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tongue, body and mind, one is unable to overcome the defilements and falls a prey to that sense-object just as a fly is 'caught' by (i.e. unable to let go) a lump of jaggery. One who relishes sense-pleasures is imprisoned by them.

Repeated resort to *gehasita upekkhā* tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness. That is why the Bhagavā say that *gehasita upekkhā* should not he resorted to.

Reference (c) above (para 2)

The neutral sensation which tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness (and should therefore be resorted to) means *nekkhammasita upekkhā*, neutral sensation inclined to renunciation. It is a neutral attitude to both agreeable and disagreeable objects arising at the six sense-doors, i.e., eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Agreeable sense-objects are not attached to. Disagreeable objects do not cause anger or vexation. Neither-agreeable-nor-disagreeable sense-objects do not cause bewilderment *moha* due to unbalanced attitude. The yogi contemplates all the six sense- objects as impermanent, woeful, and subject to change and thus discerns all of them as they really are. This neutral attitude is a form of neutral sensation which arises with wisdom in the mental process of the yogi. (In other words:) This evenness of attitude is also called indifferent feeling, equanimity. *Tatramajjhattatā*. It means both detached attitude to agreeable and disagreeable sense-objects. *Vedanupphekklā* and balanced attitude, *equanimity, tatramajjttatā* are taken as *upekkhā*.)

That being so, resorting to the six kinds of neutral sensation inclmed to renumciation six *nekkhamma sita upekkhas*, at all times, i.e, from the time of turning into a bhikkhu throughout all the stages of bhikkhu practice beginning with practice of Ten Reflections *anussati*, till the the attainment of jhanas- up to the fourth jhāna- decreases demeritoriousness and increases meritoriousness. Therefore the Bhagava says *nekkhammasita upekkhā* should be resorted to.

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Reference (c) above (para 3)

Of the two types of *nekkhammasita upekkhā*; namely: the one associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *satakka savicāra upekkhā*, (the neutral sensation that arises at all times from the time of turning into a bhikkhu throughout all the stages of insight-development through various contemplations up till the attamment of the first jhāna) and the one not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind *avitakka avicāra upekkhā*(at the attainment of the second jhāna etc.) the first one is superior to the second

The above passage compares the Arahattaphala attained by two bhikkhus, i.e., in two ways of bhikkhu practice: (a) The first bhikkhu, in contemplating a neutral sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind considers: "On what does this neutral sensation depend?" And he comes to the right understanding that it arises dependent on the body. From that understanding he proceeds to gain Insight-knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahat. (b) The second bhikkhu contemplating on the neutral sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (that arises at the second, the third, and the fourth jhanas) gains Insight-knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahat.

Of those two bhikkhus, the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the second bhikkhu, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the first bhikkhu which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the thoughts that arise in the two bhikkhus during their meditation, the thoughts that arise in the second bhikkhu, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the thoughts of the first-bhikkhu which are associated with initial application of the mind sustained application of the mind. Regarding the attainment of the *Arahatta phala* won through contemplation of the neutral sensation, the attainment of the second bhikkhu, being not

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associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to that of the first bhikkhu which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind

These are the points to note concerning (c) above.

Sakka is established in stream-entry knowledge.

Having discoursed on pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation that lead to Arahatship, the Bhagavā concluded the teaching with these words:

"Sakka, King of Devas, a bhikkhu who practises thus is one who works out the extinction of illusory perceptions associated with craving *taṇhā*, conceit *māna* and wrong view *diṭṭhi* that prolongs the suffering in *saṃsara* leading to Nibbana where all perceptions cease."

At that moment Sakka attained the fruition of Stream- entry.

The Benevolent desire, chanda, of the Buddhas.

The benevolent desire of the Buddhas, the noblest intention is to bestow the highest blessing, the superior or exalted mind, never of inferior or lower type. Wherever the Buddhas make a discourse to an individual or to a congregation, they always show the way to the attainment of the highest Arahatship. Amongst the hearers, some attain Stream-entry, some become Once-returner, some become Never-returner, and some attain Arahatship, according to the sufficing condition, i.e., the ripeness of their past merit.

To bring in a simile here:

The Bhagavā is like the royal father, the hearers of the Bhagava's teaching are like the princelings. The father makes morsels of food in the size that he usually takes, and feeds them into the mouths of the princelings. The princelings take in as much food only of what their mouths can receive. Similarly, the Bhagavā disseminates the Dhamma in the highest level i.e. Arahatship: From amongst the hearers some

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attain the First fruition, some the second, some the third, and some the fourth i.e., Arahatship, according to the capacity of understanding.

Sakka is reborn as Sakka a second time.

After winning Stream-entry, Sakka passed away in the presence of the Bhagavā and was reborn as Sakka for a second time.

There is an important point to note in this connecetion: When a *deva* passes away no corpse remains like in the case of a human being. The body ceases to exist, disappears just like a flame disappears. That indeed is so. When a human being dies the kamma-born corporeality *kammaja rūpa* disappears first. Seventeen thought-moments after the disappearance of kamma-born corporeality, mind-born corporeality *cittaja rūpa* disapperars. Within a few moments nutriment-born corporcality *āhāraja rūpa* disappears since no external nutriment sustains it. Temperature-born corporcality *utya rūpa* however stays on for a long time, taking its own process. With *devas* it is totally different. This is so because *devas* have a type of rebirth quite different from human beings. They are born instantly as adults. When their kamma-born corporcality dissolves the remaining kinds of corporeality — mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality — all dissolve simultaneousty. The result is that no physical remains are there when a *deva* passes away. The body vanishes there and them.

Special note. the difference in the fact of the presence of the human dead body and the absence of the deva dead body at their passing away is a matter that calls for some basic understanding[3] of the arising of the aggregates of a human being and those of a deva at the moment of conception.

(i) At the moment of conception or rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) of a human being, three corporeality units (*kalapas*) each a mere speck of an atom,

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[3] Some basic understanding: Readers could enhance their understanding of this chapter by studying 'A Manual of Abhidhamma by Nārada Thera', Chapter Six of which deals with Analysis of matter containing sections on enumeration of matter, classification of matter, the manner of arising of material phenomana etc.

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come into being, namely: the body decad (*kāyadasaka kalāpa*), the sex decad (*bhāvadasaka kalāpa*), the base decad (*vatthu dasana kalāpa*). The kamma-born corporeality and the mind-born corporeality, temperature-born corporeality and mtriment-born corporeality arise at the due moment. Whenever these four types of corporeality advance to the stage of static moment, *ṭhīkhaṇa* each unit of the element of heat (*tejo dhātu*) inherent in those corporeal units continuously produces temperature-born corporeality, resulting in multiplication of *utuja kalāpas* and the growth of the human body. This continuous increment of the temperature-born corporeality has the effect of its constituting most of the bulk of the human body so much so that it is, so to speak, virtually "he owner of the house" of the human body, turning the three other types of corporeality (i.e. kamma-born, mind-born, and nutriment-born corporeality) into mere "guests at the house." This is the nature of corporeality in human beings as well as all other womb-born beings. When they die, the kamma-born corporeality, the mind-born corporeality and the mutriment-born corporeality in them vanish away, like guests in the house leaving the body; but temperature-born corporeality, which is like the owner of the house, remain for a long time.

(ii) In the case of *devas*, kamma-born corporeality arising at the moment of instant rebirth constitutes the whole of the *deva* body which is three *gāvartas* long, and is like the owner of the house while the three other types of corporeality (i.e., mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality) are like guests at the house, sharing space within the *deva* body, Therefore when *devas* and *brahasmas* who are reborn instantly as adults do not leave behind any remains of their body at death; the three types of corporeality other than kamma-born corporeality (like guests who cannot stay on in the house when the house is no more) vauish when the kamma-born corporeality dissolves at death. This is a profound matter. It is intilligible to those who have a grounding in the phenomenal processes of mind and matter.)

Since Sakka passed away and was reborn as Sakka even while listening to the discourse, no one among his celestial company knew

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that it was not the same old Sakka. Only Sakka himself knew it, besides him only the Buddhas knew it by his All-knowing Wisdom.

(End of answer to questions six, seven and eight.)

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The ninth, the tenth, and the eleventh questions and answers.

Sakka now thought: "The Bhagavā has made it very clear to me about pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation just as clear butter oil has been extracted out of a lump of butter. But this evidently is the result, *Magga Phala*, the Supramundane, for which there must be the cause by way of appropriate practice. Certainly, the Supramundane *Magga Phala* cannot be had merely for the asking, like a bird soaring up the sky. There must be the practice that leads to the Supramandane. I shall now ask of the Bhagavā the preliminary practice whereby Arahatship is gained." So he asked the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, in which way does a bhikkhu practise the Bhikkhu morality of Restraint (*Pātimokkha saṃvara sīla*)?"

On being asked thus, the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, (i) there are two kinds of bodily concuct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (ii) there are two kinds of verbal conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (iii) there are two kinds of quests – that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.

"Sakka, King of Devas, (i) I have said: "There are two kinds of bodily conduct- that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted." The reason for my saying so is this: should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt that mode of bodily conduct. (Bodily conduct that tends to increase demeritoriousness and decreases meritoriousness should not be

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adopted. The same interpritation should be made in respect of the next two statements.)

Of the two kinds of bodily conduct, should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases you should adopt that mode of bodily conduct. (Bodily conduct that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness should be adopted. The same meaning should be taken in respect of the next two statments.)

"Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of bodily conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'"

(ii) "Sakka, King of Devas, I have said: 'there are two kinds of verbal conduct – that which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.' The reason for my saying so is this: should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt that mode of verbal conduct.

"Of those two kinds of verbal conduct, should you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should adopt that mode of verbal conduct.

"Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of verbal conduct that whcih should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'

(iii) "Sakka, King of Devas, I have said; 'Sakka, there are two kinds of quests- that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.' The reason for my saying so is this; should you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not take up that quest.

"Of those two kinds of quests, should you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should take up that quest.

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" Sakka, King of Devas, that is the reason why I said; 'Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of quests- that which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up."

"Sakka, King of Devas, a bhikkhu who practises, thus is one who practises the bhikkhu Morality of Restraint (*Pātimokkhasaṃvara Sīla*)."

When the Bhagavā answered thus, Sakka was delighted and said, expressing approval: "Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O Well-Spoken One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer, I have been rid of all doubts about this question: All uncertainties have left me."

Note; In the question six, seven, and eight, Sakka asked the practice that leads to Nibbāna through the cessation of illusory perceptions, and the Bhagavā replied by a discourse on the three kinds of sensation that are the fundamentals of the practice leading to Nibbāna. He distinguished between sensation that should be resorted to and sensation that should not be resorted to. Of those two types of sensation, the sensation that should not be resorted to is not the practice leading to Nibbāna; only the sensation that should be resorted to is the practice that leads to Nibbāna. Yet why does the Bhagavā discuss about the sensation that does not lead to Nibbāna? This is a likely question to be asked by one who does not see the Bhagava's purpose. However, the Bhagavā knows the disposition of Sakka such that if Sakka understands the need for abandoving the sensation that should not be resorted to, recognising it as a defiling factor, then he would be prepared to cultivate the sensation that should be resorted to, recognizing it as a cleansing factor. Thus, the discussing of both the types of sensation is conducive to Sakka's understanding. The Bhagava's method helps Sakka to adopt the proper practice.

In the present question on bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, (i.e., restraint that is the obligatory virtue for bhikkhu), the mode of bodily conduct that should not be adopted, the mode of verbal conduct that should not be adopted, and the kind of quest that should not be taken up do not constitute bhikkhu Morality of Restraint. Yet only if one is able to abandon them could one fulfil the practice of bodily conduct that should be adopted, verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the

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kind of quest that should be taken up because all of them are the factors that cleanse the mind. That is why the three defiling factors are discussed along with the three cleansing factors in pairs. This method, the Bhagavā knows, suits the disposition of Sakka in taking upon himself the proper practice.

Only when factors that ought not to be resorted to are made clear, would factors that ought to be resorted to become a mode of practice. That is the reason for the Bhagava's discussion of the pairs of useless factors and useful factors in the present set of questions on the Bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, just as in the previous set of questions on sensation.

In the present set of answers, only bodily conduct that should be adopted, , verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the kind of quest that should be taken up constitute the bhikkhu Morality of Restraint. The bodily conduct, the verbal conduct, and the quest that should not be resorted to are defiling factors, and they must first be seen as such by Sakka.

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Regarding the kind of quest that should be taken up, it may be spoken of in connection with the course of action *kammapatha* or in connection with the prescribed form of training precept. i.e.,

(i) Bodily conduct that should not be resorted to are three evil bodily actions, namely, killing, stealing, and sexual minsconduct. This is speaking in terms of course of action. Physically committing the breach (lit, breach at the body-door) of the moral precepts laid down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should not be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept.

Bodily conduct that should be adopted are: refraining from killing, refraining from stealing, and refraining from sexual misconduct. This is speaking in terms of courses of action. Physically restraining (lit, resfraint at the body-door) from transgressing the moral precepts laid

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down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept.

(The same distinction should be understood in respect of verbal conduct.)

(ii) Verbally committing four evil verbal actions such as lying, etc. is verbal conduct that should not be adopted. Refraining from transgressing the four evil verbal actions in one's speech is verbal action that should be adopted.

(iii) Quest *pariyesanā* involves physical and verbal actions. It is covered by bodily conduct and verbal conduct except that in defining the eight precepts with right-livelihood as the eighth *Ājīvathamaka sīla*, a specifie term "quest" needs to be mentioned because these eight precepts involve actions at the body-door and verbal-door (i.e., physical actions and verbal actions), and not in the sky. Quest is essentially the effort needed in making the quest.

(a) Quest is of two kinds, ignoble and noble. The two kinds of quest are described in the *Pāsarāsi sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa*. The gist of the teaching is this: where some one who himself is subject to birth, ageing, death and destruction seeks things animate (i.e., wife, children, servants, catte, poultry, etc.) and inanimate (such as gold and silver etc.) which are also subject to birth, ageing and death, (i.e., arising, decay and dissolution) this amounts to ignoble quest *Anariya pariyesanā*, the quest that should not be taken up. If someone who is himself subject to birth, ageing and death, seeing the fault in seeking things animate or inanimate, and seeks the deathless dhamma (i.e., Nibbāna where no rebirth occurs) this is called noble quest *Ariya pariyesanā*, the quest that should be taken up.

(b) Explained in another way: There are five ways of seeking gains that are not proper, (for bhikkhus) namely: (i) By scheming, i.e., creating a favourable or highly admirable impression of oneself on the lay supporters; (ii) By 'talking up' or extolling the lay supporters, (iii) By hinting at a suitable occassion for making offerings (iv) By belittling the lay supporters for their alleged

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close fistedness; (v) By pursuing gain with gain, i.e., by making gifts to lay supporters with the expectation of receiving their offerings.

There are also six places which a bhikkhu should not resort to, namely: (i) a spinster's house, (ii) a hemaphrodite's house, (iii) a liquor seller's house, (iv) a prositute's house (v) a widow's or divorcee's house (vi) a monastery of bhikkhunis.

Not resorting to the five ways of seeking gains mentioned above, the six places described above, and the twenty-one ways that are not allowable quest, *anesanā*, – all these make up the kinds of quest that should not be taken up *Anariya pariyesanā*. Refraining from all these improper kinds of quest, and living on the food collected at the daily alms-round, is righteous way of seeking gains which constitute noble quest, *Ariya pariyesanā*.

Where a certain bodily conduct, etc., is not to be resorted to, if it is an act of killing, the conduct is improper right from the start such as procuring of lethal weapons or poison, or any effort connected with it. In the case of bodily conduct that should be resorted to, all the actions connected with it are proper right from the begining. If one is disabled to perform a deed that should be resorted to, at least the intention should be made, for that intention may be carried through if circumstances permit, bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Explained otherwise:

(i) Bodily conduct that can cause a schism in the Sangha like Devadatta's conduct is improper conduct that should not be resorted to. Paying devotion to the Triple Gem twice or thrice a day like the habit of the Venerables Sāriputta and Mahā Moggalāna is conduct that should be resorted to.

(ii) Verbal conduct as giving orders to kill someone like that of Devadatta sending marksmen on a mission of assassination is conduct that should not be resorted to. Extolling the virtues of the Triple Gem like the habit of the Venerable Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna is verbal conduct that should be resorted to.

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(iii) Ignoble quest as that of Devadatta is quest that should not be taken up. Noble quest as that of the Venerables Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna is quest that should be taken up.

Whereas Sakka puts only one question concerning Bhikkhu Morality of Restraint, the Bhagava's answer is threefold- bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest; the commentary speaks of it as three questions.

The Bhagava's concluding statement. "A bhikkhu who practises thus – – –" purports to say that the bhikkhu who refrains from the bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that ought not be resorted to, and who takes up bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that should he taken up, is one who practises the supreme bhikkhu practice of morality incumbant on a bhikkhu, which constitutes the necessary condition that precedes Arahatship.

(End of the ninth, tenth and eleventh questions and answers)

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The twelfth question and answer:
On the restraint of the faculties, *Indriya Saṃvara Sīla.*

After receiving the Bhagava's discourse with delight, Sakka put the next question:

"Venerable Sir, how does a bhikkhu practise so as to keep his faculties well guarded?"

The Bhagavā answered as follows:

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of visible objects cognizable by the eye, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of sound cognizable by the ear, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

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"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of odour cognizable by the nose, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of taste cognizable by the tongue, those that should be resorted to and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of tangible objects cognizable by the body, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to.

"Sakka, King of Devas, there are two kinds of Dhamma object made up of mind and matter cognizable by the mind, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to."

When the Bhagavā had made this brief exposition Sakka said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, what the Bhagava has said in brief, I understand the meaning at length as follows: Venerable Sir, if a certain visible object cognizable by the eye tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness, that visible object should not be resorted to. If (on the other hand) a certain visible object cognizable by the eye tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that visible object should be resorted to.

"Venerable Sir, if a certain sound cognizable by the ear tends to --- p --- a certain dour cognizable by the nose tends to --- p --- a certain taste cognizable by the tongue tends to --- p --- a certain tangible object cognizable by the body tends to --- p --- a certain thought about mind or matter cognizable by the mind tends to increase demeritoriousness and decreases meritoriousness, that thought should not be resorted to. If (on the other hand,) a certain thought about mind or matter tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that thought should be resorted to.

"Venerable Sir, being able to understand the meaning in detail of what the Bhagavā has said briefly, I am now rid of all doubts; there is no uncertainty in me."

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(Note: Sakka had benefited from the previous discourses of the Bhagavā on the three kinds of sensation and on the three kinds of what is to be resorted to and what should not be resorted to. When the present brief answer from the Bhagavā was given he had the right understanding based on the Bhagava's previous preachings and accordingly began to address the bhagavā about his understaning.

The Bhagavā remained sitent, allowing Sakka to go ahead what he had to say about the meaning of the brief statements. It was not the custom of the Buddha to allow such a thing if the hearer of a discourse is not competent enough to state how he understands it, or to allow a competent hearer if he is not willing to come forward with an explanation of what he understands of it. Here Sakka was competent as well as willing. Hence the Bhagava's permission.)

Now to elaborate on the various sense-objects as to their worthiness or unworthiness;

(i) If a certain visible object tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who sees it, that visible object is an unworthy one; he should not look at it. If a certain visible object arouses in him a sense of repulsiveness perception of repulsiveness, *asubha saññā*, or strengthens the conviction in him of the truth of the Dhamma *Saddhā*, in the teaching, or arouses the perception of impermanence, *anicca sanka*, then that visible object is a worthy one; he should look at it.

(ii) If a certain song beautifully composed that is heard by a bhikkhu tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga*, attachment in him, that sound is an unworthy one; he should not listen to it. If, on the other hand, a certain song even coming from a potters girl, enables the bhikkhu who hears it to reflect on the law of cause and effect and strengthens his conviction in the truth of the Dhamma *saddhā*, tending to disenchantment with sentient existence and thoughts of renunciation, then that sound is a worthy one; he should listen to it.

(iii) If a certain odour tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who smells it, that odour is

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an unworthy one; he should not smell it. If a certain odour causes the bhikkhu who smells it to gain a perception of loathsomeness of the body, that odour is a worthy one; he should smell it.

(iv) If a certain taste tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who tastes it, that taste is an unworthy one; he should not taste it. If a certain taste causes the bhikkhu who tastes it to gain a perception of loathsomeness *āhāre paṭikūlasaññā* of the food swallowed; or if it sustains him to gain the Ariya Truth like in the case of Sāmanera Sīva, (nephew of Thera Mahā Sīva,) who became an Arahat while taking his meal, then that taste is worthy one; he should eat it. (In this connection, we have looked for the name of Sāmaṇera Sīva in the Sub-Commentary and in the *Vissuddhi magga* but do not find it. In the *Visuddhi magga* there is the story of Sāmaṇera Bhāgineyya Sangharakkhita who attained Arahatship while taking his meal (Vis. I, Chapter on *Sīla*)

(v) If a certain tangible object tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who touches it, that tangible object is an unworthy one; he should not touch it. If a certain tangible object (which is proper for a bhikkhu) causes the bhikkhu still training himself to attain Arahatship through exhaustion of the moral taints (*asavas*) completly like in the case of the Venerable Sāriputta, etc., or is conducive to zeal, or serves as a good model for future bhikkhus, then that tangible object should be resorted to.

It is noteworthy in this connection that many bhikkhus of the Buddha's time denied themselves the luxury of lying down; for instance, the Venerable Sāriputta never lay on a bed (cot) for thirty whole years; the Venerable Mahā Moggaltāna for as many years; the Venerable Mahā Kassapa for a hundred and twenty years; the Venerable Anuruddha for fifty years; the Venerable Bhaddhiya for thirty years; the Venerable Sona for eighteen years; the Venerable Raṭhapāla for twelve years; the Venerable Ānanda for fifteen years, the Venerable Rāhula for twelve years; the Venerable Bākula for eighty years; the Venerable

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Nālaka (the one who practised self-denial *Moneya* to perfection) for as long as he lived. (i.e., till his final decase, *Parinibbāna*).

(vi) If a certain Dhamma object about mind or matter tends to arouse defilements such as *rāga* attachment in the mind of a bhikkhu who thinks about that object; or tends to arouse covetousmess in him, that thought is an unworthy one; he should not entertain such a thought. If a certain thought promotes kind feelings towards others such as, "May all beings be well, be free from trouble, etc.", as in the case of the three bhikkhu elders, that throught is a worthy one; he should nurture such a thought, such a Dhamma object.

The story of the three Bhikkhu elders.

Once three bhikkhu elders made a vow among themselves on the eve of the rains-retreat period not to indulge in demeritorious thoughts such as sensnous thoughts (during the three- month *vasa* period) and made a certain monastery their rains retreat.

At the end of the rains retreat, on the *saimgha* assembly day on the full moon of Thadingyut (October) Sangha Thera put this question to the youngest of the three; "How far did you allow your mind to wander during those three months of the rains-retreat?" To which the youngest of the *theras* replied: "Venerable Sir, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander beyond the precints of the monastery." The bhikkhu's admission implies that the mind wandered sometimes within the monastery precincts which may mean sense-objects such as visible objects that came into the monastery precincts but since there were no female visitors (lit., forms of uncommon nature) his mind had no occassion to wander about through unbridled thoughts.

The Sangha elder then asked the second thera; "Friend, how far did you allow your mind to wander during these three months of the rains retreat?" To which the thera replied: "Venerable Sir, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander beyond my room."

Then the two junior *Theras* asked of the Sangha *Thera*: "Venerable Sir, how far did you allow your mind to wander during the three

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months of the rains-retreat?" To which the Sangha *Thera* answered: "Friends, during the three months I did not allow my mind to wander outside of my body." That indeed was true; the Sangha elder did not do anything (i.e., physically verablly or mentally) without being mindful of, without having first reflected on the action that was about to take place so that there was no moment left for any thought to wander forth ouside the body. The two junior *theras* said to the senior most elder: "Venerable Sir, you are wonderful!"

The moral: the type of thought that occurred to these three bhikkhu elders is of the worthy type; a bhikkhu may well entertain such thoughts.

(End of the twelfth question and answer.)

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The thirteenth question and answer on the various elements.

Thus having received the Bhagava's discourse with delight, Sakka, King of Devas, further asked his next question:

"Venerable Sir, do all samanas and brahmanas have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same ultimate goal?"

To this the Bhagava's reply was:

"Sakka, King of Devas, not all of the samanas and brahmanas have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same gral."

(Herein, Sakka puts this question because he has known, prior to his becoming an Ariya, that the so called samanas and brahmanas have diverse teaching, practices, views and goals which he now understands them as vain. He wants to know the reasons why there are such a diversity of teachings, practices, views and goals among them.)

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Sakka further asked: "Venerable Sir, what is the reason for the diversity of teachings, practices, views, and goals among all samanas and brachmanas?"

And the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, all beings in this sentient world are of various dispositions. Whatever attracts their fancy, these beings hold on to it, firmly believing it to be the only truth, and rejecting all other views as vain. That is why all of the samanas and brahmanas have no common teaching, no common practice, no common view, and no comman goal."

(Individual dispositions differ among persons. When one wants to go, another wants to stand; when one wants to stand another wants to lie down. It is difficult to find two individuals of the same disposition. If dispositions differ among one another, regarding even postures, how could views, practices and teachings be the same among them? The Bhagavā points out this diversity as the reason for the differences in teachings, practices, views and goals among samanas and brahamanas.)

(14) The foutreenth question and answer on the final crossing over.

Futher, Sakka asked this question of the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, do all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (i.e., *Nibbāna*) where they can find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome? Do all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for the attainment of the Indestructible? Do they have the Indestructible as the final goal?"

(Sakka's question is about *Nibbāna* as the ultimate reality, and about whether holders of divers views take up the practice of the Ariya Path to attain *Nibbāna*.)

The Bhagavā answered:

"Sakka, King of Devas, not all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (i.e., Nibbāna) where they can find refuge and where all

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yokes, bonds are overcome. Not all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for the attinment of Nibbāna; nor have the Indestructible as their final goal."

(Since individual disposition differ among the so-called samanas and brahmanas, their teachings, practices, views and goals differ. Therefore how could they attain Nibbāna, the ullimate reality as their common goal? The Bhagavā makes it clear in this reply that only those who practise the Ariya Path can attain Nibbāna.)

Sakka then put his last question thus:

"Venerable Sir, what is the reason that not all samanas and brahmanas attain the Indestructible (*Nibbāna*) where they can find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome? Why is it that they do not practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice for attainment of the Indestructible? Why is it that not all of them have the Indestructible as their final goal?"

And the Bhagavā replied:

"Sakka, King of Devas, those bhikkhus who are free from defilements through the Ariya Path which causes the extinction of craving (in other words, those bhikkhus who are inclined to *Nibbāna* where all craving is extinct) attain the Indestructible (*Nibbāna*) where they find refuge and where all yokes, bonds are overcome. They are the ones who practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right practice to attain *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible. They have *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible, as their final goal. That being so, not all samanas and brahmanas attain Nibbāna the Indestructible where they find refuge and where all yokes are over come. Not all of them practise the noble Ariya Path which is the right path to attain Nibbāna the Indestrucible. Not all of them have *Nibbāna*, the Indestructible as their final goal."

(Thus took place a verbal intercourse between the noblest of *Ariyas* and Sakka, an *Ariya*, on the subject of *Nibbāna*, the ultimate reality. They spoke the language of the *Ariyas* which is magnificent as a fully blossamed sal tree. For us worldings that language and its meanings are not comprehensible because our field of knowledge does not go beyond the sense faculties. (In other words, our range of perception is limited

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to our senses only.) The point the Bhagavā makes here is that only *Arahats* who have been liberated from defilements through the Ariya Path that destroys craving attain *Nibbāna*, the ultimate reality. Not all samanas and brahmanas attain *Nibbāna*.

The Buddha's Teaching has *Nibbāna* the ultimate reality as its culmination. Hence when the question of *Nibbāna* has been dealt with fully, there is the end of all questions.

On heaving the Bhagava's reply, Sakka was delighted and said, "Venerable Sir, that indeed is so. O Well-spoken One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Bhagava's answer, I have been rid of all doubts about this question. I have no uncertainties now! "

(End of the fourteenth question and answer)

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After receiving the Bhagava's discourse with much delight, Sakka. King of Devas said to the Bhagavā:

"Venerable Sir, craving is a disease, an open sore, a dart (thorn) Craving attracts all beings to endless existences, thereby sending them now to high planes of existence and then to low planes of existence.

"Venerable Sir, whatever question I did not have even the opportmity to ask of the so-called samanas and brahamanas outside this Teaching, the Bhagavā has given me the answer. The Bhagava has by this answer cleared up all darts of doubt that had long been troubling me."

The Bhagavā then asked Sakka:

"Sakka, King of Devas, do you remember having put these questions to other samanas and brahmanas?"

"Yes, I do, Venerable Sir."

"What was their answer? If it is not too much trouble, may we know it?"

"When the Bhagavā or someone as great as the Bhagavā ask (lit, sits before me), there is no trouble for me to answer."

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"Very well, then Sakka King of Devas, let us hear what you have to say."

"Venerable Sir, I had put these questions to those samanas and brahmanas whom I took for forest dwellers. They were not only unable to answer my question but even asked me who I was (that could ask such profoumd questions). I said I was Sakka, King of Devas and then they (were interested and) asked me what merit I had acquired to become Sakka. I told them the seven meritorious acts, as I had learnt, that lead to Sakkahood. Then they were greatly pleased, saying, "we have seen Sakka in person, and we have also got Sakka's answer to our questions!" Indeed, Venerable Sir, those samanas and brahamanas were merely my pupls. I had never been their pupil.

"Venerable Sir, I am now, an *Ariya* disciple of the Bhagavā, a Stream Enterer who is for ever safe against the four miserable existences of *apāya* and whose fortunate destiny is thus assured, and who is on the way to the three higher *Maggas*."

The delightful satisfaction of Sakka.

Then the Bhagavā asked Sakka whether he had previsusly experienced delightful satisfaction of this nature. Sakka replied, "yes, Venerable Sir, I remember having experienced delightful satisfaction of this nature previously."

"What kind of delightful satisfaction do you remember having expercinced before?"

"Venerable Sir, in the past there took place a great batte between the devas of Tavatimas and those of the Asuras. The Tavatiṃsa devas came out winners, and the Asuras were losers. Then, as victor, I was very glad to reflect on the fact that the Tavatiṃsa devas would now have the special privilage of enjoying both their own food pertaining to the Tavatiṃsa realm as well as the food pertaining to the Asura realm. (However) Venerable Sir, my delightful satisfaction then was pleasure bolstered up with armed might. It was not helpful for disenchanment with the wheel of existence, for destroying desire, for cessation of the

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round of rebirth, for abandoning attachment, for special apperception, for an understanding of the Four Truths, for the realization of *Nibbāna*.

"Venerable Sir, the delightful satisfaction it I now have on hearing the Bhagava's discourse is of a (superior) kind that does not need bolstering up with armed might. It is indeed conducive to disenchantment with the wheel of existence, to destroying desire, to cessation of the round of rebirth, to abandoning attachment, to special apperception, to an understanding of the Four Truths, to the relization of Nibbāna."

The six benefits for Sakka on attaining Stream-Entry Knowledge.

Then the Bhagavā asked, "Sakka, King of Devas, what benefits do you see (in your present status) so that you speak of its great delight?"

"Venerable Sir, I see six great benefits (in my present Ariyahood) and that is why I extol it so much. The six are:

(i) *Idheva tiṭṭhamānassa devabhūtassa me sato*
Purāyu ca me laddho evaṃ jānāhi mārisa.

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, even while I have been listening to your discourse in this Indasāla Cave, I have been reborn as Sakka (by the name of Maghava) and will live thirty-six milllion years by human reckoning in the Tavatiṃsa deva realm. May the Venerable One who is free from *dukkha* take note of it. Venerable Sir, this is the first benefit that is behind extolling of my Ariyahood."

(ii) *Cutāhaṃ diviyā kāyā āyuṃ hitvā amānusaṃ*
Amūḷho gabbhamessāmi yattha me ramatī mano.

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, when I die from deva existence and have relinquished the thirty six million years' life by human reckoning of Tavatiṃsa deva existence, I shall without any bewilderment (at death) be reborn in the human world in a high class or clan of my own preference. Venerable Sir, this is the second benefit that is behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

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(When an Ariya passes away and takes another rebirth, he is never in a bewildered state. Mindful and with clear comprehension, he passes away from one existence to another which is always in a fortunate destination. If reborn in the human world, he always belongs to the royal (warrior) caste or brahmin caste ,Sakka has a desire for such noble birth when he reappears as a human being.)

(iii) *Svāhaṃ amūḷhapaññassa viharian sāsane rato*
Ñāyena viharissāmi sampajāno paṭissato.

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, taking delight in the Teaching of the Perfectly Enlightened One, I (known by the name of Maghava) shall (enjoying, physical health) dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension befitting an *Ariya*.

"Venerable Sir, this is the third benefit that is behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(iv) *Ñāyena me carato ca sambodhi ce bhavissati*
Aññātā viharissāmi sveva anto bhavissati.

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, in me (known by the name of Maghava) who thus dwell in the noble practice of an *Ariya*, if *Sakadāgmi magga* arises, then, to gain still higher Path-Knowledge of *Anāgāmi magga* and *Arahatta magga* I shall dwell in still futher practice of the Path. When *Sakadāgāmi magga* is attained that will be my last human esixtence.

"Venerable Sir, this is the fourth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(v) *Cutāhaṃ mānusā kāyā āyuṃ hitvāna mānusaṃ*
Puna deva bhavissāmi devalokamhi uttamo.

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, when I (known by the name of Maghava) pass away from the human existence and leave behind the human body, relinquishing the human life, I shall be reborn in the Tavatimsa deva realm as Lord of Devas.

"Venerable Sir, this is the fifth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my ariyahood."

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(vi) *Te paññatarā devā akaniṭṭhā yassasino*
Ante me vattamānamhi so nivāso bhavissati.

"O Venerable One free from *dukkha*, those devas, the *Ariya* brahmas of the Akaniṭṭhā realm, the topmost of the planes of existence, is superior in all respects such as life span and knowledge to all other devas and brahmas. They have big followership. When I have my last existence I (known by the name of Maghava) shall be reborn in that Akaniṭṭhā brahma realm.

"Venerable Sir, this is the sixth benefit that lies behind my extolling of my Ariyahood."

(The six benefits that Sakka enjoys on hearing the discourse in the Indasāla Cave are:-

(i) Attaining Stream-Entry and instant rebirth, there and then, as Sakka again; (ii) On passing away from that Sakka existence, rebirth in a noble lineage in the human world in a non-bewildered state, his final enlightenment as an Arahat being limited to seven existences only; (iii) Continued practice of the path in his future existences without bewilderment; (iv) Attaining *Sakadāgāmi Magga* in a human existence which will be his last human existence; (v) On passing away from that last human existence, being destined to become Sakka (for the third time); (vi) Attaining *Anāgāmi Magga* as Sakka, and being reborn in progressively higher existences in the five Pure Brahma realms namely: Aviha realm, Atappa realm, Sudassā realm, Sudassī realm, Akaniṭṭhā realm; and to attain Arahatship in the Akaniṭṭhā realm.

The Sixth benefit which is to result in rebirth in the five Brahma worlds should be noted here particularly for the immense durations of sublime existence in the Pure Abodes: As an *Anāgāmi puggala* (Non - Returner) Sakka will enjoy the ecstasy of a Pure Brahma in the Avihā realm for a thousand aeons (*mahā kappas*); passing away from that realm, he will be reborn in the Atappā realm for two thousand aeons; then in the Sudassā realm for four thousand aeons: then in the Sudassī realm for eight thousand aeons; and thence in the Akaniṭṭhā realm for

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sixteen thousand aeons - thus a total of thirty one thousand aeons of the ecstasy of the Brahma existence.

In the matter of the kind of extraardinarily prolonged existence full of ecstasy there are only three outstanding Ariya disciples under Gotama Buddha's Teaching, namely; Sakka, Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā. They enjoy similar life-span.

Sakka concluded with these words:

"Venerable Sir, it is because I see these six benefits that I extol the delightful satisfaction (of my attainment)."

Then Sakka repeated his former expericence with the forest-dwelling samanas and brahmanas who failed to answer his questions, but how he had to teach them the seven modes of conduct leading to Sakkahood. (Please see his story related to the Bhagavā earlier on.)

Then he sang in praise of the Buddha in the following stanzas.

Taṇhā sallassa hantāraṃ buddhaṃ appaṭipuggalaṃ
Ahaṃ vande mahāvīraṃ buddhamādicca bandhunaṃ

"To the Buddha, the unrivalled One, Knower of the Four Truths, kinsman of the Sun (having Gotama clan as common lineage) (or in an other sense; being father of the sun in the propagation of the Supramundane), the One possessed of great endeavour, who has destroyed all darts of craving, the Perfectly-Enlightened One, I (known as Maghava) make my obeisance with raised palms.

Yaṃ karomasi brahmaṃno samaṃ devehi mārisa
Tadajja tuyhaṃ dassāma handa sāmaṇ karoma te

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, formerly we had paid our tribute to the Brahma, as with other devas; but from today onwards we shall give our offerings to you. Now we pay our obeisance to you!"

Tvameva asi Sambuddho tuvaṃ satthā anuttaro
Sadevakasmiṃ lokasmiṃ natthi te paṭipuggalo

"O Venerable One who is free from *dukkha*, you alone are the Perfectly-Enlightened One, Teacher of devas and men. There is none to

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equal you in personal glory or in the embodiment of the Dhamma in all the worlds of sentient beings including the world of devas."

Sakka's reward to Pañcasakkha deva .

After singing in praise of the Buddha in those three stanzas, Sakka said to Pañcasikha:

"O Pañcasikha, through your good offices, we have the privilege of seeing the Homage-Worthy, the Perfcetly Self-Enlightend Buddha. I am greatly indebted to you for this. I appoint you to your father's office (as Chief of Gandhabba devas). You will be the (next) chief of Gandhabbas. I also betroth you to Sūriyavaschasā, the maiden of exquisite features whom you deeply yearn for."

Sakka's Joyous Utterance.

After that Sakka was so glad that he slapped the good earth (as though a person were to slap his friend's arm in intimate affection) and uttered these words of joyous expression thrice:

Namo tassa bhagavato Arahato sammā sambuddhassa:

"Veneration to the Exalted One, the Homage- Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened."

(In this connection, Sakka slapped the good earth because (he won the Supramundane,) while he remained on the earth and also because this great earth has produced such a marvellous personage as the Buddha, so that he had a profound regard for the good earth.)

After listening to the Bhagava's answers, Sakka accquired the Eye of the Dhamma, being able to dispel certain defilements and thereby understand that "whatever is in the nature of arising has the nature of perishing." He thus attained Stream-Entry, as also did the eighty-thousand devas who were in his company then.

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This discourse, being a series of answers to Sakka's questions, is known (in the Piṭaka) as the Discourse Concerning Sakka's Questions, *Sakka Pañha*.

(End of Sakka Pañha Sutta, its background story)

(Here ends Chapter Thirty-nine.)

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CHAPTER FORTY

THE BHAGAVĀ DECLARES THE SEVEN FACTORS OF NON-DECLINE FOR RULERS.

(As we have said earlier on,) the Bhagavā spent the earlier twenty *vāsas* at various places and preached the noble Doctrine that led to the liberation of the multitudes; and spent the latter twenty four *vāsas* in Sāvatthi only. After the end of the *vāsa* or rains-retreat the Bhagavā set out on journeys of three kinds of periphery (as described earlier on) and tamed those worthy of taming. The number of discourses and dialogues are as varied as they are wide so that they can not be treated fully within the confines of this work. Just as a drop or two of sea water would suffice to understand that the sea is salt, so also in this book only a few examples from the *suttanta* (i.e., discourses) can be given that should give the reader a fair idea of the richness of the Doctrine. Scholars who wish to gain further knowledge from the Buddha's extensive teachings are advised to read from the (Myanmar) translations of the Piṭaka (with the help of the Commentaries and Sub-commatries). We shall henceforth confine our narrative to the events and discourses that belong to the period extending from around the forty-fourth *vasa* onwards which was the period close to his realization of *parinibbāna*.)

At one time (when the Bhagavā had completed his forty-fourth *vāsa*) the Bhagavā of Illustrious Attributes was staying at the mountain abode up on Gijjakuṭa Hill near Rājagaha. (The place name Gijjakuṭa means 'Vulture Peak' probably derived from the shape of the peak, or from the fact that it was the roosting place of vultures.)

At that time King Ajātasattu (of Rājagaha) was very keen on invading Vesāli, the country of Licchavis. "I will exterminate them however powerful and mighty they may be, play havoc with them, cause their ruin," he was saying all the time, a haughty monarch as he was.

The reason for his deep-seated hatred of the Licchavis could be traced to some unhappy incidents thus:

Rājagaha and Vesali were two flourishing cities on either side of the River Gaṅga which flowed east and west, with Rājagaha on the

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southern side and Vesāli on the northerm side. There was a caravan station known as Paṭṭanagāma (The present-day Paṭna was probably founded on that place.) With Paṭṭanagāma in the middle, the region extending about half a *yojana* came under the domain of King Ajātasattu while the region of the same extent towards the other side of that region came under the domain of the Licchavis.

There were rich deposits of precious materials originating at the hillside near Paṭṭanagama. As King Ajātasattu learnt about the treasures and was making plans to go there, the Licchavis got there first and took away all the treasures. When King Ajātasattu got there and learnt that the Licchavis had stolen a march on him, he went back home with great fury.

But in the following year too the Licchavis were ahead of King Ajātasattu in getting there and enjoying the find. King Ajātasattu's anger knew no bounds. He was obsessed with the thought of exterminating, destroying and ruining the mighty Licchavis. In all his four bodily postures he was cursing aloud. He even went so far as giving orders to his men to plan an expedition.

On second thoughts, however, he restrained his action. "War is disastrous to both sides. There is no clash of arms that do not result in loss of life (and property). By taking wise counsel I may not have harsh consequenecs. There is no one in the world greater in wisdom than the Buddha. Just now the Bhagavā is staying near my city, on his mountain abode on Gijjakuṭa Hill. I shall send a minister to the Bhagavā and seck advice, on my proposed expedition. If my plan is of any benefit to me the Bhagavā would remain silent; if it is against my own good the Bhagavā would say, "what good is it for the king to go on such an expedition?" Reflecting thus, he said to the brahmin Vassakāra (his Chief Minister):

> "Here, brahmin, go to the Bhagavā. Pay homage at his feet and convey my message. Enquire after his health whether the Bhagavā is free from any affliction and disease, whether he is well and fit, and is well at ease. Say to the Bhagavā: 'Venerable Sir, King Ajātasattu of Magada, son of Queen Vedehī, pays homage at your fect. He enquires after the Bhagava's health-

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whether the Bhagavā is free from affliction and disease, whether the Bhagavā is well and fit, and is well at case'. Then say to him: 'Venerable Sir, the king wishes to make war against the Vajjī princes, the Licchavis of Vesālī, and is making self-glorious declarations that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, however powerful and mighty they might be, and that he will play havoc with them and cause their ruin.' And then carefully note what the Bhagavā says and report back to me. The Tathāgatas never speaks false."

"Very well, Your Majesty, "said the brahmin Vassakāra and drove to the Gijjhakuta Hill amidst a splendid formation of carriages. Once there, he (ascended from the carriage) approached the Bhagavā, and after exchanging greetings and concluding courteous words of felicitation, sat at a suitable place. Then he said to the Bhagavā:

"Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu of Magada, son of Queen Vedehī pays homage at your fect. He enquires after your health-whether you are free from affliction and disease, whether you are well and fit, and whether you are well at ease. Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu wishes to make war againt the Vajjī primces, the Licchavī of Vesalī, and is making self-glorious declaration that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, play havoe with them, and cause their ruin."

Seven factors of growth, non-decline for kings.

At that time the Venerable Ānandā was at the back of the Bhagavā, fanning him. (In this connection it may be pointed out that the Buddhas, by virtue of their infinite merit, do not feel too cold not too hot. Ānanda's fanning the Bhagavā was merely an act of veneration.) When the Bhagavā had heard the brahmin's words he did not say anything to him but entered into a dialogue with the Venerable Ānandā thus;

(He said:) "Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes hold meetings frequently? Do they have meetings many times? What have you heard?"

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(Ānandā:) "Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes hold meetings frequently, and that they have meetings many times."

(i) The first factor of growth, non-decline.

Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes assemble frequently and have many meetings, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: Frequent meetings' means three or more meetings every day. 'They have meetings many times' means never skipping a day without meeting.

The advantages of frequent meetings is that fresh information is always forthcoming from the eight directions. If up-to-date information is not forthcoming, unrest at remote places and border areas might go unnoticed at the capital; so also breach of law and order in the country might not be duly reported. If no prompt action is taken against lawless elements this will be taken as laxity on the part of those in authority and the law and order situation will deterioate. This is a sure way of decline for rulers.

If, on the other hand, frequent meetings are held, up-to-date information from all over the country can reach the capital and prompt action can be taken whenever necessary. The bad people will then know that they do not stand any chance against this sort of efficient administration and will disperse. This is a sure way of prosperity for rulers.)

(ii) The second factor of growth, non-decline.

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes assemble in harmony and do they disperse in harmony? Do they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjī country? What have you heard."

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes assemble in harmony and disperse in harmony, and that they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjī country."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes assemble and disperse in harmony and act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of

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the Vajjī country, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: 'To assemble in harmony' means never appearing late at the appointed hour of meeting on any excuse. When the time for the meeting is announced by gong or by bell, all turn up in time, leaving aside whatever activities they may be engaged in. If one happens to be taking his meal he must leave the table at once in the middle of his meal; if one happens to be dressing himself up he must attend the meetihg even though not fully dressed up yet.

'To disperse in harmony' means leaving the meeting chamber all at the same time after the meeting has concluded. If some have left the meeting chamber and others were to remain the ones who have gone might harbour suspicion against those who remain, with the uneasy thought that they stay behind to make important decisions behind their back. This sort of suspicious speculation is poisonous for the rulers' mind.

In another sense: 'to disperse in harmony' means to be keen to undertake what is to be undertaken (as the follow up action consequent to the deliberations and decisions at the meeting). For example, if a rebellion needs to be quelled and someone is to take charge, everyone is eager to shoulder the respousibility.

'Harmony in discharging duties' means rendering every possible assistance among one another. For example, if one of the menbers is found to be falling short of his duty the others would send their sons or brothers to render help. Where a visitor needs to be entertained, the responsitility is not shirked but all join in the task. In meeting their individual social obligations too, whether for happy occasions or sad occasions, all the members act as one whole family.)

(iii) The third factor of growth, non-decline.

"Ānanda, do Vajjī princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and do they abstain from revoking what has been enacted previously, and do they follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices? What have you heard?"

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"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and that they follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices.

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes abrtain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and abstain from revoking what has been enacted previouly, and follow the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Note: 'Enacting ordinances' means imposing taxes and fines. Imposing fresh taxes and fines that were not done before, and not revoking traditional taxes and fines is an important principle for rulers. 'Following Vajjī traditions and practiecs' means acting in accordance with traditional code of justice. For instance, execution of accused persons without trial is a flagrant disregard of tradition and practice. Whenever fresh taxes and fines are enacted the people naturally resent it. They may even feel that they are fleeced and in that case they may leave the country in disgust and turn to robbery and crime in remote places, or some of the discontented lot may join gangs of bandits, cause strife in out of the way areas.

Revoking traditional taxes and fines will result in loss of revenue. This will render the rulers unable to meet state expenditures. The armed forces and civil servants will have reductions in their remuneration. This will lower their efficiency and the standards of their services will fall, effecting the might of the army.

If the time-honoured Vajjī traditions and practices are disregarded and people are executed without trial, relatives of the victims of injustice will bear grudge against the rulers. They may go to remote places and resort to crime themselves or may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. These are causes of decline for rulers.

In a country where the ordinances enacted are the same ones that have been traditionally enacted, the people will accept them without murmur. They will feel happy about their obligations and go about their normal activities, such as agriculture and trading.

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Where rulers do not revoke traditional taxes and fines their revenves in kind and in money are flowing in every day. The armed forces and civil servants enjoy their usual remuneration; they are properly provided and made happy. Their services remain as trustworthy and dependable as in the olden days.

In Vajjī system of justice there were stages of careful serutiny in the administration of criminal justice. When a man was brought before the authorities accused with theft, he was not put into custody but was properly examined. If there was no proof of theft he was allowed to go. If someone was suspected of a crime he was handed to the officials of the justice department. He was given a proper hearing and if found not guilty he was released. If the judges suspected him of the crime he was referred to a pannel of learned persons well versed in social ethics. If the pannel of learned persons found him not guilty he was released. If they considered him not free of fault he was referred to a review board of eight jurors (who belonged to the eight catigories of families with an honourable tradition and who were free from the four kinds of improper official conduct. If the review board found him not guilty he was released; if he was not free from blame he was committed to the king through the Commander-in Chief and the Heir-apparent. If the king found him not guilty he was released. If he was not free from blame the traditional criminal code, 'dhammathat', was caused to be read in his presence. The code contained specifec descriptions of acts of crime with specific punishments attached to them. The king ascertained the nature of crime the man had committed that answered the description in the list of crimes in the code, and the preseribed punishment was meted out to him.

The Observance of the Vajjī tradition described above was very reassuring to the people. When one of their kith and kin was punished for a crime the people did not blame the Vajjī princes. They knew the king had dispensed justice and that the fault lay with the perpetrator only. Being satisfied that they had full protection of the law, they went about their usual business honestly. This adherance to the time-honoured system of justice is thus a factor of progress for rulers.)

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(iv) The fourth factor of growth, non-decline.

"Ānandā, do Vajjī princes treat their elders with courteous regard, deference, estecm and veneration, and do they consider that the advice of elderly people are worth listening to? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem and veneration, and that they consider the advice of elderly people are worth listening to."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem, and veneration, and consider that the advice of elderly people are worth listening to, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline.'

(The terms 'regard, deference, esteem and veneration', all denote a deep sense of respect, indebtedness, genuine affection and humility. 'To listen to their advice' means to seek their counsel twice or thrice every day.

If young princes do not have a sense of respect for their elders and do not go to them for advice they will be ignored by the elders, and lacking proper guidance, they will tend to indulge themselves in sensual pleasures and forget their princely duties, thus leading to their ruin.

Where princes hold their elders in esteem the latter will advice them on state craft, pointing out the traditional practices. In military strategy they have practical experience so that in a given situation they can give sound guidance such as how to advance, how to retreat. Drawing on the rich experience and mature wisdom of their elders, the princes can thus carry on their proud tradition, perpetuating their national glory.

(v) The fifth factor of growth, non-decline.

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls and keeping them? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes do not carry away by force women and girls and keep them."

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"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls and keeping them, they are bound to prosper, there is no reason for their decline."

(Herein, where the rulers forcibly take any woman or girl without consent the people will be very angry. "They have taken away a mother from our house!" "They have taken away our girl whom we have nurtured with such great devotion!" "They have kept them at the palace!" People will complain. They will leave the country, go to the remote regions and become criminals themselves, or they may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. This is a cause of decline for rulers.

Where the rulers do not forcibly take away women and girls and keep them, the people are free from molestation and anxiety and they go about their usual business. They contribute to the wealth of the rulers. So, restraint of rulers is a factor for their progress.)

(vi) The sixth factor of growth, non-decline

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city? Do they see to it that appropriate offering and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city. They see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss."

"Ānandā, so long as the Vajjī princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city, and see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

(Where the rulers do not venerate the traditional shrines whether inside or outside of the city and are remiss in making the customary offerings and oblations that are due to them, the guardian spirits do not afford them protection. Although the

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guardian spirits are not able to cause fresh misfortune to the people, they can aggravate the existing misforthme such as a worsening in coughs and headaches. In time of war they do not join forces against the enemy. Thus the rulers stand to meet with decline.

Where rulers do not neglect the customary offerings and oblations that are due to guardian spirits at the traditional shrines the latter give them protection. Although the guardian spirits are not able to bring fresh fortunes to the people they can attenuate the existing misfortune such as causing immediate relief in coughs and headaches. In time of war they join forces with the local combatants. They may cause delusion to the enemy into thinking that the local army is twice or thrice its actual numbers; or they may show up terrifying sights before the enemy. Keeping the traditional guardian spirits in their good mood through customary offerings and oblations is a factor of prosperity for rulers.)

(vii) The seventh factor of growth, non-decline.

"Ānandā, do the Vajjī princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come, and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere? What have you heard?"

"Venerable Sir, I have heard that the Vajjī princes make careful provesions for the protection of and security for Arahats so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere."

"Ānands, so long as the Vajjī princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet come to the Vajjī country may come, and so that those Arahats who have already come may live in the Vajjī country in a genial atmosphere, they (the princes) are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

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(In this matter 'protection' means necessary measures to ensure safety. 'Security' means safeguarding the peace and friendly atmosphere. For noble persons their protection and security need not be provided using a powerful armed guard. What is needed is to make sure that annoyance is not caused to these noble ones by such improper ways as felling of trees near their monastry, hunting or fishing in the vicinity. Careful provisions for the protection and security are intended to guarantce a genial atmosphere for Arahats. They reflect the friendly attitude of the Vajjī princes towards the noble ones.

Where the rulers of a country do not have a friendly attitude towards Arahats who have not yet come to their country it is due to their lack of faith in the Triple Gem. In that case when bhikkhus come to their country they would not welcome them, would not go to them and pay homage, would not converse with them cordially, would not ask questions concerning the Doctrine, would not listen to their discourse, would not make offerings to them, would not hear the joyous remarks of the donee-bhikkhus, and would not arrange for their stay. They earn the reputation that such and such a ruler has no faith in the Triple Gem; when bhikkhus come to their country they would not welcome them, ... p ... would not arrange for their stay. Due to this ill repute bhikkhus do not travel by the city gate of such a ruler, and if they cannot avoid using the road that passes by the city of that ruler, they would not enter the city. And thus there is no coming of Arahats who have not yet come to that city.

If those bhikkhus who have already come to that city do not find a genial atmosphere the bhikkhus will feel that they have come to a wrong place. "Who would live in such an unfriendly city where the rulers are so disrespectful?" they would say, and leave the place. Where a place is shunned by bhikkhus due to non-arrival of bhikkhus and departure of bhikkhus who have already come, there, the place becomes devoid of bhikkhus. Where bhikkhus do not stay, guardian spirits do not stay either.

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Where guardian spirits do not stay, demons have the run of the place. Where the demons thrive strange diseases that are not known previously are caused by them. Opportunity for earning merit on account of seeing virtuous persons, seeking answers to doctrinal point, etc., is lost. This state of affairs is cause of decline for rulers.

The happy consequences of caring for the virtuous persons may be understood on the basis of the above unhappy consequences arising out of lack of such caring.)

Then the Bhagavā said to the brahim Vassakāra, Chief Minister of Magadha:

"Brahmin, on one occasion I taunght the Vajjī princes these seven principle of progress while I was staying at the Sārandada shrine in Vesālī.

"Brahmins, so long as these seven factors of growth, non-decline remain with the Vajjī princes, and so long as the Vajjī princes carefully abide by these seven principles, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

Then the brahmin Vassakāra replied to the Bhagavā: "Revered Gotama, careful abidance of just any one of those factors of growth would ensure the prosperity of the Vajjī princes, allowing no cause whatever for their decline; how much more so if they carefully abide by all the seven factors!

"O revered Gotama, it is not likely that King Ajātasattu will conquer the Vajjī country simply by making war upon it, unless he can successfully seduce the Vajjī princes or sow seeds of dissension among them.

"O revered Gotama, we shall go now. We have many affairs to attend to."

"Brahmin, you know the time to go (i.e., go when you wish)."

Then the brahmin Vassakāra, being greatly pleased with the Bhagava's words expressed his delight, rose from his seat and departed.

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(*Sārandada Shrine* was prebuddhistic shrine set up to propitiate a demon of that name. With the advent of the Buddha, a monastery was built on the site, hence the monastery still was known as Sārandada Shrine.

The brahmin's suggestion of seduction was meant to resort to acts of friendliness towards the enemy with lavish presents and messages of good will and amity. When the enemy was led to thinking that Ajātasattu was a real friend and remained unprepared for war, then only Chief Minister would advise the king to attack.

His second idea of sowing seeds of dissension also was another strategy to weaken the enemy. Both the two ideas flowed out of the Buddha's seven factors of growth.

It might be asked, "Did the Bhagavā know that the brahmin Vassakāra would benefit from the discourse?"

The answer is, "Yes."

"And then why did the Bhagavā made the discourse?"

He made the discourse out of compassion for the Vajjī princes. To elaborate: The Buddha knew with his supreme wisdom that if he did not give the discourse to the brahmin, King Ajātasattu would would invade the Licchavī Country, capture the Liccha princes and destroy them in two or three days time. By giving the discourse, he would first use the strategy of sowing dissension among the Licchavī princes and move to destroy them only after three years.

Three more years of survival would provide the Licchavi's opportunity for more meritorious deeds that would stand them in good stead. Hence the discourse given out of great compassion by the Buddha.

The fall of Vesālī

When brahmin Vassakāra returned from the Bhagavā and got back to the palace King Ajātasattu asked him:

"Teacher, what did the Bhagavā say?"

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"Your Majesty, according to Gotama Buddha, the Vajjians cannot be coptured unless through deceit or through causing a split between them."

"If we employ deceit, we shall have to suffer losses in our armed forces. We had better try to cause a split among them. But Teacher, how should we go about it?"

"In that case, hold a meeting at the palace and announce your intention to make war with the Vajjians. Then I shall pretend to disapprove of the idea and leave the council chamber. At that you should feign anger with me and blame me openly. Thereafter I shall send gifts to the Vajjians in open daylight which you should promptly find out and confiscate. Then, branding me as a traitor, you should, instead of inflicting physical punishment, appear to choose to disgrace me, shave off my head and expel me from the city. Then I shall speak out defiant words to the effect ' that I know the defence system of your city; I will lead the Vajjians to destroy the city walls and ransack the city.' At those impertiment words from me you should show great anger and order my immediate departure."

King Ajātasattu carried out Vassakāra's scheme in detail.

The Lacchavī princes learnt that Vassakāra had left Rājagaha. But they had fears of him as a crooked person. "Let him not cross the Gaṅgā to our shore", they protested strongly. However, some of the Lacchavis said, "Vassakāra is in his plight because he spoke in our defence." So the Lacchavis allowed the brahmin to cross the Gaṅgā.

Brahmin Vassakāra came up to the Lacchavī princes and on being asked the reason for his banishment he told them what had taken place at the Rājagaha court. The Lacchavis were sympathetic with Vassakāra. They thought he was treated rather too severly for such a small offence.

"What was your official status at the Rājagha court?" They asked of Vassakāra.

"I was the Judge (i.e., Minister of Justice)."

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"Then you keep that post at our court," the Lacchavis told him. Vassakāra proved himself a very competent Judge. The Lacchavis then learned the princely arts from him.

Vassakāra sows disrent among the Lacchavī princes.

When brahmin Vassakāra had established himself as the royal teacher, he started to put his scheme into effect. He would call up a Lacchavī prince in private and ask some trifling thing such as.

"Do youths under your Royal Highness do cultivating?"
"Yes, they do " (would be the natural answer.)
"Do they yoke a pair of oxen?"
"Yes, they do."

The dialogue did not go further. The two parted. But when one of the Lacchavis who saw the private discussion asked the Lacchavī who had conversed with Vassakāra about the subject of their discussion, and was told the truth, the inquirer naturally could not believe it. "There must be something that he is holding to himself," he thought. A wedge had been thus placed between the two princes.

On another day brahmin Vassakāra took another Lacchavī prince to privacy and asked, "Your Royal Highness what did you have for breakfast today?" And that was all. When some other Lacchavī prince asked about the meeting and was told the truth it struck him as qucer. Another wedge had been laid at another place.

On another occasion brahmin Vassakāra asked of another Lacchavī prince in private, "Your Royal Highness is said to be in straitened cirumstances, is that true?"

"Who told you so?" asked the Prince.
"Prince so and so told me."
And so ill will between two innocent Lacchavī princes was created.

Yet on another occasion, brahmin Vassakāra said to another Lacchavī prince in private, "Your Royal Highness is called a coward by someone."

" Who dare call me a coward?" asked the prince.

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" Prince so and so did."

Thus enmity arose between two innocent Lacchavī princes.

After three years of insidious scheming, brahmin Vassakāra brought the Lacchavī princes to such a state that no two princes had faith in each other. Then to test the effectiveness of his scheme he had a publice proclamation made, by the beat of the gong, for an assembly of the Lacchavī princes. Each bearing a grudge against another, none of the princes was prepared to work together in unison as usual. "Let the well-to-do princes attend; we are the wretched ones," some would say. Or, "Let brave men go; we are but cowards." And on these diverse grounds of disunity, the assembly did not take place.

Brahmin Vassakāra then sent a secret message to King Ajātasattu that it was the time to attack Vesālī. Ajātasattu gave the war cry by the beat of the gong and marched out of Rājagaha.

The ruling princes of Vesālī heard the news. "We will not let them cross the Gaṅgā!" - they declared and an assembly was called, but nursing the old grudges, no one attended. "Let the brave ones go." etc., they would say in derision.

When Ajātasattu's forces had crossed the Gangā, the ruling princes of Vesālī declared, "we will not let them enter our city. We will close our city gates and stand firm. Come! to our defences now!" They shouted and tried to convene an assembly. Yet there was no response.

Ajātasattu's army met no resistence whatever from Vesālī whose city gates remained open. They massacred all the Lacchavī princes and returned to Rājagaha as conquerors.

This is the story of how Vesālī fell.

(The events leading to the fall of Vesālī and its utter destruction took place during the three years beginning with the year of the passing away of the Bhagavā and two years after that. The story is reproduced here as described in the Commentary in this connection. May the reader, the virtuous follower of the Buddha, visualize in his imagination the scene of brahmin Vassakāra learning from the Bhagavā the seven factors of growth, non-decline for rulers at the

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mountain abode of the Bhagavā atop mount Gijjhakuṭa, and his departure (in all satesfaction) from there.)

The seven factor of non-decline of Bhikkhu.

(The first set of seven factor)

Even when the Bhagavā was giving a discourse on the Seven factors of growth for rulers to brahmin Vassakāra, he had in mind making a similar discourse for the guidance of bhikkhus in the interest of the prolongation of the Teaching, (i.e , the threefold training) which will be conducive to release from the round of existences, and realization of Nibbāna and hence are more beneficial than the seven factors of growth for rulers which are merely mundane principles.

Accordingly, soon after the brahmin Vassakāra had left, the Bhagava said to the Venerable Ānandā, "Go, Ananda, and let all the bhikkhus living around Rājagaha gather in the assembly hall."

"Very well, Venerable Sir," said Ānandā and arranged for a full gathering of bhikkhus. He sent bhikkhus endowed with special powers to inform those bhikkhus who dwelled at some distance from Rājagaha, and went personally to those bhikkhus who were living near by. When the bhikkhus had gathered in the Assembly Hall, Ānandā approached the Bhagavā, made obeisance to him, and standing at a suitable place, said to the Bhagavā; "Venerable Sir, the community of bhikkhus is assembled. It is for the Bhagava to go as and when he wishes. "

Then the Bhagavā went to the Assembly Hall and, taking the seat prepared for him, addressed the bhikkhus thus:

"Bhikkhus, I shall expound to you the seven factors of non-decline Listen and pay attention to what I am going to say in detail "

"Very well, Venerable Sir, the bhikkhus responded, and the Bhagavā gave this discourse:

"(i) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus hold frequent meetings and have many meetings, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

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"(ii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus assemble and disperse in harmony, and attend to the affairs of the Samgha in harmony, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(iii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not prescribe rules that had not been prescribed by the Buddha, and observe well the training rules (*vinaya*) prescribed by the Buddha, they are bound to make progress (sprirtually); there is no reasom for their decline.

"(iv) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus show respect, deference, esteem, and veneration towards the bhikkhu elders who are of long standing and senior in bhikkhuhood, who have acquired the position of leadership among the Sangha, and consider that the advice of those bhikkhu elders are worth listening to, they are bound to make progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(v) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus do not yeild to the power, the influence of *Taṇhā*, craving which arises in them and which leads to rebirth, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(vi) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus are willing to go into seclusion in remote forest dwellings, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"(vii) Bhikkhus, so long as the bhikkhus remain established in mindfulness themeselves so that those co-practitioners of the bhikkhu practice who cherish morality and who have not yet come might come, and those (of similar nature) who have already come might live in peace and comfort they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.

"Bhikkhus, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with he bhikkhus, and so long as the bhikkhus live by them, they are bound to progress (spiritually); there is no reason for their decline.'

(The discourse is not concluded yet.) The above seven factors are called the first set of seven factors of non-decline of bhikkhus.

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(i) Of those seven the first factor of assembling often is essentially the same as the first principle of progress taught to the Vajjians. Unless bhikkhus meet together often they cannot get to know what is going on at various monasteries. For instance, a certain *simā* in a certain monastery may be flawed for having mixed boundaries so that valid Samgha functions cannot be held in them; or that certain bhikkhus at a certain monastery are practising medicine, or acting as messenger for lay persons, or taxing the patience of their lay supporters by too many wants; or are pursuing gain with gain etc.

When laxity of bhikkhu conduct is not taken note of by the Samgha, evil bhikkhus may take undue advantage of it, and multiply their numbers with adverse consequences for the Teaching.

By the Samgha frequently meeting in assembly promptly, a fautly *simā* can be put right by Samgha acts so that it can function according to the Vinaya. When evil bhikkhus have formed a community of their own, Ariya bhikkhus who have attained *Magga Phala* can be despatched to teach them the ways and practices of the Ariyas; *Ariyavaṃsa Dhamma*; evil bhikkhus can be chastised by sending bhikkhus adept at the Vinaya rules. In such case, evil bhikkhus will know that the Samgha are vigilant and that they cannot thrive. Thus the progress for the bhikkhus in the threefold training is assured.

(ii) Bhikkhus assembling in harmony means promptly responding to a call for Samgha congregation to carry out any Samgha business such as clearing a pagoda precincts or doing repair work to the shrnies, or making vows or imparting instructions under the Vinaya rules. On no account should the signal for gathering of the bhikkhus be treated slightly. All personal engagements such as stitching robes, or baking an alms-bowl, or repairing the monastery should be dropped for the moment to attend the assembly. This attitude of always giving priorty to the business of the Samgha assembly assures harmony in bhikkhu assemblies.

Dispersing in harmony means to rise from the meeting all at once and to break up without exception. If some bhikkhus were to stay on, those that have left the assembly hall might harbour suspicious thoughts

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against those staying behind. "Those bhikkhus have real business to discuss between themselves only"; such misunderstanding will arise.

Dispersing in harmony also may mean rising up together eagerly to take responsibility to carry out the resolutions made at the assembly such as participation in Samgha acts concerning *simas* or volunteering for chastising an errant bhikkhu.

Attending to the affairs of the Samgha in harmony means a readniess on the part of every bhikkhu to live as a community, never being selfish. For instance, if a guest bhikkhu arives, he should be given a warm welcome instead of being directed to another monastery, or making undue inquiries about his identity. This is particularly important in respect of a sick bhikkhu needing shelter and attention. Finding bhikkhu requisites, alms-bowl or robes or medicine for the needy is also an act of harmonious discharge of bhikkhu obligation. Where there is a dearth of learned bhikkhus at a certain place and there is the danger of the Pāḷi text or the correct meaning thereof going to extinction, the bhikkhus of that place should find a competent bhikkhu to teach the text and interpret the meaning there of, and he should be looked after properly, by way of the four bhikkhu requisites.

(iii) In the third factor of non-decline prescribing a bhiikkhu undertaking which is not in accordance with the Doctrine amounts to prescribing something that had not been prescribed by the Buddha.

An example of such undertaking: There is a certain provision in the Vinaya rules called *nisīdanasantata* rule or *Purāṇasantata* rule in the *Pārājika Pāḷi, 2-Kosiya Vagga* (the fifth rule at page 336, Myanmar translation). When the Bhagavā was staying in Sāvatthi at the Jetavana Monastery the Bhagavā said to the bhikkhus "Bhikkhus, I wish to remain in seclusion for three months. No bhikkhu shall come to me except the one who brings my meals." The bhikkhus then made an undertaking among themselves that any bhikkhu who went to the Bhagavā, other than the one bringing food for the Bhagavā, should be liable to *Pācittiya* offence, and breach of this offence should be conveyed to the Sangha. Now this is overdoing the Bhagava's orders. Those bhikkhus had no right to classify breach of the Bhagava's words

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on that particular occasion as one of *Paeittiya* offence, nor any right to declare (by their own undertaking) the breach a cause for confession. Such undertaking is against the Dhamma Vinaya, and amounts to prescribing something which the Buddha had not prescribed.

Disregarding what the Buddha prescribed is best illustrated by the case of Vajjīputtaka bhikkhus of Vesālī when they tried to introduce ten unlawful rules of their liking in flagrant disobedience to the Buddha's Vinaya rules. That event took place on the hundredths year of the Buddha's passing away. (See *Vinaya Cūḷaovagga Pāḷi, Sattā Satikakkhandhaka*).

During the time of the Buddha there were bhikkhus Assaji and Punabbasuka who intentionally infringed minor rules of the Discipline. However trifling the offence might be, non-observance of what the Buddha prescribed is nothing but non-obsevance.

In the story of Puraṇasantata the Venerable Upasena Arahat, (brother of Sāriputta) refrained from making a (novel) undertaking as a bhikkhu rule of conduct. This is a case of not prescribing rules that had not been preseribed by the Buddha.

The Veneralbe Yasa who headed the Second Synod taught the Dhamma Vinaya to the bhikkhus. This is an instance of not disregarding the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

On the eve of the First Synod a lively discussion took place among the Samgha whether minor offences should be dropped from the code of Vinaya because the Buddha, when his passing away was near, gave this option to the Samgha, after he was gone. The Venerable Kassapa, head of the First Synod, made a formal propsoal at the Samgha congregation to uphold all minor offences as prescribed by the Buddha. This is a case of observing well the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

(iv) With reference to this factor of non-decline; bhikkhu elders would give spiritual guidance only to those bhikkhus who are courteous and reverential towards them and who approach them twice or thrice every day. To those who willingly seek guidance by showing their admiration, the bhikkhu elders would impart practical

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wisdom handed down from generation of teachers and essential points in the Doctrine that are fit to be taught only to the sincere and devoted pupils. If the bhikkhus do not show due respect and regard to the bhikkhu elders they will be deprvied of the five benefits such as morality, and the seven properties of the *ariyas*, and so stand to great loss and decline.

Those bhikkhus who are courteous and reverential towards the bhikkhu elders and approach them twice or thrice every day, gain knowledge from them in many ways. They get practical instructions (in insight meditation) such as, "you should go forward thus (being mindful and with clear comprehension); you should go backward thus; you should look straight ahead thus; you should look sideways thus; you should bend the arm thus; you should stretch the folded arm thus; you should carry the great robe and alms-bowl thus, etc." The bhikkhu elders would impart to them practical wisdom handed down from generations of teachers and essential points in the Doctrine worthy of only sincere and devoted pupils. They would teach them the thirteen ascetic practices and warn them against pitfalls in doctrinal controversy by explaining to them the moot points contained in the Ten Points of Controversy (Abhidhamma Piṭaka). Thus being established as good pupils of worthy teachers, those bhikkhus will gain the five benefit's such as morality fulfilling the task of Arahatship, the fruit of becoming bhikkhu.

(v) As regards the fifth factor of non-decline, a bhikkhu who goes about from village to village, town to town, ever closely at the heels of their donors for the sake of acquiring the four bhikkhu requisites, is one who yields to the power of craving. One who yields to craving is on the decline in the benefits of bhikkhu practice such as morality. One who does not yield to craving progresses spiritually begining with morality.

(vi) As regards the sixth factor of non-decline, a remote forest dwelling is a place away from human settlements (not necessarily to be in a forest). One must be willing to dwell in seclusion at such a place. That indeed is so. In a monastery close to a town or village, when

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a bhikkhu rises from jhāna he hears human voices, male, female or children's voices which spoil the tempo of concentration.

At a forest abode one wakes up in the mornong to the sounds of animals and birds (which make for peace and contentment) which creates delightful satisfaction, *pīti*, and by wisely reflecting on that delightful satisfaction one can attain *Arahatta phala*. Thus the Bhagavā speaks in praise of a bhikkhu sleeping at a remote forest dwelling even more than a bhikkhu in jhānic absorption living near a town or a village. This is because the Bhagavā sees the potential for easier attainment of Arahatship in the forest-dwelling bhikkhu. That is why he says that as long as bhikkhus are willing to dwell in seclusion in forest abode they are bound to progress spiritually; and that there is no reason for their decline.

(vii) Regarding the seventh factor of non-decline, resident bhikkhus who do not welcome co-practitioners of the bhikkhu-practice who cherish morality are those who lack in faith in the Triple Gem. This type of bhikkhu would not greet guest bhikkhus on arrival, would not offer a seat, nor would fan them to cool them, nor would do any act normally expected of a host-bhikkhu. A monastery where such bhikkhus live earns the reputation it deserves that such and such monastery is a place where bhikkhus lacking in faith in the Triple Gem live, that it is unfriendly to guest bhikkhus, and inhospitable. That reputation keeps away guest bhikkhus from entering that monastery even though they may happen to be passing by it. Therefore virtuous bhikkhus who have not been there never come to it. Those virtuous bhikkhus who have come, not knowing the inhospitable nature of the monastery, will soon find out that the place is not the right one for them to stay long, and will go away in disgust. In this way that monastery will become a place where other virtuous bhikkhus do not care to settle down. The result is that the resident bhikkhus of that monastery will lack any opportunity of seeing virtuous ones who can show them the Doctrine that would dispel doubts in them, teach them the training precepts, and preach them the excellent Doctrine. Those resident bhikkhus will then hear no new