

Ánanda Thera



Ven. Ananda Ministering the sick Monk

Introduction – Reading the story of **Ven. Ananda Thera**, we come to know the significance of paying homage to **Bodhi tree**. It was instructed by Buddha to plant a sapling Bodhi tree to represent him – Buddha said to Ananda –

1. *“Ánanda bring a sapling from the Bodhi Tree in **Buddha Gaya** and plant it in **Jetavana**. He then said: "In my absence, let my devotees pay homage to the great Bodhi Tree that gave me protection during enlightenment. Let the Bodhi Tree be a symbol of my presence. Those who honor the Bodhi.*
2. *The next significant contribution was the formation of the **Bhikkhuni Sangha order** for the first time in **Buddha’s Ministry**.*
3. *The next, is the **Ratana Sutta – Yatana Tote** - whenever, some one recite **Ratana Sutta – Yatana Tote** – we are reminded of **Ven. Ananda** who first recite this paritta sutta to clean the evil off the city of **Vasali**.*
4. *He attained the **Arahantship** on the day of the **First Council of the Dhamma**, (**Sangayana**), post **Maha Parinaibbana** period. He was declared **the guardian of the Dhamma** because of his **retentive memory**.*

5. One very significant lesson we can learn from the Maha-parinibbana Sutta is Buddha's instruction to Ananda - "*Ananda, please prepare a bed for me between the twin sal-trees, with its head to the north. I am tired, and will lie down.*" When we meditate we should always face towards the Northerly direction to accrue the purity of the Universe. It also means we should place our sleeping bed position with head in the North direction.

6. Another significant lesson is the environment of an Arahant at a critical moment are surrounded with Devatas (Devas and Devis) paying their obeisance. That was the reason why when a monk attained the Arahantship, there will appear **luminous glows around his monastery** – in Burmese we called it – *Yaung Kyi Daw Hlut Te*. Miraculous glows of luminous rays will appear at the monastery where the Arahant Monk lives, because of Devas' visitation to the monastery (Their shining body illuminate the surrounding area)..

7. Buddha gave his final instruction to his disciples how they should behave towards women folks. It will always be a reminder to all Bhikkhu's and Bhikkhuni's as well.

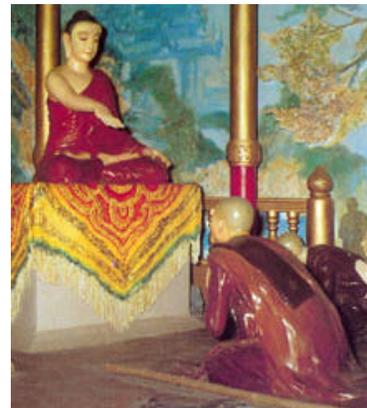
"Lord, what course should we follow with regard to womenfolk?"

"Not-seeing, Ananda"

"But when there is seeing, lord, what course should be followed?"

"Not-addressing, Ananda."

For this reason, woman folks are suppose to wear dark color shawl (*Pa war*) around their shoulder when addressing Monks to tone down their appeal.



Ven. Ananda aspired to become a personal attendant to the Buddha some 100,000 world cycles back in time, before the *Buddha Padumuttara*. who gave the prophecy that he will certainly realize his aspiration at the time of Gotama Buddha. One's aspiration will come to realization if one strive hard to do meritorious deeds through the cycles of rebirths, *Samsara*.

From the Dhammapada Verse 53, our lesson is not to consume the left over from the past in the present. Do more and more meritorious deeds in the present.

Ánanda was one of **Prince Siddhartha's cousins**. His father was Amitodana, a younger brother of King Shuddhodana. As his birth brought a lot of happiness to his family he was named Ánanda. He was born on the same day as Prince Siddhartha.

Ánanda was ordained as a monk in the second year of the Buddha's ministry, when he was thirty-seven years old. Shortly after, hearing a sermon by the *Ven. Punna Mantaniputta*, he attained the first stage of sainthood, Sotápanna. When the Buddha was fifty-five years old, Ánanda became His personal attendant.

The Buddha addressed the assembled monks and informed them that He had many attendants who had assisted him periodically but none of them had been able to fulfill their duties perfectly. "It is time" he said, "to have a reliable, trustworthy attendant." He then asked if any of the assembled monks would like to be His personal attendant. All the noble ones gathered immediately responded to His request by offering their services. Ánanda, however, who dearly wished to be His attendant, modestly held back, thinking, "The Buddha would surely appoint me if I were the most suitable person." The Buddha, with His divine eye, observed that many eons ago *Ánanda had aspired to be a personal attendant of a Buddha, the fulfillment of which was to occur during His reign*. Refusing the offers of the other monks, He turned to Ánanda and offered the post to him.

Ánanda agreed to accept the post if the Buddha would agree to eight conditions. Four of them related to the non-acceptance of gifts and favors from the Buddha. Ánanda wanted to ensure that there would be no doubts cast that he had accepted this position in order to obtain material gain. The other four related to the performance of his duties while being mindful of his own advancement in the Noble Path. The Buddha agreed to Ánanda's requests.

The fact that Ánanda felt comfortable in asking the Buddha, whom he loved and respected and to whom he was loyal, for a conditional acceptance, illustrates the relationship between the Buddha and His monks and the manner in which the Buddha ran His ministry. The Buddha was the undisputed leader. But there was no fear under His reign. Monks felt free to voice their opinion and to question the Buddha at will.

In truth, the term personal attendant does not convey all the duties and responsibilities carried out by *Ánanda*. In addition to taking care of all the Buddha's personal needs *Ánanda* was an executive assistant to the Buddha and helped in the management of His large retinue of monks, nuns and devotees. He also had the unique advantage of hearing most of the Buddha's discourses and because of his **unusually retentive memory**, **was declared the Guardian of the Dhamma**.

To attain the position of personal attendant of a Buddha, one needs to **aspire to the position and perform many meritorious deeds over a period of 100,000 world cycles**. *Ánanda* made this aspiration 100,000 world cycles ago, at the time of the *Buddha Padumuttara*. At that time he was born as *Sumana*, *the younger half-brother of the Bodhisattva Gotama* (known at that time by the name Jatila). He provided the requisites during the three months of the rainy season to the Padumuttara Buddha and His retinue of 100,000 monks. **He then aspired to be the personal attendant of a future Buddha**. The Buddha Padumuttara looked into the future and saw that this aspiration would be fulfilled. *He informed Ánanda that in 100,000 world cycles he would be the personal attendant of the Buddha Gotama*. From this time onwards *Ánanda* continued to perform meritorious deeds to fulfill his aspiration.

In addition to being the Guardian of the Dhamma, *Ánanda* was well-known for two other important events that he initiated. They were the planting of the **Ánanda Bodhi** and **the founding of the order of the nuns**.

Many persons came to **Jetavana** to pay homage to the Buddha and to learn His teachings. Sometimes when they came, the Buddha was away helping a person in distress. As many had traveled long distances to see Him and were disappointed, *Ánanda* asked the Buddha what could be done to help these disappointed devotees.

The Buddha then asked **Ánanda to bring a sapling from the Bodhi Tree in Buddha Gaya and plant it in Jetavana**. He then said: "In my absence, let my devotees pay homage to the great Bodhi Tree that gave me protection during enlightenment. Let the Bodhi Tree be a symbol of my presence. Those who honor the Bodhi Tree would in essence be honoring and paying homage to me."

Ever since that time, Buddhists from all over the world have venerated the Bodhi Tree as they would the Buddha, with scented water, flowers and incense. Many uninformed persons have misunderstood this symbolic action by saying that Buddhists worship trees. The Buddha statue, the Bodhi Tree, and the relics of the Buddha, are but symbols of the Buddha that people use to focus the mind on the compassionate and serene qualities of the Buddha. The veneration of the Buddha provides the tranquility and peace of mind that many people cannot readily acquire to meditate, study, and listen to His teachings.

It was at Ánanda's request, on behalf of **Maha Pajapati**, that the **Buddha instituted the order of the nuns**. The Buddha had initially refused Maha Pajapati Gotami's request to be ordained. It was after Ánanda's question as to whether women were incapable of reaching spiritual heights and the Buddha's reply that women were as capable as men of reaching spiritual heights that the Buddha had agreed to the formation of the order of the nuns. As such, women had a special regard and respect for Ánanda. This, together with his pleasing nature, made Ánanda very popular. It is said that there were none who spoke ill of Ánanda or were envious of him despite his honored position and proximity to the Buddha.

The documented past life stories of Ánanda reflect that he was seldom a god (unlike his stepbrother Anuruddha) and seldom an animal (unlike his cousin Devadatta). *Ánanda was often a human and in many births was the brother of the Bodhisattva.*

Even though Ánanda was very learned and knowledgeable, he only reached the first stage of sainthood, Sotápanna, during the lifetime of the Buddha. His deep attachment to the Buddha prevented him from attaining Arahantship. As a result, he was not aware of the exact moment when the Buddha passed away. Thinking that the Buddha had attained Parinibbána, he informed his stepbrother Anuruddha. Anuruddha, who was an Arahant, observing with his divine eye that this was not the case, clarified to Ánanda that the Blessed One had not yet passed away. He had reached a meditative stage known as Cessation of Perception and Feeling.

Shortly after the Buddha's Parinibbána, **on the day of the First Council of the Dhamma, (Sangayana) Ánanda attained Arahantship.** Ánanda

was designated by the Buddha as the leader in five categories. They were:

Learning
Retentive memory
Good behavior
Steadfastness
Ministering of care

Thirty of Ánanda's verses have been preserved in the Theragatha. The following illustrate his encouragement to associate with good friends and those well-versed in the Dhamma.

*"A clever man should not make friends
With a malicious man, or an angry man, or an envious man,
One delighting in (others') misfortune;
Contact with a bad man is evil.
A clever man should make friends
With a man of faith, a pleasant man,
With wisdom and great learning;
Contact with a good man is fortunate.
See the painted puppet
A heap of sores, a compounded body, diseased,
With many bad intentions,
For which there is no permanent stability.
Desiring understanding of the doctrine,
One should associate with that disciple of the Buddha,
Who has great learning, is expert in the doctrine,
Possesses wisdom, is of such a kind.
-- (Theragatha 1018-1020, 1030)*

Ánanda declared the following verses to inspire others to follow his example as the Guardian of the Dhamma. He also encouraged others to carefully examine and understand the teachings prior to their practice.

*"82,000 teachings from the Buddha
I have received,
2,000 more from his disciples;
Now 84,000 are familiar to me.
Who nothing has heard and nothing understood (those void of*

Dhamma)
He ages only oxen-like
His stomach (body) only, grows and grows
But his insight deepens not.
Thou follow him who has heard much
Then what is heard shall not decline.
This is the tap-root of the holy life;
Hence a Dhamma Guardian you should be!
Knowing what comes first and what last
Knowing well the meaning too,
Skilful in grammar (analytical knowledge) and in other terms
The well-grasped meaning he examines.
Keen in his patient application
He strives to weigh the meaning well.
At the right time he makes the effort
And inwardly collects his mind."
-- (Theragatha 1024,1025,1027-1029)

Ánanda passed away at the age of one hundred and twenty. The Dhammapada states that as people on both sides of the River Rohini wanted his relics, Ánanda preached the Dhamma to the people while seated in the air in the middle of the river and wished that his body would split in two with one part falling on one bank of the river and the other part on the other bank of the river. He then entered the ecstatic meditation on fire. Flames instantly issued from his body and, as willed, one portion of his relics fell on one side of the river while the other portion fell on the other side. The people then enshrined his relics in stupas so that they could honor him.

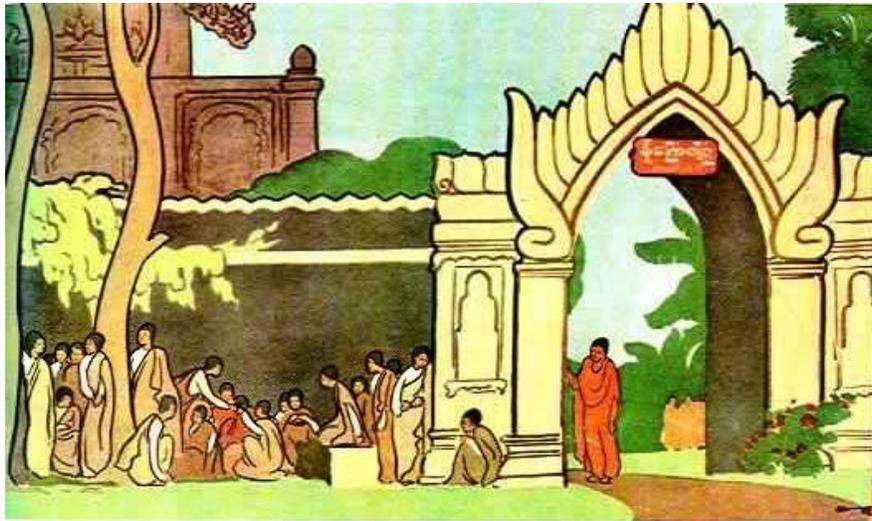
Ánanda's greatest contribution to the Dhamma occurred three months after the Parinibbána of the Lord Buddha. The Buddha had declared **Ánanda as the guardian of the Dhamma because of his retentive memory.** At the First Sangha Council, Ánanda, under the direction of Maha Kassapa, led the five hundred Arahants in the recitation of the Teachings and helped in the codification of the Dhamma. This method of preservation of the Dhamma was used again in later years. The second Sangha Council was led by one of Ánanda's pupils.

Reference - Relatives and Disciples of the Buddha by Radhika Abeysekera

Mahapajapati and Ananda



Foster mother Mahapajapati Gotami asking Permission for admission to Bhikkhuni Order



Mahapajapati Gotami relates her intention of becoming a Bhikkhuni ,at the entrance of the Monastery, to Ven. Ananda

The Buddha's aunt, **Mahapajapati**, had nursed and brought up the Buddha as if he were her own son. When her husband, King Suddhodana, passed away, she became very sad and began to feel tired of the worldly life. She came to prefer a pure kind of life, liked to follow the Buddha, listen to the Buddha Dhamma and wished she could leave home and join his group of monks in the practice of Dhamma. So she led a group of women who were unwilling to become court ladies, and they followed the Buddha everywhere.

Lady Mahapajapati requested the Buddha's kind permission to let her leave home and become a nun so that she could follow him closely and learn and practice according to his teaching as other bhikkhus did. Although she implored him again and again that she and the other women be accepted as **bhikkhunis**, she was three times refused by Buddha. At this she became so disappointed and felt deeply hurt that she and the other women all began to weep.

When King Suddhodana's cremation was ended, the Buddha left Kapilavatthu and began traveling and preaching from place to place. At one point he came to the country of Vasali and resided at the Mahavana Monastery. Lady Mahapajapati and her group of women all shaved their heads, put on robes, and journeyed on foot toward Vasali. They could only walk a short distance each day, so it took them a long time to arrive finally at Mahavana Monastery, where the Buddha was staying.

When they arrived, after walking for a long time, their feet were all swollen, and their bodies had become thin and weakened by fatigue. Mahapajapati stood at the entrance to the monastery and could not hold back her tears. Ananda had just come out of the monastery gate and found the lady weeping sorrowfully. He asked her why she was crying. The lady said: "Venerable Ananda! The Buddha did not allow me and my women to leave home. I want nothing else. I wish only to leave home and become a nun, and so I am crying!"

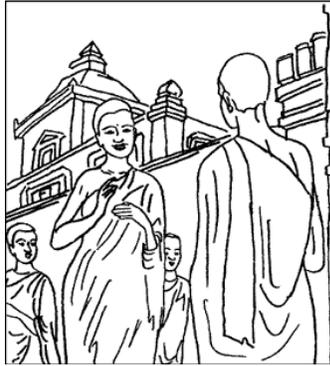
Ananda consoled her: "**My noble lady! Please wait here for a little while. If this is so, I shall entreat the Buddha to have compassion and to allow women to practice Dhamma as well as the bhikkhus.**" Promising the lady that he would do that entire he could to help her, Ananda then went back into the monastery to see the Buddha. With deep reverence, he requested that the Buddha show his mercy and let women leave

home as men were allowed to do. But the Buddha replied: "Ananda! No, no! Do not ask me to do this!"

Ananda did not back down but, with courage, persisted in his entreaty for a second and even a third time; but even so the Buddha refused his request each time. Ananda thought to himself: "The Buddha does not consent upon my direct request. Maybe he will consent if I plead in a different way." So he asked: "Buddha! If women quit worldly affairs and become nuns and strictly practice pure living according to Dhamma, will they be able following the order of the Holy path to attain to the four fruits? Will they be able to attain Nibbana?" The Buddha replied: "Ananda! If women quit worldly affairs, become nuns and practice according to Dhamma, they too can during this present lifetime, attain the stage of arahant and Nibbana.

Ananda then said: "In that case, I beg the Buddha to consider that, lady Mahapajapati has, in former times, done you the greatest favor; for she is your aunt, as well as your foster-mother, and she breast-fed you from the time your mother passed away as well as teaching you and bringing you up in place of your mother. Buddha, I beg you, for the sake of this lady, kindly [allow women to leave home like men so that they can also practice the Buddha Dhamma in pursuit of the highest holy fruit that you have expounded to the people of the world.](#)"

The Buddha said: "All right, Ananda! If Lady Mahapajapati is willing to observe the 'eight ways of showing respect' strictly, I shall allow her to leave home!" Then he explained the eight forms of showing respect to Ananda, and finally he stood up and said: "Ananda! If lady Mahapajapati willingly observes these eight forms of showing respect all her life, she will be a bhikkhuni, pure in conduct and complete in virtue!"



Ven. Ananda Relates to Maha Pajapati the Buddha's Intention

Having obtained the Buddha's permission, Ananda went out to tell Lady Mahapajapati what the Buddha said. The lady was very happy, and she said to Ananda: "Venerable Ananda! Young girls love to dress up; they shampoo and bathe themselves and then, with both hands, raise beautiful fragrant flower garlands to place on their heads, carefully adjusting and fixing this decoration. Likewise, I shall observe the eight commandments as if they were a garland of flowers on a young girl's head and make sure that this garland does not fall from my head throughout my life.

Ananda returned to see the Buddha once again, bowed and then said: "Buddha! Lady Mahapajapati is willing to observe strictly the eight ways of showing respect that you have mentioned, for she has now realized her desire of being able to become a bhikkhuni!" The Buddha said: "Ananda, with women in the order the correct doctrine of Dhamma will prevail for a shorter period than with men; for if a tribe has more women than men, how can they ward off ferocious bandits and resist outside oppression? With women as nuns, the Buddha-Dhamma cannot prevail for very long." In a later prophecy Buddha said his Sasana would last for 5,000 years.

Formation of the Order of Bhikkhuni



Buddha admitted Mahapajapati Gotami to Bhikkhuni Order

The Buddha was dwelling at Kapilavatthu in Banyan Park Monastery. Maha-pajapati Gotami approached the Buddha along with five hundred women of the Sakya clan, and begged permission for women to be admitted into the Order as Nuns. The Buddha refused permission saying, 'Enough, O Gotami, do not ask that women be admitted into the Order as Nuns'. She went away sorrowful and sad.

Later, when the Blessed One was dwelling at Vesali, Mahapajapati Gotami had her hair cut off, put on yellow garments and with five hundred of Sakya women followed to Vaseli. She dared not enter the monastery grounds and stood outside the porch. Now the Venerable Ananda saw her standing there, and went to the Buddha and asked several times for permission to admit women into the Order as Nuns. At last, the Blessed One gave the permission and was admitted to the order along with her five hundred retinues of women.

Appendix - A

Twenty Four Buddhas. Starting from the time our Buddhisatta received a definite prophecy from Buddha Dipankara.

1. *Dipankara Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was born as the ascetic *Sumedha* and received the **definite proclamation**

After a period of one Asankheyya there appeared:

2. *Kondanna Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a *Cakkavatti King* named **Vijitavi**

After a period of one Asankheyya there appeared:

3. *Mangala Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a *Brahmin* named **Suruci**

4. *Sumana Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a *Naga king* named **Atula**

5. *Revata Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a **Brahmin** named **Atideva**

6. *Sobhita Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a **Brahmin** named **Ajita**

After a period of one Asankheyya there appeared:

7. *Anomadassi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was **a leader of demons**

8. *Paduma Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was **a lion**

9. *Narada Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was **an ascetic**

After a period of one Asankheyya there appeared:

10. *Padumuttara Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a man named **Jatila** (This period was 100,000 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)

After a period of 70,000 Maha kappa there appeared:

11. *Sumedha Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a young man named **Uttara** (This period was 30,000 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)

After a period of 12,000 Maha kappa there appeared:

12. *Sujata Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was **a chakkavatti king** (This period was 18,000 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)

13. *Piyadassi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a young **Brahmin** named *Kassapa*
14. *Atthadassi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was an **ascetic** by the name of *Susima*
15. *Dhammadassi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was the **God Sakka**
16. *Siddhatta Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was an ascetic by the name of *Mangala*
17. *Tissa Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a king named *Sujata* who later became an ascetic (This period was 92 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)
18. *Phussa Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a king by the name of *Vijitavi* who later became a monk
19. *Vipassi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was the **Naga king, Atula** (This period was 91 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)
20. *Sikhi Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a king named *Arindama* (This period was 31 Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)
21. *Vessabhu Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was the **king Sudassana** who later became a monk (This period was one Maha kappas before the advent of the Gotama Buddha)
22. *Kakusandha Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a **king named Sema** (This period was in the same Maha kappas as that of the Gotama Buddha)
23. *Konagamana Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a king named *Pabbata* who later became a monk (This period was in the same Maha kappas as that of the Gotama Buddha)
24. *Kassapa Buddha* - The Bodhisatta was a **Brahmin** named *Jotipala* (This period was in the same Maha Kappas as that of the Gotama Buddha)

Appendix – B

Dhammapada Verses 51 and 52

The Story of Chattapani, a Lay Disciple

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verses (51) and (52) of this book, with reference to the lay disciple Chattapani and the two queens of King Pasenadi of Kosala.

A lay disciple named Chattapani who was an anagami* lived in Savatthi. On one occasion, Chattapani was with the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery respectfully and attentively listening to a religious discourse, when King Pasenadi also came to the Buddha. Chattapani did not stand up because he thought that by standing up, it might mean that he was paying respect to the king, but not paying due respect to the Buddha. The king took that as an insult and was very much offended. The Buddha knew exactly how the king was feeling; so he spoke in praise of Chattapani, who was well versed in the Dhamma and had also attained the Anagami Fruition. On hearing this, the king was impressed and favorably inclined towards Chattapani.

When the king next met Chattapani he said, "You are so learned; could you please come to the palace and give lessons of the Dhamma to my two queens?" Chattapani declined but he suggested that the king should request the Buddha to assign a bhikkhu for this purpose. So, the king approached the Buddha in connection with this, and the Buddha directed the **Venerable Ananda to go regularly to the palace and teach the Dhamma to queen Mallika and queen Vasabhakhattiya**. After some time, the Buddha asked the Venerable Ananda about the progress of the two queens. The Venerable Ananda answered that although Mallika was learning the Dhamma seriously, Vasabhakhattiya was not paying proper attention. On hearing this the Buddha said that the Dhamma could be of benefit only to those who learn it seriously with due respect and proper attention and then practice diligently what was taught.

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 51. Just as a beautiful flower, lacking in scent, cannot give the wearer the benefit of its scent, so also, the well-preached words of the Buddha cannot benefit one who does not practice the Dhamma.

Verse 52. Just as a flower, beautiful as well as fragrant, will give the wearer the benefit of its scent, so also, the well-preached words of the Buddha will benefit one who practices the Dhamma.

? **Anagami; one who has attained the third Magga.**

Dhammapada Verse 53

The Story of Visakha

While residing at the Pubbarama monastery in Savatthi, the Buddha uttered Verse (53) of this book, with reference to Visakha, the famous donor of the Pubbarama monastery.

Visakha was the daughter of a rich man of Bhaddiya, named Danancaya, and his wife Sumanadevi, and the granddaughter of Mendaka, one of the five extremely wealthy men of King Bimbisara's dominions. When Visakha was seven years old, the Buddha came on a tour to Bhaddiya. On that occasion, the rich man Mendaka took Visakha and her five hundred companions with him to pay homage to the Buddha. After hearing the discourse given by the Buddha, Visakha, her grandfather and all her five hundred companions attained Sotapatti Fruition.

When Visakha came of age, she married Punnavadahana, son of Migara, a fairly rich man from Savatthi. One day, while Migara was having his meal, a bhikkhu stopped for alms at his house; but Migara completely ignored the bhikkhu. Visakha, seeing this, said to the bhikkhu, "I am sorry, your reverence, my father-in-law only eats leftovers." On hearing this, Migara flew into a rage and told her to leave his house. But Visakha said she was not going away, and that she would send for the eight elderly rich men who were sent by her father to accompany her and to advise her. It was for them to decide whether she was guilty or not. When the elders came, Migara said to them, "While I

was having my rice-with-milk in a golden bowl, Visakha said that I was taking only dirt and filth. For this offence, I'm sending her away."

Thereupon, Visakha explained as follows: "*When I saw my father-in-law completely ignoring the bhikkhu standing for alms-food, I thought to myself that my father-in-law was not doing any meritorious deed in this existence. he was only eating the fruits of his past good deeds. So, I said, 'My father-in-law only eats leftovers.'* Now Sirs, what do you think, am I guilty?" The elders decided that Visakha was not guilty. Visakha then said that she was one who had absolute and unshakable faith in the Teaching of the Buddha and so could not stay where the bhikkhus were not welcome; and also, that if she was not given permission to invite the bhikkhus to the house to offer alms-food and make other offerings, she would leave the house. So permission was granted her to invite the Buddha and his bhikkhus to the house.

The next day, the Buddha and his disciples were invited to the house of Visakha. When alms-food was about to be offered, she sent word to her father-in-law to join her in offering food; but he did not come. When the meal was over, again she sent a message, this time requesting her father-in-law to join her in hearing the discourse that would soon be given by the Buddha. Her father-in-law felt that he should not refuse for a second time. But his ascetic teachers, the Niganthas, would not let him go; however, they conceded that he could listen from behind a curtain. After hearing the Buddha's discourse Migara attained Sotapatti Fruition. He felt very thankful to the Buddha and also to his daughter-in-law. Being so thankful, he declared that henceforth Visakha would be like a mother to him, and Visakha came to be known as Migaramata.

Visakha gave birth to ten sons and ten daughters, and ten sons and ten daughters each were born to everyone of her children and grandchildren. Visakha possessed an immensely valuable gem-encrusted cloak given by her father as a wedding present. One day, Visakha went to the Jetavana monastery with her entourage. On arrival at the monastery, she found that her bejeweled cloak was too heavy. So, she took it off, wrapped it up in her shawl, and gave it to the maid to hold it and take care of it. The maid absentmindedly left it at the monastery. It was the custom for the Venerable Ananda to look after the things left by any one of the lay disciples. Visakha sent the maid back to the

monastery saying, "Go and look for the bejeweled cloak, but if the Venerable Ananda had already found it and kept it in a place do not bring it back; I donate the bejeweled cloak to the Venerable Ananda." But the Venerable Ananda did not accept her donation. So Visakha decided to sell the bejeweled cloak and donate the sale proceeds. But there was no one who could afford to buy that bejeweled cloak. So Visakha bought it back for nine crores and one lakh. With this money, she built a monastery on the eastern side of the city; this monastery came to be known as Pubbarama.

After the libation ceremony she called all her family to her and on that night she told them that all her wishes had been fulfilled and that she had nothing more to desire. Then reciting five verses of exultation she went round and round the monastery. Some bhikkhus hearing her, thought she was singing and reported to the Buddha that Visakha was not like before, and that she was going round and round the monastery, singing. "Could it be that she had gone off her head?" they asked the Buddha. To this question, the Buddha replied, "Today, Visakha had all her wishes of the past and present existences fulfilled and on account of that sense of achievement, she was feeling elated and contented; Visakha was just reciting some verses of exultation; she certainly had not gone off her head. Visakha, throughout her previous existences, had always been a generous donor and an ardent promoter of the Doctrine of successive Buddhas. She was most strongly inclined to do good deeds and had done much good in her previous existences, just as an expert florist makes many garlands from a collection of flowers.

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 53. As from a collection of flowers many a garland can be made by an expert florist, so also, much good can be done (with wealth, out of faith and generosity) by one subject to birth and death.

Reference – Dhammapada Verses and Stories by Daw Mya Tin.-

Appendix - C

Samyutta Nikaya VIII.4

Ananda Sutta

Ananda (Instructions to Vangisa)

Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
For free distribution only.

On one occasion **Ven. Ananda** was staying near Savatthi in Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's monastery. Then early in the morning he put on his robes and, carrying his bowl & outer robe, went into Savatthi for alms with **Ven. Vangisa** as his attendant monk. Now at that time dissatisfaction (with the chaste life) had arisen in Ven. Vangisa. Lust invaded his mind. So he addressed Ven. Ananda with this verse:

With sensual lust I burn.
My mind is on fire.
Please, Gotama, from compassion,
tell me how
to put it out.

[Ven. Ananda:]

From distorted perception
your mind is on fire.
Shun the theme of the beautiful
accompanied by lust.
See mental fabrications as other,
as stress,
& not-self.

Extinguish your great lust.
Don't keep burning again & again.

Develop the mind
-- well-centered & one --
in the foul,
through the foul.
Have your mindfulness
immersed in the body.
Be one who pursues

**disenchantment.
Develop the theme-less.
Cast out conceit.
Then, from breaking through
conceit,
you will go on your way

at peace.**

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/canon/samyutta/sn08-004.html>

Appendix - D

Digha Nikaya 16

Maha-parinibbana Sutta

The Great Discourse on the Total Unbinding

(excerpt)

Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
For free distribution only.

...

Then the Blessed One said to **Ven. Ananda**: "Ananda, let's go to the far shore of the Hiraññavati River. We'll head for Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinara."

"As you say, lord," Ven. Ananda responded to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large community of monks went to the far shore of the Hiraññavati River and headed for Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinara. On arrival, he said to Ven. Ananda, "*Ananda, please prepare a bed for me between the twin sal-trees, with its head to the north. I am tired, and will lie down.*"

Responding, "As you say, lord," Ven. Ananda prepared a bed between the twin sal-trees, with its head to the north. Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side in the lion's sleeping posture, with one foot on top of the other, mindful & alert.[\[1\]](#)

Now at that time the twin sal-trees were in full bloom, even though it was not the time for flowering. They showered, strewed, & sprinkled on the Tathagata's body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms fell from the sky, showering, strewing, & sprinkling the Tathagata's body in homage to him. Heavenly sandalwood powder fell from the sky, showering, strewing, & sprinkling the Tathagata's body in homage to him. Heavenly music was playing in the sky, in homage to the Tathagata. Heavenly songs were sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathagata.

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ananda, "Ananda, the twin sal-trees are in full bloom, even though it's not the flowering season. They shower, strew, & sprinkle on

the Tathagata's body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms are falling from the sky... Heavenly sandalwood powder is falling from the sky... Heavenly music is playing in the sky... Heavenly songs are sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathagata. But it is not to this extent that a Tathagata is worshipped, honored, respected, venerated, or paid homage to. Rather, the monk, nun, male lay follower, or female lay follower who keeps practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, who keeps practicing masterfully, who lives in accordance with the Dhamma: that is the person who worships, honors, respects, venerates, & pays homage to the Tathagata with the highest homage. So you should train yourselves: 'We will keep practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, we will keep practicing masterfully, we will live in accordance with the Dhamma.' That's how you should train yourselves."

Now at that time **Ven. Upavana** was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning him. Then the Blessed One dismissed him, saying, "Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me." Then the thought occurred to Ven. Ananda, "For a long time, now, this Ven. Upavana has been an attendant to the Blessed One, staying near him and traveling with him. But now, in his final hour, he dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me.' Now what is the reason, what is the cause, why the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me'?"

Then Ven. Ananda said to the Blessed One, "For a long time, now, this Ven. Upavana has been an attendant to the Blessed One, staying near him and traveling with him. But now, in his final hour, he dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me.' Now what is the reason, what is the cause, why the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me'?"

"Ananda, most of the **devatas** from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Tathagata. For twelve leagues all around Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinara, there is not the space even of the tip of a horse-tail hair that is not occupied by eminent devatas. The devatas, Ananda, are complaining, 'We have come a long distance to see the Tathagata.[2] Only once in a long, long time does a Tathagata -- worthy & rightly self-awakened -- arise in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathagata will occur. And this eminent monk is standing in front of the Blessed One, blocking the way. We aren't getting to see the Blessed One in his final hour.'"

"But, lord, what is the state of the devatas the Blessed One is referring to?"

"Ananda, there are devatas who perceive space to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them,[3] they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes (alternate reading: the Eye) will disappear from the world!' Then there are devatas who perceive earth to be earth.

Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes will disappear from the world!' But those devatas who are free from passion acquiesce, mindful & alert: 'Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?'"

"In the past, lord, the monks in all directions, after ending the Rains retreat, came to see the Tathagata. Thus we got to see & attend to the monks who inspire the heart. But now, after the Blessed One is gone, we won't get to see or attend to the monks who inspire the heart."

"Ananda, there are these four places that merit being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merit his feelings of urgency & dismay (*samvega*). Which four? 'Here the Tathagata was born' is a place that merits being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merits his feelings of urgency & dismay. 'Here the Tathagata awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening'... 'Here the Tathagata set rolling the unexcelled wheel of Dhamma'... 'Here the Tathagata was totally unbound in the remainderless property of Unbinding' is a place that merits being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merits his feelings of urgency & dismay. These are the four places that merit being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merit his feelings of urgency & dismay. They will come out of conviction, Ananda -- monks, nuns, male lay followers, & female lay followers -- to the spots where 'Here the Tathagata was born,' 'Here the Tathagata awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening,' 'Here the Tathagata set rolling the unexcelled wheel of Dhamma,' 'Here the Tathagata was totally unbound in the remainderless property of Unbinding.' And anyone who dies while making a pilgrimage to these memorials with a bright, confident mind will -- on the break-up of the body, after death -- reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world."

"Lord, what course should we follow with regard to womenfolk?"

"Not-seeing, Ananda"

"But when there is seeing, lord, what course should be followed?"

"Not-addressing, Ananda."

"But when we are addressed, what course should be followed?"

"Mindfulness should be established, Ananda."

"And, lord, what course should we follow with regard to the Tathagata's body?"

"You are not to be concerned about the Tathagata's funeral. Please, Ananda, strive for the true goal, be committed to the true goal, dwell heedful, ardent, & resolute for

the sake of the true goal. There are wise nobles, brahmans, & householders who are highly confident in the Tathagata. They will conduct the Tathagata's funeral."

"But, lord, what course should be followed with regard to the Tathagata's body?"

"The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ananda, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathagata."

"And what, lord, is the course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch?"

"Ananda, they wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrap it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrap it in **new linen cloth**. Having done this 500 times, they place the body in an iron oil-vat, cover it with an iron lid, make a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and cremate the body. Then they build a burial mound for the wheel-turning monarch at a great four-way intersection. That is the course that they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch. The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ananda, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathagata. A burial mound for the Tathagata is to be built at a great four-way intersection. And those who offer a garland, a scent, or a perfume powder there, or bow down there, or brighten their minds there: that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness.

"There are these four who are worthy of a burial mound. Which four? A Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is worthy of a burial mound. A Private Buddha... a disciple of a Tathagata... a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a burial mound.

"And for what reason is a Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then -- on the break-up of the body, after death -- they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world. It is for this reason that a Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is worthy of a burial mound.

"And for what reason is a Private Buddha (**Pecceca Buddha**) worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a Private Buddha,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then -- on the break-up of the body, after death -- they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world...

"And for what reason is a disciple of a Tathagata worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a disciple of a Tathagata,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then -- on the break-up

of the body, after death -- they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world...

"And for what reason is a wheel-turning monarch worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a wheel-turning monarch,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then -- on the break-up of the body, after death -- they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world. It is for this reason that a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a burial mound.

"These are the four who are worthy of a burial mound."

Then Ven. Ananda, going into a [nearby] building, stood leaning against the door jamb, weeping: "Here I am, still in training, with work left to do, and the total Unbinding of my teacher is about to occur -- the teacher who has had such sympathy for me!"

Then the Blessed One said to the monks, "Monks, where is Ananda?"

"Lord, Ven. Ananda, having gone into that building, stands leaning against the door jamb, weeping: 'Here I am, still in training, with work left to do, and the total Unbinding of my teacher is about to occur -- the teacher who has had such sympathy for me!'"

Then the Blessed One told a certain monk, "Come, monk. In my name, call Ananda, saying, 'The Teacher calls you, my friend.'"

"As you say, lord," the monk answered and, having gone to Ven. Ananda, on arrival he said, "The Teacher calls you, my friend."

"As you say, my friend," Ven. Ananda replied. Then he went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, "Enough, Ananda. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Haven't I already taught you the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating.

"For a long time, Ananda, you have waited on the Tathagata with physical acts of good will -- helpful, happy, whole-hearted, without limit; with verbal acts of good will... with mental acts of good will -- helpful, happy, whole-hearted, without limit. You are one who has made merit. Commit yourself to exertion, and soon you will be without mental fermentations."

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks, those who, in the past, were worthy ones, rightly self-awakened, had foremost attendants, just as I have had

Ananda. Those who, in the future, will be worthy ones, rightly self-awakened, will have foremost attendants, just as I have had Ananda. Ananda is wise, he knows, 'This is the time to approach to see the Tathagata. This is the time for monks, this the time for nuns, this the time for male lay-followers, this the time for female lay-followers, this the time for kings & their ministers, this the time for sectarians, this the time for the followers of sectarians.

"There are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ananda. If a group of monks approaches to see Ananda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. If a group of nuns approaches to see Ananda... If a group of male lay followers approaches to see Ananda... If a group of female lay followers approaches to see Ananda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. These are the four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ananda. There are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in a wheel-turning monarch. If a group of noble warriors approaches to see him... If a group of brahmins approaches to see him... If a group of householders approaches to see him... If a group of contemplatives approaches to see him, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. In the same way, monks, there are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ananda. If a group of monks... a group of nuns... a group of male lay followers... a group of female lay followers approaches to see Ananda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. These are the four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ananda."

When this was said, Ven. Ananda said to the Blessed One, "Lord, may the Blessed One not be totally unbound in this little town, this dusty town, this branch township. There are other great cities: Campa, Rajagaha, Savatthi, Saketa, Kosambi, Vanarasi. May the Blessed One be totally unbound there. In those cities there are many wealthy noble warriors, brahmins, & householders who have high confidence in the Tathagata. They will conduct the Tathagata's funeral."

"Don't say that, Ananda. Don't say that: 'this little town, this dusty town, this branch township.' In the past, Ananda, a king named Mahasudassana was a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king ruling righteously, who was a conqueror of the four directions, a stabilizer of his country, endowed with the seven treasures. This Kusinara was his capital city, named Kusavati: twelve leagues long from east to west, seven leagues wide from north to south. Kusavati was powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with people & prosperous. Just as the capital city of the devas, named Alakamanda is powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with yakkhas & prosperous; in the same way, Kusavati was powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with people & prosperous. By day or by night, it was never lacking in ten sounds: the sound of elephants, horses, carts, drums, tabors, lutes, songs, cymbals, gongs, with cries of 'Eat! Drink! Snack!' as the tenth.

"Now, Ananda, go into Kusinara and announce to the Kusinara Mallans, 'Tonight, Vasitthas, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathagata will occur. Come out, Vasitthas! Come out, Vasitthas! Don't later regret that 'The Tathagata's total Unbinding occurred within the borders of our very own town, but we didn't get to see him in his final hour!'"

Responding, "As you say, lord," Ven. Ananda put on his robe and -- carrying his bowl & outer robe -- went unaccompanied into Kusinara. Now at that time the Kusinara Mallans had met for some business in their assembly hall. Ven. Ananda went to the assembly hall and on arrival announced to them, "Tonight, Vasitthas, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathagata will occur. Come out, Vasitthas! Come out, Vasitthas! Don't later regret that 'The Tathagata's total Unbinding occurred within the borders of our very own town, but we didn't get to see him in his final hour!'" When they heard Ven. Ananda, the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives were shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow. Some of them wept, tearing at their hair; they wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes will disappear from the world!"

Then the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives -- shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow -- went to Ven. Ananda at Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinara. The thought occurred to Ven. Ananda, "If I let the Mallans pay reverence to the Blessed One one by one, the night will be over before they have finished paying reverence. What if I were to have them pay reverence to the Blessed One arranging them family by family, announcing, 'Lord, the Mallan named so-&-so, together with his children & wives, servants & retainers, bows down with his head at the Blessed One's feet.'" [4] So Ven. Ananda, arranging the Mallans family by family, had them pay reverence to the Blessed One, [saying,] "Lord, the Mallan named so-&-so, together with his children & wives, servants & retainers, bows down with his head at the Blessed One's feet."

In this way Ven. Ananda got the Mallans to pay reverence to the Blessed One within the first watch of the night.

Now at that time Subhadda the Wanderer was staying in Kusinara. He heard, "Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will take place." Then the thought occurred to him: "I have heard the elder wanderers, teachers of teachers, saying that only once in a long, long time do Tathagatas -- worthy ones, rightly self-awakened -- appear in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will occur. Now there is a doubt that has arisen in me, but I have faith that he could teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I might abandon that doubt."

So he went to Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove and, on arrival, said to Ven. Ananda, "I have heard the elder wanderers, teachers of teachers, saying that only once in a long, long time do Tathagatas -- worthy ones, rightly self-awakened -- appear in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will occur. Now there is a doubt that has arisen in me, but I have faith that he could teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I might abandon that doubt. It would be good, Ven. Ananda, if you would let me see him."

When this was said, Ven. Ananda said to him, "Enough, friend Subhadda. Don't bother the Blessed One. The Blessed One is tired."

For a second time... For a third time, Subhadda the Wanderer said to Ven. Ananda, "...It would be good, Ven. Ananda, if you would let me see him."

For a third time, Ven. Ananda said to him, "Enough, friend Subhadda. Don't bother the Blessed One. The Blessed One is tired."

Now, the Blessed One heard the exchange between Ven. Ananda & Subhadda the Wanderer, and so he said to Ven. Ananda, "Enough, Ananda. Don't stand in his way. Let him see the Tathagata. Whatever he asks me will all be for the sake of knowledge, and not to be bothersome. And whatever I answer when asked, he will quickly understand."

So Ven. Ananda said to Subhadda the Wanderer, "Go ahead, friend Subhadda. The Blessed One gives you his leave."

Then Subhadda went to the Blessed One and exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One, "Venerable sir, these priests & contemplatives, each with his group, each with his community, each the teacher of his group, an honored leader, well-regarded by people at large -- i.e., Purana Kassapa, Makkhali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambalin, Pakudha Kaccayana, Sañjaya Belatthaputta, & the Nigantha Nataputta: Do they all have direct knowledge as they themselves claim, or do they all not have direct knowledge, or do some of them have direct knowledge and some of them not?"

"Enough, Subhadda. Put this question aside. I will teach you the Dhamma. Listen, and pay close attention. I will speak."

"Yes, lord," Subhadda answered, and the Blessed One said, "In any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path is not found, no contemplative of the first... second... third... fourth order [stream-winner, once-returner, non-returner, or Arahant] is found. But in any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path *is* found, contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order *are* found. The noble eightfold path is found in this doctrine & discipline, and right here there are contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order. Other teachings are

empty of knowledgeable contemplatives. And if the monks dwell rightly, this world will not be empty of Arahants."

At age twenty-nine I went forth,
seeking what might be skillful,
and since my going forth
more than fifty years have past.

Outside of the realm
of methodical Dhamma,
there is no contemplative.

"And no contemplative of the second... third... fourth order. Other teachings are empty of knowledgeable contemplatives. And if the monks dwell rightly, this world will not be empty of Arahants."

Then Subhadda the Wanderer said, "Magnificent, lord! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to point out the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has the Blessed One -- through many lines of reasoning -- made the Dhamma clear. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, & to the community of monks. Let me obtain the going forth in the Blessed One's presence, let me obtain admission."

"Anyone, Subhadda, who has previously belonged to another sect and who desires the going forth & admission in this doctrine & discipline, must first undergo probation for four months. If, at the end of four months, the monks feel so moved, they give him the going forth & admit him to the monk's state. But I know distinctions among individuals in this matter."

"Lord, if that is so, I am willing to undergo probation for four years. If, at the end of four years, the monks feel so moved, let them give me the going forth & admit me to the monk's state."

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ananda, "Very well then, Ananda, give Subhadda the going forth."

"Yes, lord," Ananda answered.

Then Subhadda said to Ven. Ananda, "It is a gain for you, Ananda, a great gain, that you have been anointed here in the Teacher's presence with the pupil's anointing."[\[5\]](#)

Then Subhadda the Wanderer received the going forth & the admission in the Blessed One's presence. And not long after his admission -- dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute -- he in no long time reached & remained in the supreme

goal of the holy life, for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And thus Ven. Subhadda became another one of the Arahants, the last of the Blessed One's face-to-face disciples.

(VI)

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ananda, "Now, if it occurs to any of you -- 'The teaching has lost its authority; we are without a Teacher' -- do not view it in that way. Whatever Dhamma & Vinaya I have pointed out & formulated for you, that will be you Teacher when I am gone.

"At present, the monks address one another as 'friend,' but after I am gone they are not to address one another that way. The more senior monks are to address the newer monks by their name or clan or as 'friend.' The newer monks are to address the more senior monks as 'venerable' or 'sir.'

"After I am gone, the sangha -- if it wants -- may abolish the lesser & minor training rules.[\[6\]](#)

"After I am gone, the monk Channa should be given the brahma penalty."

"What, lord, is the brahma penalty?"

"Channa may say what he wants, Ananda, but he is not to be spoken to, instructed, or admonished by the monks."[\[7\]](#)

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "If even a single monk has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Sangha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

When this was said, the monks were silent.

A second time, the Blessed One said, "If even one of the monks has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Sangha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

A second time, the monks were silent.

A third time, the Blessed One said, "If even one of the monks has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Sangha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

A third time, the monks were silent.

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Now, if it's out of respect for the Teacher that you don't ask, let a friend inform a friend."

When this was said, the monks were silent.

Then Ven. Ananda said to the Blessed One, "It's amazing, lord. It's marvelous. I'm confident that, in this community of monks, there is not even a single monk who has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Sangha, the path or the practice."

"You, Ananda, speak out of confidence, while there is knowledge in the Tathagata that, in this community of monks, there is not even a single monk who has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Sangha, the path or the practice. Of these 500 monks, the most backward is a stream-winner, not destined for the planes of deprivation, headed to self-awakening for sure."

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Now, then, monks, I exhort you: All fabrications are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful." Those were the Tathagata's last words.

Then the Blessed One entered the first jhana. Emerging from that he entered the second jhana. Emerging from that, he entered the third... the fourth jhana... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of nothingness... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the cessation of perception & feeling.

Then Ven. Ananda said to Ven. Anuruddha, "Ven. Anuruddha,[\[8\]](#) the Blessed One is totally unbound."

"No, friend Ananda. The Blessed One isn't totally unbound. He has entered the cessation of perception & feeling."

Then the Blessed One, emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, entered the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the dimension of nothingness... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the fourth jhana... the third... the second... the first jhana. Emerging from the first jhana he entered the second... the third... the fourth jhana. Emerging from the fourth jhana, he immediately was totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, there was a great earthquake, awesome & hair-raising, and the drums of the devas sounded.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sahampati Brahma uttered this verse:

**All beings -- all -- in the world,
will cast off the bodily heap
in the world
where a Teacher like this
without peer in the world
the Tathagata, with strength attained,
the Rightly Self-Awakened One,
has been totally
Unbound.**

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sakka, ruler of the gods, uttered this verse:

**How inconstant are compounded things!
Their nature: to arise & pass away.
They disband as they are arising.
Their total stilling is bliss.**

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Ven. Anuruddha uttered this verse:

**He had no in-&-out breathing,
the one who was Such, the firm-minded one,
imperturbable
& bent on peace:
the sage completing his span.**

**With heart unbowed
he endured the pain.
Like a flame's unbinding
was the liberation
of awareness.**

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Ven. Ananda uttered this verse:

**It was awe-inspiring.
It was hair-raising
when, displaying the foremost
accomplishment in all things,
the Rightly Self-Awakened One
was totally Unbound.**

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, some of the monks present who were not without passion wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!" But those monks who were free from passion

acquiesced, mindful & alert: "Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?"

Then Ven. Anuruddha addressed the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Hasn't the Blessed One already taught the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating. The devatas, friends, are complaining."

[Ananda:] "But, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the state of the devatas the Blessed One is referring to?"

"Friend Ananda, there are devatas who perceive space to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!' Then there are devatas who perceive earth to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!' But those devatas who are free from passion acquiesce, mindful & alert: 'Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?'"

Then Ven. Anuruddha & Ven. Ananda spent the remainder of the night in Dhamma talk.

Then Ven. Anuruddha said to Ven. Ananda, "Go, friend Ananda. Entering Kusinara, announce to the Kusinara Mallans, 'The Blessed One, Vasiṭṭhas, is totally unbound. Now is the time for you to do as you see fit.'"

Responding, "As you say, sir," Ven. Ananda in the early morning put on his robe and -- carrying his bowl & outer robe -- went unaccompanied into Kusinara. Now at that time the Kusinara Mallans had met for some business in their assembly hall. Ven. Ananda went to the assembly hall and on arrival announced to them, "The Blessed One, Vasiṭṭhas, is totally unbound. Now is the time for you to do as you see fit."

When they heard Ven. Ananda, the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives were shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow. Some of them wept, tearing at their hair; they wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!"

Then the Kusinara Mallans ordered their men, "In that case, I say, gather scents, garlands, & all the musical instruments in Kusinara!" Then, taking scents, garlands, & all the musical instruments in Kusinara, along with 500 lengths of cloth, the Kusinara Mallans went to the Blessed One's body in Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinara. On arrival, they spent the entire day in worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, in making cloth canopies and arranging floral wreaths. Then the thought occurred to them, "It's too late today to cremate the Blessed One's body. We'll cremate the Blessed One's body tomorrow." And so they spent the second day, the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day, the sixth day in worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, in making cloth canopies and arranging floral wreaths.

Then on the seventh day the thought occurred to them, "Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating to the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the south, around the outside of the town, and cremate it to the south of the town."

Then eight leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, "We'll lift up the Blessed One's body," were unable to lift it. So the Kusinara Mallans asked Ven. Anuruddha, "What is the reason, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the cause, why these eight leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, 'We'll lift up the Blessed One's body,' are unable to lift it?"

"Your intention, Vasitthas, is one thing. The devas' intention is another."

"But what, Ven. Anuruddha, is the devas' intention?"

"Your intention, Vasitthas, is, 'Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the south, around the outside of the town, and cremate it to the south of the town.' The devas' intention is, 'Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with heavenly dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the north of the town, enter the town through the north gate, carry it through the middle of the town and out the east gate to the Mallans' memorial called Makuta-bandhana, to cremate it there.'"

"Then let it be, venerable sir, in line with the devas' intention."

Now at that time Kusinara -- even to its rubbish heaps & cesspools -- was strewn knee-deep in coral-tree flowers. So the devas & the Kusinara Mallans, worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with heavenly & human dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, carried it to the north of the town, entered the town through the north gate, carried it through the middle of the town and out

the east gate to the Mallans' memorial called Makuta-bandhana. There they set it down.

Then the Kusinara Mallans said to Ven. Ananda, "Venerable sir, what course should we follow with regard to the Tathagata's body?"

"The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Vasitthas, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathagata."

"And what, venerable sir, is the course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch?"

"Vasitthas, they wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrap it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrap it in new linen cloth. Having done this 500 times, they place the body in an iron oil-vat, cover it with an iron lid, make a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and cremate the body. Then they build a burial mound for the wheel-turning monarch at a great four-way intersection. That is the course that they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch. The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ananda, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathagata. A burial mound for the Tathagata is to be built at a great, four-way intersection. And those who offer a garland, a scent, or a perfume powder there, or bow down there, or brighten their minds there: that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness."

So the Kusinara Mallans ordered their men, "In that case, I say, gather the Mallans' teased cotton-wool."

Then they wrapped the Blessed One's body in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrapped it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrapped it in new linen cloth. Having done this 500 times, they placed the body in an iron oil-vat, covered it with an iron lid, made a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and set the body on the pyre.

Now at that time Ven. Maha Kassapa was traveling on the highway from Pava to Kusinara with a large community of monks, approximately 500 monks in all. Leaving the road, he sat down at the foot of a tree. Meanwhile, a certain naked ascetic, carrying a coral-tree flower from Kusinara, was traveling on the highway to Pava. Ven. Maha Kassapa saw the naked ascetic coming from afar, and on seeing him said to him, "Do you know our teacher, friend?"

"Yes, friend, I know him. Seven days ago Gotama the contemplative was totally unbound. That's how I got this coral-tree flower."

With that, some of the monks present who were not without passion wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!" But those monks who were free from passion acquiesced, mindful & alert: "Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?"

Now at that time a monk named Subhadda^[9] who had gone forth when old was sitting among the group. He said to the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. We're well rid of the Great Contemplative. We've been harassed by [his saying], 'This is allowable. This is not allowable.' But now we will do what we want to do, and not do what we don't want to do."^[10]

Then Ven. Maha Kassapa addressed the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Hasn't the Blessed One already taught the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating."

Then four leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, "We'll ignite the Blessed One's pyre," were unable to ignite it. So the Kusinara Mallans asked Ven. Anuruddha, "What is the reason, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the cause, why these four leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, 'We'll ignite the Blessed One's pyre,' are unable to ignite it?"

"Your intention, Vasitthas, is one thing. The devas' intention is another."

"But what, Ven. Anuruddha, is the devas' intention?"

"The devas' intention, Vasitthas, is, 'This Ven. Maha Kassapa is traveling on the highway from Pava to Kusinara with a large community of monks, approximately 500 monks in all. The Blessed One's pyre will not catch fire until Ven. Maha Kassapa has worshipped the Blessed One's feet with his head.'"

"Then let it be, venerable sir, in line with the devas' intention."

So Ven. Maha Kassapa went to the Blessed One's pyre at Makuta-bandhana, the Mallans' memorial near Kusinara. On arrival, arranging his robe over one shoulder, he placed his hands palm-to-palm over his heart, circumambulated the pyre, uncovered the Blessed One's feet,^[11] and worshipped them with his head. And the 500 monks, arranging their robes over one shoulder, placed their hands palm-to-palm over their hearts, circumambulated the pyre, and worshipped the Blessed One's feet with their heads. As soon as it had been worshipped by Ven. Maha

Kassapa and the 500 monks, the Blessed One's pyre caught fire of its own accord. In the burning of the Blessed One's body, no cinder or ash of the outer skin, inner skin, flesh, tendons, or oil of the joints could be discerned. Only the bone-relics^[12] remained. Just as in the burning of ghee or oil, no cinder or ash can be discerned; in the same way, in the burning of the Blessed One's body, no cinder or ash of the outer skin, inner skin, flesh, tendons, or oil of the joints could be discerned. Only the bone-relics remained. And of the 500 twin-wrappings only two were burnt: the innermost & the outermost.

When the Blessed One's body was consumed, a cascade of water fell from the sky, extinguishing the Blessed One's pyre. Water shot up from a sal-tree as well, extinguishing the Blessed One's pyre. The Kusinara Mallans, with all kinds of scented water, extinguished the Blessed One's pyre. Then for seven days they kept the bone-relics in their assembly hall -- setting them round with a lattice of spears surrounded by ramparts of bows -- worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating them with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents.

Then King Ajatasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So he sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. I, too, am a noble warrior. I deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. I, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Licchavis of Vesali heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Sakyans of Kapilavatthu heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was the greatest of our relatives. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Buliyans of Allakappa... The Koliyans of Ramagama heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Brahman of Vetha Island heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So he sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. I am a brahman. I deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. I, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Pava Mallans heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

When this was said, the Kusinara Mallans said to the groups & factions, "The Blessed One was totally unbound within the borders of our own town. We will not give up a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics."

When this was said, Dona the brahman addressed the groups & factions,

Listen, good sirs,
to a word from me.
Our Awakened One taught
forbearance.

It's not good that there should be combat
over the relics of the highest one.

Let's unite in concord,
on friendly terms,
and make eight shares.

Let there be
burial mounds
in the various directions,
many people made confident
in the One with Eyes.

"In that case, brahman, you yourself divide the Blessed One's bone-relics into eight equal shares."

Responding, "As you say, good sirs," to the groups & factions, Dona the brahman divided the Blessed One's bone-relics into eight equal shares and then said to the groups & factions, "Good sirs, give me this urn. I will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for the urn." They gave him the urn.

Then the Moriyans of Pippalivana heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinara." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinara Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

"There is no [remaining] share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. They have been divided. Take the embers from here." They took the embers from there.

Then King Ajatasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Rajagaha.

The Licchavis of Vesali built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Vesali.

The Sakyans of Kapilavattu built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Kapilavattu.

The Buliyans of Allakappa built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Allakappa.

The Koliyans of Ramagama built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Ramagama.

The brahman of Vettha Island built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics on Vettha Island.

The Pava Mallans built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Pava.

The Kusinara Mallans built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Kusinara.

Dona the brahman built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the urn.

The Moriyans of Pippalivana built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the embers in Pippalivana.

Thus there were eight burial mounds for the bone-relics, a ninth for the urn, and a tenth for the embers.

That is how it was in the past.

Notes

1. In preceding sections of the discourse, the standard phrase describing the Buddha's act of lying down to rest reads, "Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side in the lion's sleeping posture, with one foot on top of the other, mindful & alert, having made a mental note to get up." Here, however, the Buddha is lying down for the last time and will pass away in this posture, so he makes no mental note to get up.

2. From Vedic times, it has been considered auspicious in India to gaze on a holy person or heavenly being, and to be gazed on by such a being as well. Here the fact that heavenly beings themselves want to gaze on the Buddha indicates the high regard they have for him (this is also the motive for their Great Meeting in (DN 20));

the phrase later in this paragraph, "the One with Eyes," indicates that they also regarded his gaze as highly auspicious for them. Later passages in this discourse indicate that human beings have similar feelings about the auspiciousness of the Buddha's gaze and the Buddha as an object of one's own gaze. A great deal of the later history of Buddhism in India -- including devotional practice, Buddhology, meditation practice, and even the architecture of monasteries -- grew out of the continuing desire to have a vision of the Buddha and to be gazed on by the Buddha, even after his Parinibbana.

It is sometimes assumed, based on a passage in SN XXII.87, that the Pali Canon is uniformly negative toward this aspect of Buddhist tradition. There, Ven. Vakkali, who is ill, states that "For a long time have I wanted to come & see the Blessed One, but I haven't had the bodily strength to do so," and the Buddha comforts him, "Enough, Vakkali. Why do you want to see this filthy body? Whoever sees the Dhamma sees me; whoever sees me sees the Dhamma." It should be noted, however, that the Buddha's treatment of this topic is sensitive to the context. In SN XXII.87, he is talking to a monk who (1) is too sick to come see the Buddha on his own strength; and (2) is on the verge of arahantship. Here in DN 16, however, the Buddha dismisses Ven. Upavana so as to honor the desire of the devas who want to see him in his last hour; and he sends Ven. Ananda into Kusinara to inform the lay people there so that they too will be able to see him in his last hour. His motive here may be similar to that given for encouraging the building of a burial mound dedicated to him: seeing him will help human & heavenly beings brighten their minds, and that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness. Thus the attitudes expressed on this topic in the Pali Canon, when taken in their entirety, are more complex than is generally recognized.

3. Reading *chinna-pada* with the Thai edition.

4. The desire to have one's name announced to a holy person appears to have been a part of pre-Buddhist devotional practice in India. This passage, along with others in the Canon, indicates that it was quickly adopted into Buddhist devotional practice as well. It lived on in later Buddhist practice in the custom of having the donor's name inscribed in bas-reliefs placed near or on a stupa, even in locations where the name would not be visible to human eyes.

5. The commentary notes that Subhadda makes this statement based on non-Buddhist practices he knew from his previous sectarian affiliation.]

6. The Cullavagga (XI.9) tells of how the monks at the First Council could not agree on which rules should be classed as lesser & minor. Ven. Ananda himself confessed that he neglected to ask the Buddha on this point. One of the monks made a motion that -- since many of the rules affect the laity, and the laity would look down on the monks for rescinding them after the Buddha's death -- none of the rules should be rescinded. This motion was adopted by the Council.

7. A monk named Channa is depicted at several spots in the Vinaya as despising all other monks on the grounds that "The Buddha is mine, the Dhamma is mine, it was by my young master that the Dhamma was realized."(Sanghadisesa 12) This would fit in with the post-canonical tradition identifying Channa as the horseman who accompanied the young Prince Siddhartha on the night of the latter's Great Renunciation. Two rules in the Vinaya -- .'(Sanghadisesa 12) and Pacittiya 12 - -- depict him as devious & impossible to admonish. Cv.XI reports events after the Parinibbana, telling of how news of the brahma-penalty shocked Channa to his senses. As a result, he changed his ways and eventually became an arahant. As Ven. Ananda then explains in that passage, the brahma-penalty was automatically lifted at the moment of Ven. Channa's final attainment. SN XXII tells a different version of how Ven. Channa changed his attitude and broke through to the Dhamma.]

8. Ven. Ananda, assuming that the Buddha has passed away, addresses Ven. Anuruddha -- his senior -- as "venerable sir," in line with the Buddha's instructions.]

9. A different Subhadda from the Buddha's last face-to-face disciple.

10. In Cullavagga XI.1, Ven. Maha Kassapa cites this statement as good reason to hold a council for standardizing the Dhamma & Vinaya "before what is not-dhamma shines out and dhamma is obscured, before what is not-discipline shines out and discipline is obscured; before those who speak what is not-dhamma become strong and those who speak what is dhamma become weak; before those who speak what is not-discipline become strong and those who speak what is discipline become weak." Thus the First Council was held during the Rains Retreat following the Buddha's Parinibbana.

11. The commentary notes that Ven. Maha Kassapa entered the fourth jhana, which he used as the basis for a feat of psychic power so that the Buddha's feet would appear out of their extensive wrappings.]

12. Up to this point in the narrative, the Buddha's body is called a *sarira* (singular). Here the noun becomes plural, with the meaning of "relics," and remains plural for the remainder of the narrative.