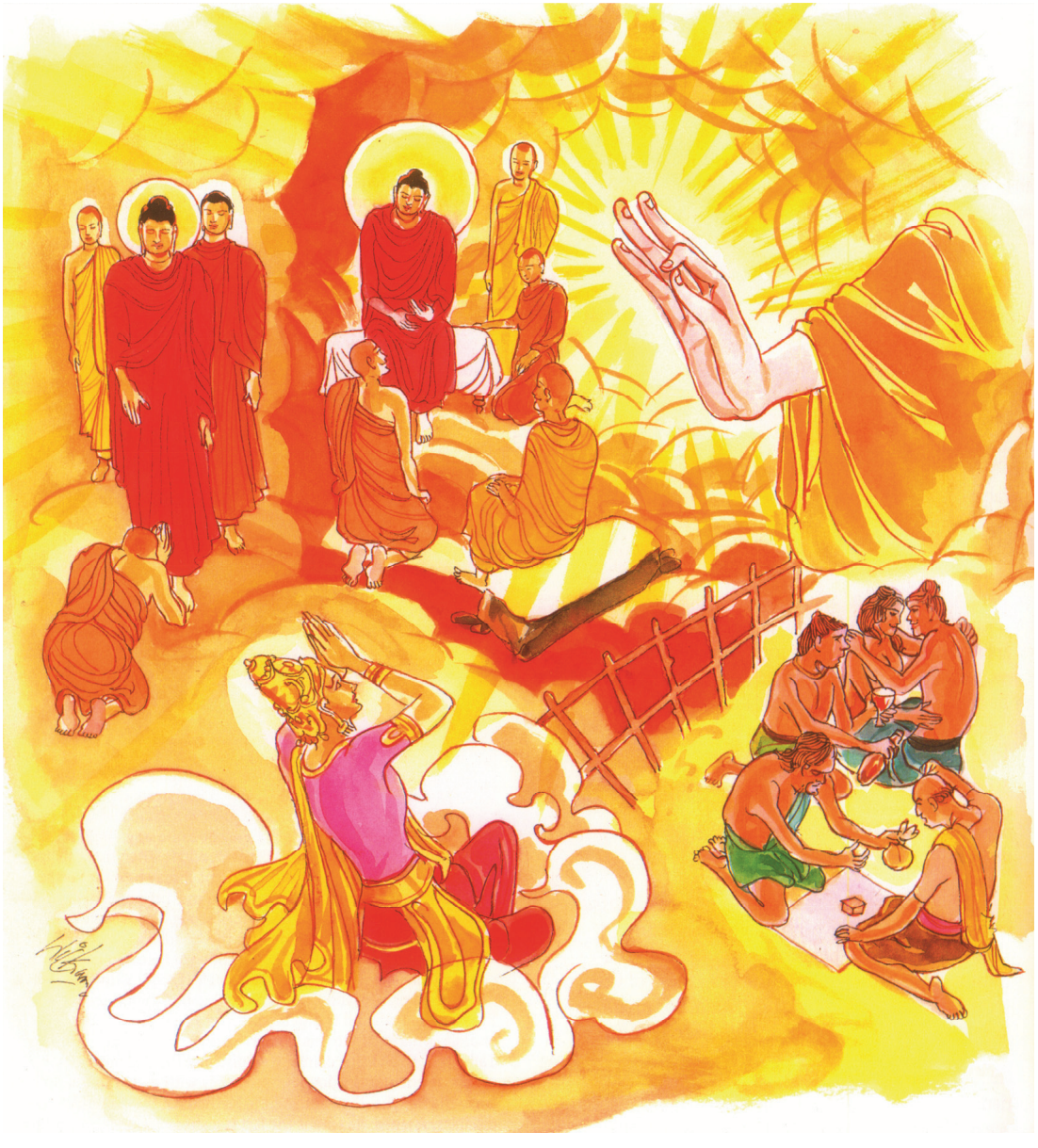
Taste the flavour of truth
Story of bhikkhu Tissa

Place: Vaishali

When the Buddha announced that after four months he will attain parinirvana, many bhikkhus who had not yet attained Arahatship were sad and depressed. They were at a loss as they did not know what to do. Therefore, they kept themselves in close proximity of the Buddha. Amongst the bhikkhus who were yet to attain Arahatship was a young bhikkhu named Tissa. He also got the news of the Buddha's parinirvana. But instead of feeling saddened about it, he resolved to himself, 'It is only four months that our Teacher will leave this world. I am still attached to this world. Let me try sincerely and diligently to attain Arahatship before his departure from this world. I must work really very hard.' So, Tissa, instead of keeping himself in close proximity of the Buddha, unlike other bhikkhus, left for a secluded place to practise meditation.

Other bhikkhus could not understand and appreciate his behaviour. They complained to the Enlightened One, 'Bhante! It seems Tissa does not have deep regards for you. He is confined to himself. He has not been coming to show respect to you.' Therefore, Tissa was summoned by the Sakya Muni and asked to explain his conduct. Tissa appeared before the Tathagata, paid homage to him and said, 'Bhante, I have been striving diligently and ardently to attain Arahathood before you take parinirvana. It is the only reason why I have not been coming to see you.'

The Buddha addressed the bhikkhus, 'Bhikkhus should be like Tissa. **You do not honour me by offering flowers. You honour me only by practising the Dhamma.'**



Verse 206: Sādhu dassanam ariyānaṃ sannivāso sadā sukha
Adassanena bālānaṃ niccam eva sukhi siyā.

Verse 206: It is a blessing to see the Noble Ones. To live with them is always blissful. Not seeing the fools is also a blessing.

Be with the noble
Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha

Place: Venugram

The Buddha spoke these three verses at the village Veluvana, with reference to Sakka, the king of gods.

About ten months before his attainment of parinirvana, the Buddha spent his vassa at the village Beluva near Vaishali. While he was staying there, he suffered severe dysentery. When Sakka learnt about it, he thought, 'It is my bounden duty to go to the Buddha and attend to him in his sickness.' Accordingly, he approached the Buddha, saluted him and rubbed his feet with his hands. The Buddha asked, 'Who is that?' 'It is me, Bhante, Sakka.' 'Why have you come here?' 'I have come to attend to your sickness, Sir.' 'Do not worry about my health as there are many bhikkhus near me.' Sakka insisted on nursing the Buddha till he became fit. He did not permit any person to touch him. He himself carried the excreta of the Buddha on his head. Moreover, he did it with great honour, as if he were carrying perfume. Thus Sakka nursed the Buddha till he was better and felt comfortable.

Verse 207: Bāla saṅgatacāri hi digham addhāna socati
Dukkho bālehi saṃvāso amitten eva sabbadā
Dhiro ca sukha saṃvāso ñātinaṃ va samāgamo.

Verse 207: Living in the company of fools brings suffering for long. It is ever painful, like living with an enemy. Living with the wise is a pleasure. It is like living with relatives.

Don't be with the fools
Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha

The bhikkhus were surprised. They wondered to find Sakka himself attending to the Enlightened One during his sickness! 'It is really a great act to carry the vessel containing the excreta of the Buddha on his head and that too happily as if he were carrying a vessel filled with perfumes, without slightest contraction on his face.'

When the Buddha heard these remarks, he said, 'Monks! What are you saying? It is not at all surprising that Sakka, king of gods, should cherish warm affection for me. It is because of me that Sakka, king of gods, laid aside his old form of Sakka and took the form of young Sakka.'

Verse 208: Tasmā hi dhirañ ca paññañ ca bahussutañ ca
Dhorayha silaṃ vatavantam āriyaṃ
Taṃ tādisaṃ sappurisaṃ sumedhaṃ
Bhajetha nakkhatta pathaṃ va candimā.

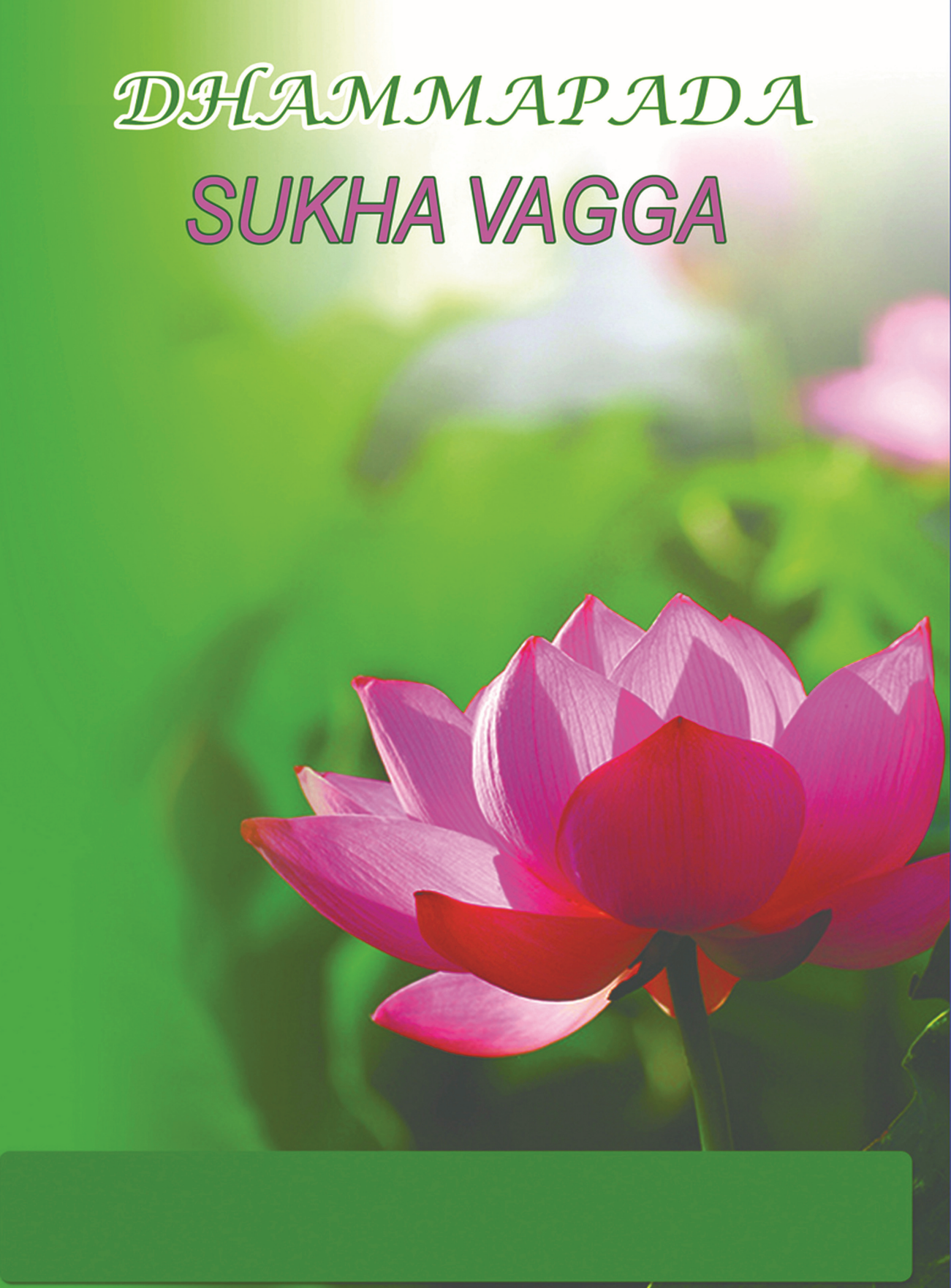
Verse 208: Therefore, one should associate with the wise and the intelligent, the learned, morally virtuous, the dutiful and the noble ones, like the moon following the starry path.

Be with the wise and the virtuous
Story of Sakka nursing the Buddha

The Buddha continued, 'Once, Sakka came to me terrified with the fear of death. He sat down in Indasala cave in the midst of the company of the gods. I dispelled his fear and suffering and preached him the Dhamma. After listening to the Dhamma, he became young Sakka. Thus, I have been a great helper to him. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that he should cherish warm regards and affection for me. Indeed, bhikkhus, it is good to see the Noble Ones. It is pleasure to live with them.'

DHAMMAPADA

SUKHA VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

Affection

PIYA VAGGA

Chapter XVI

PIYA VAGGA

Affection

Index

PIYA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of three ascetics	209.	Follow the noble persuits	159
2.	Story of three ascetics	210.	Be above dear and not dear	161
3.	Story of three ascetics	211.	Free yourself from bonds	163
4.	The Buddha comforts the afflicted	212.	Grief springs from endearment	165
5.	The Buddha comforts Visakha	213.	Grief springs from affection	167
6.	Princes fight over a courtesan	214.	Grief springs from attachment	169
7.	Anitthi Kumara loses his bride	215.	Grief springs from lust	171
8.	Story of a Brahmin	216.	Grief springs from craving	173
9.	Kassapa receives baskets of cakes	217.	The virtuous are dear to all	175
10.	Story of an elderly monk	218.	Make efforts to go upstream	177
11.	Story of Nandiya	219.	Be meritorious	179
12.	Story of Nandiya	220.	Virtues always pay	181

Verse 209: Ayoge yuñjam attānaṃ yogasmiñ ca ayojayaṃ
Atthaṃ hitvā piyaggāhi pihet āttānuyoginaṃ

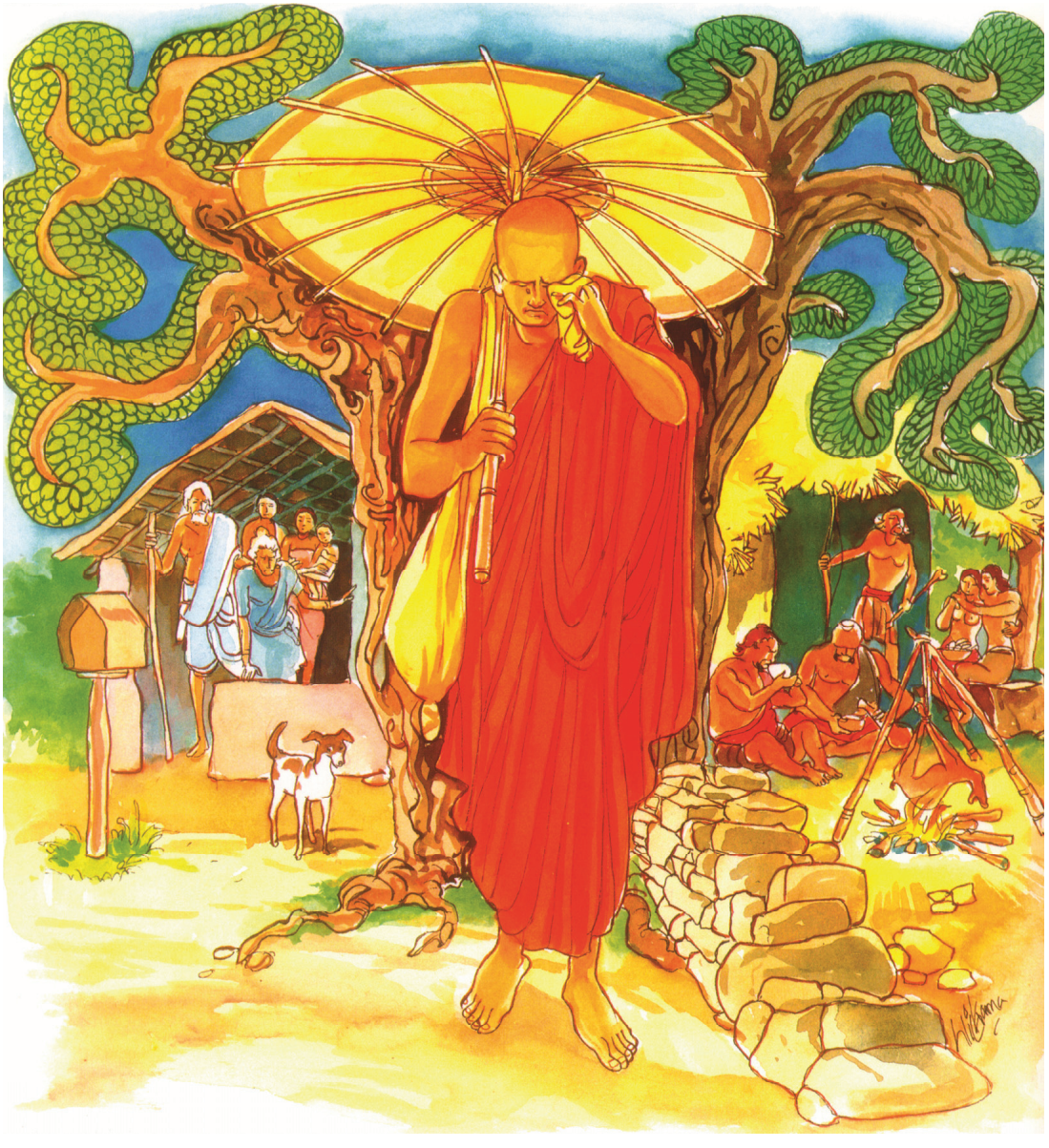
Verse 209: One who, seeks after pleasures leaving the path of virtue, devotes to affairs unworthy of doing and abstains from the noble pursuits, such a person envies one striving for spiritual progress.

Follow the noble pursuits
Story of three ascetics

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The story goes that in a certain household at Sravasti, there lived a family consisting of, father, mother and the son. One day, some bhikkhus visited their house for almsfood. The boy was greatly impressed with the thanks giving talk on the Dhamma and wanted to become a monk then and there. He, straightway, requested his parents for their permission to become a bhikkhu. But because of their strong attachment to the son, the parents did not give permission to join the Sangha. Therefore, the boy thought, 'When my parents are not around, I shall run away from the house and become a bhikkhu without their approval.' The parents also thought, 'The son may run away when we are not around. So we have to be more vigilant. We have to keep a watch on him.' Whenever the father left home, he handed over the son to the care of the mother and advised her, 'Please keep him safe and sound, till I return.' Similarly, when the mother left home, she gave the son to the care of the father and said, 'Please keep him safe and sound, till I return.'

One day, the father was away and the mother thought, 'I will definitely keep my son safe and sound.' So, she tied her one foot against one of the door-posts and the other against the other door-post and sat down on the ground to spin the thread. The boy thought, 'I will outsmart my mother and escape from home.' So, he told his mother, 'Dear mother, please remove your leg to one side. I have to attend to the nature's call.' The mother could not guess that the boy was planning to escape. She took his words at their face value. The boy came out of the house, kept on running, as fast as he could, and reached the monastery. He requested the bhikkhus to admit him in the Sangha. They agreed. Thus, only son of the family became a bhikkhu without the permission of the parents.



Verse 210: Mā piyehi samāgañchi appiyehi kudācanaṃ
Piyānaṃ adassanaṃ dukkhaṃ appiyānañ ca ḏassanaṃ

Verse 210: Develop no intimacy with the beloved. Never be unfriendly towards anyone. It is equally painful to be out of sight of the beloved and to see the unfriendly.

Be above dear and not dear
Story of three ascetics

When the father came back home, he asked his wife, 'Where is the son?' 'Husband, he was here a moment ago.' The father looked around, did not find him and thought, 'Where can my son be? He must have gone to the monastery.' So, he reached the monastery. There he saw his son as a bhikkhu and lamented to him, 'My dear son, why have you left the family and destroyed me?' But after a moment, thought came to him, 'Now that my son has become a monk, why should I remain a householder? I shall also become a monk.' So, he requested the bhikkhus to admit him in the Sangha. He became a bhikkhu, then and there.

The mother at home thought, 'Why are my son and husband delaying to come back home?' Thinking this way and that way, she came to the conclusion, 'I am sure they both have gone to the monastery and become bhikkhus there.' So, she went to the monastery and found her husband and the son as bhikkhus. Then she thought, 'My son and husband both have become monks. What use I have to remain as a householder?' So, she went to the bhikkhunis and requested them to admit her in the Order of the bhikkhunis. Thus, because of their strong attachment for their son, the father and the mother also became bhikkhu and bhikkhuni respectively.

Verse 211: Tasmā piyaṃ na kayirātha piyāpāyo hi pāpako
Ganthā tesaṃ na vijjanti yesaṃ natthi piyāppiyaṃ.

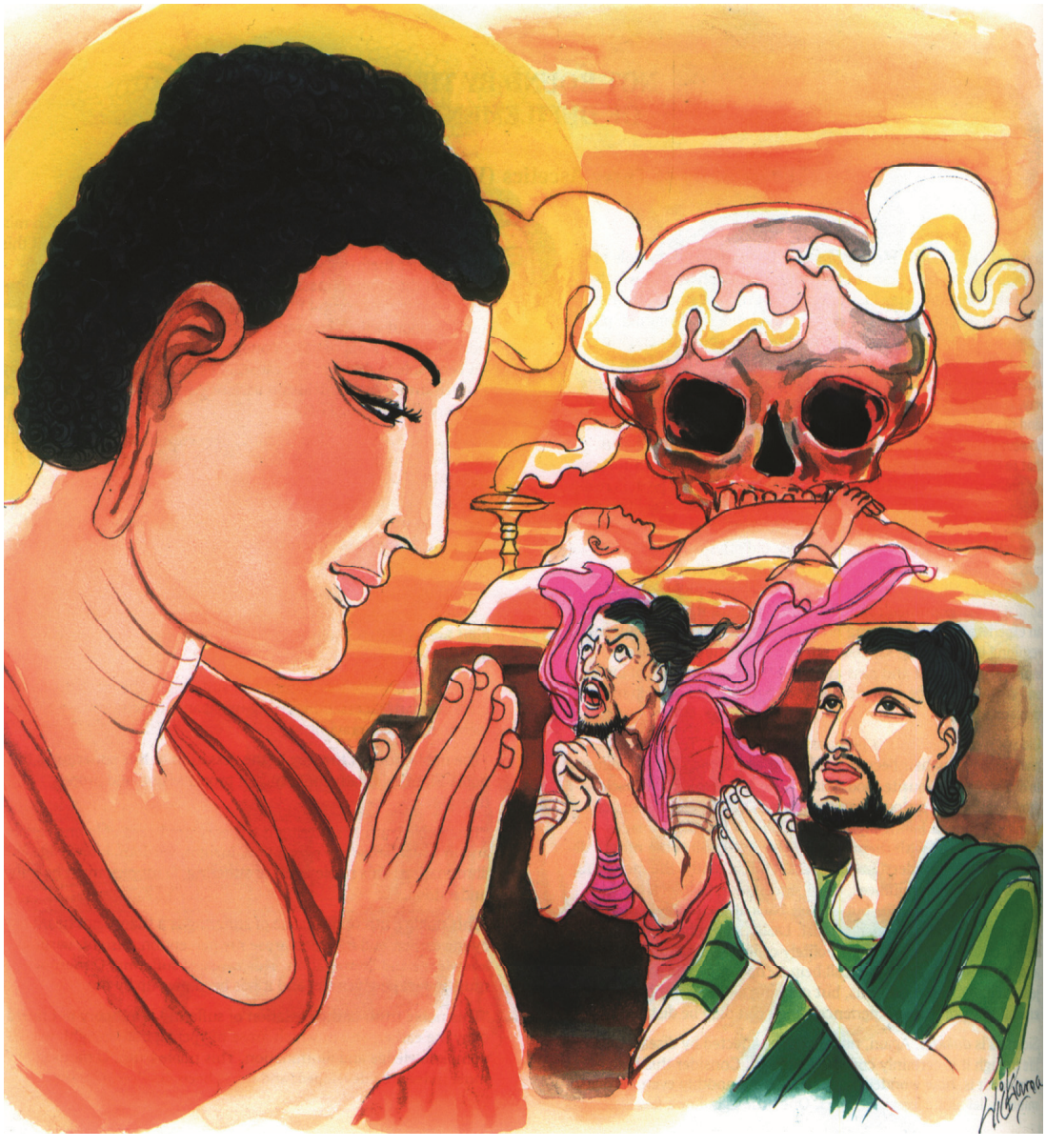
Verse 211: Hold none dear, for painful is the separation from the dear ones. Those who have neither the beloved, nor the unfriendly are free from all bondages.

Free yourself from bonds
Story of three ascetics

Though all the three had given up worldly life yet they were not able to cut off attachment for each other. They had taken to saffron robes but behaved completely as worldly men. They could not live separated from each other and could not give up their affection. The family stayed in the monastery as if they were in their own house sitting together for hours, talking, eating and gossiping. Thus they made themselves a nuisance to others. They did not observe the rules of the monastic life. When other bhikkhus saw it, they got alarmed. They reported about their behaviour to the Buddha. The Buddha called all the three and asked them, 'Is it true that you are behaving in such and such way?' 'Yes Sir', they replied. The Buddha admonished them, 'This is not the way the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis should behave. Why do you do so?' 'But it is impossible for us to live apart.'

The Buddha said, 'Once you have joined the Sangha, you should no longer stay like a family. There is no doubt that not seeing those who are dear and seeing those who are not dear, are both painful. Even so, you should not hold any being or anything dear to you, because emotional attachment retards spiritual progress.'

Note: We should thus live detached giving up both likes and dislikes. We can avoid both types of suffering. Verily blessed are they who entertain neither likes nor dislikes.



Verse 212: Piyato jāyati soko piyato jāyati bhayaṃ
Piyato vippamuttassa natthi soko, kuto bhayaṃ?

Verse 212: From endearment springs grief. From endearment springs fear. For him who is free from endearment, how can there be grief; much less fear?

Grief springs from endearment
The Buddha comforts the afflicted

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a rich householder was very depressed over the death of his son. He used to go to the burning-ground daily, stay there for long hours and wept on continuously. One day, the Buddha saw this man in his morning vision and found that the householder was likely to attain the first stage of Sainthood. So, he went to his house and asked him why he was feeling so depressed. The man told him about the death of his son and the pain and suffering it caused to him.

The Buddha consoled him, **'Death does not occur in one place only. It is the destiny of all beings. One, who is born, has to die some day. Indeed, you must be ever mindful that the fate of the life lies in death only. Do not think that only your beloved son was meant to die. Therefore, do not be distressed and shaken as you are.'**

The Buddha also explained how people in the past took reasonable view of death, **'Wise men in the past did not express sorrow over the death of a son but applied diligently to meditate on it: Mortality has suffered mortality; dissolution has suffered dissolution. In the past, the wise people did not act the way you are acting over the death of your son. You have left your normal activities and the business, deprived yourself of food and are only lamenting all the time. Wise men in the olden days did not do so. On the contrary, they ate the food as usual and attended to their normal activities and business. Grieve not at the thought that your dear son is dead. Whenever sorrow or fear arises, it arises only because one is so dear.'**

Perceiving the fleeting nature of life, the householder attained the first stage of Sainthood.

Verse 213: Pemato jāyati soko pemato jāyati bhayaṃ
Pemato vippamuttassa natthi soko, kuto bhayaṃ?

Verse 213: From affection (attachment) springs grief. From affection (attachment) springs fear. For him who is free from affection (attachment), how can there be grief, much less fear?

Grief springs from affection
The Buddha comforts Visakha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, a grand-daughter of Visakha, named Sudatta, died. Visakha felt very depressed at her loss. She went to the Buddha and expressed her grief, saying, 'Bhante! The girl was very close to me. She was also faithful, true and helpful. I shall not get anyone like her again.' The Buddha asked her, 'But Visakha, tell me how many people live in Sravasti?' 'I have heard you say Sir that they are in thousands.' 'But suppose, all those people become as dear to you as Sudatta, will you like that?' 'Yes Bhante.' 'Now, tell me how many people die in Sravasti everyday?' 'A great many people die everyday, bhante!' 'In that case, you will continuously be in grief only. You will have no time to do anything other than weeping and crying all the time.' 'Certainly bhante, I now understand that I should not grieve over her death.' 'Let not the death of one child, affect you too much. Whether it is grief or it is fear, it arises only out of affection.'

Verse 214: Ratiyā jāyati soko ratiyā jāyati bhayaṃ
Ratiyā vippamuttassa natthi soko, kuto bhayaṃ?

Verse 214: From attachment springs grief. From attachment springs fear. For him who is free from attachment, how can there be grief, much less fear?

Grief springs from attachment
Princes fight over a courtesan

Place: Kutagarshala, Vaishali

On a festival day, the Buddha entered the town of Vaishali along with a number of bhikkhus. On the way, they met some Lichchavi princes. They were elegantly dressed for going to the pleasure garden. The Buddha, on seeing them, told the group of bhikkhus accompanying him, 'Bhikkhus! Those of you, who have not seen the gods of the Tavatimsa loka should have a good look at these Lichchavi princes. You may take them comparable to the devas of the Tavatimsa loka.' So saying the Buddha and his group entered the city.

On the way to the pleasure garden, the princes met a beautiful courtesan and invited her to join them. She accompanied them to the pleasure garden. But on the way itself, they started feeling jealous of each other for that lady. As a result, they quarrelled and then fought over her. Very soon, the fighting led to free exchange of blows. Blood started oozing out from them. The place turned into a river of blood. As a result, men had to carry the princes back home, bleeding on cots.

By this time, the Buddha and the group of bhikkhus were returning back from almsround. They saw the wounded princes being carried back home. The bhikkhus remarked, 'Bhante, early in the morning, we saw these Lichchavi princes departing from the city, fully dressed beautifully like gods. But all because of a single woman, they have come to this sad plight and are ruined.' The Buddha clarified to them, **'Bhikkhus, sorrow and fear arise out of enjoyment of sensual pleasures and attachments. They arise solely because of lust.'**

Verse 215: Kāmato jāyati soko kāmato jāyati bhayaṃ
Kāmato vippamuttassa natthi soko, kuto bhayaṃ?

Verse 215: From lust springs grief, from lust springs fear. For him who is wholly free from lust, how can there be grief, much less fear?

Grief springs from lust
Anitthi Kumara loses his bride

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Anitthi Gandha Kumara, a young man, lived in Sravasti. He was to marry a beautiful young girl from the city of Sagala. She was very delicate and had never undertaken a long journey. As such, when she was being taken in a carriage to Sravasti for marriage, the bumps of the road gave her cramps. She became seriously sick and died on the way. When Anitthi Kumara came to know about the death of the bride, he was overwhelmed by grief and pain and exclaimed, 'Alas! It is so sad to think that I should have failed to meet such a beautiful woman!'

At this time, the Buddha knew that it was time for the young man to realise the Dhamma. So, he went to his house. The parents of Kumara offered almsfood to the Buddha. After the food, the Buddha sent for the young man and asked him why he was in so much pain and distress. He told the entire story of the tragic death of the bride. Then the Enlightened One told him, 'But, young man, do you know the reason of your acute pain?' 'No bhante, I do not.' **'Son, Because of lust, intense sorrow has come upon you. It is due to lust for things and lust for sensual pleasures that sorrow and fear arise.'** Reflecting upon the advice of the Buddha, the young man overcame grief and pain. He realised the fleeting nature of sensual desires.

Soon afterwards, Anitthi Gandha Kumara attained the first stage of Sainthood.

Verse 216: Taṅhāya jāyati soko taṅhāya jāyati bhayaṃ
Taṅhāya vippamuttassa natthi soko, kuto bhayaṃ?

Verse 216: From craving springs grief, from craving springs fear. For him who is free from craving how can there be grief, much less fear?

Grief springs from craving
Story of a brahmin

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A brahmin farmer, living in Sravasti, was follower of some other religion. But the Buddha knew that very shortly he was likely to attain the first stage of Sainthood. So, he went to the place where the farmer was sowing his field and spoke to him. The brahmin became friendly and felt happy that the Buddha sought his welfare and also took interest in his farming. So, he said, 'Bhante, when I shall harvest rice from the field, I shall first offer you some rice and then I shall take it. I will not eat my rice until I have offered you some.' However, the Buddha knew beforehand that the farmer would not have the opportunity to harvest the rice from his field that year, but he kept silent.

One day prior to the harvesting, there was heavy rain and the entire crop of paddy was destroyed. The brahmin was very sad because he was no longer in a position to offer any rice to his friend, the Buddha. The Buddha visited the farmer to console him. The farmer narrated the great calamity that had befallen on him saying, 'Bhante! I had taken a vow that in case the crop came out well, I shall share it with you but my heart's desire has been shattered to pieces. Sorrow has befallen on me. I do not relish the food anymore.' The Buddha asked, 'But do you know what has caused that sorrow which has come to you?' 'No Sir, I do not know but you know.' The Buddha replied, 'Yes, my friend, I know. Whenever sorrow or fear arises, it arises solely from craving: tanha, the desire.'

Verse 217: Sila dassana sampannaṃ dhammaṭṭhaṃ sacca vēdinaṃ
Attano kamma kubbānaṃ taṃ jano kurute piyaṃ.

Verse 217: He who, is perfect in virtues and insight, is always established in the Dhamma, has realised the Truths and fulfils his duties, is loved by all men.

The virtuous are dear to all
Kassapa receives baskets of cakes

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

It was a festival day. The Buddha entered the city of Rajagriha for almsfood. A group of bhikkhus accompanied him. On their way, they happened to come across some young boys going to a garden. They were carrying some baskets of cakes. On seeing the Buddha, they made salutations to him but did not make any offer of cake to him. The Buddha told the bhikkhus, 'Although these boys have not offered any cake to us, they will be offering it to a bhikkhu who is coming behind us. We will go ahead only after these boys have offered us cakes.' After saying this, the Buddha and the bhikkhus sat down below a tree. Just at that moment, bhikkhu Kassapa was seen coming from behind. On seeing him, the boys immediately developed a liking for him. They saluted him, put down their baskets on the ground, took the cakes in their hands and offered it to him saying, 'Have some cakes, respectable bhante.'

Bhikkhu Kassapa then advised the boys, 'My teacher, the Exalted One is resting beneath the tree with other bhikkhus. Go and offer your cakes to him.' The boys did as they were told. The Buddha accepted the offering.

Later some bhikkhus remarked that the boys had shown favour to bhikkhu Kassapa. Then the Buddha explained, 'Monks, all the bhikkhus who are like my son Kassapa are liked by both, the devas and the men. Such bhikkhus are always offered the four requisites viz. robes, food, shelter and medicines.'

Verse 218: Chandajāto anakkhāte manasā ca phuṭo siyā
Kāmesu ca appaṭibaddha citto ūddhaṃ soto ti vuccati.

Verse 218: He who, has developed an earnest wish for reaching the indescribable Nirvana, is pure in his mind and is not overpowered by the sensualities; such a person is called an Upstream-bound (i.e. one marching upward) one.

Make efforts to go upstream
Story of an elderly monk

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

On one occasion, a pupil of an elderly monk asked him, 'Bhante, Have you attained Arahanthood?' Although the senior bhikkhu had attained the third stage of Sainthood, i.e. Anagami fruition, yet he did not disclose it and kept silent. He did not want to disclose his achievement till he had attained Arahanthood. But he passed away without attaining Arahanthood and without telling anyone of his achievement.

The pupils of the saint were very grieved that their teacher had passed away without attaining Sainthood. They went to the Buddha and asked him, 'Sir, where is our teacher reborn?' The Tathagata clarified to them, 'Bhikkhus! Your teacher was already an Anagami before his passing away. He is now reborn in the world of the Brahmas. He did not disclose his achievement because he felt ashamed that he had attained only that much. He was sincerely and diligently making efforts to attain Arahantship. Your teacher is now definitely free of the attachments of the sensual (Kamaloka) world.'

Verse 219: Cirappavāsiṃ purisaṃ dūrato sotthim āgataṃ
Nāti mittā suhajjā ca abhinandanti sāgataṃ.

Verse 219: As a man who has remained absent for a long time, on his safe return, after a long journey, is welcomed by his relatives, friends and well-wishers .....

Be meritorious
Story of Nandiya

Place: Rishipattan, Saranath

Nandiya was a rich, young man who lived in Benaras. He had full faith in the Buddha's teachings and was also an ideal son. When he came of age, his parents wanted him to marry Revati, his maternal uncle's daughter who lived just across their house. But Revati was a non-believer in the Buddha and was not accustomed to giving alms and charities. Because of this, Nandiya did not want to marry her. But Nandiya's mother liked Revati and wanted her as her daughter-in-law. So, she suggested to her, 'Dear daughter, properly sweep and clean the floor and the sitting place of the bhikkhus. When the bhikkhus arrive, take their bowls in your hands and invite them to sit down at their respective seats. When they have finished their meals, wash their bowls. If you will do as I have told you, you will be able to win the heart of my son.' Revati did as she was advised by her would be mother-in-law. Then Nandiya's mother proposed to her son for their marriage and he agreed. But before they got married, Nandiya told his wife, 'If you will act sincerely to serve the group of bhikkhus who will be coming to our house for almsround, then you will enjoy my favour and it will be our privilege to have you in our family. Therefore, be mindful.' 'Surely, I will act accordingly,' said Revati. In due course of time, she gave birth to two sons. When Nandiya's parents passed away, she became the sole lady incharge of the households. Nandiya inherited a lot of wealth from his parents. He made arrangements for providing alms to the bhikkhus regularly. He also made provisions for supply of food to the poor, needy and the travellers. Sometime later, on hearing the Buddha's talk, Nandiya got a monastery built at Isipatana for dwelling of bhikkhus. He got the beds supplied and when the monastery was fully furnished, he donated it to the Buddha by pouring water of donation into the right hand of the Buddha. As the water of donation fell in the right hand of the Buddha, there arose a great palace in the deva loka (world of the deities), made of all kinds of gold, silver and jewels.

Verse 220: Tath eva kata puññam pi asmā lokā paraṃ gataṃ
Puññani patigaṅhanti piyaṃ ñātim va āgataṃ.

Verse 220: …….Likewise, his good deeds will welcome the well-doer when he goes from this world to the next.

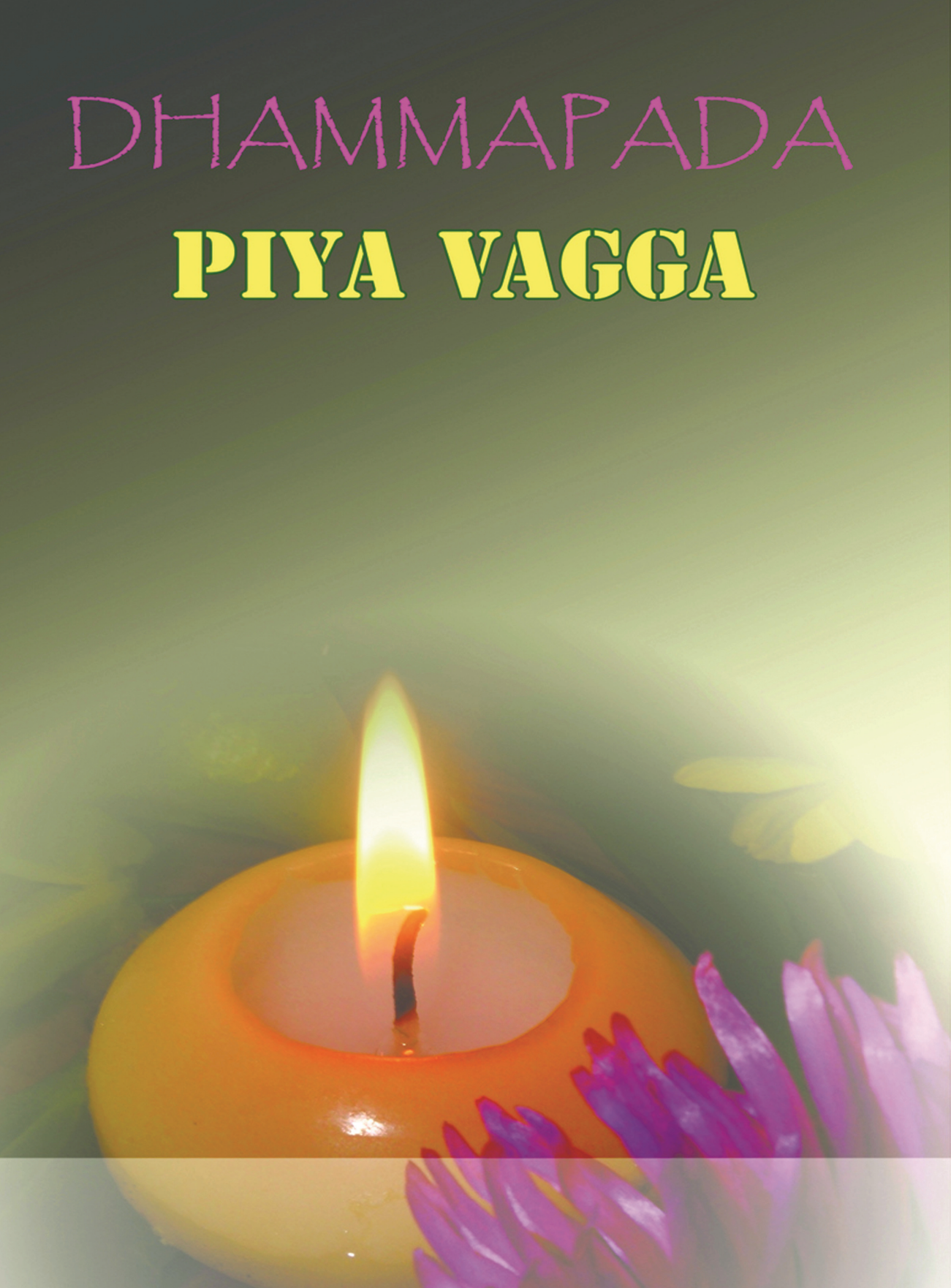
Virtues always pay
Story of Nandiya

Now it so happened that during that time, Venerable Maha Moggallana went to the deva loka. On seeing the palace, he asked the deities, 'Through whose merit has this palace come up?' The deities replied, 'It is due to the merit earned by a householder Nandiya who has constructed a marvellous monastery at Isipatana.' Thereafter, the nymphs came down from the palace and said, 'Sir, we are the slaves of Nandiya. Pray tell him to come here soon. Putting off human body and taking the body of a deity is like breaking a vessel of clay and taking a vessel of gold.'

The elder left the heavenly world and on arrival, asked the Buddha, 'Bhante, is it true that while men remain in the world, they earn the merit of good deeds done by them on the earth in the deva loka as well?' The Buddha replied, 'Why do you ask this question to me? You have yourself seen the merit earned by Nandiya.' Hearing this Moggallana commented, 'Then, it really seems to be true.' The Enlightened One said, 'Why do you talk like this Moggallana? If a son or a brother, who has gone abroad and has stayed there for long, is returning back home, whosoever meets him at the village gate hurries back and exclaims loudly, "So-and-so is back". And immediately, his relations feel great happiness, come out of their houses and greet him saying, "Dear friend! Dear brother! You have come back at last!" Similarly, when either a man or a woman who has done deeds of merit in this world, leaves the world and goes to the next, the heavenly deities come out with ten types of presents and go forward to meet and greet him, saying, 'Let me meet him first! Let me meet him first!'

DHAMMAPADA

PIYA VAGGA



DHAMMAPADA

ANGER

KRODHA VAGGA

Chapter XVII

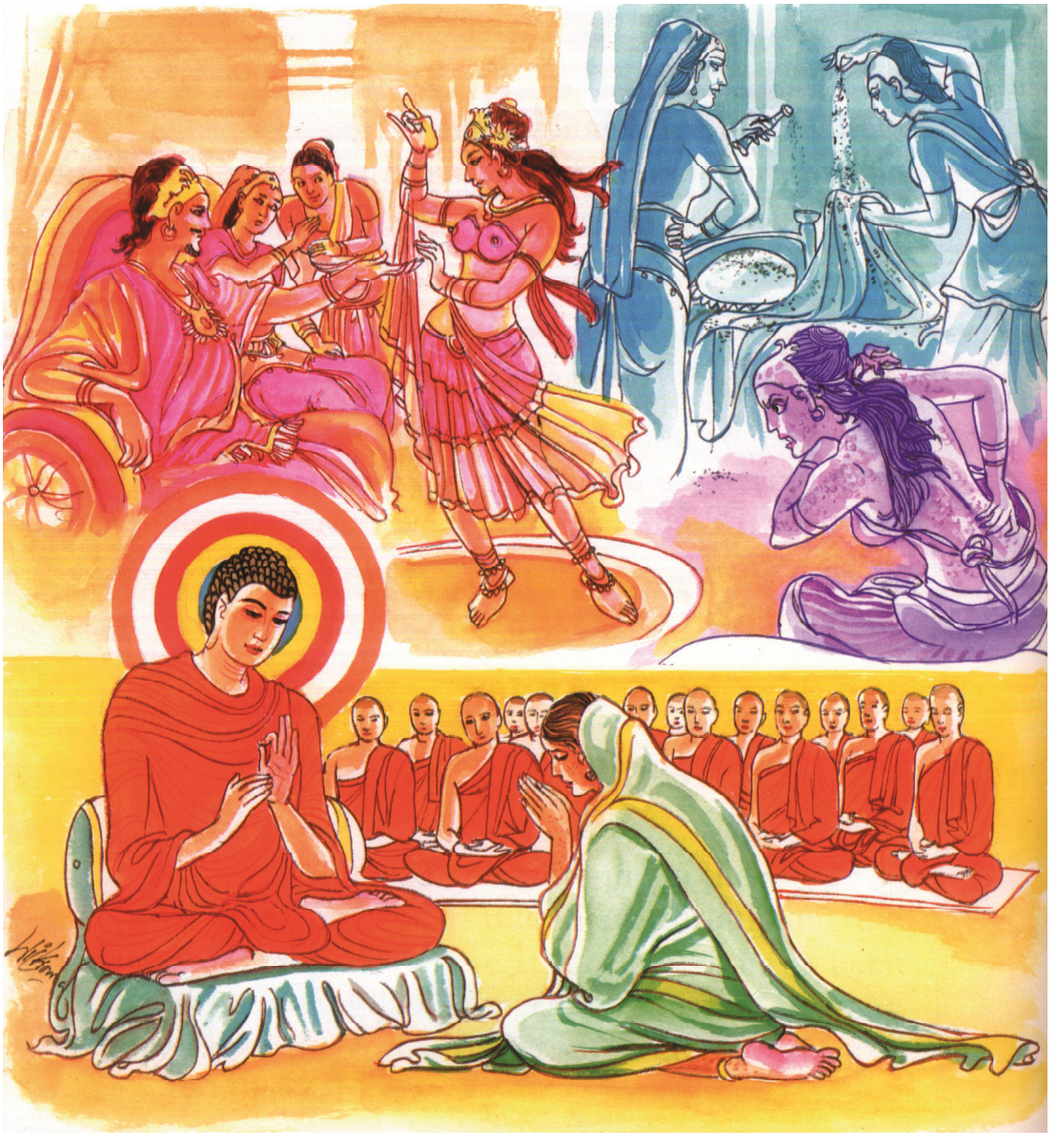
KRODHA VAGGA

ANGER

Index

KRODHA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of Rohini	221.	Give up anger	187
2.	Monk and the tree spirit	222.	Control your anger	189
3.	Story of Lady Uttara	223.	Overcome anger by love	191
4.	Story of the way to heaven	224.	Be truthful, patient and generous	193
5.	A brahmin greets the Buddha as his son	225.	Be harmless, attain deathlessness	195
6.	Story of Punna	226.	Be vigilant, give up impurities	197
7.	Story of Atula	227.	None is blameless	199
8.	Story of Atula	228.	None is ever blamed or praised	201
9.	Story of Atula	229.	Who dare blame the pure?	203
10.	Story of Atula	230.	Who are praised by all?	205
11.	Six monks wear wooden sandals	231.	Be pure in deed	207
12.	Six monks wear wooden sandals	232.	Be pure in speech	209
13.	Six monks wear wooden sandals	233.	Be pure in thought	211
14.	Six monks wear wooden sandals	234.	Be perfectly self-controlled	213



Verse 221: Kodhaṃ jahe vippajaheyya mānaṃ, Saññojanaṃ sabbam atikkameyya Taṃ nāma rūpasmiṃ asajjamānaṃ, Akiñcanaṃ nānupatanti dukkhā.

Verse 221: Give up anger. Abandon pride. Overcome every attachment and cling not to the mind and the body. Thus become free from sorrows.

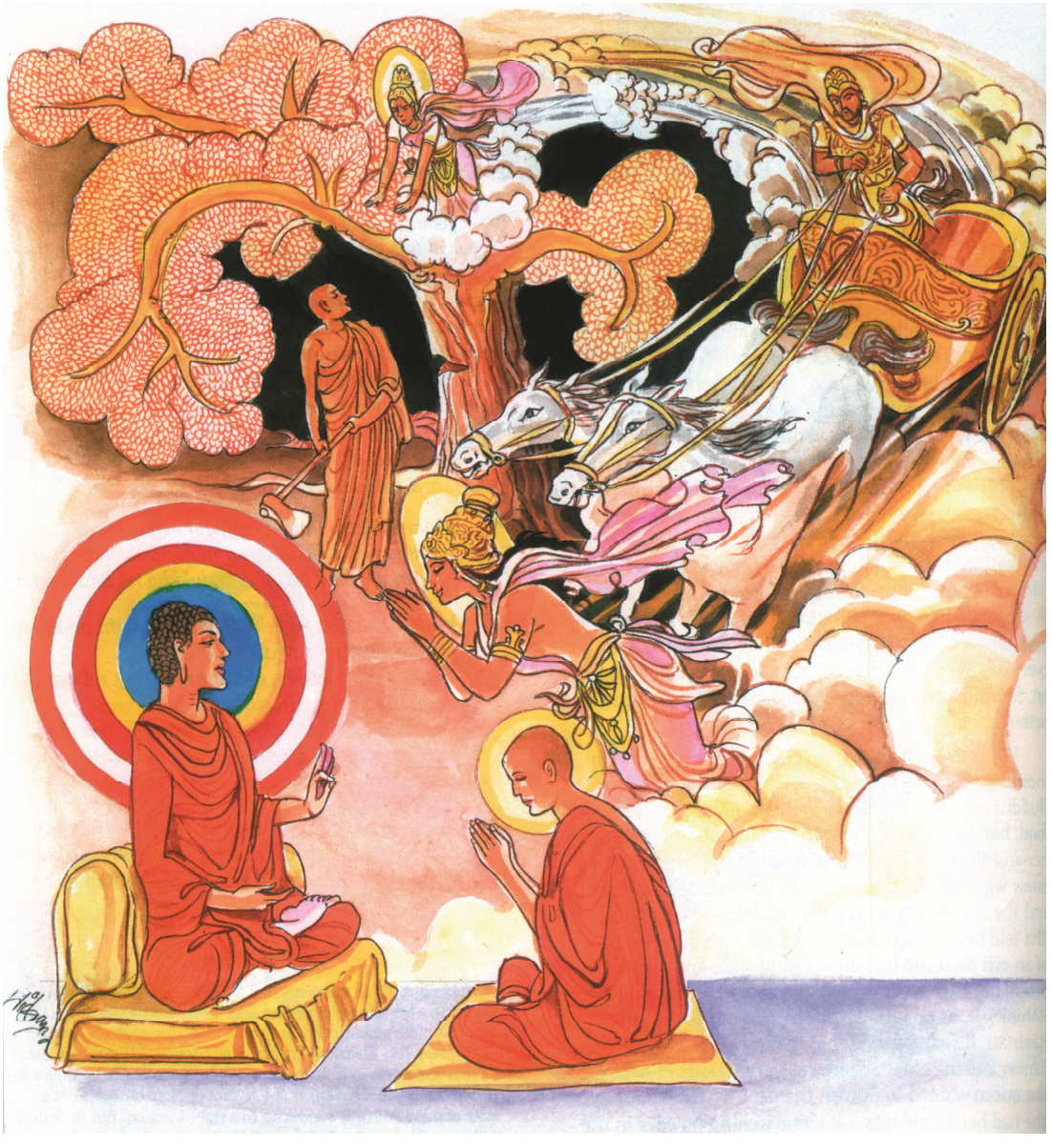
Give up anger
Story of Rohini

Place: Niggodharam

Once, bhikkhu Anuruddha happened to visit Kapilavastu. All his relatives came to see him, except his sister Rohini. On knowing that she was suffering from skin disease, he sent for her. She felt ashamed of coming to see her brother. Therefore, she covered her head and came to see him. Bhante Anuruddha advised her, 'Do some deeds of merit to undo some demerits you have done in the past. Sell some of your jewellary, raise funds out of that and get a community hall constructed where people can come and perform meritorious deeds. Even while the construction goes on, sweep the floors regularly and fill the water jars, yourself.' 'But how shall I be able to get the community hall constructed? I am a lady.' 'I shall request our relatives to help you in the construction of the hall.' Rohini did as her elder brother advised her. Slowly and slowly, as the construction work went on, she recovered and felt better.

When the community hall was ready, the Buddha and his disciples were invited for the almsfood. After the food, the Tathagata asked for the donor of the building to bless her but Rohini was not to be seen around. Then the Buddha sent for her. She came and paid regards to the Buddha. The Buddha asked her, 'Rohini, Do you know why you suffer from this dreaded disease of leprosy?' 'No Sir, I do not know.' 'It is because of an evil deed done by you out of anger in one of your past births. In that birth you were the chief queen of the king of Benaras. The king had a favourite dancer and you were very jealous of her. One day, you instructed your attendants to put some itching powder in her bed and blankets. Then to disgrace her, some powder was thrown on her. The poor lady itched all over the body and was in great pain. She ran towards her bed but there the situation worsened.'

The Buddha then called upon the audience, **'Do not act in anger. It is a foolish act. Do not bear any ill-will towards anyone.'** At the end of the talk many in the audience, including Rohini, attained Srotappan state of fruition. Her leprosy disappeared. Her colour also became clear and smooth.



Verse 222: Yo ve uppatitaṃ kodhaṃ rathaṃ bhantaṃ va dhāraye
Tam ahaṃ sārathiṃ brūmi rasmiggāho itaro jano.

Verse 222: He who verily holds back his arisen anger as one stops a rolling chariot, him I call a charioteer. The others only hold the ropes.

Control your anger
Monk and the tree spirit

Place: Aggalava Chetiye

Once, a bhikkhu from Alavi decided to build a hut for his use. So, he started cutting down a tree to make place for the hut. Now, it so happened that there lived a deva on the tree with her infant son. She requested the bhikkhu not to cut down the tree. But, the bhikkhu did not entertain her request and continued to cut the tree. Failing to stop him from cutting the tree, she thought, 'If I put my son on this branch of the tree, then this would stop him from cutting the tree.' Hoping so, she put her son on the branch of the tree. But by then the bhikkhu had already swung his axe and could not stop it in time. Thus, he unintentionally cut off one arm of the child. Seeing this, the mother was in rage and decided to kill the bhikkhu. But, as soon as she raised her hands to strike him, she checked herself and reflected, 'A bhikkhu is a person who observes the five precepts (panchashila). No doubt, this bhikkhu has done a wrong act, yet if I kill him, I am also bound to suffer in the future. This may also become a precedence to kill other bhikkhus. Therefore, it is better that I meet the master of this bhikkhu.' Thus weeping, she went to the Buddha and told him what had happened to her.

The Buddha told her, 'O devata! You have done exceedingly well by controlling your anger.' He then gave her a sermon on the Dhamma. On hearing it, she attained the first stage of Sainthood. Because her previous home had been destroyed, she was offered a tree near the Jetavana monastery to live.

After this incidence, the Buddha introduced the rule of Vinaya that the bhikkhus should not destroy plant life.

Verse 223: Akkodhena jine kodhaṃ asādhuṃ sādhunā jine
Jine kadariyaṃ dānena saccena alikavādinaṃ.

Verse 223: Conquer anger by love, evil by good, the miser by charity and the liar with truth.

Overcome anger by love
Story of Lady Uttara

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

Uttara was the daughter of a farm labourer Punna who worked for a rich man Sumana. One day, Punna and his wife offered almsfood to Venerable Sariputta, as a result of which they became very rich. Punna was declared the official banker. Once, Punna offered almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus for seven days and on the seventh day, on hearing the discourse from the Buddha, all the three members of the family attained Srotappan stage of fruition. On coming of age, Uttara was married to the son of a rich man, Sumana. Uttara was unhappy in her husband's home because she could not offer almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus or listen to the Dhamma. So, she told her father, 'Why have you kept me in this cage? Here I am not able to offer any almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus, nor can I hear the Dhamma.' Her father felt sorry for her and sent rupees fifteen thousand in cash to help her in providing almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus. With this money she engaged Sirima, a beautiful courtesan of Rajagriha as her husband's wife in her place for fifteen days. During this period, Uttara offered almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus. On the fifteenth day, when her husband, from his window, saw her in the kitchen preparing the almsfood, he smiled and said, 'How foolish she is! She does not know how to enjoy herself. She is tiring herself out in almsgiving ceremony.' Sirima saw him smile and forgetting that she was only a substitute, a paid woman, became very jealous of Uttara. Being unable to control herself, she went to the kitchen and got some boiling oil with the intention of pouring it over the head of Uttara. Uttara saw Sirima coming but bore no ill-will towards her. She reflected that because Sirima had stood for her that she could hear the Dhamma for fifteen days, fulfil her religious obligations and carry out the acts of charity. Thus she was extremely grateful to Sirima. Suddenly, she realised that Sirima was going to pour boiling oil on her. Seeing her, she made this firm resolution, 'If I bear any ill-will towards Sirima, then let this boiling oil burn me. If I have no ill-will towards her, let it not burn me.' As Uttara had no ill-will towards Sirima, the boiling oil proved harmless. It was just like cold water to her. But Sirima thought that oil must have gone cold. She went to get another pot of boiling oil. The attendants of Uttara caught her and beat her. Uttara stopped them and asked them to apply some medicinal ointment on Sirima. Then Sirima remembered her true position, regretted what she had done and requested her mistress to pardon her. Uttara told her, 'I shall ask my father whether I should accept your apology.' Sirima was going to Punna, when Uttara said, 'I was not referring to my father who gave me birth but to the father, the Buddha who has helped me in breaking the chains of birth.' So, as arranged, Sirima offered almsfood to the Buddha and the bhikkhus the next day. After the meal, the Buddha was told about what had happened between Sirima and Uttara. Sirima admitted her mistake and requested the Buddha to ask Uttara to pardon her. He then asked Uttara how she felt when boiling oil was being poured on her head. Uttara replied, 'Sir! Because I am grateful to Sirima, I bear no ill-will or hatred towards her. I only radiated my loving kindness towards her.' The Buddha then applauded her tolerance and capacity to control anger.

Verse 224: Saccaṃ bhaṇe na kujjheyya dajjā ppasmim pi yācito
Etehi tihi ṭhānehi gacche devāna santike.

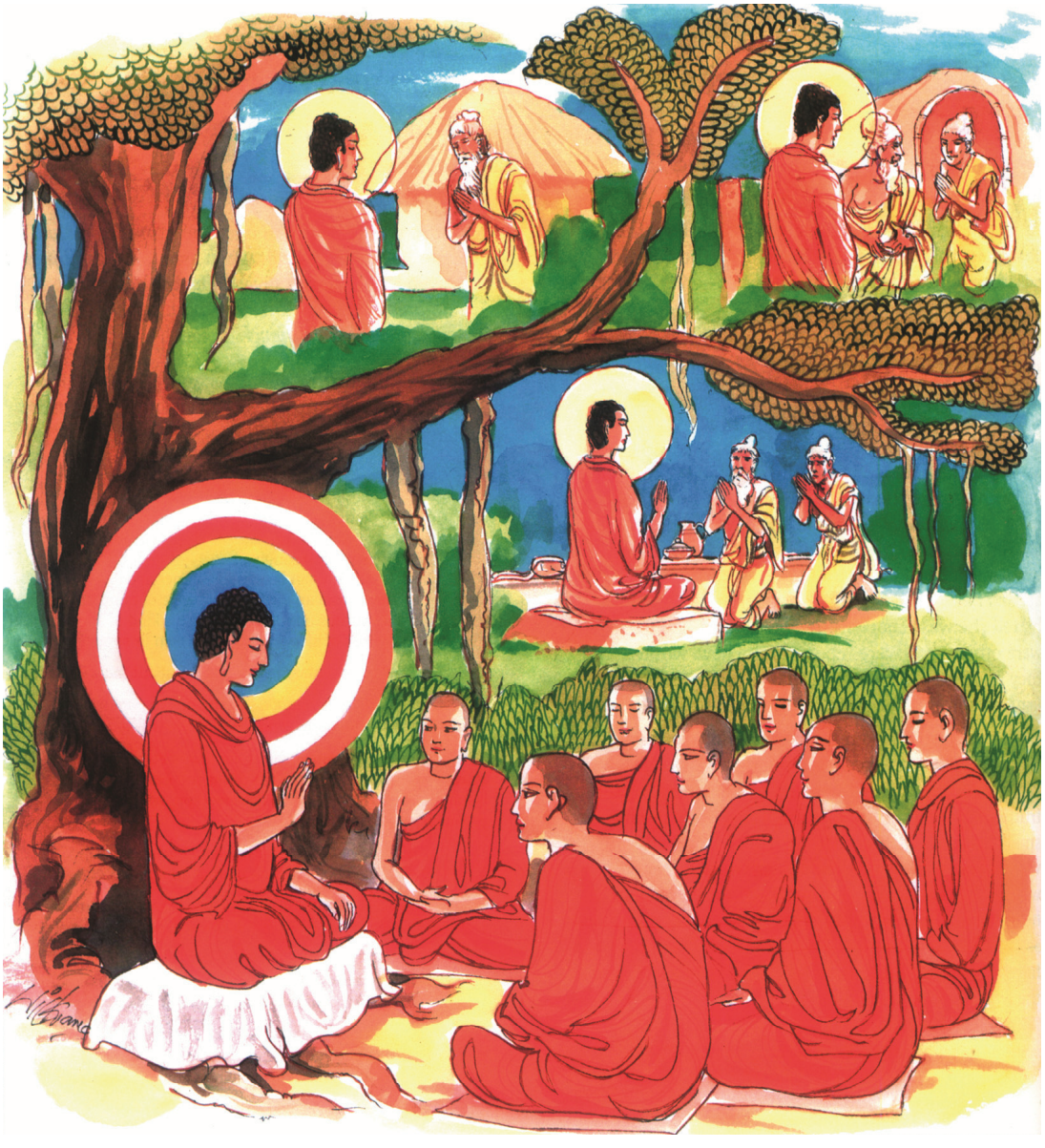
Verse 224: One should speak the truth. One should not be angry. One should give when asked, even when there is little to give. Through these three paths, one may go to the lands of gods.

Be truthful, patient and generous
Story of the way to heaven

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, bhikkhu Maha Moggallana visited the deva loka and found many devas living in big luxurious mansions. He asked them, 'What good deeds have you done to be reborn in the deva world?' They gave him different answers. One of them said, 'I am reborn in the deva world not because I have been charitable, nor because I have listened to the Dhamma but just because I have always spoken the truth.' One female deva said, 'I am reborn in the deva loka because I did not get angry with my master. I had no ill-will towards him even when he often beat and abused me. For keeping my anger under control and giving up hatred, I am reborn in the deva loka.' Then, there were others who were reborn in the deva world because they had offered little things like a stick of sugarcane, a fruit or some vegetable to a bhikkhu or to someone else.

On his return from the deva loka, Moggallana put this question before the Buddha, 'Bhante! Is it possible to gain such great benefits by just speaking the truth, or by checking one's passions like anger or by giving small amounts of such little value things like fruits and vegetables?' The Buddha questioned him back, 'My son! Why do you ask this question? Have you not seen for yourself the big palatial houses in the deva loka? Have you not yourself spoken to the devas and heard what they have said in reply to your question? You should have no doubt left in you by now. Little deeds of merit definitely lead one to the world of the devas.'



Verse 225: Ahiṃsakā ye munayo niccaṃ kāyena saṃvutā
Te yanti accutaṃ ṭhanaṃ yattha gantvā na socare.

Verse 225: The sages who are harmless and are ever contolled in body go to the Nirvana, the deathless state, where one has no more grief.

Be harmless, attain deathlessness
A brahmin greets the Buddha as his son

Place: Anjanavana

Once, the Buddha and the bhikkhus entered the town of Saketa for almsfood. On the way, they met an old brahmin who on seeing the Buddha so addressed him, 'O son, where have you been all these years? Why have you not come to see us all for a very long time? Come with me. Let me take you to your mother also. She too will be happy to see you.' Saying so, he requested the Enlightened One to come to his house. The Buddha did not show any resentment or reaction to what the old man said. On reaching home, the old man introduced him to his wife who also said the same thing to the Buddha. The Buddha was introduced to the children of the house as the 'eldest brother.' They paid regards to him. From that day onwards, the couple invited him for almsfood everyday and the Buddha visited them regularly. After the meals they heard the Dhamma attentively and in due course of time the old man and his wife attained the third stage of Sainthood, the Anagami state of fruition.

The bhikkhus were puzzled how and why the Buddha allowed the old couple to address him as their son. The Buddha clarified thus, 'Bhikkhus, they called me as their son because they were my parents and uncle and aunt in innumerable births in the past. In several lives, I was either their son or a nephew.' The Buddha also explained to the bhikkhus, **'Sometimes we feel extremely pleased when we meet someone unknown to us. We feel good in his company and develop liking for him even when we have never seen such a person. Because of immense love for him, we develop full trust in him. Sometimes, as we have lived together with someone happily in the past, we develop same attachment in this life also as lotus is attached to water.'** The Buddha stayed near the brahmin couple for three months and visited them regularly for almsfood.

During this period they attained Arahantaship. Subsequently, they passed away in Nirvana. The bhikkhus did not know that the brahmin couple had attained Nirvana. They asked the Buddha where they were reborn. The Buddha explained, 'Those who are Arahants, are not reborn anywhere. They have attained Nirvanic bliss.'

Verse 226: Sadā jāgaramānānaṃ ahorattānusikkhinaṃ
Nibbāṇaṃ adhimuttānaṃ atthaṃ gacchanti āsavā.

Verse 226: For them who always remain vigilant, who train themselves day and night, who strive and let themselves move towards the Nirvana, their impurities come to an end.

Be vigilant, give up impurities
Story of Punna

Place: Gridhakoot Parbat, Rajagriha

One evening Punna, the slave girl, was crushing rice for her master. As she was sweating profusely and was feeling tired, she came out of the room to rest for a while in the cool air. Her eyes fell on Venerable Dabba, who was taking some bhikkhus down the hill, after listening to the Dhamma. He was carrying a light to show them the way. Punna saw them and thought, 'I am awake till this late hour of the night because I am poor and I have to earn my livelihood. But why the bhikkhus should be awake till this late hour of the night? May be some bhikkhu is sick, some bhikkhu has been bitten by a snake or they are troubled by something.'

Early in the morning, Punna took some rice, soaked it in water and made cake of it. Thinking 'I shall eat it by the riverside', she took it with her. On the way, she saw the Buddha on almsround and thought, 'On some days, I see the Buddha but have nothing to offer to him. On other days, I do have something to offer but I do not see him. I am lucky today as I have seen him and I have cake also to offer. But will he accept this cheap and coarse cake?'

She decided to offer the cake to the Buddha. But she was not sure whether he would like to accept her offering of such coarse food. The Buddha read out her thoughts. He accepted the offering of cake and looked towards Ananda. Ananda understood that the Buddha wanted to give a short discourse to her. So, he spread a mat on the ground. The Buddha sat on the mat and ate the cake, offered by Punna. Afterwards, Punna requested the Buddha, 'Bhante! Let the truth which has enlightened you, enlighten me as well.' 'So it be', said the Tathagata. Then the Buddha asked her, 'Punna, what did you say when you saw the bhikkhus coming down from the hill-top last night?' 'Bhante, the explanation is very simple, "As far as I am concerned, I am a poor and oppressed person and hence I am unable to sleep. But why is it that the bhikkhus are not able to sleep?"' The Buddha clarified what was puzzling her, 'You have no time to sleep because you are poor and have to work hard. As far as my sons, the bhikkhus, are concerned, they do not sleep because they have to be ever vigilant and mindful all the time. There is difference between the two. **No matter in whatever state one is, one must not feel tired of being mindful and vigilant.**'

Verse 227: Porāṇam etaṃ Atula n'etaṃ ajjatanām iva
Nindanti tuṇhim āsiṇaṃ nindanti bahu bhāṇinaṃ
Mita bhāṇinam pi nindanti natthi loke anindito.

Verse 227: Atula! It is not something new. It has always been told since ancient times. They blame one who maintains silence. They blame one who speaks much. They also blame one who speaks little. There is none in this world who is not blamed.

None is blameless
Story of Atula

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Atula was a lay disciple who lived in Sravasti. He had a group of five hundred lay disciples who were normally his companions. One day, he took his disciples with him to the monastery to hear the Dhamma from bhante Revata. Therefore, they went to him, saluted him and sat down on one side. They requested him to tell the principles of the Dhamma. Now, bhante Revata was used to living alone as a recluse. He enjoyed living in isolation without companions, delighting in solitude. Therefore, when Atula approached him, he did not utter a single word and maintained silence.

'Bhante Revata has nothing to offer to us,' thought Atula. They were dissatisfied and left his place.

Verse 228: Na cāhu na ca bhavissati na cetarahi vijjati
Ekantaṃ nindito poso ekantaṃ vā pasaṃsito.

Verse 228: There never has been, there never will be, nor there is anyone now in the present, who has always been blamed or who has been praised only.

None is ever blamed or praised
Story of Atula

Next, they moved to bhante Sariputta, paid regards to him and stood on his side. 'What is the purpose of your coming to see me?' asked bhante Sariputta. Replied Atula, 'I, along with these lay disciples, went to hear the Dhamma from bhante Revata. But he did not say a single word to us. I got irritated with him and we have now come to you to hear the Dhamma. Preach the Dhamma to us.' Sariputta said, 'Well! If it is so lay disciples, then sit down.'

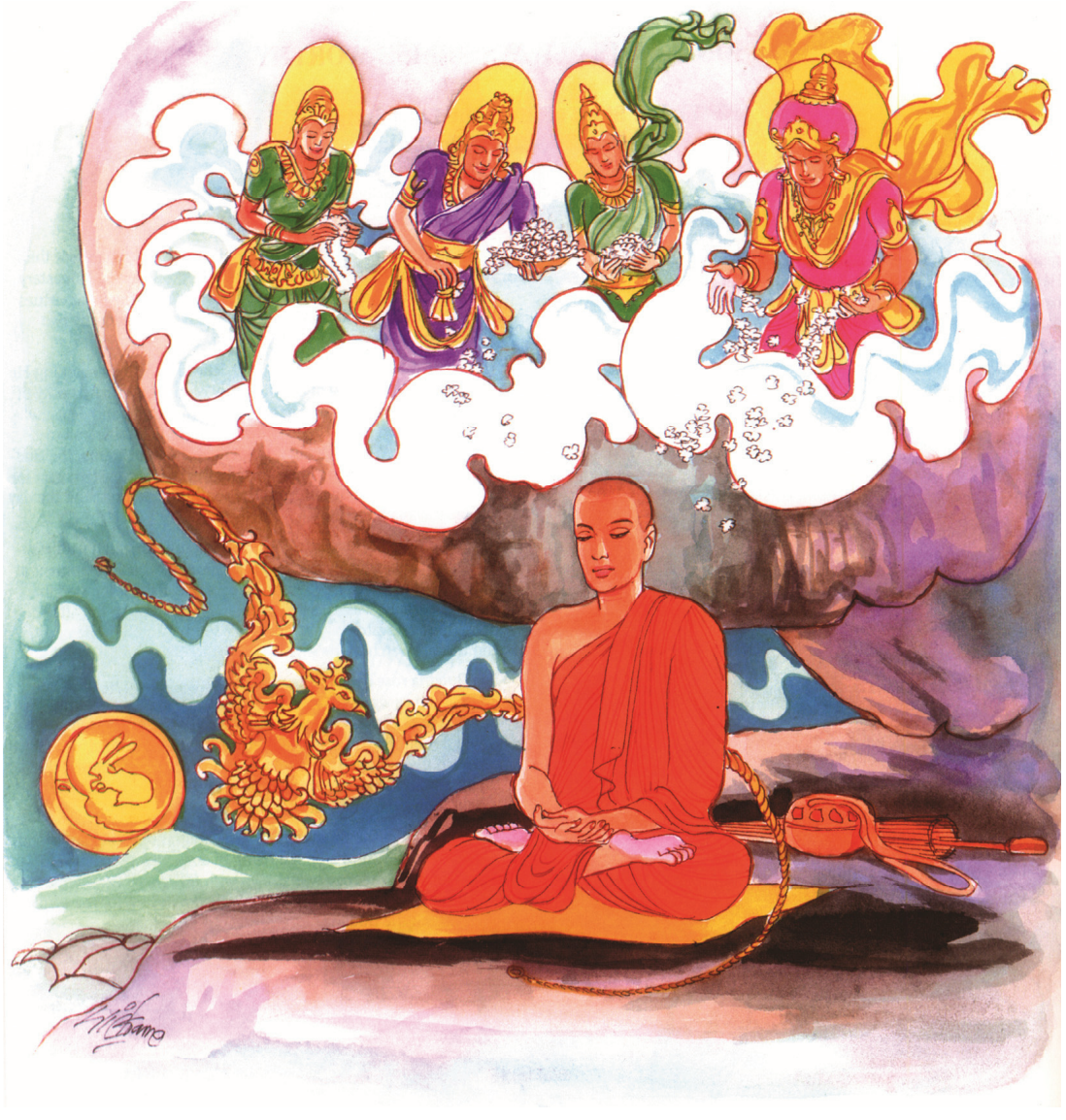
All the lay disciples sat down. Then Sariputta explained the teachings in the Abhidhamma at great length. But the talk was not of their liking. They grumbled, 'Abhidhamma is exceedingly hard to understand. Bhante has taught us in great length. Of what use such great exposition is to us?'

Verse 229: Yañ ce viññū pasaṃsanti anuvicca suve suve
Acchidda vuttiṃ medhāviṃ paññāsila samāhitaṃ.

Verse 229: If the wise praise him day after day, knowing that his life is truly faultless, he is intelligent and endowed with wisdom and virtue, who will blame him?

Who dare blame the pure?
Story of Atula

Irritated there also, they left the place and this time they approached bhante Ananda for teaching the Dhamma. They came to bhante Ananda, paid respects to him and stood on one side. Bhante Ananda asked, 'what do you want, Atula?' Atula replied, 'Please preach us Dhamma, bhante.' So, Ananda explained to them the Dhamma briefly, making it very easy to understand.



Verse 230: Nekkhaṃ jambonadass eva ko taṃ ninditum arahati
Devā pi taṃ pasaṃsanti Brahmuṇā pi pasaṃsito.

Verse 230: Who will dare to condemn him who is like a piece of pure, refined gold coin? Even the gods praise him. He is praised even by the great Brahma.

Who are praised by all?
Story of Atula

But they felt that the talk was too brief and sketchy. Next they went to the Buddha and told him, 'Venerable Sir, we have come to listen to your teaching. We have been to other preachers before we have come to you but we are not satisfied with any of them. Venerable Revata did not bother to teach anything and kept silent. Venerable Sariputta was too exhaustive and the Dhamma he taught was too difficult for us to understand. As for Venerable Ananda, he was too brief and sketchy. We did not like any of the discourses.'

To them the Buddha said, 'Atula and the disciples! **Blaming others is not a new thing! There is no one in this world who is never blamed. There is none who received only praise or only blame. Even kings and the Buddhas are blamed by some and praised by others. To be blamed or to be praised by someone narrow minded is of no consequence. One is truly criticised if he is censured by a wise man. Similarly, he is truly praised when he is praised by a wise man.**'

Verse 231: Kāyappakopaṃ rakkheyya kāyena saṃvuto siyā
Kāya duccaritaṃ hitvā kāyena sucaritaṃ care.

Verse 231: Guard against evil deeds. Control your body. Giving up evil deeds, cultivate good deeds.

Be pure in deed
Six monks wear wooden sandals

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

The Buddha spoke these four verses while residing at Venuvana monastery, near Rajagriha, with reference to a group of six monks.

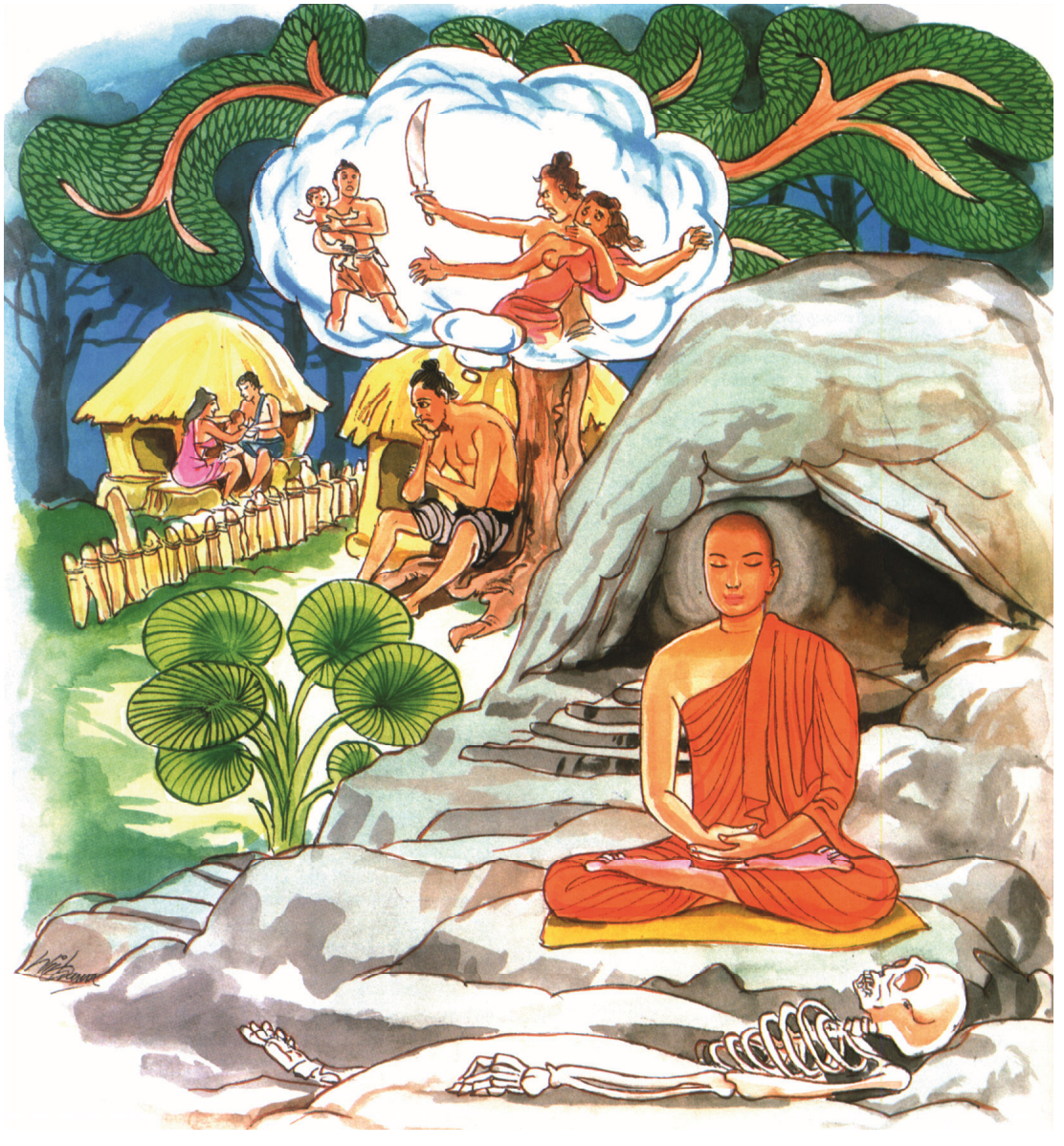
One day, a group of six bhikkhus put on wooden sandals, took wooden sticks in their hands and walked up and down on the surface of a flat rock, making much sound. The Buddha heard the noise and asked Ananda, 'Ananda! What is the noise? What is going on?'

Verse 232: Vacipakopaṃ rakkheyya vācāya saṃvuto siyā
Vaci duccaritaṃ hitvā vācāya sucaritaṃ care.

Verse 232: Guard against evil speech. Control your speech. Giving up evil speech, cultivate good speech.

Be pure in speech
Six monks wear wooden sandals

Venerable Ananda replied, 'A group of six monks is walking around up and down in wooden sandals and that is making the noise.'



Verse 233:Manopakopaṃ rakkheyya manasā saṃvuto siyā
Mano duccaritaṃ hitvā manasā sucaritaṃ care.

Verse 233: Guard against evil thoughts. Control your mind. Giving up evil thoughts, cultivate good thoughts.

Be pure in thought
Six monks wear wooden sandals

The Buddha advised, 'One must be always considerate to others and not disturb the peace. A bhikkhu should always control his thoughts, words and deeds.'

Verse 234: Kāyena saṃvutā dhirā atho vācāya saṃvutā
Manasā saṃvutā dhirā te ve suparisaṃvutā.

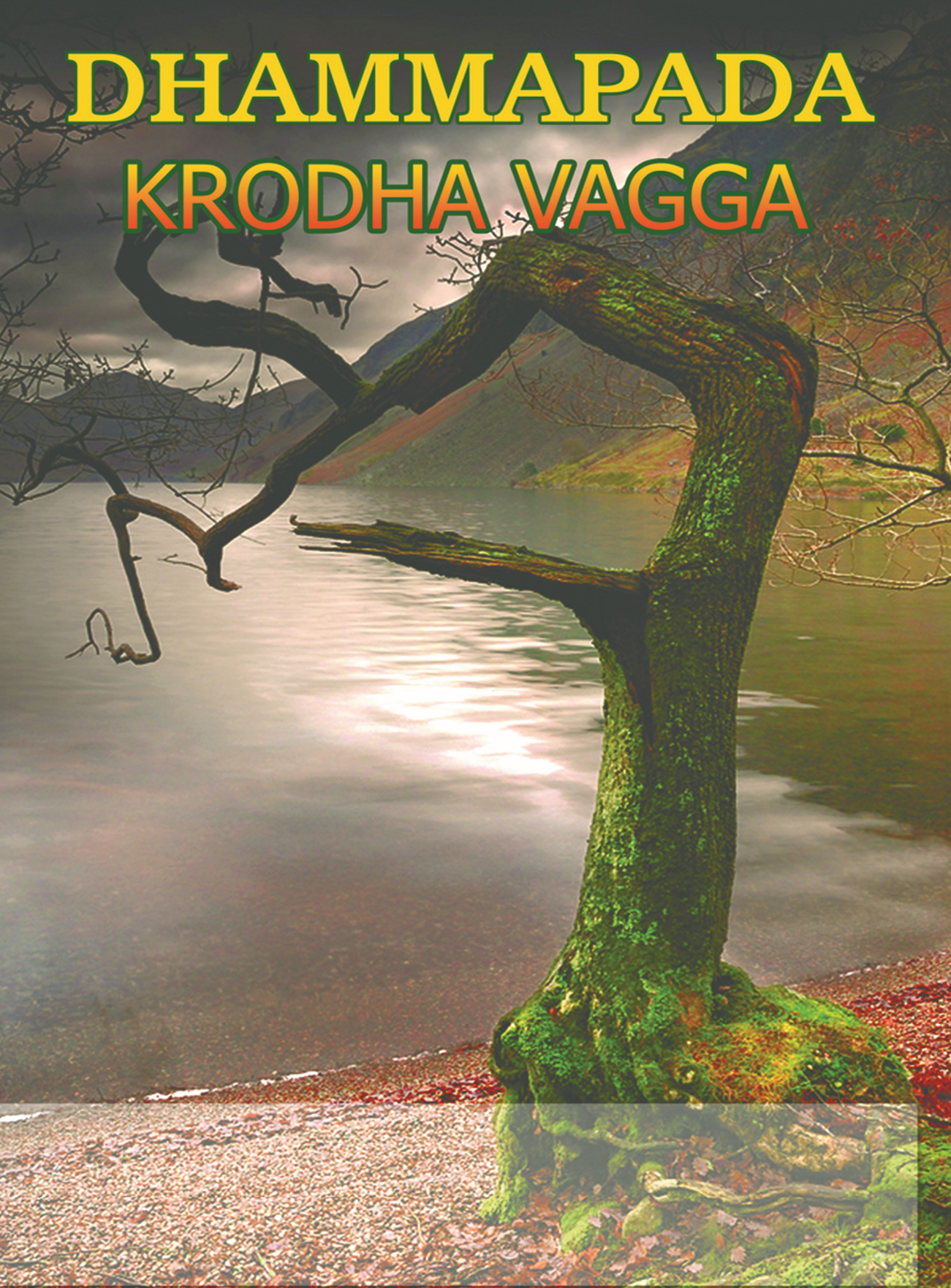
Verse 234: The wise are controlled in deeds. They are controlled in speech. They are controlled in thoughts. Indeed, they are perfectly self-controlled.

Be perfectly self-controlled
Six monks wear wooden sandals

After this incidence additions were made in the rule of Vinaya. The bhikkhus were discouraged from wearing wooden sandals.

DHAMMAPADA

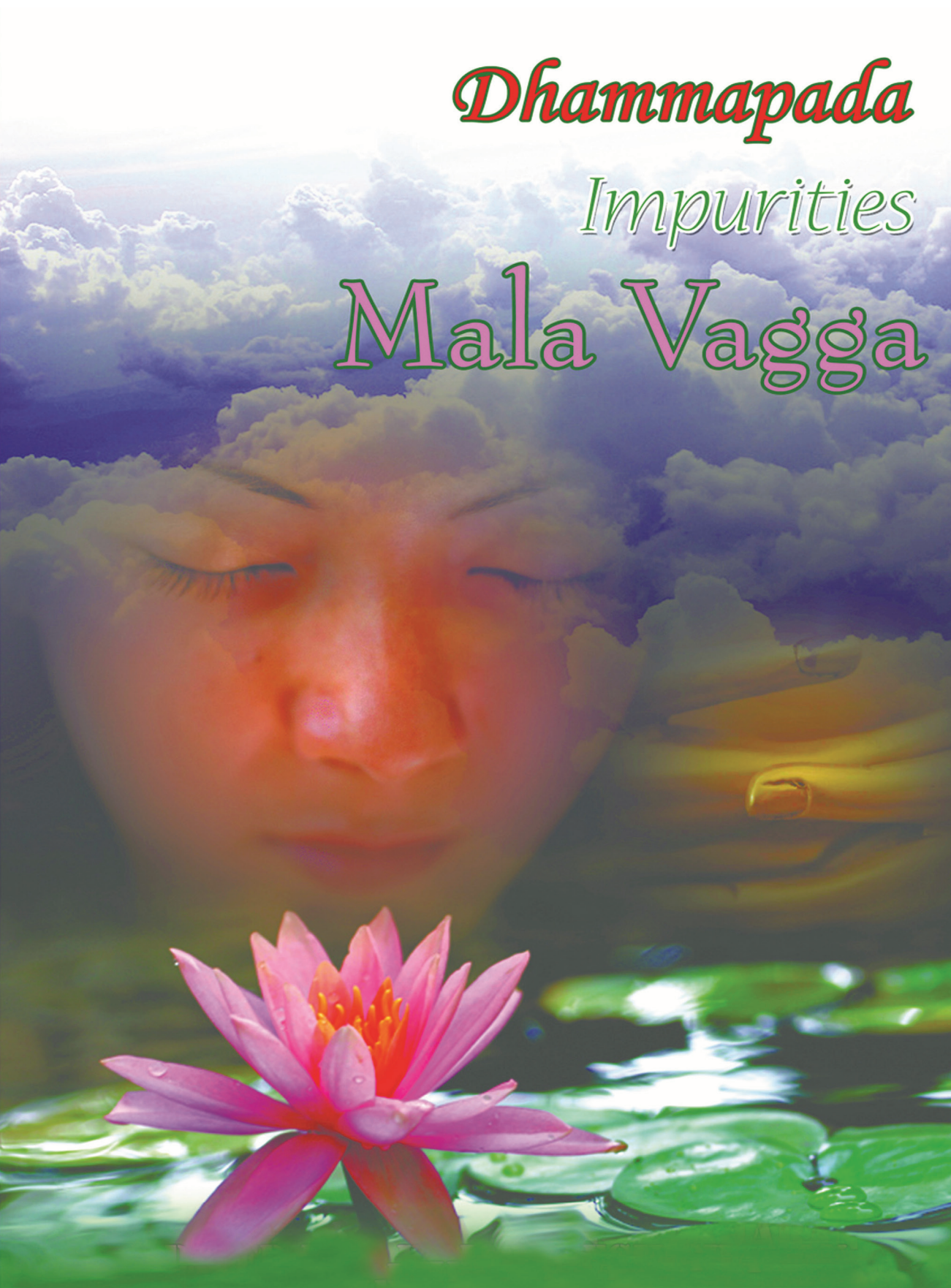
KRODHA VAGGA



Dhammapada

Impurities

Mala Vagga



Chapter XVIII

MALA VAGGA

Impurities or Taints

Index

MALA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of the butcher and his son	235.	Death is near to you	219
2.	Story of the butcher and his son	236.	Strive hard	221
3.	Story of the butcher and his son	237.	Life has come to an end	223
4.	Story of the butcher and his son	238.	Be passionless	225
5.	Story of a brahmin and the holy men	239.	Purify yourself	227
6.	Monk Tissa born as an insect	240.	Don't ruin yourself	229
7.	Story of monk Laludayi	241.	The causes of stain	231
8.	A man's wife commits adultery	242.	Taints are evil things	233
9.	A man's wife commits adultery	243.	Ignorance: the greatest curse	235
10.	Chula Sari practises medicine	244.	Don't lead a shameless life	237
11.	Chula Sari practises medicine	245.	Hard to lead a modest life	239
12.	Story of five lay disciples	246.	Observe the five precepts	241
13.	Story of five lay disciples	247.	Sinful digs his own grave	243
14.	Story of five lay disciples	248.	Do no wrong	245
15.	Story of novice Tissa	249.	Be not envious	247
16.	Story of novice Tissa	250.	No peace to envious	249
17.	Story of five lay- disciples	251.	No river like craving	251
18.	Story of Mendaka	252.	Don't see others' faults	253
19.	Story of Ujjhana Sanni	253.	Whose defilements multiply?	255
20.	Story of the ascetic Subhadda	254.	No aggregates are eternal	257
21.	Story of the ascetic Subhadda	255.	No Saints outside the Dhamma	259

Verse 235: Paṇḍupalāso va dāni si yama purisā pi ca taṃ upaṭṭhitā
Uyyoga mukhe ca tiṭṭhasi pātheyyaṃ pi ca te na vijjati.

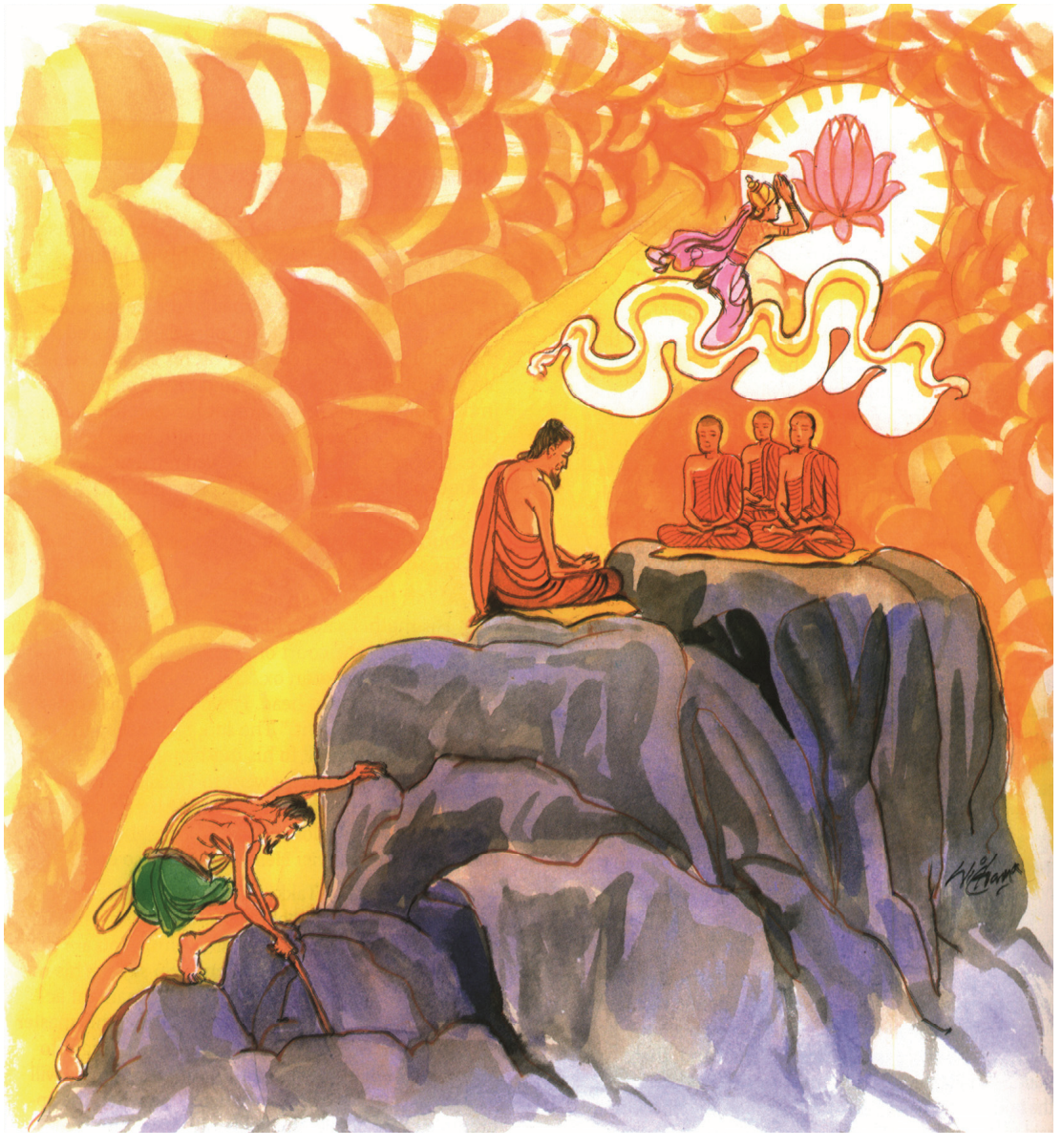
Verse 235: You are now like a leaf, faded and discoloured. The messengers of death are knocking at your door. You stand on the threshold of death. You are about to start on a long journey. Yet, you have made no provision for the journey.

Death is near to you
Story of the butcher and his son

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there lived a man in Sravasti who worked as a butcher for long time. He also loved beef and insisted on having meat curry in his meal everyday. He killed the animals, selected the best parts of its body for his food and sold the rest to the people. Although the monastery was close by, he never gave even a spoonful of rice as almsfood. He continued with this practice for fifty-five years without any sense of remorse.

One day, at dusk time he gave a piece of meat to his wife to cook it and went to the river to take bath. While he was away, one of his friends came to his house and told his wife, 'Let me have a little of meat. A guest has come to my house.' 'We have no meat left for sale. After selling all meat, your friend has gone to the river to take bath.' 'Do not refuse me. If you have any meat left, give it to me.' 'There is no meat except this small piece which he has kept for himself to eat. He does not eat food without meat.' The friend saw the piece of meat lying there. So, when the lady went inside, he picked up the piece of meat and left the place.



Verse 236: So karohi dipam attano khippaṃ vāyama paṇḍito bhava
Niddhanta malo anaṅgaṇo dibbaṃ ariya bhūmim ehisi.

Verse 236: Be wise. Without any further delay strive hard and quickly make your own island, your refuge. Removed of all the impurities, be stainless, free from moral defilements. Doing so, enter the land of the Noble Ones.

Strive hard
Story of the butcher and his son

After the butcher returned back from bath, he sat down for food. His wife served him some rice and vegetables but no meat. 'Where is the meat?' 'Master, no meat is left with us.' 'I gave you a piece of meat to cook the curry before I went for the bath. Where is that?' 'That is not left with us now. Your such and such friend came to our house and said that he had a guest. I told him that we had only a small piece of meat and that you do not eat food without meat curry but he took away the meat, without my knowledge, when I went inside.'

When the butcher learnt all this, he became furious and said, 'Unless I have meat curry to eat, I shall not eat this rice. Take it away.' 'What is to be done Master? Pray, eat this rice today without meat.' 'I will not do that.' He set aside the rice plate on one side and got up.

Verse 237: Upanita vayo va dāni si sampayātosi Yamassa santike
Vāso pi ca te natthi antarā pātheyyam pi ca te na vijjati.

Verse 237: You have spent away your years wastefully and have come to the end of your life, arriving near the death now. There is no stopping or halting on the way. Yet, you have made no provision for the journey.

Life has come to an end
Story of the butcher and his son

He was so accustomed to meat eating and cruelty everyday that he could not discriminate between right and wrong action. He went inside the backyard of his house where he had kept an ox, pushed his hand in its mouth, pulled out the tongue, cut it off from its root with his knife and came back to his wife with it. He got it cooked up on charcoal bed, placed that roasted meat on rice and sat down to eat it. He first took some rice and then placed a piece of meat in his mouth. He tried to take a bite of the ox-tongue but instead he bit off his own tongue. Now the ox and the butcher were in the same plight. The butcher was in great pain and agony. Blood flowed profusely from his mouth. He died a terrible death and was reborn in hell. The ox also died.

The butcher's wife was very frightened and she asked her son to leave home immediately and go far off lest this evil would become a curse and fall on him as well. So, the son went away to Taxila. There, he became a goldsmith. Later, he married the daughter of his master and a few children were born to them. Though he was not cruel as his father, yet he did not do any noble deed in daily life to create good karma for himself.

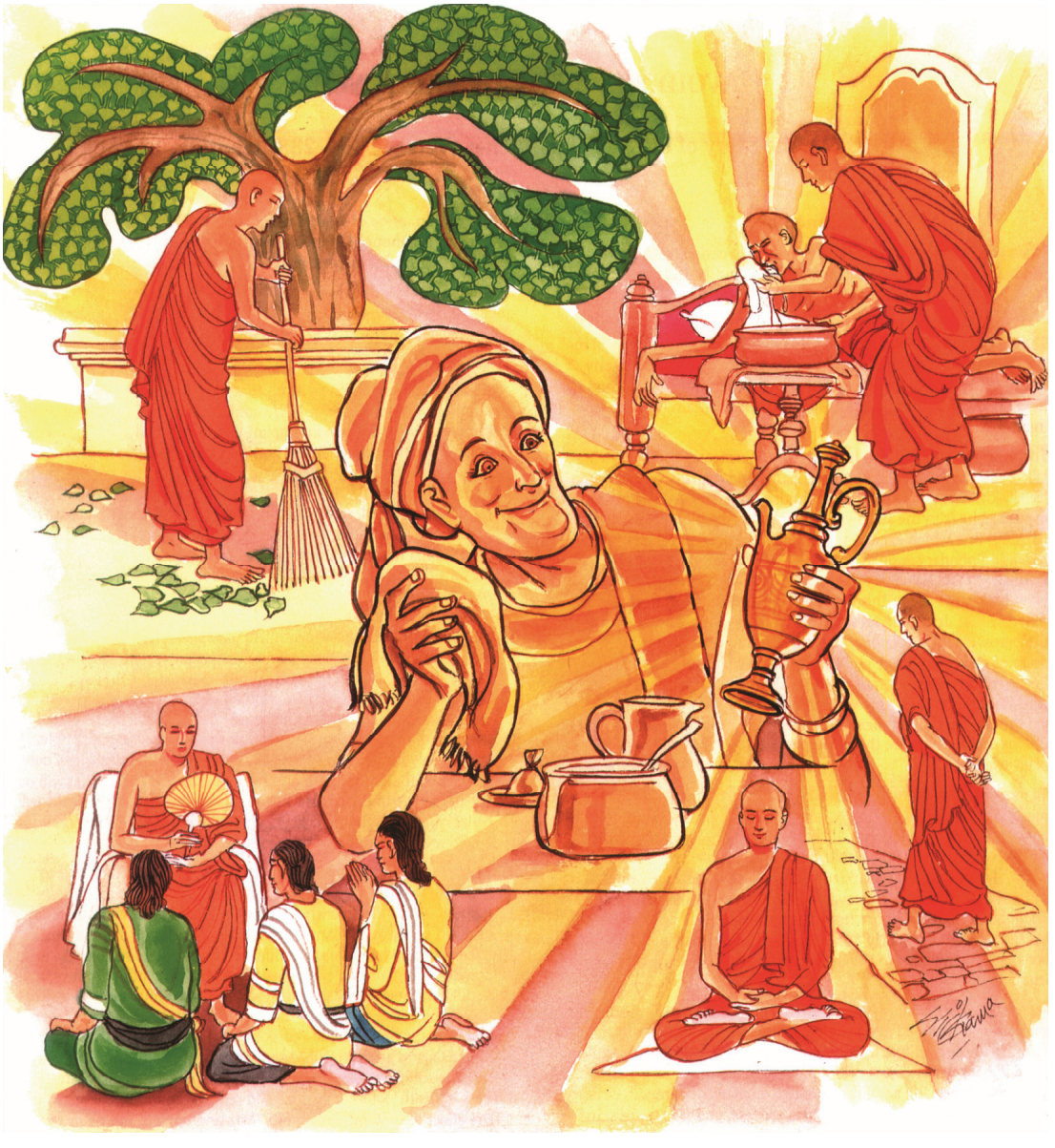
Verse 238: So karohi dipam attano khippaṃ vāyama paṇḍito bhava
Niddhanta malo anaṅgaṇo na puna jātijaraṁ upēhisi.

Verse 238: Without any further delay you exert hard. Work out your refuge. Purified of all impurities, be stainless and enter the celestial land of the sages.

Be passionless
Story of the butcher and his son

When his sons grew up, he returned back to Sravasti along with them and settled down there. The sons, unlike their father, were sincere followers of the Buddha. They were greatly worried of their father because he had not done a single meritorious deed in his whole life. So, one day they invited the Buddha and the bhikkhus to their house for the almsfood. After the food, they requested the Buddha, 'Bhante! We have made this offering to you on behalf of our father. Kindly give a discourse so that he can realise the Dhamma.'

So, the Buddha admonished the old man, 'Lay disciple, you are growing old. Your body is like a dry leaf. You have to prepare for your future life. Make a refuge for yourself. Be wise. Do not be a half witted person. Develop your devotion and spiritual way of life.' On hearing the Dhamma, the old man perceived the fleeting nature of the worldly life. Reflecting mindfully and diligently on the admonition given by the Enlightened One, the old man attained the first stage of Sainthood.



Verse 239: Anupubbena medhāvi thoka thokaṃ khaṇe khaṇe
Kammāro rajatass eva niddhame malam attano.

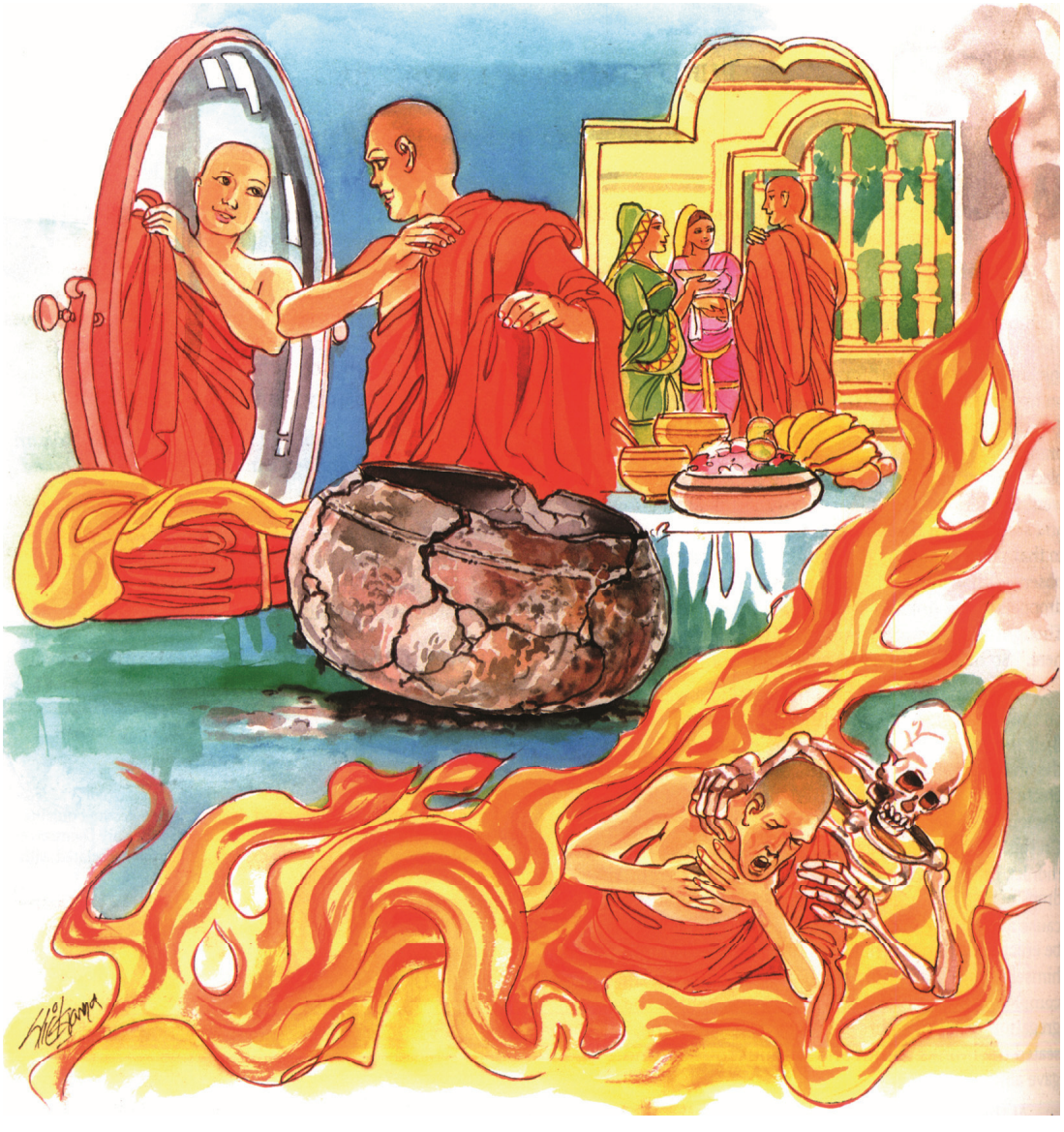
Verse 239: A wise man shall remove his own impurities gradually, little by little, moment by moment, as a goldsmith removes the impurity of silver gradually, by degrees.

Purify yourself
Story of a brahmin and the holy men

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

One day, a brahmin saw a group of bhikkhus rearranging their robes as they were preparing to enter the town for almsfood. He noticed that the robes of some of the bhikkhus touched the ground and got wet because of the dew on the grass. He thought, 'This grass should be cleared from this place.' So, the next day he made the place as clean and smooth as a shining floor. He went to that place again on the following day. This time he found that the robes of the bhikkhus touched the bare ground and became dirty. So, he covered the path with sand. Later on, he observed that the bhikkhus used to sweat in the hot sun and got drenched during rains. So, he finally got a shelter made for them. The bhikkhus gathered there before entering the city for almsfood.

When the building was ready, the man invited the Buddha and the bhikkhus for the almsfood. The brahmin explained to the Buddha how he had performed meritorious deeds one by one. During the thanks giving, the Buddha replied, 'O brahmin! **The wise perform the acts of merit little by little. Gradually and constantly they remove the impurities of the mind.**'



Verse 240: Ayasā va malaṃ samuṭṭhitaṃ taduṭṭhāya tameva khādati
Evaṃ atidhona cārinaṃ saka kammāni nayanti duggatiṃ.

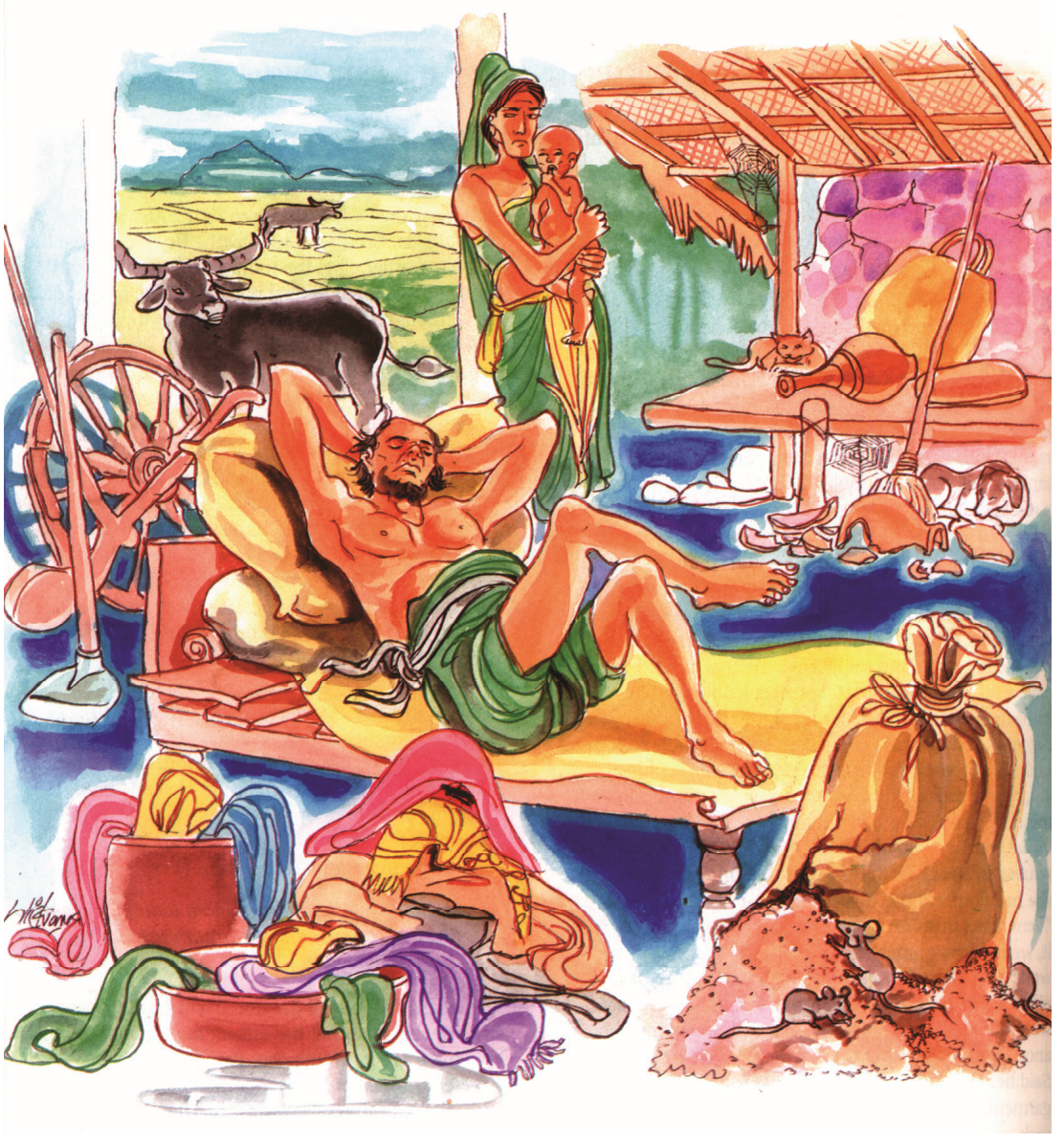
Verse 240: As the rust formed from the iron eats up the very iron, so also his own evil deeds lead the violator to an evil destiny.

Don't ruin yourself
Monk Tissa born as an insect

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a monk named Tissa lived in Sravasti. One day, he received a set of costly robes in almsgiving. He was very pleased at it. He thought of wearing it the next day. But he passed away that very night. As he was greatly attached to the set of robes, he was reborn as an insect within their folds. Since there was none to inherit his belongings, it was decided to distribute the robes amongst the bhikkhus. When they were being distributed, Tissa, as the insect, was greatly upset. He cried out, 'They are destroying my robes!' The Buddha heard the cry through his supernatural power and advised the bhikkhus not to touch the robes for the next seven days. On the eighth day, the robes were distributed amongst the bhikkhus.

Later, the Buddha explained to the bhikkhus, 'Tissa was greatly attached to the robes. Due to this bad karma he was reborn as an insect for seven days. He lived in the folds of the robes. When you were preparing to distribute it, he, as an insect, was in great agony. He was restless and moved around here and there. If you had taken away the robes at that time, he would have become very bitter of you. As a result, he would have further suffered for a long time. After the lapse of seven days he is now reborn in a happy state due to his previous good karma. That is why I asked you to distribute the robes only after seven days. Indeed bhikkhus, attachment is something very dangerous. As the rust corrodes the iron from which it is formed so also attachment destroys oneself. It sends a man to the lower forms of life. A bhikkhu should not be attached to his four requisites either. Attachment also delays the process of self-purification.'



Verse 241: Asajjhāya malā mantā anuṭṭhāna malā gharā
Malaṃ vaṇṇassa kosajjaṃ pamādo rakkhato malaṃ.

Verse 241: Learning not revised, is often forgotten very soon. The house neglected and not repaired, soon decays. Lethargy ruins family life. Lack of interest spoils the beauty. Heedlessness is the flaw of the watchman.

The causes of stain
Story of monk Laludayi

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

In Sravasti, people were always full of praise for the discourses given by Venerable Sariputta and Maha Moggallana, the two Chief Disciples of the Buddha. Laludayi overheard them and said, 'You have heard them only, that you talk like this. I wonder what you will say if you hear my teaching of the Dhamma.' So, the people invited him to deliver a talk on the Dhamma. He accepted the invitation. When it was time, they requested him, 'Bhante, preach the Dhamma to us.' So, Udayi sat down on the seat, took a painted fan in his hand and not knowing a, b, c of the Dhamma said, 'I will recite the sacred word. Let someone else preach the Dhamma.' So saying, he got down from the seat. The disciples made someone else preach the Dhamma. Again the second time he said, 'I will recite the verses at night. Let someone else recite it now.' The disciples did accordingly. At night time they brought Laludayi again to the platform. Then also he said, 'I will recite it at dawn. Let someone else recite it now.' So saying he got down from the seat. In this way he put off speaking three times.

The devotees lost their patience. The crowd picked up stones, sticks and other missiles. They threatened him saying, 'Fool, while we were talking about the virtues of Sariputta and Moggallana, you said this and that. Why don't you say something now?' The bhikkhu ran for his life, people following him. He fell down in an excreta pool.

When the Buddha was told about this incidence, he said, 'Bhikkhus, he has fallen in sewer pool in one of his previous lives as well.' Then he narrated the Shukkar jataka in detail, 'In that life Udayi was a boar and Sariputta was the lion. Laludayi has learnt very little of the Dhamma. He does not recite the religious texts any time. Neither has he memorised anything. Whatever little he knows gets rusty by not being repeated.'

Verse 242: Mal itthiyā duccaritaṃ maccheraṃ dadato malaṃ
Mala ve pāpakā dhammā asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.

Verse 242: Bad conduct is the rust in women. Miserliness is the rust of the donor. All evil things both in this world and the next are indeed rusts.

Taints are evil things
A man's wife commits adultery

Place: Veluvana, Rajagriha

The Buddha spoke these two verses at Veluvana with reference to a youth of a respectful family whose wife committed adultery. The story is that this young man of Rajagriha was married to a woman of equally respectable family. But his wife was not faithful to him. She indulged in adultery. On account of his wife's misconduct, he felt ashamed. He stopped meeting friends and relations. He had no courage to meet them face to face. He also kept himself away from the Buddha.

However, after sometime one day he felt like paying respects to the Buddha. So, he went to the Veluvana monastery. He paid his salutations to him and sat down on one side. 'Disciple, Why is it that you are not to be seen these days? ' asked the Enlightened One. The young man then narrated the whole story to the Buddha.

Verse 243: Tato malā malataraṃ avijjā paramaṃ malaṃ
Etaṃ malaṃ pahatvāna nimmalā hotha bhikkhavo.

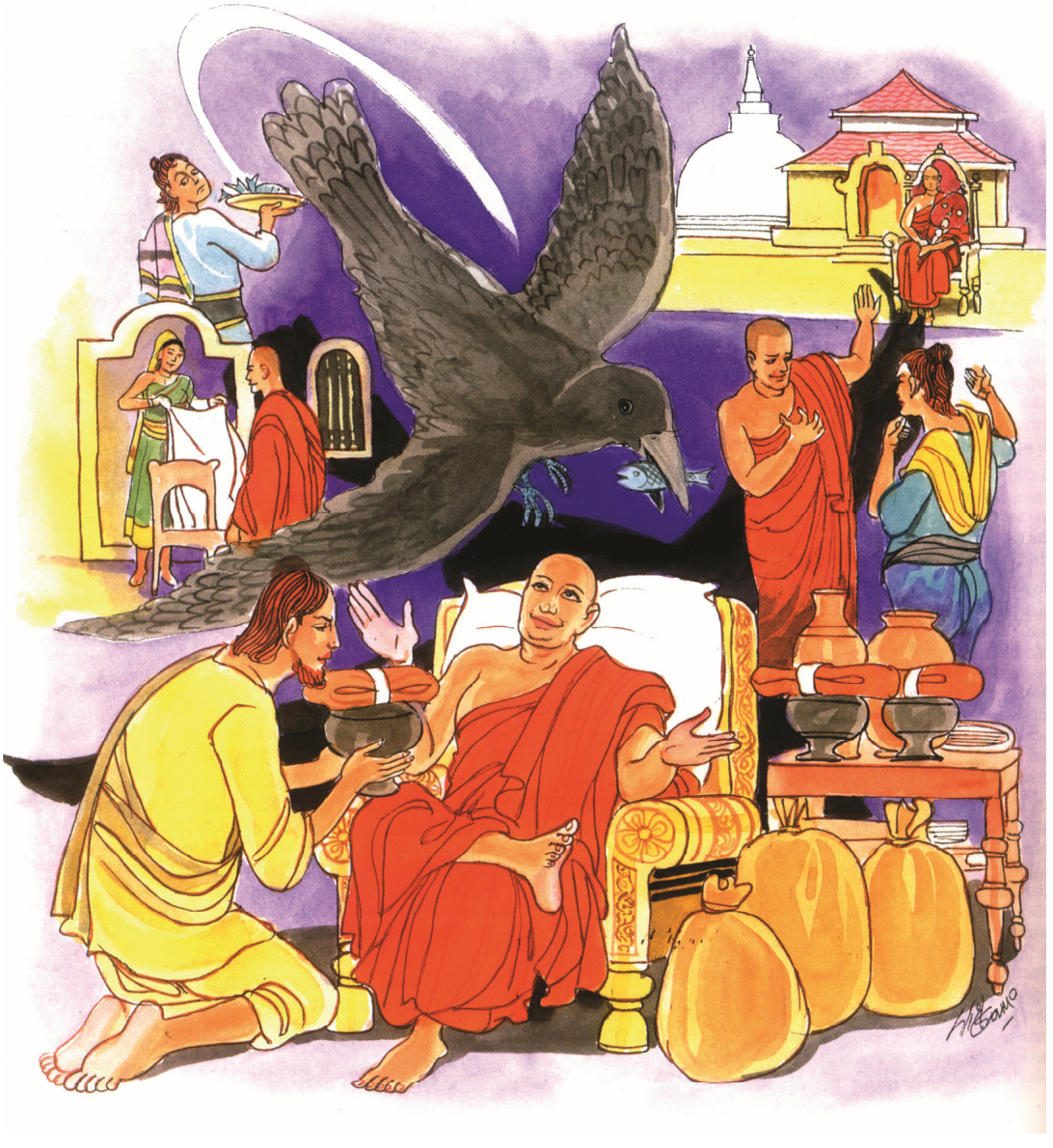
Verse 243: The impurity of ignorance is the worst, the greatest of all the impurities. Removing this impurity, O bhikkhus! Be free from impurities.

Ignorance: the greatest curse
A man's wife commits adultery

On hearing the story and knowing the reason for his absence for quite sometime, the Buddha said, 'My disciple, those women who have no moral shame are just like a river, a road, liquor shop, rest house or a water-pot stand by the roadside. Anyone can use them. They associate with all types of people. They are open to enjoyment by everyone. Therefore, a wise man should not get angry with them.' The Buddha further admonished him, 'I had warned you even in one of your previous births, "Women are like rivers and the like, and a wise man should not get angry with them." But because rebirth is hidden from you, you did not understand this. You ignored this point when it was brought to your notice then.'

The young man requested to throw light on the Jataka. At his request, the Buddha read the following stanza from the Jataka: 'Like a river, a road, an inn, a hall, a shed--- such are the women of this world. Their behaviour is totally unpredictable.'

The Buddha further added, 'Indecent and obscene behaviour is a defect of woman, miserliness is a defect of the giver of the alms. Evil deeds, because of the destruction they cause both in this world and the world to come, are defects of living beings. But of all the defects and deficiencies, ignorance is the worst.'



Verse 244: Sujivaṃ ahirikena kākasūrena dhaṃsinā
Pakkhandinā pagabbhena samkiliṭṭhena jivitaṃ.

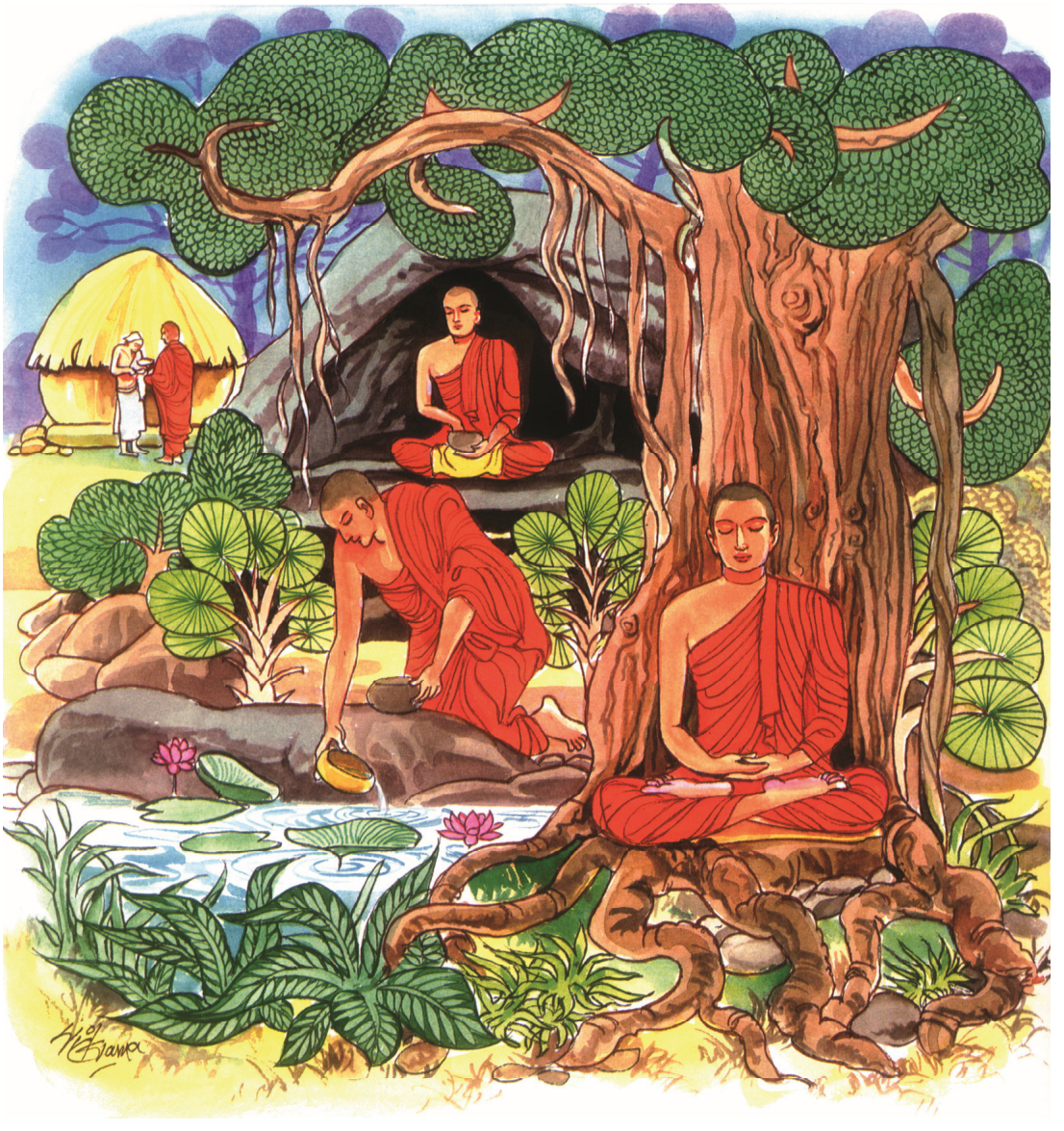
Verse 244: Life is easy for a man who is shameless, bold like a crow, openly disobedient, harmful, arrogant and corrupt.

Don’t lead a shameless life
Chula Sari practises medicine

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery in respect of a bhikkhu named Chula Sari who practised medicine for the purpose of personal gains. The story is that there lived a monk by name Chula Sari who was very cunning and crafty. He knew medicine, practised it and in return earned choicest food for the services rendered by him.

One day, Chula Sari was returning to his dwelling place after attending a patient. On his way, he happened to meet bhante Sariputta. He explained to him how he had gone to treat a patient and accepted delicious food as payment for his services. He offered the food to him saying, ‘Bhante, here is some delicious food which I have received as fee for administering medical treatment. You will not get tasty food like this. Please accept it. Henceforth, whenever in future I receive delicious food like this, I shall bring it to you for sharing with you.’ Sariputta listened to what he said, did not say anything to him and went his way. He did not accept the food because the monk had not followed sila (morality).



Verse 245: Hirimatā ca dujjivaṃ niccaṃ suci gavesinā
Alinen appagabbhena suddhājivena passatā.

Verse 245: Life is difficult for a man who is shameful, ever seeks purity, detached, humble, clean in life and wise.

Hard to lead a modest life
Chula Sari practises medicine

On reaching the monastery, the monks reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha said, 'Bhikkhus, a monk who is shameless, coarse in thought, word and deed is arrogant like a crow. He lives a comfortable living by unlawful and unethical means. On the other hand, the life of a bhikkhu who has a sense of moral shame is not easy.' 'If one has no sense of shame then life is easy for him. He can live in whatever way he likes without having any consideration of "what the people will think." He can be destructive in all manners just as a crow is. His life is unclean just like the life of a crow. He is boastful and goes on his way without caring for others. On the other hand, the life of a person who is modest, sensitive and self-disciplined, morally strong, who constantly pursues what is pure and is unattached; is really tough. His life is, of course, full of insight.'

A crafty crow is also known as 'kakasurena'. The attitude of a shameless person has been compared to a crafty crow. Like a crafty crow, the shameless person lingers unnoticed or hides with ulterior motive until he finds an opportunity ripe to snatch away whatever he can. The verse says that life is easy for such a crafty person. But that is not the right attitude of someone who is a member of the Sangha, the last gem, the last refuge of the Buddha.

Verse 246: Yo pāṇam atipāteti musāvādañ ca bhāsati
Loke adinnaṃ ādiyati paradārañ ca gacchati.

Verse 246: One, who kills, lies, steals or goes to others' wives…….

Observe the five precepts
Story of five lay disciples

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these verses at the Jetavana monastery with reference to five lay-disciples. On one occasion, five lay-disciples were staying at the Jetavana monastery and were observing the following five silas (precepts):

1. I undertake to abstain from killing anything that breathes.

2. I undertake to abstain from taking what is not given.

3. I undertake to abstain from sexual misconduct.

4. I undertake to abstain from speaking falsehood.

5. I undertake to abstain from liquor that causes intoxication and heedlessness.

Of these five lay-disciples, each one was observing only one sila out of the five but claimed that his particular sila was the most difficult to follow.

Verse 247: Surāmeraya pānañ ca yo naro anuyuñjati
Idh evam eso lokasmiṃ mūlaṃ khanati attano.

Verse 247: …….and is addicted to intoxicating drinks, digs out his own root even in this very life.

Sinful digs his own grave
Story of five lay disciples

One day, they entered in a dispute and argued, 'Following my precept is the hardest thing to do. My sila is the toughest of all the silas we are observing.' As they did not agree, there were arguments and counter-arguments. They went to the Buddha, saluted him, told him about their dispute and requested him for its resolution. The Enlightened One heard them patiently and without naming a single precept as of more or lesser importance, admonished them, 'You should not consider any particular sila as being easy or unimportant. All of them are hard to keep. The observance of these silas will lead you to your welfare and happiness. Do not think lightly of any of the precepts. None of these silas is easy to observe.'

These five silas, also known as Panchasila, the five silas for training, are the ABC of the Buddhist ethics. These are the basic principles for the lay follower, to be observed from the very beginning.

Verse 248: Evaṃ bho purisa jānāhi pāpa dhammā asaññatā
Ma taṃ lobho adhammo ca ciraṃ dukkhāya randhayuṃ

Verse 248: Know this, O good man, that evil things are difficult to control. Let not greed and wickedness drag you to prolonged suffering.

Do no wrong
Story of five lay disciples

Sir Edwin Arnold has very beautifully described them in his immortal work 'The Light of Asia':

Kill not—for pity's sake—lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.

Give freely and receive, but take from none
By greed, or force, or fraud, what is his, own.

Bear not false witness, slander not nor lie;
Truth is the speech of inward purity.

Shun drugs and drinks, which work the wit abuse;
Clear minds, clear bodies, need no soma juice.

Touch not thy neighbour's wife, neither commit
Sins of flesh, unlawful and unfit.

These silas are to be observed and acted upon in one's daily life. They are not meant for mere recitation, for lip service or for applying to others as that would serve no purpose. **It has been rightly said, 'He who knows the silas by heart, but fails to practise them, is like one who lightens up a lamp and then shuts his eyes.'**

Verse 249: Dadāti ve yathā saddhaṃ yathā pasādanaṃ jano
Tattha yo mańku bhavati paresaṃ pāna bhojane
Na so divā vā rattiṃ vā samādhiṃ adhigacchati.

Verse 249: People give according to their faith and pleasure. Whoever becomes envious of others' food and drink, gains no peace either by day or by night.

Be not envious
Story of novice Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Tissa, a young novice, had a very bad habit of criticising other people's good deeds. He used to go about finding faults with the gifts of even Anatha Pindika and Visakha. When people gave a little, he would say, 'Why do they give so very little?' Whenever they gave abundant alms, he would blame them and say, 'I suppose they had no place in their house to put in.' or 'Surely they should give the bhikkhus only so much as is required to support life; so much boiled rice is absolutely wasted.' But with reference to his own relatives, he would say, 'Oh! The house of our relatives is very rich. Their house is like a well where anyone could come for water.' Thus he sang praises of his relatives.

When the bhikkhus found that he was only finding faults with others, they became very skeptical and decided to find out the truth about his family background. Therefore, some young bhikkhus were sent to his village to investigate about him. The villagers provided them with seats and food in the rest-house. 'There is a novice named Tissa who came from this village and retired from the world. Who are his relatives?' The villagers thought, 'There is no young man from any gentleman's household in this village who has retired from the world and become a monk. What are these bhikkhus saying?'

Verse 250: Yassa c'etaṃ sumucchinnaṃ mūla ghaccaṃ samuhataṃ
Sa ve divā vā rattiṃ vā samādhiṃ adhigacchati.

Verse 250: He, who has this feeling of envy cut off, uprooted and destroyed, gains peace by day and by night.

No peace to envious
Story of novice Tissa

So, they clarified to the bhikkhus, 'We have heard of a gatekeeper's son who went on a journey with a group of carpenters. He retired from the world and became a bhikkhu. Without any questioning, definitely it is this novice, you are referring to.' Thus the bhikkhus found out that Tissa's relatives were all poor and that all the time Tissa had only been boasting about them. They reported the matter to the Buddha. Said the Enlightened One, 'Bhikkhus, this is not the first time that he has gone on criticising and empty boasting. In a previous life also he was a great braggart. He had the habit of showing off.'

The Buddha continued, 'Bhikkhus, If any man is annoyed because others give either little or much, coarse or fine food, or because they give nothing to him when they give much to others, such a man will never attain Insight.'

Verse 251: Natthi rāga samo aggi natthi dosa samo gaho
Natthi moha samaṃ jālaṃ natthi taṇhā samā nadi.

Verse 251: There is no fire like lust, no ill-luck like hatred, no net like delusion and no river like craving.

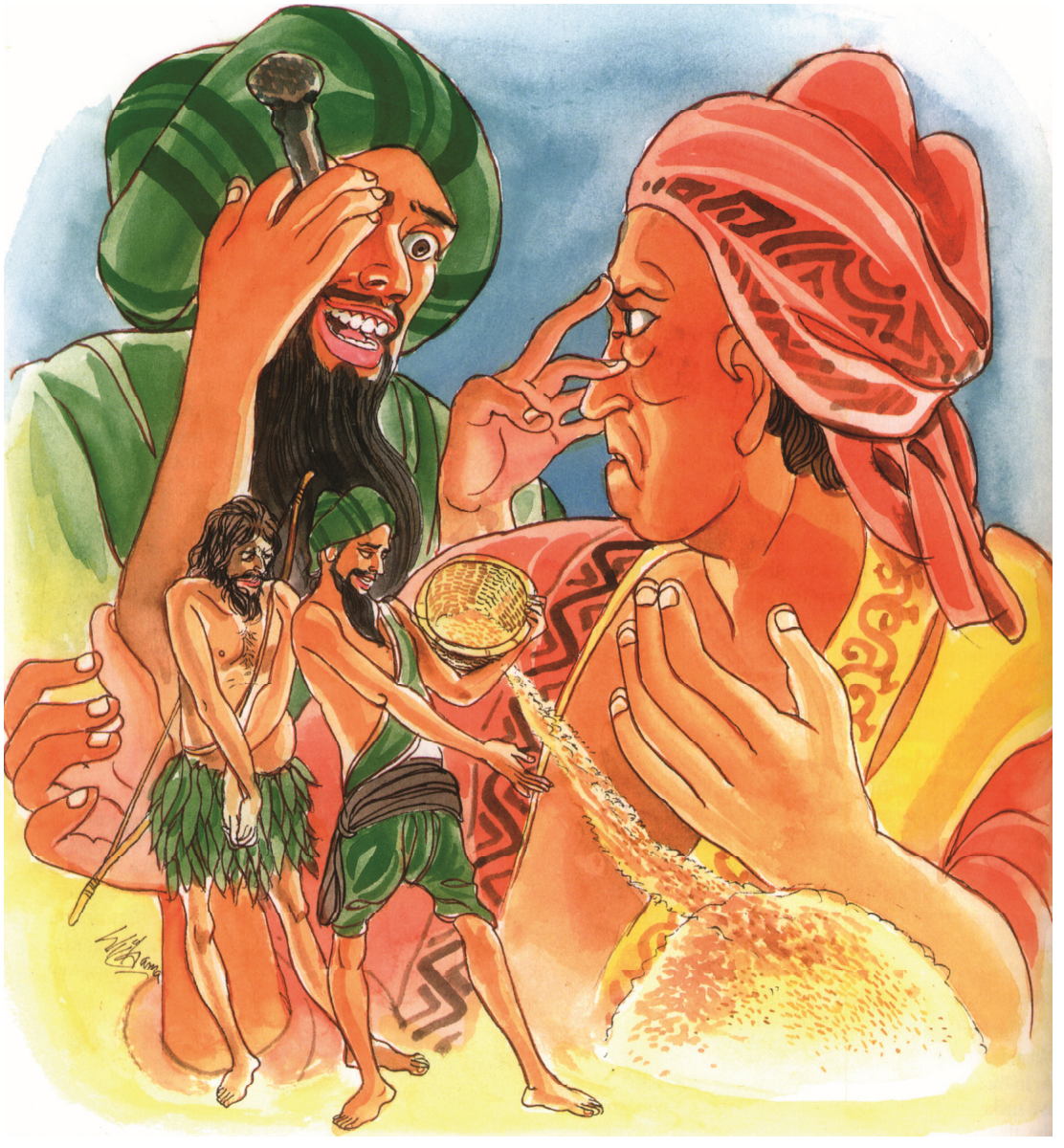
No river like craving
Story of five lay-disciples

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, five lay-disciples were present in a congregation when the Buddha expounded the Dhamma at the Jetavana monastery. One of them was asleep while sitting, the second was scratching the earth with his fingers, the third was trying to shake a tree and the fourth was looking up at the sky. The fifth one was the only one who was respectfully and attentively listening to the Buddha. Bhikkhu Ananda who was standing near the Buddha and fanning him saw the different behaviour of these five lay-disciples and questioned the Buddha, 'Bhante, While you were teaching the Dhamma like the big drops of rain falling from the sky, only one of these five persons was listening to the Dhamma attentively.' Then Ananda described the four different attitudes of the other lay-disciples to the Buddha and asked why they were behaving thus.

The Buddha then explained that these people could not get rid of their old habits. In their past birth, the first one was a snake. As a snake coils up and goes to sleep, so also this man had gone to sleep while listening to the Dhamma. The one who was scratching the earth with his hand was earlier an earthworm. The one who was shaking the tree was a monkey in his past life. The one who had been looking up to the sky had been an astrologer. The one who listened to the Dhamma attentively had been a learned brahmin. The Buddha then said, 'Ananda, you must remember that one must be attentive to be able to understand the Dhamma and there are many people who cannot understand the Dhamma.'

Ananda then asked, 'Sir, What are the things that prevent people from being able to realise the Dhamma?' The Buddha clarified, **'Ananda, passion (raga), ill-will (dosa) and ignorance (moha) are the three things that prevent people from realising the Dhamma. There is no fire like the fire of lust. Passion always burns in men and without any break.'**



Verse 252: Sudassaṃ vajjaṃ aññesaṃ attano pana duddasaṃ
Paresaṃ hi so vajjāni opuṇāti yathā bhusaṃ
Attano pana chādeti kaliṃ va kitavā saṭho.

Verse 252: It is easy to see the faults of others and hard to see one's own faults. One spreads out the faults of others like chaff but hides his own faults as a crafty fowler conceals himself by hiding through the branches of tree etc. or a gambler hides his losing die.

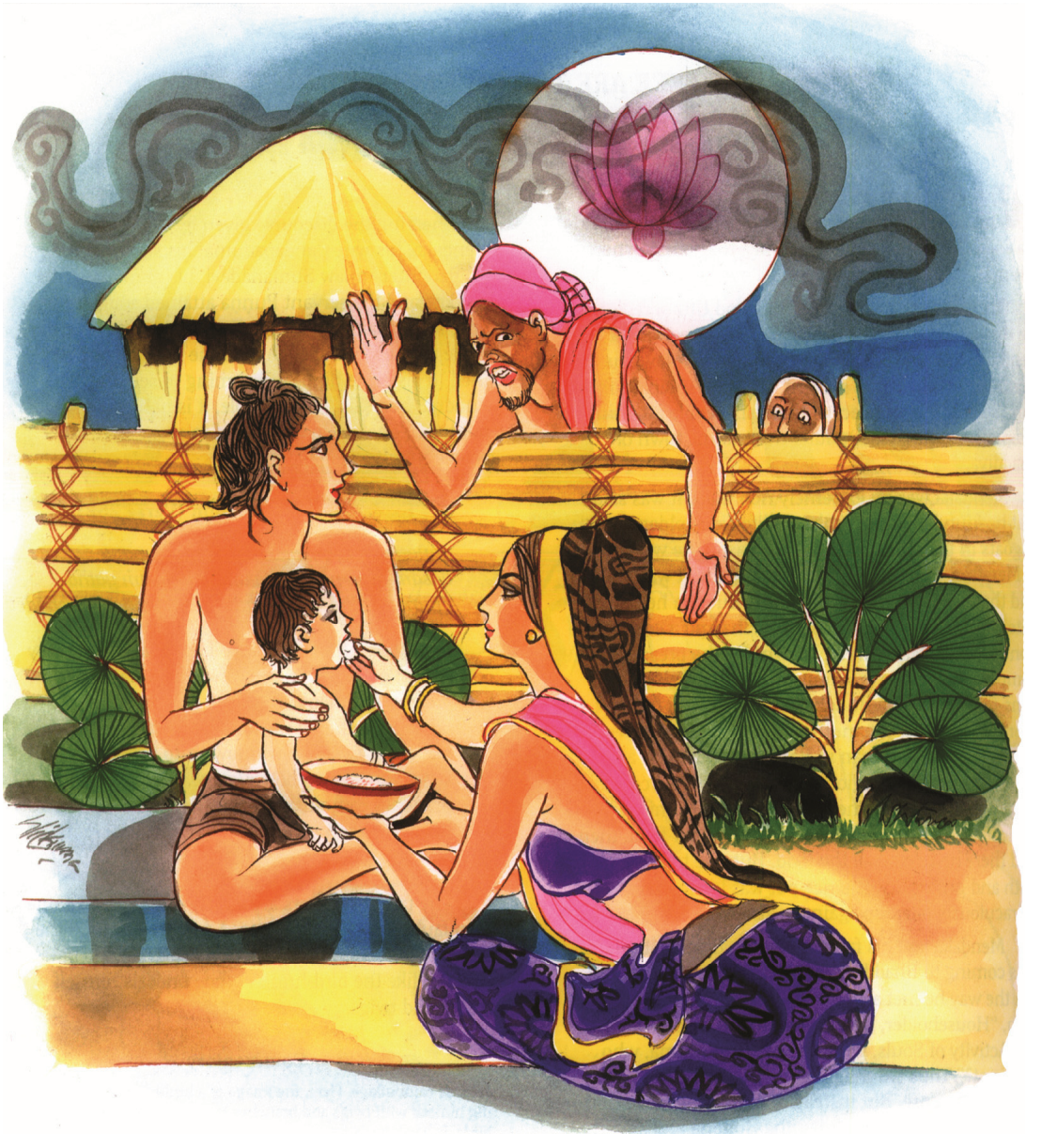
Don't see others' faults
Story of Mendaka

Place: Bhaddiyanagar

Once, while he was on tour to Anga and Uttara regions, the Buddha came to the town of Bhaddiya. During the morning vision, he found that Mendaka, his wife, his son, his daughter-in-law, his grand-daughter and his servant were in a position to attain Srotappan stage. Mendaka was an extremely rich man. He had found, due to his past good karma, a large number of life-sized golden statues of goats in his backyard. For this reason he was known as Mendaka (a goat) the rich man.

On coming to know that the Buddha was coming to Bhaddiya, Mendaka and his family members went to pay homage to him. After hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, the whole family attained Srotappan, first stage of Sainthood. Mendaka then related to the Buddha how on the way he met some ascetics who spoke ill of the Enlightened One and tried to dissuade him not to come and see the Buddha. The Buddha replied, 'My disciple, it is natural for some people not to see their own faults and exaggerate the faults and failings of the other people.'

The Buddha also revealed to Mendaka about the noble deeds done by him in his former births, 'In one of your previous births you had donated a monastery and a congregation hall to Vipassi Buddha. Yet, in another existence you were a rich man in Benaras. At that time there was a severe famine throughout the region. One day, you offered only food you had, as almsfood to a Pachcheka Buddha. As a result, your cooking pot was later on found to be filled up with rice.'



Verse 253: Para vajjānupassissa niccaṃ ujjhāna saññino
Āsavā tassa vaḍḍhanti ārā so āsavakkhayā.

Verse 253: He who sees others' faults and always blames others, the impurities of such a one, grows. He is far off from the destruction of impurities.

Whose defilements multiply?
Story of Ujjhana Sanni

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Bhikkhu Ujjhana Sanni was always in the habit of finding faults and speaking ill of others. The matter was reported to the Buddha who said, 'Bhikkhus, if someone finds fault in another so as to teach him to correct himself, then there is nothing wrong in that. But if someone is always finding faults with others or speaking ill of them out of malice or ill feeling, then it is not desirable. He will not attain concentration and mental absorption (jhana). He won't be able to understand the Dhamma. His moral impurities (asavas) increase.'

Note: We know that in sports a coach finds faults with his player. His job is to find faults. If he is not finding out the mistakes committed by the player, his player will not improve and in that case he will not be doing his job properly. But is he doing wrong by finding faults in the player? No! Is he cruel to the player? No, he is not cruel. In his so called cruelty is hidden the well being of the player. Everything in life depends on the intention, the motive. If the intention is to improve the player, then the coach must teach and reprimand the player.

The word 'Ujjhanasannino' means 'tending to divide others.' His name is derived from his personal weakness in finding faults with others merely to destroy them.

Finding faults of others is the shortcoming of the most of the men these days. It is a by-product of the modern worldly life. Much unhappiness is caused by this habit. This habit arises because some people talk too much. When they talk without thinking, they start criticising others after sometime. It is a very common phenomenon.

'Much talking is a source of danger
Through silence misfortune is avoided.
The talkative parrot in a cage is shut,
While birds that cannot talk, fly freely.
(Tibetan Yoga)

Verse 254: Ākāse padaṃ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire
Papañcābhiratā pajā nippapañcā Tathāgata.

Verse 254: There is no track in the sky, no saint outside. Mankind delights in obstacles (desire, egotism etc.). The Buddhas are free from them.

No aggregates are eternal
Story of the ascetic Subhadda

Place: Kusinagar (Kusinara)

Ascetic Subhadda was the last bhikkhu to be ordained in the Sangha of the Buddha. He has significant place in the history of Buddhism because of this reason.

At the time of the Buddha's parinibbana, this wandering ascetic was living at Kusinara. His younger brother was a devotee of the Buddha and had given alms to the Buddha nine times. When Subhadda heard that the Buddha would attain parinibbana in that night, he became anxious to meet him. He thought, 'I have entertained doubts on three points. The old monks have not been able to resolve them. I have not yet asked Gotama Buddha. I feel that only the Enlightened One can answer these questions. I have so far looked at Gotama as a novice and if I do not ask him the questions now, I may feel sorry hereafter.'

So, Subhadda approached bhikkhu Ananda and requested him, 'A doubt has arisen in me. I have faith in ascetic Gotama. Capable indeed he is to teach the doctrine so that I may dispel my doubts. Shall I, O Ananda, obtain a glimpse of Ascetic Gotama?'

'Enough, friend Subhadda, do not worry the Buddha. He is tired,' said bhikkhu Ananda. Subhadda repeated his request for the second and third time. For the second and third time, Ananda replied in the same way. The Buddha overheard the conversation and addressed to Ananda, 'No, Ananda, do not stop Subhadda. Whatever, he will ask of me, all that will be with the desire for knowledge and not to annoy me. And whatsoever I shall tell him in answer, he will readily understand.'

Verse 255: Ākāse padaṃ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire
Saṅkhārā sassatā natthi, natthi Buddhānaṃ iñjitaṃ.

Verse 255: There is no track in the sky, no Saint outside. No conditioned or caused things are eternal. There is no instability in the Buddhas.

No Saints outside the Dhamma
Story of the ascetic Subhadda

Thereupon, Ananda introduced Subhadda to the Buddha. Subhadda exchanged friendly greetings with him and sitting aside asked his three questions of doubt:

1. Are there tracks in the sky?

2. Are there Ariya bhikkhus (samanas) outside the Teaching of the Buddha?

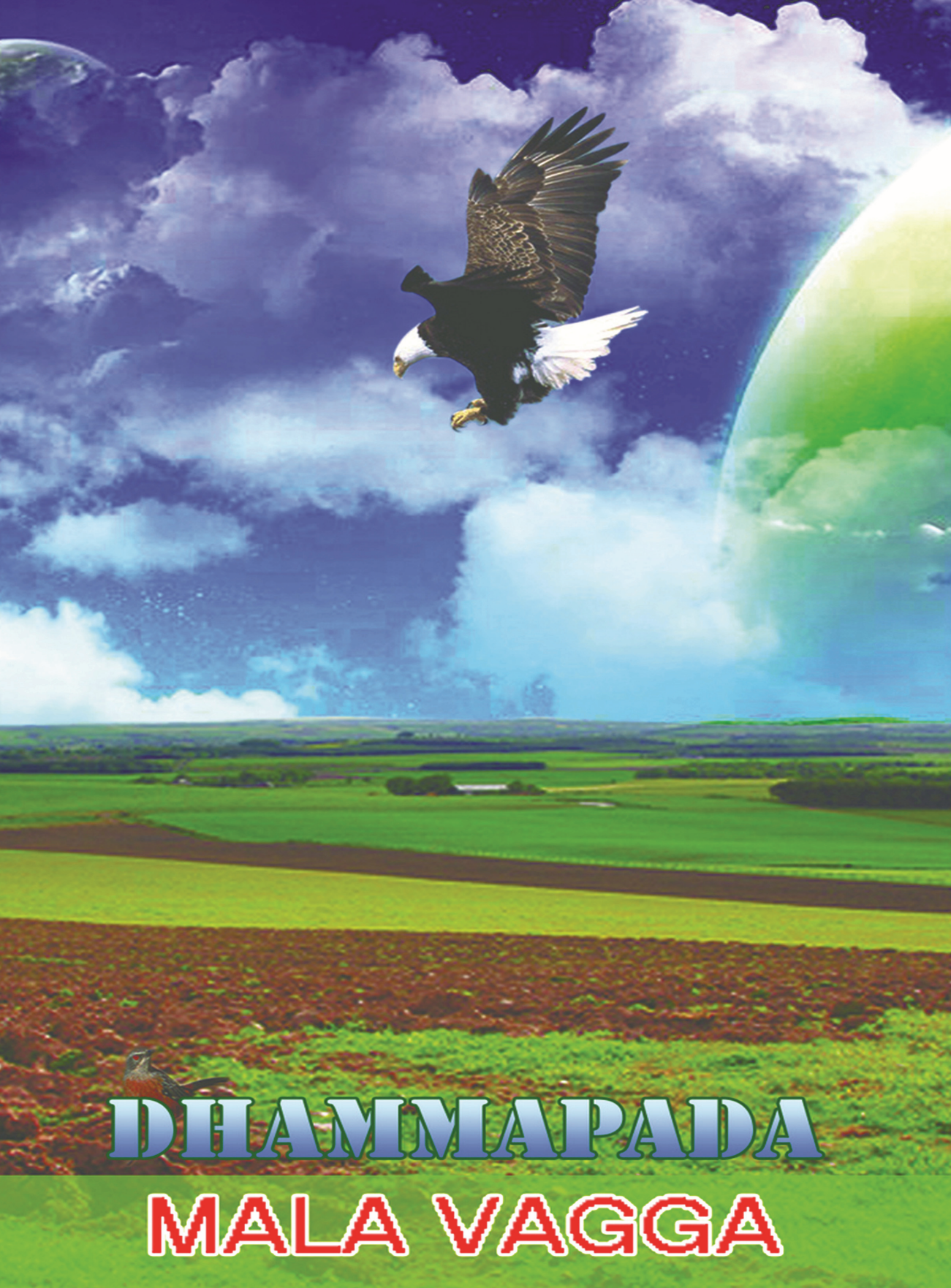
3. Is there any conditioned thing (sankhara) that is permanent?

The Buddha replied all these three questions in the negative. Thereupon Subhadda spoke to the Buddha, 'Excellent! Lord, Excellent! O lord! I seek refuge in the Triple Gem. May I receive the ordination in the presence of the Buddha?' Thereupon, the Tathagata addressed Ananda and said, 'Ananda, you may ordain Subhadda.' 'So be it, Lord,' replied Ananda. Thus Subhadda received ordination in the presence of the Buddha. He became the last bhikkhu to be ordained during the lifetime of the Buddha.

And in no long time after his ordination, bhikkhu Subhadda living alone, away from men, diligent, enthusiastic and resolute realised in this life itself by his own intuitive knowledge the goal of that incomparable life of Holiness, and lived abiding in that state for the sake of which sons of noble families rightly leave the householder's life for the homeless life.

He perceived that rebirth had ended, the Holy Life had been completed and there was no other life after this life.

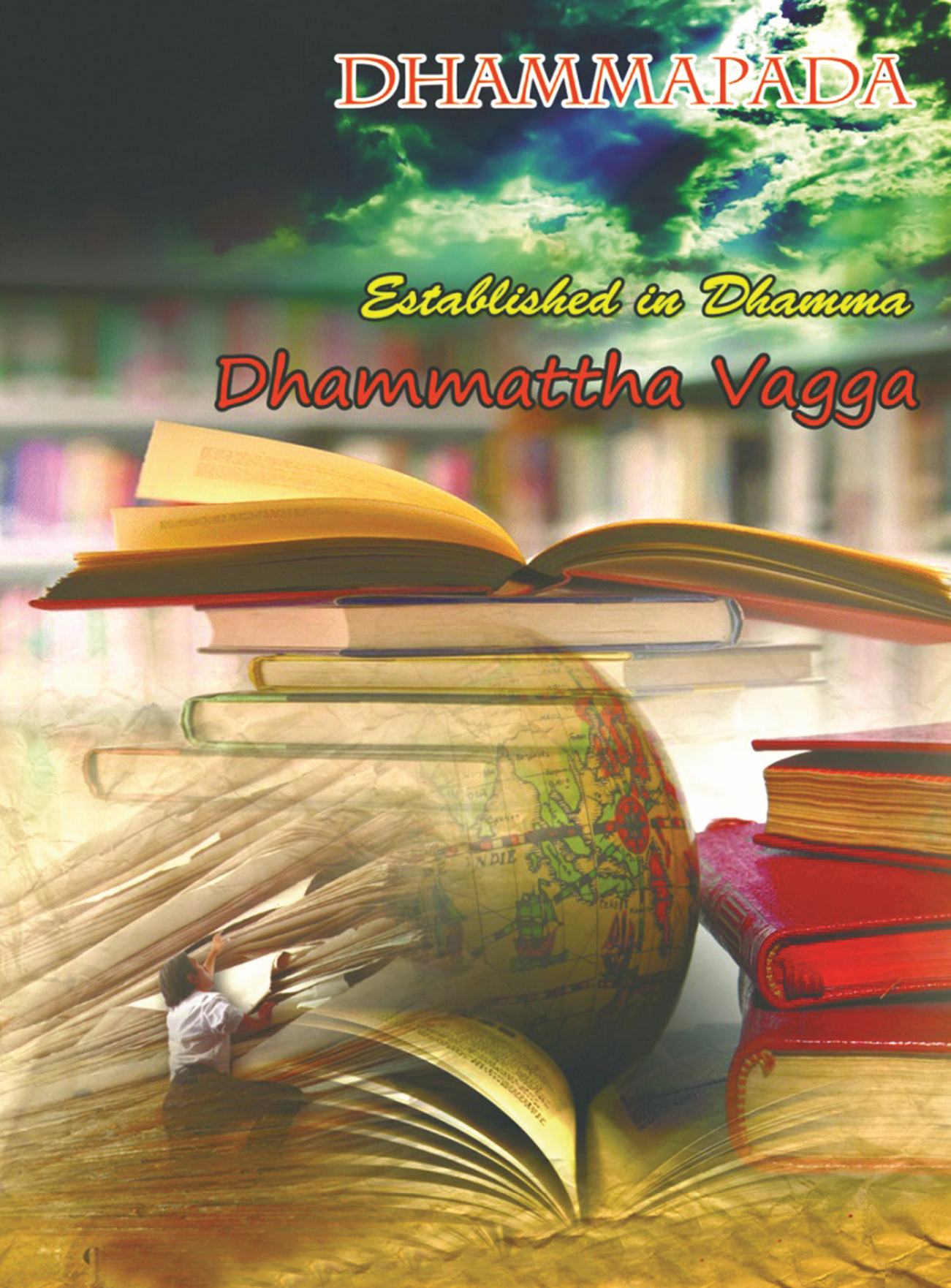
Note: As there is no track in the void vault of the heaven, so there cannot be a saint outside the domain of spiritual attainments. The masses are in the grip of desires and egotism. But the Perfect Ones are free from desires and egotism. All things conditioned are impermanent and subject to decay. As the Buddhas are fearless and free from fetters, they waver not.


DHAMMAPADA
MALA VAGGA

DHAMMAPADA

Established in Dhamma

Dhammattha Vagga



Chapter XIX

DHAMMATTHA VAGGA

Established in Dhamma
The Just or Righteous

Index

DHAMMATTHA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	The judges take bribes	256.	The just should be fair	265
2.	The judges take bribes	257.	The true judges are impartial	267
3.	Story of six monks	258.	A talkative may not be wise	269
4.	Story of Arahant Ekudana	259.	Mere talking is not enough	271
5.	Story of Lakuntaka Bhaddiya	260.	Grey hair, not sign of a saint	273
6.	Story of Lakuntaka Bhaddiya	261.	Who is a thera?	275
7.	Story of pretending monks	262.	Be good-natured	277
8.	Story of pretending monks	263.	Give up jealousy	279
9.	Story of monk Hatthaka	264.	Who is a monk?	281
10.	Story of monk Hatthaka	265.	Monk must overcome evil	283
11.	A brahmin wanting to be a bhikkhu	266.	Who is a bhikkhu?	285
12.	A brahmin wanting to be a bhikkhu	267.	Silence is not wisdom	287
13.	Story of becoming muni	268.	What makes a saint?	289
14.	Story of becoming muni	269.	Real wisdom: Test of muni	291
15.	Story of a fisherman	270.	Be harmless	293
16.	Monks slacken their efforts	271.	Strive continuously	295
17.	Monks slacken their efforts	272.	The journey is long	297

Verse 256: Na tena hoti dhammaṭṭho yen atthaṃ sahasā naye
Yo ca atthaṁ anatthañ ca ubho niccheyya paṇḍito.

Verse 256: He cannot be just if he decides a case hastily or rashly. The wise man should decide a case after considering both points of view, right and wrong.

The just should be fair
The judges take bribes

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses, when he was residing at the Jetavana monastery, with respect to some corrupt judges. On a certain day, the bhikkhus went for the alms around the settlement area near the north gate of Sravasti. While they were returning to the monastery and passing through the city centre, it started raining heavily. They could not move forward and looked for some place to take shelter. They entered the hall of justice and saw some judges taking bribes and deciding the cases arbitrarily. Seeing this they thought, 'These judges are all corrupt and unjust. Till now we had the idea that these judges were fair and gave right judgements. But they are doing just the opposite. They are not at all scared of the evil karma they are creating.'

When the rains stopped, the bhikkhus continued their journey to the monastery. On reaching there they narrated to the Buddha what they had seen. The Buddha said, 'If a judge decides a case being influenced by monetary considerations then he cannot be called a just judge who abides by the law. If one weighs the evidence intelligently and decides the case impartially, then he is to be called a just judge who abides by the law.'

Verse 257: Asāhasena dhammena samena nayati pare
Dhammassa gutto medhāvi dhammaṭṭho ti pavuccati.

Verse 257: The wise man who decides not arbitrarily but in accordance with the law is one who protects the law; he is called the dhammattha, ‘one who abides by the law’.

The true judges are impartial
The judges take bribes

Note: Why do the judges act arbitrarily in an unjust manner? They are not scared of the working of the Law of Karma. Sir Edwin Arnold has very well described it in the Light of Asia:

It (karma) knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true
Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs;
Times are as nought, tomorrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;
The unjust judge has lost his own defender;
The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
And spoiler robs, to render.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness.
Which none at last can turn aside or stay:
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet, Obey!

Verse 258: Na tena paṇḍito hoti yāvatā bahu bhāsati
Khemi averi abhayo paṇḍito ti pavuccati.

Verse 258: He is not a wise man just because he talks much. Only one who is peaceful, friendly and harms no one is called ‘a wise man.’

A talkative may not be wise
Story of six monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke this verse at the Jetavana monastery, in respect of six troublesome monks. Once there was a group of six bhikkhus who always created nuisance at meal times whether they were at the monastery or in the village. One day, some samaneras were having the almsfood when these bhikkhus arrived there. They started harassing them and said boastfully to them, 'Look! We alone are intelligent. Nobody is as intelligent as we are. We alone are the wise people here.' They, however, did not stop at that. They started throwing the things around here and there and behaved in an unruly manner. They made total mess and left the monastery. Other bhikkhus informed the Buddha about this incidence. He said, 'Bhikkhus! I do not say that one who talks too much, abuses or bullies others is a wise man. Only he, who is free from hatred and harms no one, is a wise man.'

Verse 259: Na tāvatā dhamma dharo yāvatā bahu bhāsati
Yo ca appam pi sutvāna dhammaṃ kāyena passati
Sa ve dhamma dharo hoti yo dhammaṃ nappamajjati.

Verse 259: One is not well versed in the Dhamma if he merely talks much. He who hears little but sees the Dhamma through realisation, and who does not neglect the Dhamma, is indeed, versed in the Dhamma.

Mere talking is not enough
Story of Arahant Ekudana

Place: Sravasti, Jetavana

Bhikkhu Ekudana who lived in a grove near Sravasti knew only one verse of Udana. But he understood its meaning fully. When occasions arose, he would recite only this verse, but from the core of his heart. Whenever he recited this verse, the devas of the forest appeared and applauded him profusely.

One day, two bhikkhus well versed in the Tripitaka, accompanied by other bhikkhus arrived there. Ekudana requested them to teach the Dhamma. They asked, 'Are there many who will wish to listen to the Dhamma in this remote area?' Ekudana replied, 'Even the guardian spirits of the forests come to listen to each discourse and applaud it after it is over.' So, these two bhikkhus spoke on the Dhamma, one by one, but no deva came forward to applaud their talks.

The two learned bhikkhus were disturbed when they finished their discourse because there was no word of appreciation from the deva spirits, the guardians of the forest. They had a doubt whether Ekudana had told them the truth. When they questioned Ekudana, he stood by his words, 'The guardian spirits always applaud at the end of each discourse.' Still not satisfied with the reply given by Ekudana, the two monks asked him to give his talk on the Dhamma. Ekudana held his fan in front of him and recited the usual verse in the same melodious tone. Again, at the end of the talk, the forest devas applauded him profusely. The bhikkhus accompanying the two monks felt that the deva spirits residing in the forest were showing favour to Ekudana.

The matter was reported to the Buddha. The Buddha admonished them, 'Bhikkhus! I do not say that a bhikkhu who has learnt much and talks much of the Dhamma is one who is versed in the Dhamma. One, who has learnt very little, knows only one verse of the Dhamma but fully comprehends the Four Noble Truths and is ever mindful, is the one who is truly versed in the Dhamma.'

Verse 260: Na tena thero hoti yen assa palitaṃ siro
Paripakko vayo tassa mogha jiṇṇo ti vuccati.

Verse 260: One is not an Elder (Thera) merely because of his grey-head. He, who is ripe only in age, is called ‘one grown old in vain.’

Grey hair, not sign of a saint
Story of Lakuntaka Bhaddiya

Place: Sravasti, Jetavana

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery in respect of bhikkhu Bhaddiya. He was also known as Lakuntaka Bhaddiya, as he was of short height.

One day, a group of bhikkhus came to the Jetavana monastery to pay homage to the Buddha. Bhante Lakuntaka Bhaddiya was also present in the monastery at that time. When they arrived at the monastery, they saw bhikkhu Bhaddiya before they reached the Buddha. They paid homage to the Buddha and sat down on one side.

The Enlightened One knew that the time was ripe for the group of bhikkhus, who came to see him, to attain Arahanthood. So, he asked them the question, 'Did you see a certain Elder bhikkhu leaving my room before you entered it?' Because of his short height, the bhikkhus had taken him as a samanera and they replied, 'No Sir, we did not see any Elder bhikkhu. We saw a certain samanera (novice), bhante!' Then the Buddha said, 'That bhikkhu is not a samanera. He is an Arahant.' 'But bhante, he was exceedingly young,' questioning his age, they said.

Verse 261: Yamhi saccañ ca dhammo ca ahiṃsā saññāmo damo
Sa ve vanta malo dhiro thero iti pavuccati.

Verse 261: One, in whom we find truth, purity, virtue, non-violence, self-discipline and control of senses, is indeed called the Elder.

Who is a thera?
Story of Lakuntaka Bhaddiya

The Buddha clarified, 'Bhikkhus! I do not call someone as Arahant just because he is old and is aged, his hair has turned grey or because he sits in the seat of an Elder. An Arahant is one who comprehends the Four Noble Truths and does not harm others. Rather he is ever kind and compassionate to others. One, who is old only in years, has grown ripe uselessly.'

Here it must be understood that as stated in the first verse of the Yamaka Vagga of the Dhammapada, the mind is the fore-runner of everything. Everything that we do as human beings arises out of the mind only. So, what goes on inside the mind is more important than the mere physical appearance of the person from outside, whether he is tall or short, white or black, young or old etc.

Who is a thera? A thera is a bhikkhu who has spent at least ten years in the Sangha from the date of his higher ordination. Thera, literally means well established--- one who is firm and stable. In English, this term is generally termed as an Elder. A bhikkhu who has completed twenty years in the Sangha is called a MahaThera (Great Venerable).

Verse 262: Na vākkaraṇa mattena vaṇṇa pokkharatāya vā
Sādhurūpo naro hoti issuki macchari saṭho.

Verse 262: Not by fine talks, nor by beauty of complexion, does a jealous, selfish and deceitful one become a good- hearted man.

Be good-natured
Story of pretending monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery in respect of some monks who were very fluent in speaking but lacked in moral character.

It was the custom at the monastery for the young bhikkhus and samaneras to attend to the needs of the senior bhikkhus who were their teachers. They used to wash and dye the clothes of their teachers, as per the need and also performed other small services for their teachers. Some bhikkhus noticed that the senior monks were being provided these services and envied them. They wanted to be treated just like them. They thought, 'We are very good at speaking but for all those fluent talks, receive no such services and attention. Now, suppose we approach the Buddha and tell him, "Bhante, when it comes to giving eloquent talks, we are also expert at it. Give orders to these samaneras as follows, "Even though you have learnt the Law from your teachers, you get further guidance and other instructions from these bhikkhus." Thus our gain, respect and honour will increase.'

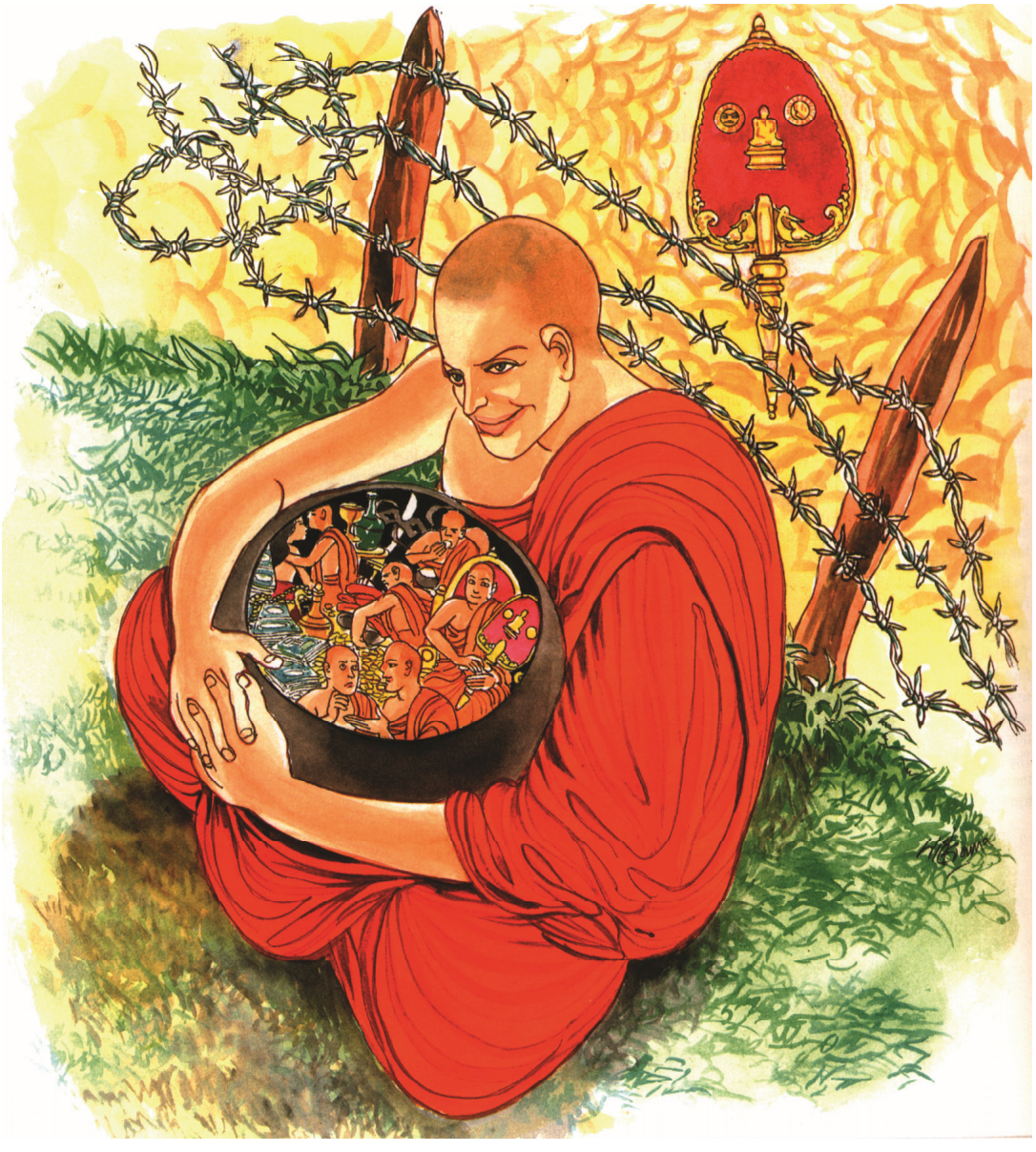
Verse 263: Yassa cetaṃ samucchinnaṃ mūla ghaccaṃ samūhataṃ
Sa vantadoso medhāvi sādhurūpo ti vuccati.

Verse 263: But one, who has cut off, uprooted and removed these evils and has become pure, is indeed called a good-hearted man.

Give up jealousy
Story of pretending monks

So, they approached the Buddha and told him what they had thought of. The Buddha knew what their motive was. He, therefore, turned down their suggestion and admonished them, 'Bhikkhus! I do not say that you are good-hearted and accomplished merely because of your ability to talk. But, that man in whom desires, envy and other evil qualities have been uprooted by the Path of Arahantship, he alone is truly accomplished. A man who gives up all evils and follows the holy life is to be called a good-hearted man.'

Merely because of one's verbal, impressive style of speaking, or the charming presence, a person who is greedy, envious, dishonest does not become an acceptable individual. If an individual has uprooted and eradicated all these evils and has got rid of impurities, such a person is truly an acceptable individual.



Verse 264: Na muṇḍakena samaṇo abbato alikaṃ bhaṇaṃ
Icchā lobhasamāpanno samaṇo kiṃ bhavissati?

Verse 264: Not by mere shaven head, an undisciplined liar becomes a bhikkhu. How can one who is full of desires and greed be a bhikkhu?

Who is a monk?
Story of monk Hatthaka

Place: Sravasti, Jetavana

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery in respect of monk Hatthaka.

Bhikkhu Hatthaka was in the habit of arguing with others. Whenever he was defeated in an argument, he would challenge his opponents to meet at a certain place and time to continue with the argument. He would then go to the appointed place before the appointed time and declare that the absence of the opponent meant acknowledgement of his defeat. He would say this and much else of the same sort and boast, 'Look, those foolish people dare not meet me. They have been defeated by me.' He would invariably employ such tactics with one opponent after another.

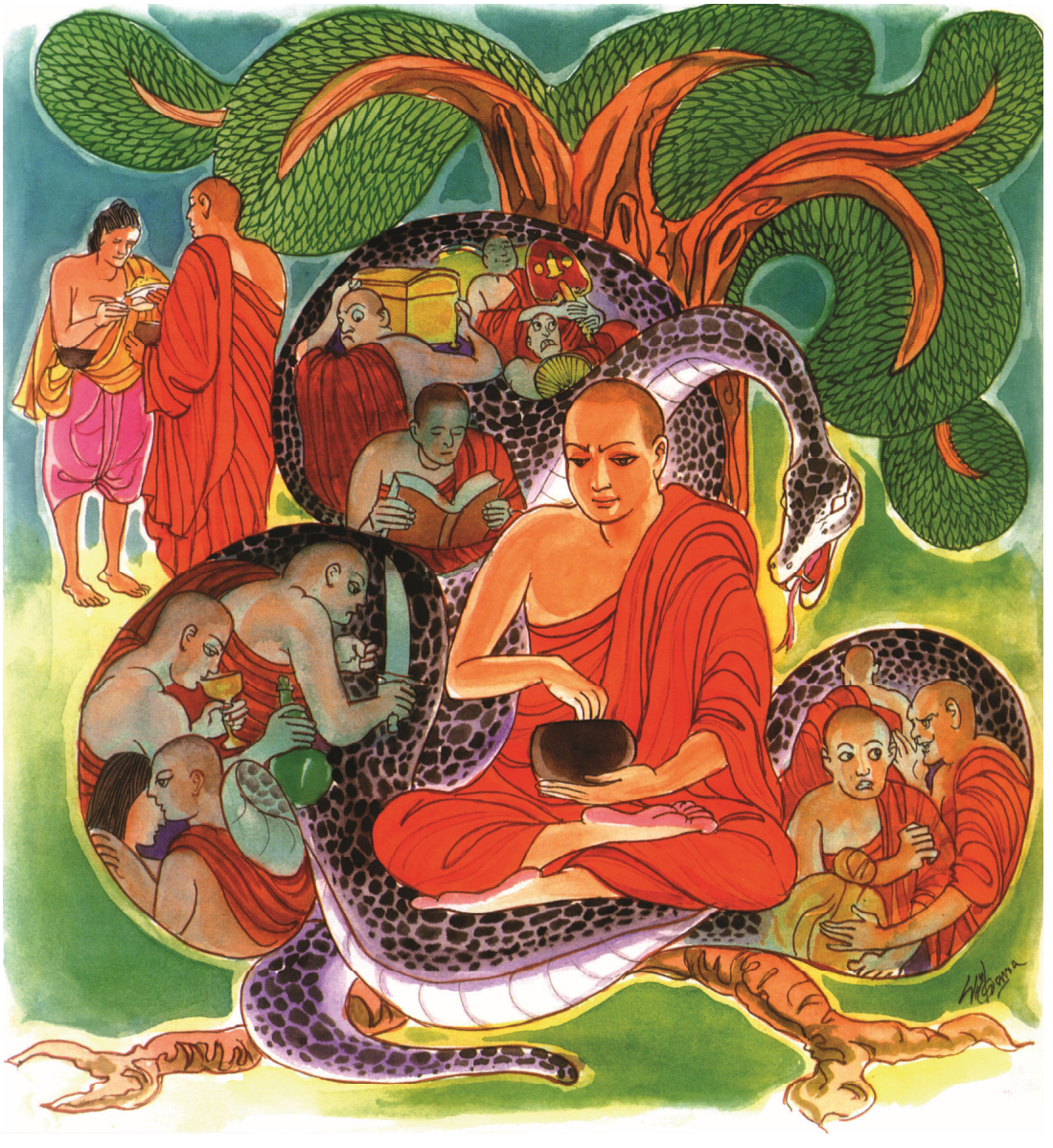
Verse 265: Yo ca sameti pāpāni aṇuṃ thūlāni sabbaso
Samitattā hi pāpānaṃ samaṇo ti pavuccati.

Verse 265: He, who overcomes evils, great and small, completely, is called a bhikkhu because of overcoming all evils.

Monk must overcome evil
Story of monk Hatthaka

The Buddha heard about what Hatthaka was doing. He sent for him and asked him, 'Hatthaka, is it true that you are doing such and such thing?' 'Yes Sir, it is true,' replied Hatthaka. The Buddha admonished him, 'Bhikkhu! Why do you do so? Why do you behave in this way? One who says such things is not suitable to be a samana (monk) in spite of his shaven head. Only one who has rid himself of all evil and pride is to be called a samana.'

An individual who does not practise religion, speaks untruth, and is filled with desires and greed cannot become an ascetic, merely because he is a shaven-headed. If an individual gets over all sins, big and small, he is described as an ascetic for he has put down sins.



Verse 266: Na tena bhikkhu hoti yāvatā bhikkhate pare
Vissaṃ dhammaṃ samādāya bhikkhu hoti na tāvatā.

Verse 266: One is not a bhikkhu because he begs from others. By adopting base ways and means, one cannot truly be called a bhikkhu.

Who is a bhikkhu?
A brahmin wanting to be a bhikkhu

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery with reference to a brahmin who wanted to be addressed as a bhikkhu because he used to go to the town for almsfood.

Once, there was a brahmin who retired from the world and became a monk of some Order, other than the Sangha of the Buddha. One day, as he was going around the town for alms-food, he thought, 'It is a common belief that one who goes for almsround and lives a life through almsfood is called a bhikkhu. The Buddha addresses his own disciples who go for almsround as "bhikkhus". That being so, I should also be called a bhikkhu.' So thinking, he approached the Buddha and told him, 'Bhante, I also support my life by going round for almsfood. Please address me also as a bhikkhu.'

Verse 267: Yo'dha puññañ ca papan ca bāhetvã brahma cariyavā
Saṅkhāya loke carati sa ve bhikkhū ti vuccati.

Verse 267: He, who is established in holy life, giving up both good and bad deeds and moves about in the world; fully mindful, is indeed, called a bhikkhu.

Silence is not wisdom
A brahmin wanting to be a bhikkhu

The Buddha replied, 'Brahmin, I do not call someone as a bhikkhu simply because he goes out and supports his life through almsfood. One who professes false views and acts inappropriately is not a bhikkhu. Only one who meditates on the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality of the aggregates is to be called a bhikkhu.'

No one becomes a bhikkhu merely because he wears saffron robes and goes around begging for food. Being a bhikkhu is a mental state and not an outwardly physical state. One is not a bhikkhu if he has wrong beliefs.

On the other hand, a man who rises above both good and bad and treads the path of higher discipline, reflecting wisely, that person indeed deserves to be called a bhikkhu.

Verse 268: Na monena muni hoti mulha rūpo aviddasu
Yo ca tulaṃ va paggayha varam ādāya paṇḍito.

Verse 268: Not by silence does a dull and ignorant one become a sage. But the wise man, who as if holding a pair of scales, embraces the best and shuns evil, is indeed a sage.

What makes a saint?
Story of becoming muni

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery in respect of some followers of other sects who claimed to be sages, only because they maintained silence.

Some ascetics, who were not the followers of the Buddha, used to say a few words of blessings whenever they received almsfood from their devotees. They would say, 'May you be free from danger, may you prosper and get rich, may you live long.' They would also tell their hosts when they received food and other things, 'In such and such place there is mud; in such and such place there are thorns. You should not go to such and such place.' They expressed their thanks and appreciation in this manner and then only they proceeded.

On the other hand, the bhikkhus of the Buddha did not utter a single word and after receiving the alms departed silently. This was because for twenty years after the Buddha's attainment of Enlightenment, the bhikkhus were advised to maintain silence after receiving offerings. The people started comparing the mode of receiving of the alms by the two groups and commented, 'We receive the words of blessings from the ascetics but not a single word of appreciation from the bhikkhus of the Buddha who simply depart in silence after receiving the almsfood.'

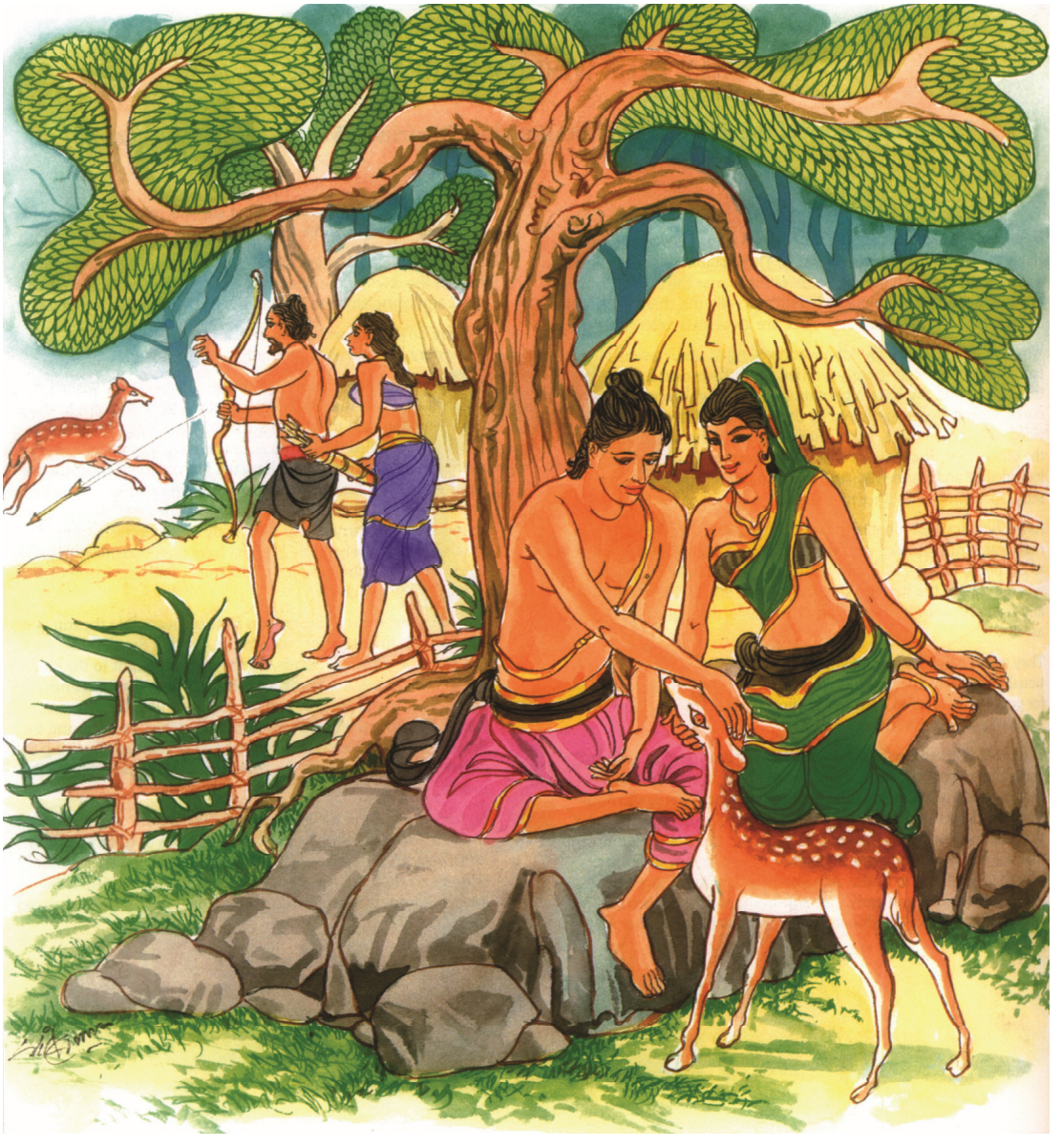
Verse 269: Pāpāni parivajjeti sa muni tena so muni
Yo munāti ubho loke muni tena pavuccati.

Verse 269: For that reason (i.e. for having embraced the best and abandoned the evil) he is a sage. He, who realises both the worlds, is indeed called a sage.

Real wisdom: Test of muni
Story of becoming muni

The bhikkhus reported this matter to the Buddha. On hearing this, the Enlightened One advised them to act likewise and speak a few words of appreciation after receiving almsfood and other offerings from their supporters. The bhikkhus started this practice of offering appreciation. As a result of this, on hearing the words of blessings and encouragement from the bhikkhus of the Buddha, whom they revered deeply, people felt happy and satisfied. The ascetics of the other sects saw this and started criticising the bhikkhus with a sense of disapproval, 'We adhere to the qualities of a sage (muni) and maintain silence but the bhikkhus of the Buddha's camp go on delivering lengthy lectures in public places.'

The Buddha heard these critical remarks and said, 'Bhikkhus, There are some who have to maintain silence because they are ignorant, do not know the subject and are frightened to speak. There are also others who do not speak because they do not want to share their profound knowledge with others. Thus one does not become a muni simply by maintaining silence. I call him only a sage who has overcome evil in him.'



Verse 270: Na tena ariyo hoti yena pāṇāni hiṃsati
Ahiṃsā sabba pāṇānaṃ ariyo ti pavuccati.

Verse 270: He is not an Ariya (Noble) if he harms living beings. One who does not hurt anyone, is harmless towards all living beings is truly called an Ariya (Noble).

Be harmless
Story of a fisherman

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, there was a fisherman named Ariya who lived near the north gate of Sravasti. One day, the Buddha, in his morning survey, through his supernatural power, found that the fisherman was ripe to attain Srotappan stage. So, on his return from the almsround, along with the bhikkhus, he stopped near the place where Ariya was catching fishes. When the fisherman saw the Buddha, he threw away his fishing net and came near him; paid reverence to him and stood by one side.

The Enlightened One then proceeded to ask the names of the bhikkhus in his presence one by one. Finally, he also asked the name of the fisherman. The fisherman replied that his name was Ariya. On hearing his name, the Buddha explained to him, 'The Noble Ones (Ariyas) do not harm any living beings. Since you are killing fishes, you are not worthy of your name.' The fisherman immediately understood that the Buddha was advising him to give up his way of livelihood by killing fishes. He wanted him to renounce his harmful way of living and practise compassion and loving kindness for all beings.

One, who seeks spiritual advancement, must refrain from taking any life, however small or insignificant it may seem. To attain complete harmony with the Universe, one must strictly respect all forms of life.

Verse 271: Na silabbata mattena bāhusaccena vā puna
Atha vā samādhi lābhena vivicca sayanena vā

Verse 271: Not by rites or rituals, mere morality and austerities, nor by profound learning, nor by meditative calmness, nor by life in solitude…….

Strive continuously
Monks slacken their efforts

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these two verses at the Jetavana monastery with reference to some monks who had slackened their spiritual efforts, thinking that they could attain Arahanthood any time, they wanted.

Some of the bhikkhus once thought, 'We have acquired virtues. We have been undertaking pure practices. We are exceedingly learned. We dwell in places of abode which are solitary and remote. We have also developed supernatural powers through meditation. It won't be difficult for us to attain Arahanthood, anytime we wish.' Some other bhikkhus who had attained Anagami (third stage of Sainthood) also thought, in a similar way, 'For us it would not be difficult now to attain Arahanthood.' Thus they became relaxed and complacent in their approach.

With this thinking in their mind, the bhikkhus, one day, went to see the Buddha. They paid homage to him and sat down on one side. Then the Enlightened One asked them, 'Bhikkhus! Have you been making sincere efforts? Have you been able to attain Arahanthood?'

The bhikkhus replied, 'We have made so much of advancement, we have reached such a stage that it will not be difficult for us to attain Arahanthood.' On hearing their reply, the Buddha admonished them, 'Bhikkhus, just because you have developed some qualities of sila (morality) and because you have attained the third stage of Sainthood (Anagami fruition), you should not feel relaxed, become complacent and think that only a little is left to be done. Unless you have eradicated all mental impurities (asavas), you must not think that you have realised the perfect bliss of the Arahanthood.'

Verse 272: Phusāmi nekkhamma sukhaṃ aputhujjana sevitaṃ
Bhikkhu vissāsam āpādi appatto āsavakkhayaṃ.

Verse 272: …..has a bhikkhu the bliss of his recluse life, with Nirvanic goal (extinction of desires etc.) still unreached.

The journey is long
Monks slacken their efforts

Note: In India there is a popular story of competition of racing between a hare and a tortoise. It will be worthwhile to mention it here.

One day, there was a competition between a hare and a tortoise as to who could run faster and reach the destination earlier. A tortoise is no match to a hare in speed. So, the hare ran fast, reached near the destination and felt like taking a nap. Thinking that the tortoise could not match him in speed and he could run any time faster than him and win the race, he settled down for taking some rest and overslept. When he got up, it was too late. He ran as fast as he could but the tortoise had already reached the end point and won the race. So, came the saying, 'Slow and steady wins the race.'

The moral of the story is that we should not take the success for granted. It has been rightly said that the kingdom of the heaven is won by the sweat of the brow. Also, there is always a gap between the cup and the lip and, therefore, we should never rest till we have reached our destination. There is definitely a lot of difference between reaching the goal point and just reaching it. The horse coming second in the race is just behind the horse that comes first but there is huge difference in the prize money between the horse that comes first and the horse that comes second.

DHAMMAPADA

DHAMMATTHA VAGGA

DHAMMAPADA

The Path

MAGGA VAGGA

Chapter XX

MAGGA VAGGA

The Way or The Path

Index

MAGGA VAGGA

Sr. no.	*Character*	*Verse*	*Teaching*	*Page*
1.	Story of five hundred monks	273.	What is the best?	303
2.	Story of five hundred monks	274.	Follow the pure path	305
3.	Story of five hundred monks	275.	The path to end suffering	307
4.	Story of five hundred monks	276.	Exert yourself	309
5.	Meditate on anicca	277.	All things are transient	311
6.	Meditate on Dukkha	278.	All things are sorrowful	313
7.	Meditate on anatta	279.	Nothing is with self	315
8.	Story of idle bhikkhu Tissa	280.	Do not be slothful	317
9.	Story of a pig spirit	281.	Be pure in all ways	319
10.	Story of bhikkhu Pothila	282.	Develop your wisdom	321
11.	Five old monks & an old lady	283.	Be free of attachment	323
12.	Five old monks & an old lady	284.	Be detached: Become free	325
13.	Monk meditating on a lotus flower	285.	Cut attachment like winter lily	327
14.	Story of Mahadhana	286.	Realise the truth of death	329
15.	Story of Kisa Gotami	287.	Death seizes attached men	331
16.	Story of Patachara	288.	No protection from death	333
17.	Story of Patachara	289.	Proceed to Nirvana	335

Verse 273: Maggān aṭṭhaṅgiko seṭṭho saccānaṃ caturo padā
Virāgo seṭṭho dhammānaṃ dipadānañ ca cakkhumā.

Verse 273: The Eight-fold path is the best of all the paths. The Four Noble Truths are the best of all the truths. Passionlessness (Nirvana) is the best of Dhammas and the Seer the best of men.

What is the best?
Story of five hundred monks

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The Buddha spoke these verses at the Jetavana monastery, in respect of five hundred monks, who had accompanied him to the countryside on almsround.

This group of five hundred bhikkhus once accompanied the Buddha to a village and returned back with him after the almsround. In the evening, while seated in the Hall of the Dhamma, these bhikkhus started sharing their experiences about their visit to the village, during the day time. They compared the path undertaken by them that day with the paths undertaken by them in the past. They said, 'The path to such and such village is smooth. The path to that village is rough. The path to such and such village is full of pebbles and the path to such and such village is without pebbles.' Further, they also discussed about the quality of the land of the village they had just visited whether it was plain or hilly, smooth or stony, red or black coloured etc.

The Buddha came to the Hall of Dhamma, while this conversation was going on, and seating himself in the seat already prepared for him, asked, 'Bhikkhus! What is the topic of your discussion today?' Then the bhikkhus told him what they were discussing. On hearing this, the Buddha said, 'Bhikkhus! The path you are talking about is the physical path of the external world. This path should not be of much interest to a bhikkhu. **A bhikkhu should address himself only to the noble path i.e. a bhikkhu should be only concerned with the path of the Noble Ones (Ariyas). He should strive to do what should be done for attainment of perfection that leads to the realisation of Perfect Peace (Nirvana).'**

Verse 274: Eso va maggo natth añño dassanassa visuddhiyā
Etaṃ hi tumhe patipajjatha mārass etaṃ pamohanaṃ.

Verse 274: This is the only Way. There is no other alternative way for the purity of vision. Do follow this path which outwits the Mara.

Follow the pure path
Story of five hundred monks

Note: Just as we have an external world in which we live, there is yet another world, which is the internal world. Just as there are external paths, there are internal paths as well. **The internal world, hidden and stronger than the external world, guides our actions, just as the engine of the car, which is hidden inside the bonnet of the car, is the driving force for the vehicle. Just as in an iceberg only a tip (1/10th) is visible and the 9/10th, i.e. the major volume is invisible in water, so does the mind, the powerhouse of human personality, work in hidden realms.**

Unfortunately, the human beings do not give proper attention to the internal world, as much as it deserves. We take bath everyday, clean our physical body with soap but do we pay any attention to the cleaning of the mental body? Probably not! It is like cleaning the car from outside but not taking care of the engine, leaving it neglected!

The Buddhist teaching specifically mentions that our life is guided more by the mental processes than by the physical processes. 'Mind is the forerunner of everything,' says the Buddha.

The Enlightened One further explained to the bhikkhus that the 'Eightfold Path' is the greatest, noblest and the best path. The truths are also many but the Four Noble Truths are the greatest truths.

Verse 275: Etaṃ hi tumhe paṭipannā dukkhassantaṃ karissatha
Akkhāto ve mayā maggo aññāya salla santhanaṃ.

Verse 275: By following this path you will put an end to all sufferings. I expounded this path for the removal of the arrow of sufferings.

The path to end suffering
Story of five hundred monks

Sir Edwin Arnold, very beautifully, describes these Four Noble Truths in his immortal work, 'The Light of Asia':

The first truth is of *Sorrow*. Be not mocked!
Life which ye prize is long-drawn agony:
Only its pains abide; its pleasures are
As birds, which light and fly.

The Second Truth is *Sorrow's Cause*. What grief
Springs of itself and springs not of Desire?
Senses and things perceived mingle and light
Passion's quick spark of fire

The Third is *Sorrow's Ceasing*. This is peace---
To conquer love of self and lust of life,
To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,
To still the inward strife;

The Fourth Truth is *the Way*. It openeth wide,
Plain for all feet to tread, easy and near,
The *Noble Eightfold Path*; it goeth straight
To peace and refuge, Hear!

Verse 276: Tumhehi kiccaṃ ātappaṃ akkhātāro Tathāgatā
Paṭipannā pamokkhanti jhāyino māra bandhanā.

Verse 276: You must exert yourselves. The Perfect Ones are only teachers. Those who are on the path and meditate, get out of the bondage of Mara.

Exert yourself
Story of five hundred monks

Similarly the Buddha says that Nirvana is the greatest, amongst all the states.

Sir Edwin Arnold narrates it as follows:

He goes Unto NIRVANA. He is one with Life,
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
OM, MANI PADME, OM! The Dewdrop slips
Into the Shining Sea!

The Buddha here exhorts us for action. He says, **'The effort must be made by oneself. The Buddhas (the Teachers) only show the way and direct you.' This is also one of the most important teachings of the Buddha that each one has to undertake his own journey. Nobody can carry someone else on his back, not even the Buddha. Everyone has to travel by himself. There is no way out. There are no shortcuts.**

The Buddha is himself the living example to demonstrate that it is the individual effort which matters. He had visited all the sages of his time like Ramaputra and Kalam but was not satisfied with their teachings. So, he diligently worked for six years all by himself and did not rest till he got the Enlightenment.

Verse 277: Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccāti yadā paññāya passati
Atha nibbindati dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā.

Verse 277: All conditioned things are impermanent. When one sees this by insight, then he feels disgusted and disillusioned with the ills of the bodily existence. This, itself, is the Path to Purity.

All things are transient
Meditate on anicca

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

A group of bhikkhus, after receiving their topic of meditation from the Buddha went into the forest to practise meditation but they could not make much progress. So, they returned to the Buddha and requested for some other topic of meditation which could suit their temperament better.

The Buddha reflected on the past lives of these bhikkhus and found that during the time of Kassapa Buddha these bhikkhus had developed meditation on impermanence. So, he advised them to concentrate on the topic of impermanence (anicca) and said, 'Bhikkhus, all component things are impermanent.'

All component things whether animate or inanimate are subject to the universal law of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and unsubstantiality. No supernatural power of God can stop or change this phenomenon. All our problems and unhappiness are rooted in our attachment towards momentary feelings or objects. The conflict between our craving and impermanency creates dissatisfaction or physical or mental suffering. Those who concentrate on this universal law gain inner peace and contentment in life.

Sir Edwin Arnold in the 'Light of Asia' says:

Sweet is fond Love, but funeral-flames must kiss
The breasts which pillow and the lips which cling;
Gallant is warlike Might, but vultures pick
The joints of chief and King.

Verse 278: Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhāti yadā paññāya passati
Atha nibbindati dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā.

Verse 278: All conditioned things are sorrowful. When one sees this by insight, then he feels disgusted and dispassionate towards the painful. This, itself, is the Path to Purity.

All things are sorrowful
Meditate on Dukkha

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

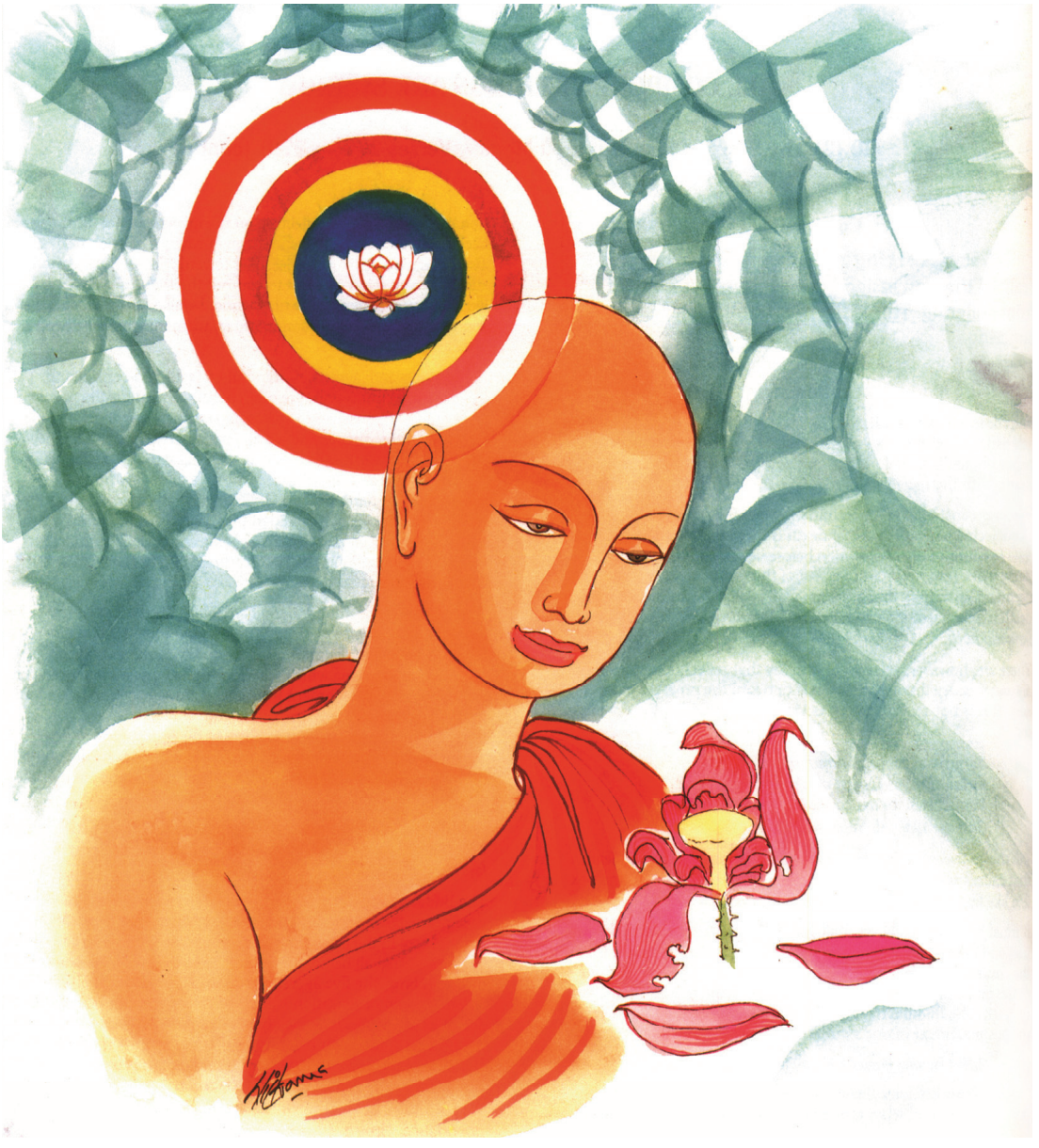
The story in this verse is similar to the story of the previous verse on anicca. Here the Buddha found that another group of the bhikkhus had meditated on dukkha in their past births. To them, the Buddha advised, 'Bhikkhus, all component things are oppressive and unsatisfactory. Thus all component things are dukkha. Get rid of the dukkha.'

In the Buddhist system there are three characteristics of existence --- anicca, dukkha and anatta. Dukkha is the second characteristic of existence. The Four Noble Truths of the Buddha also revolve round suffering.

The truth about suffering tells us that all beings are subject to birth, decay, disease and death. The five aggregates (skandhas) are: physical phenomena, feeling of sensation, perception, volitional activities, and consciousness. All these constitute suffering. The right understanding of suffering is Sammadishtthi. Sammadishtthi is basically essential for understanding of the real nature of the world. Of the four Noble Truths, the understanding of the suffering is the most important. Tanha (craving, attachment) is the cause of suffering because of which we are born and reborn again and again. The craving also assumes three forms: (1) Craving to sensual pleasures (2) Craving to existence and (3) Craving to non-existence. The Noble Eightfold Path leads to cessation of Suffering.

Sir Edwin Arnold in the 'Light of Asia' says:
Ache of the birth, ache of the helpless days,
Ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's prime;
Ache of chill grey years and choking death,
These fill your piteous time.

Ask of the sick, the mourners, ask of him
Who tottereth on his staff, lone and forlorn
'Liketh thee life?'—these say the babe is wise
That weepeth, being born.



Verse 279: Sabbe dhammā añattā ti yadā paññāya passati
Atha nibbindati dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā.

Verse 279: All states (Dhamma) are without self, i.e. devoid of ego. When one sees this by insight, then he feels disgusted and disillusioned with the ills of the existence of ego. This, itself, is the Path to Purity.

Nothing is with self
Meditate on anatta

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

The story of anatta is similar to the stories on anicca and dukkha. Here, the Buddha, on reflection, found that another group of bhikkhus had meditated on non-self (anatta). So, the Enlightened One encouraged them to pursue their meditation on this line. He said to them, 'Bhikkhus, all component things are insubstantial. They are not subject to one's control.'

Anatta means no-soul concept. The idea of a lack of soul, or a permanent and abiding self, or an atman that is eternal is extremely difficult for most individuals to understand.

The doctrine of change taught in Buddhism is that all component things that have conditioned existence are processes but the changes occur in such rapid succession that people regard mind and body as static entities. People do not see their arising and breaking up but see them as a lump or whole. This we can understand from the movement of the cinematographic film. The film moves in such a quick succession, so rapidly that it gives the feeling of continuity on the screen.

So long as man fails to see things as processes, as movements, he will never understand the anatta (no soul) doctrine of the Buddha. That is why people impatiently put the question, 'If there is no persisting entity, no unchanging principle, like self or soul (atman), what it is that experiences the results of the deeds here and hereafter?'

Verse 280: Uṭṭhāna kālamhi anuṭṭhahāno, Yuvā bali ālasiyaṃ upeto
Saṃsanna saṅkappamano kusito, Paññāya maggaṃ alaso na vindati.

Verse 280: Who strives not when he should strive, who, though young and strong, is given to idleness, who is loose in his purpose and thoughts and who is lazy--- such idler never finds the way to wisdom.

Do not be slothful
Story of idle bhikkhu Tissa

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a group of bhikkhus at Sravasti was admitted to the Sangha by the Buddha. All of them, except one, took a subject of meditation and went to the forest for practising meditation. They worked diligently and vigilantly and in due course of time all of them attained Arahanthood. Then they returned back to the monastery, paid respects to the Buddha and sat down there. Bhikkhu Tissa had stayed back at the monastery and had not gone to the forest. Since he did not pursue the meditation diligently, he did not gain much.

When Tissa came to know that all bhikkhus had attained Arahanthood, he regretted that he had wasted time. So, he decided to practise meditation all throughout the night. As he was walking in the night, meditating, he fell down and broke his thigh bone. Other bhikkhus heard his cry and rushed to help him.

Subsequently, the matter was brought to the notice of the Buddha. He clarified, **'Bhikkhus, one who does not strive when he should strive but idles away the time will not attain mental absorption (jhana) and purity.'**

Verse 281: Vācānurakkhi manasā susaṃvuto, Kāyena ca akusalaṃ na kayirā
Ete tayo kamma pathe visodhaye, Ārādhaye maggaṃ isippaveditaṃ.

Verse 281: Watchful of speech, well restrained in mind, let him do no evil with the body. Thus let him purify these three ways of action and follow the Path shown by the Sages.

Be pure in all ways
Story of a pig spirit

Place: Venuvana, Rajagriha

One day, when Venerable Moggallana and Venerable Lakkhana were coming down from the Gridhkoot hill in Rajagriha, Moggallana just smiled after seeing a miserable, ever-hungry spirit (preta). Now it is customary that when Arahants and the Buddhas smile, it is not an expression of humour. Rather it is a sign to whoever is with them to question them on what prompted them to smile. Lakkhana asked Moggallana the reason for the smile but he, instead of giving the clarification, advised him to ask this question at the Venuvana monastery in the presence of the Buddha.

Back at the monastery, bhikkhu Lakkhana repeated his question in the presence of the Buddha. Then, Moggallana explained that he had seen a preta (ghost) which had the head of a pig and the body of a human being. Maggots, flies and insects were swarming around his mouth. On hearing this, the Buddha also confirmed that he had seen that very preta on the day of Enlightenment. 'There may be some who may not believe the horrifying story and by not believing, he will create wrong karma for himself. Therefore, out of compassion for men, I did not tell this incidence.' The Buddha then told the story of a bhikkhu who due to his evil karma became the pig-preta.

During the time of a previous Buddha, there was a bhikkhu who gave talks on the Dhamma. Once, he visited a monastery where two bhikkhus were staying. They were very popular with the lay disciples for they explained the Dhamma in simple terms, easily understandable by them. The visiting bhikkhu hatched a conspiracy against the two bhikkhus so that they could leave the monastery and he could live alone in the whole place. He created rift and misunderstanding between them. As a result, the two bhikkhus fought between themselves and left the monastery. He himself captured the whole place. On account of that evil karma, the bhikkhu had to suffer for a long time after his death and became a preta (ghost). Then the Buddha advised, 'A bhikkhu should be calm and well restrained in thought, word and deed.'

Verse 282: Yogā ve jāyatī bhūri ayogā bhūri saṅkhayo
Etaṃ dvedhā pathaṃ ñatvā bhavãya vibhavāya ca
Tath attānaṃ niveseyya yathā bhūri pavaḍḍhati.

Verse 282: Indeed, wisdom springs from meditation. In the absence of meditation the wisdom declines. Knowing this twofold path of gain and loss, let one so conduct himself that wisdom develops.

Develop your wisdom
Story of bhikkhu Pothila

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Pothila was a senior bhikkhu who knew the Dhamma well. Because of his knowledge he was also conceited. The Buddha knew this negative quality in him and wanted him to change. So, in order to break his ego, he used to address him as 'Useless Pothila'. When Pothila heard this a number of times, he questioned himself why the Buddha addressed him so. He felt that it was because he had not made any serious effort to practise meditation and that 'by now I should have attained Sainthood.'

Thus, without telling anyone he left for a monastery far away from Sravasti where there were many bhikkhus. First, he went to the senior most bhikkhu and humbly requested him to accept him as his disciple. But the monk wishing to humble him sent him to his junior bhikkhu, who in turn sent him to the next. In this way, he was sent from one bhikkhu to another till he reached a young Arahant samanera. The samanera accepted him as a pupil only after ascertaining from Pothila that he would follow his instructions obediently. As directed by the samanera, Pothila kept his mind firmly fixed on the true nature of the body. He was very sincere and vigilant in his meditation.

The Buddha saw Pothila in his vision and sent radiance to him through supernatural power and exhorted him to be steadfast and ardent in his quest for the spiritual advancement. Soon thereafter, Pothila attained Arahanthood.

Verse 283: Vanaṃ chindatha mā rukkhaṃ vanato jāyati bhayaṃ
Chetvā vanañ ca vanathañ ca nibbanā hotha bhikkhavo.

Verse 283: Cut down the forest of lust, not merely the trees. From the forest of lust springs fear. Cut down both forest and trees, be forestless, O bhikkhus.

Be free of attachment
Five old monks & an old lady

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

There lived in Sravasti five friends who became monks in old age. They were in the habit of going together to their old homes for almsfood. Of their former wives, one was a very good cook and she was also a good host. She looked after them very well. Thus, the five bhikkhus normally preferred to go to her house for almsfood. However, one day she fell sick and passed away suddenly. The old bhikkhus felt her loss very deeply and kept on lamenting and crying on her loss and praising her virtues. They fell on each other's necks, wept and lamented, 'Madhurapacika, our friend's former wife, a lay disciple, is dead. She was the most generous supporter of us all. Where shall we find another like her?' In the evening, the bhikkhus were discussing this matter in the Hall of Truth when the Buddha arrived and asked, 'What are you discussing now, sitting here in this hall?' When they disclosed that they were discussing about the lamentation of the five monks, the Great One said, 'This is not for the first time that they have conducted themselves in this manner. The same thing happened in one of their previous lives also.'

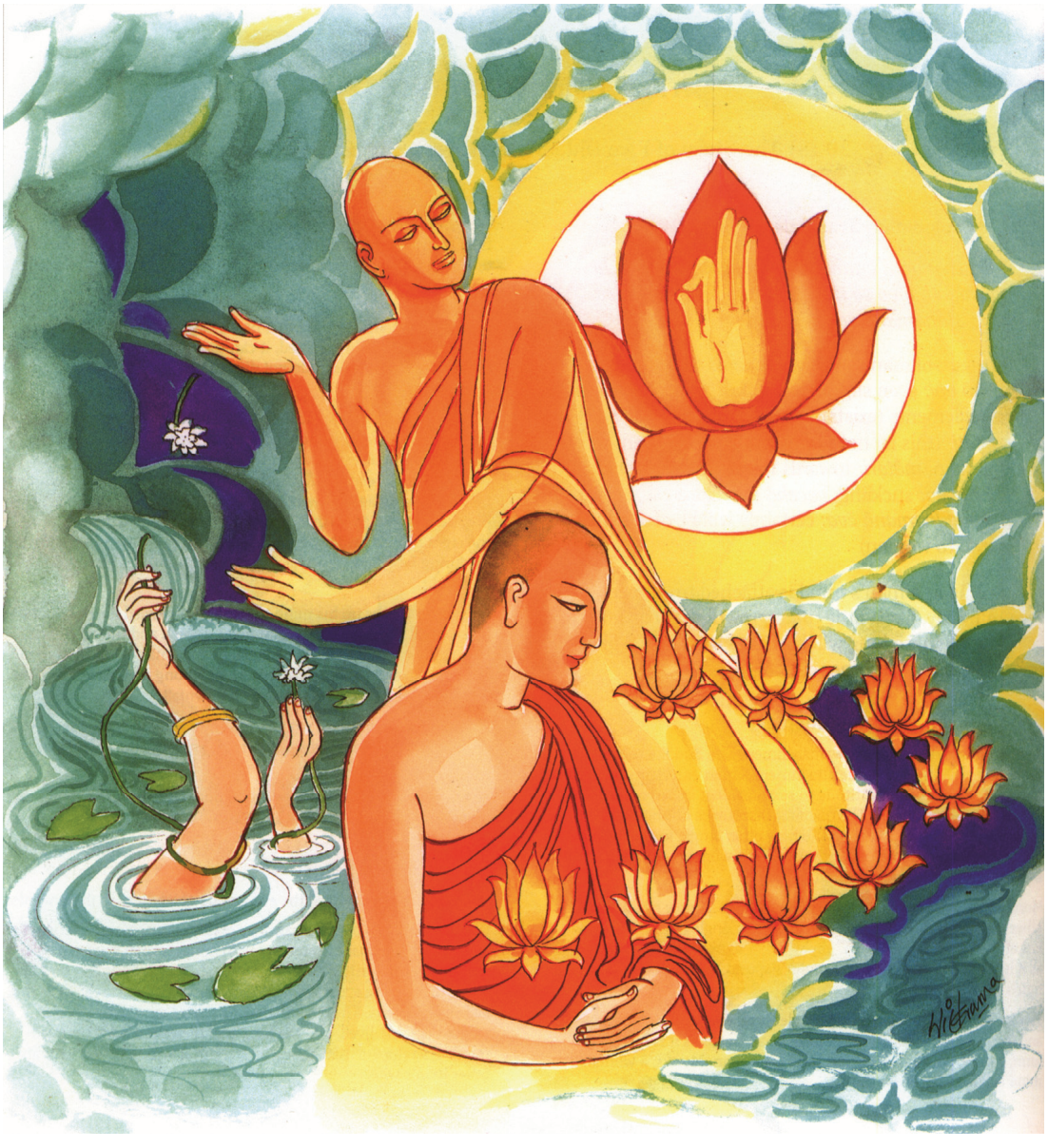
Verse 284: Yāvaṃ hi vanatho na chijjati anumatto pi narassa nārisu
Paṭibaddha mano va tāva so vaccho khirapako va mātari.

Verse 284: So long as, the man's wood of lust is not cut down, his mind remains attached to women like a milk-sucking calf to its mother-cow.

Be detached: Become free
Five old monks & an old lady

On the request of the bhikkhus, the Buddha continued with the story, 'In one of their previous existences, all these five bhikkhus and the lady were born as crows. As she was walking along the sea shore, a tidal wave came and swept her away. She died in the sea. All the crows kept on weeping, crying and lamenting. They said, "We shall bring her back. We shall make this sea dry by taking out all water and throwing it on the other side. Thereby we shall recover our female friend." Saying so, they immediately started to dry up the ocean by taking water in their beaks. They continued with this effort till they were totally exhausted and realised that they could not accomplish their mission.'

Thus narrating the story from the Kaka Jataka in detail, the Buddha admonished the bhikkhus, 'Bhikkhus! You all are feeling the pain and sorrow because you are not free from greed, hatred and ignorance (raga, dosa and moha) which are like a great forest. Cut down the forest and you will be freed from these mental impurities.'



Verse 285: Ucchinda sineham attano kumudaṃ sāradikaṃ va pāṇinā Santimaggam eva brūhaya nibbānaṃ sugatena desitaṃ.

Verse 285: Cut off your attachment with the hand, as though it were an autumn lily. Cultivate the very path of peace. Nirvana has been preached by the Auspicious One.

Cut attachment like winter lily
Monk meditating on a lotus flower

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, a young son of a goldsmith was admitted to the Sangha by bhikkhu Sariputta. He received 'Impurity of the body' as the subject of meditation and left for the forest to practise meditation there. As he did not make much progress, he returned back to Sariputta twice for further instructions. Still he could not make much progress. So, Sariputta took the bhikkhu to see the Enlightened One.

The Buddha knew that the bhikkhu was the son of a goldsmith and that he had been born in the family of goldsmiths in several past existences. So, he changed the subject of meditation for the bhikkhu. Instead of loathsomeness, he was directed to meditate on pleasantness. With his supernatural power, the Buddha created a beautiful lotus flower and gave it to the monk advising him to stick it in a mound of sand just outside the monastery.

The bhikkhu, concentrating on the big, beautiful, fragrant lotus flower was able to overcome the hindrances. He was filled up with delightful satisfaction (piti) and progressed gradually till he reached as far as the fourth level of mental absorption (jhana).

The Buddha saw him from his perfumed chamber and with his supernatural power he made the lotus flower disappear in one moment. Seeing the flower dry up and lose its colour, the bhikkhu understood the impermanent nature of the lotus flower and all other conditioned things. That led to the realisation of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and the insubstantiality of all conditioned things. At that time, the Buddha again sent radiance and exhorted him to kill out craving (tanha). Reflecting mindfully on this, the bhikkhu attained Arahanthood.

Verse 286: Idha vassaṃ vasissāmi idha hemanta gimhisu
Iti bālo vicinteti antarāyaṃ na bujjhati.

Verse 286: 'Here will I live during the rains, here in the winter and here in summer,' so ponders over a fool, not realising the danger of the approaching death.

Realise the truth of death
Story of Mahadhana

Place: Jetavana, Sravasti

Once, Mahadhana, a merchant from Benaras, came to Sravasti during a festival to sell his textiles and other merchandise goods. When he reached the outskirts of Sravasti and wanted to cross the river, he could not do so as the river was flooded. He was held up at the river bank for seven days. By that time, the festival at Sravasti was over.

He did not want to carry back all his goods to Benaras. Therefore, he decided to stay back in Sravasti itself for sometime and sell off his goods. After a few days when the Buddha was on almsround, he saw Mahadhana and smiled. Ananda asked the Buddha the reason of his smile and the Tathagata replied, 'Ananda, Do you see that merchant? He thinks that he will stay here and sell his goods. He is not aware that his end is very near. He is going to die in seven days. What is to be done has to be done today as the time is too short. **To live just one day, mindful, energetic and not disturbed by moral impurities, is to have a well spent life.**'

On the advice of the Buddha, Ananda explained to Mahadhana, 'Time is running out for you. You should practise mindfulness instead of being negligent.' On knowing that the death was knocking at his door, Mahadhana was alarmed and frightened. So, he invited the Buddha and the bhikkhus for almsfood for seven days and requested the Enlightened One to expound the Dhamma to him to help him gain freedom from samsara.

On the seventh day, after hearing the discourse of appreciation (anumodana), Mahadhana attained Srotappan, first stage of Sainthood. When after the discourse, the Tathagata left for the monastery, he accompanied him for some distance and then returned. On the way back, he had severe headache and passed away. Upon his death, he was reborn in the Tusita deva loka.

Verse 287: Taṃ putta pasu sammattaṃ byāsatta manasaṃ naraṃ
Suttaṃ gāmaṃ mahogho va maccu ādāya gacchati.

Verse 287: A deeply attached person, who is overwhelmed with thoughts on children and wealth, is snatched away by death like the sleeping village is washed away by the great floods.

Death seizes attached men
Story of Kisa Gotami

Kisa Gotami was the foremost among the female Maha Arahants of the Noble Sangha.

She was lean and thin and hence was called Kisa. Her real name, Gotami was linked to Kisa and she was known as 'Kisa Gotami.' On marriage, she had a son but very soon he died. The emotional attachment, on which she was living, was removed all of a sudden. As she was blind in her attachment, she could not believe that her son was no more alive. So, with her child in her arms, she roamed in the village seeking for the medicine which could revive him.

One day, a good samaritan advised her to visit the monastery and see the Buddha. There, she requested him to provide her the medicine she was looking for. The Buddha saw her potential Sainthood and the future. He also found that she was stranger to death. So, he asked her to bring some mustard seed. She felt happy and was about to set out to bring mustard. 'But wait a little', the Buddha added, 'The mustard seed must be brought from a house that has never seen death.'

Kisa thought that the work was simple. But she was on a journey of discovery. The much sought after mustard seed was readily available in every house but alas! Not that particular seed, the Buddha wanted. There was no house which did not have visitor as frequent as death. The truth that death is universal gradually dawned on her. She saw that the Buddha wanted to teach her the great lesson. She went back to the Buddha and asked him where to find that mustard seed. The Buddha told her, 'You imagined wrongly that you alone had lost a child. Death is the eternal law for all beings. Death, like a severe flood, drags away everything to the sea of ruin for all living beings, even when their desires are unfulfilled.' Kisa was now sadder but wiser. She no longer looked for the medicine. She looked for the higher prescription that could cure her once for all.

Similar story appears in chapter 8, Verse 114.

Verse 288: Na santi puttā tāṇāya na pitā na pi bandhavā
Antakenādhipannassa natthi ñātisu tānatā.

Verse 288: Neither sons, nor father, nor friends stand to save. There is no protection from kinsmen for one at the jaws of death.

No protection from death
Story of Patachara

Patachara had a very tragic life. She lost her husband, her two sons, parents and her only brother, almost at the same time. Due to this extreme grief, she was driven to near madness. On meeting the Buddha, she was pacified and became mindful. The Buddha consoled her by saying, 'Patachara, sons and daughters cannot look after you. Even when they are alive, they do not exist for you. The wise man observes the sila (morality) and clears the path leading to the Nirvana.' Hearing the healing words of wisdom from the Buddha, Patachara was relieved of the pain.

In Uraga Jataka, (man quits his mortal frame), the story concerns a farmer whose son had died. The Buddha went to his house and asked him, 'Sir, why are you weeping?' He replied, 'Ever since my son died, I have been in grief.' The Buddha explained, 'Sir, **It is only that which is subject to dissolution that has been dissolved. That which is subject to destruction, is destroyed. And this has happened neither to one man only, nor in one village only. There is no creature that is not subject to death.**' The Buddha related a story of the past.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta ruled in Benaras, the Bodhisattva was born as a farmer in a brahmin family, outside the city. He had one son and a daughter. When he grew up, the son was married. There were six members in the family, including the female slave. They all lived happily and affectionately. The Bodhisattva admonished them, 'Give alms, as you have received. Observe holy days. Keep the moral law. Dwell on the thought of death. Death is certain, life is uncertain. Therefore, take heed to your ways day and night.' They accepted his teachings seriously and started following it. They dwelt diligently on the thought of death.

One day, the Bodhisattva went with his son to plough the field. The son was bitten by a snake and fell down dead. The father laid the body at the foot of a tree and covered it with a cloth. He neither wept, nor cried. He said, 'That which is subject to dissolution is dissolved, that which is subjected to death is dead.' He went on ploughing the field. Seeing a neighbour going home, he told him, 'Please go to our house and tell my wife, "You do not bring food for two, but bring for one only today. All of you wear clean garments and come with flowers and perfumes."'

Verse 289: Etam atthavasaṃ ñatvā paṇḍito sila saṃ vuto
Nibbāna gamanaṃ maggaṃ khippam eva visodhaye.

Verse 289: Realising this fact, a wise one restrained morally clears the way to Nibbana expeditiously.

Proceed to Nirvana
Story of Patachara

The neighbour told exactly these words to the brahmin's wife. 'By whom was this message given?' 'By the brahmin himself, lady', he replied. She understood that her son was dead. She showed perfect self-control, wore white garments and with flowers and perfumes in her hand, she bade her family members to bring food. All members went to the field, as advised. The Bodhisattva, still sitting under the tree where the son lay, ate his food. Then they put the body on the funeral pyre, everyone made an offering of flowers and perfume and set fire to the body. But not a single tear was shed by anyone. All were meditating on the thought of death. On seeing the virtue of the family members, Sakka asked the Bodhisattva why he did not weep at the death of his son. He replied:

Man quits his mortal frame, when joy in life is past.
Even as a snake is wont, its worn out slough to cast,

No friend's lament can touch the ashes of the dead:

Why should I grieve: He fares the way he had to tread.

The mother also replied to Sakka in a similar manner:

Uncalled he hither came, unbidden soon to go;
Even as he came, he went. What cause is here for woe?

The sister explained the reason why she did not weep:

Though I should fast and weep, how would it profit me?
My kith and kin alas! Would, more unhappy be.

The wife also explained the reason why she did not weep.

DHAMMAPADA
MAGGA VAGGA

"Wherever the Buddha's teachings have flourished,

either in cities or countrysides,

people would gain inconceivable benefits.

The land and people would be enveloped in peace.

The sun and moon will shine clear and bright.

Wind and rain would appear accordingly,

and there will be no disasters.

Nations would be prosperous

and there would be no use for soldiers or weapons.

People would abide by morality and accord with laws.

They would be courteous and humble,

and everyone would be content without injustices.

There would be no thefts or violence.

The strong would not dominate the weak

and everyone would get their fair share."

***THE BUDDHA SPEAKS OF**
THE INFINITE LIFE SUTRA OF
ADORNMENT, PURITY, EQUALITY
AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF
THE MAHAYANA SCHOOL*

With bad advisors forever left behind,
From paths of evil he departs for eternity,
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light
And perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.

The supreme and endless blessings
of Samantabhadra's deeds,
I now universally transfer.
May every living being, drowning and adrift,
Soon return to the Pure Land of Limitless Light!

⁕ The Vows of Samantabhadra ⁕

I vow that when my life approaches its end,
All obstructions will be swept away;
I will see Amitabha Buddha,
And be born in His Western Pure Land of
Ultimate Bliss and Peace.

When reborn in the Western Pure Land,
I will perfect and completely fulfill
Without exception these Great Vows,
To delight and benefit all beings.

⁕ The Vows of Samantabhadra Avatamsaka Sutra ⁕

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

《英文：法句經《第二冊》：DHAMMAPADA (VAGGA 11-20)》

財團法人佛陀教育基金會 印贈

台北市杭州南路一段五十五號十一樓

Printed for free distribution by

The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation

11F, No. 55, Sec. 1, Hang Chow South Road, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Tel: 886-2-23951198 , Fax: 886-2-23913415

Email: overseas@budaedu.org

Website: http://www.budaedu.org

Mobile Web: m.budaedu.org

This book is strictly for free distribution, it is not to be sold.

Printed in Taiwan

3,000 copies; May 2019

EN442 - 16590