

Suttanipāta Commentary

Translated
by the
Burma Piṭaka Association



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AIM Logo

Edited by Bhikkhu Pesala
for the
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Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Editor's Foreword..... | vii |
| 1. Translator's Preface..... | viii |
| 1. Urugavagga (Snake Chapter)..... | ix |
| 2. Uruga Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | ix |
| 3. Dhaniya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | x |
| 4. Khaggavisāṇa Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xi |
| 5. Kasibhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xi |
| 6. Cunda Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xii |
| 7. Parābhava Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xii |
| 8. Aggikabhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xiii |
| 9. Metta Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xiv |
| 10. Hemavata Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xiv |
| 11. Āḷavaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xiv |
| 12. Vijaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xv |
| 13. Muni Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xvi |
| 1. Cūlavagga (Minor Chapter)..... | xvi |
| 2. Ratana Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xvi |
| 3. Āmagandha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xviii |
| 4. Hiri Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xix |
| 5. Maṅgala Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xx |
| 6. Sūciloma Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxi |
| 7. Kapila Sutta (Dhammacariya Sutta) Vaṇṇanā..... | xxi |
| 8. Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxii |
| 9. Dhamma Sutta (Nāvā Sutta) Vaṇṇanā..... | xxii |
| 10. Kiṃsīla Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxiii |
| 11. Uṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxiii |
| 12. Rāhula Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxiii |
| 13. Nigrodhakappa Sutta (Vaṅgīsa Sutta) Vaṇṇanā..... | xxiv |
| 14. Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta (Mahāsamaya Sutta) Vaṇṇanā..... | xxiv |
| 15. Dhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxv |
| 1. Mahāvagga (Great Chapter)..... | xxvi |
| 2. Pabbajjā Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvi |
| 3. Padhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvi |
| 4. Subhāsita Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvi |
| 5. Pūraḷāsa Sutta (Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta) Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvii |
| 6. Māgha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvii |
| 7. Sabhiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxvii |
| 8. Sela Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxviii |
| 9. Salla Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxviii |
| 10. Vāsetṭha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxviii |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 11. Kokālika Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxix |
| 12. Nālaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxx |
| 13. Dvayatānupassanā Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxii |
| 1. Atthakavagga (Chapter of the Eights)..... | xxxii |
| 2. Kāma Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxii |
| 3. Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxii |
| 4. Duṭṭhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxii |
| 5. Suddhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxiii |
| 6. Paramaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxiii |
| 7. Jarā Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxiii |
| 8. Tissa-Metteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxiv |
| 9. Pasūra Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxiv |
| 10. Māgaṇḍiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxv |
| 11. Purābheda Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxv |
| 12. Kalahavivāda Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxvi |
| 13. Cūḷabyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxvi |
| 14. Mahābyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxvii |
| 15. Tuvataka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxvii |
| 16. Attadaṇḍa Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxvii |
| 17. Sāriputta Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxviii |
| 1. Pārāyana Vagga (Chapter on the Way to the Beyond)..... | xxxix |
| 2. Vatthu Gāthā Vaṇṇanā..... | xxxix |
| 3. Ajita Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xli |
| 4. Tissametteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlii |
| 5. Puṇṇaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlii |
| 6. Mettagū Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlii |
| 7. Dhotaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlii |
| 8. Upasīva Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlii |
| 9. Nanda Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliii |
| 10. Hemaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliii |
| 11. Todeyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliii |
| 12. Kappa Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliii |
| 13. Jatukaṇṇi Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliii |
| 14. Bhadrāvudha Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliv |
| 15. Udaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliv |
| 16. Posāla Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliv |
| 17. Mogharāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xliv |
| 18. Piṅgiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā..... | xlvi |
| 19. Pārāyanatthuti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā..... | xlvi |
| 20. Pārāyanānugīti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā..... | xlvi |
| 21. Nigamanakathā..... | xlvi |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Commentary on the Suttanipāta..... | 1 |
| 1. Foreword (Ganthārambhakathā)..... | 1 |
| 1. The Snake Chapter (Uragavagga)..... | 1 |
| 2. Commentary on the Uraga Sutta..... | 1 |
| 3. Commentary on the Dhaniya Sutta..... | 34 |
| 4. Commentary on the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta..... | 58 |
| 5. Commentary on the Kasibhāradvāja Sutta..... | 162 |
| 6. The Commentary on the Cunda Sutta..... | 197 |
| 7. Commentary on the Parābhava Sutta..... | 208 |
| 8. Commentary on the Aggika Bhāradvāja Sutta..... | 218 |
| 9. Commentary on the Metta Sutta..... | 243 |
| 10. Commentary on the Hemavata Sutta..... | 269 |
| 11. Commentary on the Āḷavaka Sutta..... | 300 |
| 12. Commentary on the Vijaya sutta..... | 332 |
| 13. Commentary on the Muni Sutta..... | 350 |
| 1. Minor Chapter (Cūḷavagga)..... | 383 |
| 2. Commentary on the Ratana Sutta..... | 383 |
| 3. Commentary on the Āmagandha Sutta..... | 440 |
| 4. Commentary on the Hiri Sutta..... | 462 |
| 5. Commentary on the Maṅgala Sutta..... | 469 |
| 6. Commentary on the Sūciloma Sutta..... | 522 |
| 7. Commentary on the Kapila Sutta (Dhammacariya Sutta)..... | 529 |
| 8. Commentary on the Brāhamaṇadhammika Sutta..... | 539 |
| 9. Commentary on the Dhamma Sutta (Nāvā Sutta)..... | 561 |
| 10. Commentary on the Kimsīla Sutta..... | 569 |
| 11. Commentary on the Uṭṭhāna Sutta..... | 578 |
| 12. Commentary on the Rāhula Sutta..... | 584 |
| 13. Commentary on the Nigrodhakappa Sutta (Vaṅgisa Sutta)..... | 591 |
| 14. Commentary on the Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta (Mahāsamaya Sutta) | 602 |
| 15. Commentary on the Dhammika Sutta..... | 624 |
| 1. Great Chapter (Mahāvagga)..... | 642 |
| 2. Commentary on the Pabbajjā Sutta..... | 642 |
| 3. Commentary on the Padhāna Sutta..... | 649 |
| 4. Commentary on the Subhāsita Sutta..... | 661 |
| 5. Commentary on the Pūraḷasa Sutta..... | 670 |
| 6. Commentary on the Māgha Sutta..... | 688 |
| 7. Commentary on the Subhiya Sutta..... | 696 |
| 8. Commentary on the Sela Sutta..... | 721 |
| 9. Commentary on the Salla Sutta..... | 747 |
| 10. Commentary on the Vāseṭṭha Sutta..... | 753 |
| 11. Commentary on the Kokālika Sutta..... | 769 |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 12. Commentary on the Nālaka Sutta..... | 782 |
| 13. Commentary on the Dvayatanupassanā Sutta..... | 814 |
| 1. Chapter of the Eights (Aṭṭhakavagga)..... | 829 |
| 2. Commentary on the Kāma Sutta..... | 829 |
| 3. Commentary on the Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta..... | 834 |
| 4. Commentary on the Dutṭhaṭṭhaka Sutta..... | 840 |
| 5. Commentary on the Suddhaṭṭhaka Sutta..... | 848 |
| 6. Commentary on the Paramaṭṭhaka Sutta..... | 855 |
| 7. Commentary on the Jarā Sutta..... | 858 |
| 8. Commentary on the Tissa-Metteyya Sutta..... | 863 |
| 9. Commentary on the Pasūra Sutta..... | 867 |
| 10. Commentary on the Māgaṇḍiya Sutta..... | 874 |
| 11. Commentary on the Purābheda Sutta..... | 883 |
| 12. Commentary on the Kalahavevāda Sutta..... | 888 |
| 13. Commentary on the Cūlabhyūha Sutta..... | 893 |
| 14. Commentary on the Mahābyuha Sutta..... | 899 |
| 15. Commentary on the Tuvaṭaka Sutta..... | 906 |
| 16. Commentary on the Attadaṇḍa Sutta..... | 912 |
| 17. Commentary on the Sāriputta Sutta..... | 917 |
| 1. Chapter on the Way to the Beyond (Pārāyanavagga)..... | 925 |
| 2. Commentary on the Vatthu Gāthā..... | 925 |
| 3. Commentary on the Ajita Sutta..... | 939 |
| 4. Commentary on the Tissa-Metteyya Sutta..... | 942 |
| 5. Commentary on the Puṇṇaka Sutta..... | 943 |
| 6. Commentary on the Mettagū Sutta..... | 945 |
| 7. Commentary on the Dhotaka Sutta..... | 948 |
| 8. Commentary on Upasīva Sutta..... | 949 |
| 9. Commentary on the Nanda Sutta..... | 952 |
| 10. Commentary on the Hemaka Sutta..... | 953 |
| 11. Commentary on the Todeyya Sutta..... | 954 |
| 12. Commentary on the Kappa Sutta..... | 954 |
| 13. Commentary on the Jatukaṇṇi Sutta..... | 955 |
| 14. Commentary on the Bhadrāvudha Sutta..... | 956 |
| 15. Commentary on the Udaya Sutta..... | 957 |
| 16. Commentary on the Posāla Sutta..... | 959 |
| 17. Commentary on the Mogharāja Sutta..... | 960 |
| 18. Commentary on the Piṅgiya Sutta..... | 962 |
| 1. Commentary on the Stanza of Pārāyanatthuti..... | 963 |
| 1. Commentary on the Stanza of Pārāyanānugīti..... | 964 |
| 1. Colophon..... | 968 |

Editor's Foreword

This book is one of several given to me on floppy disks over twenty years ago by James Patrick Stuart Ross, an American who travelled to Burma regularly to acquire translations of Buddhist works. It has remained unpublished until now due to its length, and because I had no access to the floppy disks until recently.

The Suttanipāta is of special interest for me. The late Hammalawa Saddhātissa published a translation of it for Curzon Press, and I have a copy of his book. The late Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw gave numerous lectures on discourses from the Suttanipāta collection, including “A Discourse on the Hemavata Sutta,” which was one of the first editions of his works that I published. Other discourses that he explained are “A Discourse on the Purabheda Sutta,” “A Discourse on the Tuvāṭaka Sutta,” and “A Discourse on the Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta.” The first of these was the second discourse given by the Buddha on the same night as the the Dhammacakka Sutta was taught to the five ascetics. The latter discourses were among a group of six discourses given to deities of various inclinations on the Great Occasion (Mahāsamaya).

Other very well known discourses in the Suttanipāta are regularly recited for protection. I have published expositions of the Ratana Sutta, the Metta Sutta, and the Maṅgala Sutta. The antithesis of the Maṅgala Sutta, the Parābhava Sutta (on the causes of downfall) is rather less popular. I have also published an Exposition of the Salla Sutta, from this collection, and a page on the Āmagandha Sutta.

The words marked in **bold and dark blue** are quoted from the Pāli text. Those in **bold and dark red** are not found or not adequately translated in the Pali Text Society's Pali/English Dictionary.

The original was in two volumes, which I have combined into one. This first draft was put together quickly, to make the work available for others as soon as practical. If time permits, I will do a more thorough editorial job later to improve it, providing more cross-references, etc.

It may be beyond my ability to complete this work since each paragraph needs to be completely rewritten, but since I have completed the preliminary stage to the end of the Translator's Preface, I will publish that part so that readers can at least gauge the scope of this work. The original, unedited version can be downloaded in LibreOffice format.

Bhikkhu Pesala
March 2016

Translator's Preface

This Sutta Nipāta Commentary, known as the Paramatthajotikā, in two volumes, as published by the Buddha Sāsana Council, Rangoon, in the Union of Burma, constitutes the first two books of the second assignment of six books made to me by the Aṭṭhakathā Translation Project of Burma in the wake of my having successfully made my gift of the Dhamma (*dhammadāna*) by finishing my English translation of the five books of Aṭṭhakathā comprising two volumes of Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, otherwise known as Visuddhajanaviḷāsini, two volumes of Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā alternatively known as Paramatthadīpanī and one volume of Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā also known as Paramatthadīpanī, within a period of three years or thereabouts, completely, with my glossary cum index each, respectively.

The canonical Suttanipāta consists of five groups (*vagga*) namely 1) Uravavagga (the group about a snake), 2) Cūlavagga (the minor group), 3) Mahāvagga (the great group), 4) Aṭṭhakavagga (the group of octads or eight stanzas), and 5) Pārāyana vagga (the final group).

In the Uravavagga are twelve suttas; in the Cūlavagga are fourteen suttas; in the Mahāvagga are twelve suttas; in the Aṭṭhakavagga are sixteen suttas; and in the Pārāyanavagga are sixteen suttas.

The definition of Suttanipāta is given by the commentator Buddhaghosa¹ himself in his foreword (Ganthārambhakathā) as follows:—

*“Gāthāsatasamākiṅṇo, geyyabyākaraṇaṅkito.
‘Kasmā ‘Suttanipāto’ti, Saṅkhamesa gato’ti ce?*

*Suvuttato savanato, atthānaṃ suṭṭhu tāṇato.
Sūcanā sūdanā c’eva, yasmā suttaṃ pavuccati.*

*Tathārūpāni suttāni, nipātetvā tato tato.
Samūhato ayaṃ tasmā, saṅkhamevamupāgato.*

*Sabbāni cāpi suttāni, pamāṇantena tādino.
Vacanāni ayaṃ tesam, nipāto ca yato tato.*

*Aññasāṅkhānimittānaṃ, viśesānānamabhāvato.
Saṅkhaṃ Suttanipāto’ti, evameva samajjhagā’ti*

“Strewn over well with a hundred verses it is marked by statements in mixed prose and poetry and explanatory answers. If asked why this has arrived at the reckoning as Suttanipāta; since the discourse was taught from

¹ Mahā-Buddhaghosa. There is another author known as Culla-Buddhaghosa (ed.)

the point of view of having been well-spoken and listened to, owing to excellent protection of advantages, and is the indicating and destroying also; after having made such discourses as are in conformity with them to come down from here and there, they have collected themselves into this; therefore, it has but arrived at this reckoning. All the discourses also are such as are limited by quantity; this anthology comprises their statements owing to this and that. Due to absence of distinctions of another reckoning and characteristic sign, there is, thus, the reckoning and characteristic sign, there is, thus, the reckoning as Suttanipāta, well arrived at, even in this way."

In the Paramatthajotikā, which is the Commentary on the Suttanipāta, the commentator Buddhaghosa gave the exposition (*vaṇṇanā*) of all the suttas in the five chapters (*vagga*), giving such details as to by whom each verse was uttered, where and when it was recited and why it was spoken.

1. Uragavagga (Snake Chapter)

1. Uraga Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Here, first of all, the commentator made his presentation of the layout of the canonical Suttanipāta according as described by me above and wound up by saying that the total number of suttas stood at seventy of which Uraga sutta is one to come at their beginning. Uraga sutta starts with the stanza:—

*"Yo uppatitaṃ vineti kodhaṃ viṣaṭaṃ sappaviṣaṃ va osadhehi;
so bhikkhu jahāti orapāraṃ, urago jiṇṇamivattacaṃ purāṇaṃ."*ti

While residing at the shrine of Aggālava in Ālavī, the Buddha spoke this stanza for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma to those who had reached near him after he had laid down the rule of discipline (*sikkhāpadaṃ paññāpetvā*) prohibiting the felling of trees by bhikkhus. With the word-by-word meaning given in the padavaṇṇanā, the gāthā can be construed thus:—

A monk who removes his risen anger similar to doing away with the venom of a poisonous snake, which had spread, by means of many a variety of medicine, forsakes all the ten worldly fetters, in the same way as a snake forsakes its old worn-out skin.

The second stanza was spoken by the Buddha at Jetavana in Sāvatti by way of teaching the Dhamma to the son of a gold-smith who became a monk in the presence of the Thera Sāriputta whom he attended upon, when the Blessed One had come to find out that the candidate had successfully carried out his kammaṭṭhāna prescribed by himself superseding the one given by his chief disciple. At the end of the teaching the monk became established in Arahantship.

The stanza starting with **yo taṇhamudacchida** was spoken by Sakyamuni, while residing in Sāvatti to teach the Dhamma to a bhikkhu who, while staying on the shore of a lotus lake, Vaggara, harboured wild thoughts under the influence of his craving desire. At the end of the teaching, the monk became an Arahant.

The fourth verse beginning with **yo mānamudabbadhi** was uttered by the Blessed One while residing in Sāvatti in order to enlighten a remorse-stricken monk over his having sighted a reed-bridge sent adrift by a furious flood evoking his sense of impermanence. In the course of listening to the teaching, the monk could identify the formidable flood with the fourth right path which totally cut asunder the reed-bridge-like depravities (*kilesa*). At the end of the teaching, the monk became established in Arahantship.

The fifth verse beginning with **yo nājjhagamā** as well as the remaining seven stanzas of the Uruga Sutta are of one and the same origin. While residing at Jetavana, an occasion arose for the Buddha to make use of the allegory of a fig flower (*udumbara puppha*) in reciting a verse beginning with **yo nājjhagamā bhavesu sāram** to teach the Dhamma to a bhikkhu who was seated practising his meditation at the foot of a brahmin in search of fig flowers for his daughter to wear on her wedding day.

From the sixth stanza onwards the Buddha spoke about anger (*kodha*), greed (*lobha*), lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*dosa*) latent desire (*vanathajā*) and hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) which should be forsaken similar to the old worn-out skin forsaken by a snake.

2. Dhaniya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The first verse begins with **pakkodano** which bespoke that Dhaniya, the owner of a huge herd of cattle was well provided with provisions, his meal having been cooked ready for him to eat. This sutta was taught by the Buddha while residing in Sāvatti. The commentator Buddhaghosa graphically described the life of a bovine breeder of bountiful belongings according as the name Dhaniya would demonstrate. On one occasion, the cowherd was dwelling on the shore of the river Mahī when the Buddha came and converted him after having held with him congenial conversation wherein the wealthy bovine breeder spoke first of his self-sufficiency and security, materially, followed by the Buddha's rejoinder echoing his absence of anger and other defects and abundance of his belongings, spiritually. At the end of the conversation the cowherd became convinced that such material possessions as sons and daughters, slaves and servants, cattle and cash could not but be

transitory, creating woe and worry. Consequently, both the husband and wife became recluses and visualised Arahantship.

3. Khaggavisāṇa Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In the commentary on this sutta, Buddhaghosa traced the source of every stanza wherein the single horn of rhinoceros is found repeatedly recorded to emphasise the allegory signifying the seclusion, the life of solitude to be led by a bhikkhu for his escape from the misery of the rounds of repeated rebirths.

4. Kasibhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā

While the Blessed One was residing at a brahmin village, in Dakkhinagiri of Magadha, the Master saw in the course of his survey of the world, one afternoon, Kasibhāradvāja, a brahmin to be sufficiently suited for Arahantship. The commentator commenced to describe in detail, incidentally, how the Buddha used to keep himself busy morning, noon and night working indefatigably for the weal of the whole world inclusive of the divine domain. Accordingly, the Buddha busily engaged himself early the next morning, put on his lower garment, took his bowl and robe and proceeded to a place, where when he stood, the brahmin Kasibhāradvāja would surely see him. Accordingly, the brahmin saw the Buddha who had kept standing begging his alms food and spoke of his being a farmer who ploughed his paddy field and sowed seeds of cereals (**kasāmi ca vapāmi ca**) ridiculing the latter's reliance on donors for food. the Buddha's rejoinder to the brahmin was that He was equally a cultivator who used to plough the earth and sow the seeds of grain. When put to task by the brahmin to show his ploughing equipment and seeds to be sown, the Buddha allegorically enlightened him that confidence (**saddhā**) stood for seeds; headed by moral shame (**hiri**) and wisdom (**paññā**), yoked with mindfulness (**sati**), accompanied by energy (**vīriya**), did the ploughing. By means of truth (**saccam**), the reaping of harvest was done. Unlike the brahmin's beast of burden, yoked to the plough-share which would recede once it had reached the extremity of the field of crops, the Buddha's plough kept on proceeding, without receding, till it had reached freedom from bondage (**yogakkhema**), where, having arrived at, one does not grieve.

After having heard the profound teaching of the deep Dhamma by the Buddha, the brahmin became pious-minded and made his offering of milk-rice (**pāyāsa**) in his own gold tray worth a hundred thousand to the

Tathāgata, who declined the offer, creating an opportunity to make his miracle over the same, rendering the donor mentally remorse-stricken and physically hair-bristling. Struck with wonder, Kasibhāradvāja sought his life-long refuge in the Buddha and made his request for recluseship in good faith. Consequently he became fully endowed with wisdom (**paññāya**). Physically and mentally, leading his life of solitude all alone, diligently without being devoid of mindfulness (**sati**) he put forth his unabated effort regardless of his body and life, consequent upon which he attained his goal of monkhood.

5. Cunda Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On one occasion the Blessed One went to Pāvā and was residing in the mango grove of Cunda, son of a smith (**Kammāraputta**), who entertained the Order of monks headed by the Buddha with rice and curry in gold vessels, one of which was stolen by an evil monk. Desirous of reporting the theft to Tathāgata, Cunda approached the Blessed One in the evening and put a question by means of a stanza starting with **Pucchāmimuniṃ**. By the nature of the question, the Buddha immediately understood that it referred to the evil monk. To serve as an apt answer, therefore, the Buddha gave his definition of a good and genuine recluse in such terms as: Buddhasamaṇa, khīṇāsava, samaṇa, sekkha samaṇa, and vohāramattasamaṇa.

6. Parābhava Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Immediately after they had heard the Maṅgala Sutta taught by the Blessed One for the prosperity and well-being of all creatures, innumerable deities desired to know the antithesis, which would lead living beings to ruin. On the next day, therefore, the divine king Sakka gave orders to a certain divine youth to ask the Buddha about the road to ruin (**parābhava**). The divine youth (*devaputta*) did likewise. In response to the request made by the delegate of Sakka, the Buddha enumerated the roads to ruin thus:—

Asanto piyo, sante na kurute piyaṃ, one who is dear to the wicked and does nothing to be dear to the good people; **niddāsīlī sabhāsīlī**, has the habit of sleeping in excess and is supremely society-minded; **anuṭṭhāta**, inactive, **alaso**, lazy; **kodhapaññāṇo**, irascible; does not support (**bharati**) his aged parents though he himself is leading a comfortable life (**pahusanto**) and capable of looking after them; he deceives monks, brahmins and others with falsehood (**musāvādena vañceti**); notwithstanding his being of bountiful belongings (**pahūtavitto**), flush with gold and endowed with eatables, he would enjoy them himself all alone, consuming them in secret

without sharing even with his own children; proud of parentage (**jātitthaddho**), he would belittle his own kith and kin (**sañātiṃ atimaññeti**); he is a womaniser (**itthidhutto**), indulging in wine (**surādhattu**) and addicted to gambling (**akkhadhattu**); not content with his own wife (**sehi dārehi**) he makes mischief by copulating with courtesans (**vesiyāsu padussati**) and does likewise with the wives of others (**paradāresu**); advanced though he is in age at eighty or ninety, he would wed (**āneti**) a young girl with fig-fruit like breasts (**timbarutthanim**) to spend his sleepless nights jealously keeping watch over his unwilling partner (**tassā issā na supati**); a congenital glutton is prone to ruin himself having squandered his money buying fish and flesh to satiate himself; placing such a man as a spendthrift in a position of official authority with many an opportunity to accept bountiful bribe; a man of meagre money with his vast craving for belongings who is not contented with what had been gained by him; and one who aspires for sovereignty gets ruined over his failure to secure it, in spite of his having incurred expenditure for his fighting force.

7. Aggikabhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Aggikabhāradvāja, a brahmin, was a fire-worshipper who considered the sight of a bald-headed monk on the occasion of rituals to be inauspicious. He was spotted by the Buddha, while residing at Jetavana, as one suited to be a disciple (**sāvaka**). In the course of his austere practice of begging for almsfood from door to door continuously (**sapadānam**) the Buddha reached the residence of Aggikabhāradvāja who had bathed himself and was being busy with his huge preparations respectfully for his fire worship. As soon as he sighted Sakyamuni, he lost his temper and addressed the Master harshly with words of abuse using such a term as outcaste (**vasala**) which was eventually to be defined by the Buddha who pointed out that parentage is not a prime factor to be low and that the state of an outcaste must be determined by deeds. Thus, one who is often angry (**kodhano**), a bearer of grudges (**upanāhī**), an evil hypocrite (**pāpamakkhī**), one of perverse views (**vipannaditṭhi**) and a fraud (**māyāvī**) must be understood as low-born. Whoever, here in this world, would treat living beings cruelly (**pāṇam vihiṃsati**) with no compassion (**dayā n'atthi**), to be known by people as a killer and plunderer of villages and towns by besieging them, he is an outcaste. Similarly is he who steals or robs the belongings of others either in a village or forest and who as a debtor denies his debt on being demanded by a creditor as well as one who functions as a highway robber. Equally so, is a witness

who gives false evidence and who is rude to his relatives, friends and wife. An outcaste never nourishes his aged parents in spite of having abundant wealth. These and other evils and bad manners make one an outcaste.

8. Metta Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Blessed One taught this sutta for the purpose of providing protecting (**parittatthāya**) and for the benefit of mental exercise (**kammaṭṭhānatthāya**) to monks, who were harassed with threats by tree divinities on the slope of Himavanta mountain-range, and who had reached his presence. After having blamed the monks for infringing the rule of discipline by their departure from their rains retreat (*vassa*), the Buddha admonished them to develop their meditation on boundless loving-kindness. My English translation in this connection will speak for itself.

9. Hemavata Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Here, the commentator traced the origin to the event of the parinibbāna of the Buddha Kassapa, whose corporeal relics remained as a single solid, resembling a mass of gold and at whose time the long span of human life extended up to sixteen thousand years (**soḷasavassasahassāyukāni**). In the wake of a super-shrine having been set up over the relics of that Buddha, two very friendly young men entered the Order of monks in the presence of the surviving disciples, consequently to become two ogre leaders of divine powers known as Hemavata and Sātāgiri at the time just before the appearance of the Buddha Gotama. The two ogre friends entered upon a mutual agreement to tell one another whenever and wherever any peculiar phenomenon would occur since the former lived in Himavanta and the latter in Majjhimadesa. Subsequently, there arose the Buddha Gotama with such phenomena of wonder as earthquake, *etc.*, all over Jambudīpa. Consequently, both the ogre generals, accompanied by their armies, respectively, left their homes to redeem their pledges by informing one another of all that each had seen and heard which were strange and surprising, which they did when they met one another half-way before they reached their destinations. Sātāgiri, thereafter, took his friend Hemavata to the Buddha of whom they uttered words of praise and to whom they put their questions for their enlightenment.

10. Ālavaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

A detailed description of the situation and splendour of the palatial residence of Ālavaka, the supernatural ogre general, is to be read here, prefaced by an excitingly interesting story of a human king of the city of

Ālavaka, who owing to devoted deer-hunting was almost devoured by the ogre, who had to be appeased by the royal supply of human individual a day in such a way as to have created a crisis which involved the risk of life of his own baby boy. The sovereign's son, however, escaped from this eventuality to become later, a novice disciple (*sāmaṇera*) of the Buddha, who, just in time, converted the ogre by first occupying the latter's residence in his absence. With all his physical power, comprising a colossal army comparable to that of Māra, equipped with equally effective weapons, Ālavaka tried to oust the Buddha from his resplendent residence without success. Finally, making his last attempt, the ogre put questions, bequeathed to him by his forefathers and over which many visitors and sightseers of his palace had previously lost their lives, to the Buddha, who made his answers by emphasizing the virtue of faith (*saddhā*). Consequently, the ogre Ālavaka became a Stream-winner at that the moment when the royal baby-boy was brought by royal retainers to be delivered to him. With a sincere sense of shame Ālavaka accepted the baby and offered him as charity to the Buddha who had it looked after by its royal parents till it grew up to such an age as and when the child could become a young devotee (*upāsaka*) attending upon the Blessed One and the Order of monks. Subsequently, after having been established in the fruition of a non-returner (*anāgāmi*) **Ālavaka** finished learning all the teachings (*vacanaṃ*) of the Buddha, secured a retinue of five hundred devotees (*upāsaka*) and was proclaimed by the Blessed One as foremost among those who gather a following by means of the four bases of sympathy:-

*“Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakāna, upasakānaṃ catūhi saṅgaha-
vatthūhi parisāṃ saṅgaṇhantānaṃ yadidaṃ Hatthako Ālavako.”*

11. Vijaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Commentator, Buddhaghosa made mention of two different origins of this sutta, according as the same was spoken by Sakyamuni on two occasions, the first of which was when the daughter of **Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī**, namely, **Janapadakalyāṇī** who was one of the three Sākyan princesses bearing the name of Nandā had become completely converted. Accordingly, the Buddha uttered first the verses from Dhammapada beginning with:-

“Āturaṃ asuciṃ pūtiṃ passa Nande samussayaṃ.”

After having heard the entire verse, Nandā became established in the fruition of Stream-winning (*sotāpatti*). Subsequently, the Buddha taught this Vijaya Sutta

to Janapadakalyāṇī Nanda to serve as a meditation subject in making her progress for the purpose of achieving higher paths. The second occasion for the teaching of this Vijaya Sutta by the Buddha was brought about when at Rājagaha over the extremely attractive beauty of Sirimā, the courtesan, younger sister of Jivaka, a monk became mad with lustful love and confined to bed without eating any food. While that recluse was behaving himself badly in this wise the harlot Sirimā died. Under royal orders, her body was laid bare at the cemetery to be seen closely by everybody including the love-sick monk who became disillusioned over the gradual decomposition and disintegration of her corpse. In order to admonish the remorse-stricken recluse and teach the dhamma to the assembled audience, the Buddha spoke the sutta, which can be considered as the all-embracing analysis of the anatomy and physiology of a human body with all its pseudo-pleasantness but with definite defects in detail.

12. Muni Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Buddhaghosa enlightened his readers that the first four stanzas of the sutta were spoken by Sakyamuni in blaming a poverty-stricken widow and her only son, who after having entered the Order of bhikkhuṇī and bhikkhu, went about together, enjoyed their gains together and later, after having disrobed themselves, lived publicly as husband and wife, ruthlessly regardless of their previously having been mother and son. To render other recluses remorseful the remaining portion of the Sutta was employed by the Buddha to teach the dhamma describing the definition of muni as assessed, ascertained and appreciated by the wise (**dhīrā**).

The Commentary on the Muni Sutta is complete.

2. Cūlavagga (Minor Chapter)

1. Ratana Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Sakyamuni spoke this sutta for the purpose of dispelling the disaster that Vesāli was facing comprising famine with its consequential complications. In commenting upon this sutta, Buddhaghosa gave the origin of Licchavī family and their capital city with the caption of Vesāli vatthu. In the beginning, with its seven thousand seven hundred and seven sovereigns, the city of Vesāli was populous, prosperous, and flourishing; later over the calamity of crop-failure due to drought, poverty-stricken people died of starvation first. Due to the sordid smell of their dead bodies in different degrees of decomposition, thrown about outside the city, non-human beings entered it

and there arose epidemic diseases in every locality. Consequently, all the kings and people of Vesāli deputed two of their sovereigns with plurality of presents to the presence of King Bimbisāra at Rājagaha in order to request the latter to persuade the Master to mercifully travel to Vesāli.

In response to the royal request of the Licchavī, King Bimbisāra made it possible for the two messengers to personally meet the Buddha who was respectfully approached and apprised of the appalling affair in their homeland. The Blessed One gave his consent when he came to know of the boundless benefit that can be bestowed upon not only the people of Vesāli, but also the whole world by his teaching of Ratana Sutta to Licchavī and all the people of the city. Buddhaghosa mentions how King Bimbisāra saw to the joyful journey with comfort and ceremony of the Buddha to Vesāli and how Licchavī monarchs made their warm welcome to the Master with high honour double of what was done by the rājā of Rājagaha.

Immediately after the arrival of the Blessed One at Vesāli, the divine king Sakka, followed by his crowd of devas, came to pay his homage to him. With the assembling together of the devatā of super power, numerous non-human beings fled with fright. Under orders of the Master, the Venerable Ānanda memorised the Ratana Sutta for the purpose of warding off the disastrous danger of the residents of Vesāli, fetched water using the begging bowl of the Buddha as a container and wandered about the whole city continuously sprinkling the water in every nook and cranny, reciting the Ratana Sutta at the same time for the purpose of protection (*paritta*).

At the moment of the recitation of the charm by the Thera, the non-human beings (**amanussa**), who previously stayed put, hiding themselves in garbage heaps, wall-corners and so forth, fled finally out of the city through the four great gates mostly and the rest who could not get egress at the gates broke through the city-wall and went away hurriedly for good. Later, seated in the assembly hall at the centre of the city, Sakyamuni taught the Ratana Sutta to the huge audience comprising the entire Order of monks inclusive of Ānanda, the divine crowd headed by Sakka and the citizens of Vesāli led by Licchavī lords. At the end of the teaching, there came about the recovery of the previous prosperity of the city, which became completely cleaned by sufficiently heavy shower of rain as a result of the recitation of the Ratana Sutta as a *paritta*, which was the Buddha's solemn statement of truth (*saccavacana*), and which resulted in the realisation of truth (**dhammābhisamaya**) by eighty-four thousand living beings.

2. Āmagandha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The commentator traced the origin of this sutta to a period prior to the appearance of the Buddha Gotama, when a brahmin named Āmagandha who led the life of a hermit recluse (**tāpasa pabbajja**) along with five hundred youths in the Himavanta hills where he had a hermitage built and lived on forest fruits and roots, absolutely abstaining from fish and flesh meat. Due to deficiency of salt in their system all the hermits suffered from jaundice (**paṇḍuroga**). Consequently, the hermits had to go to a border village to beg for salt and sour nourishment (**loṇambilādīni**). Being hospitably urged by villagers who invited them and entertained them with almsfood, they spent four months a year in residential structures provided by the people of the village. Subsequently, Sakyamuni arose in the world and in the course of his turning the Wheel of Truth, arrived at Sāvatti eventually. While residing there, Sakyamuni saw the hermits prosperous with sufficing qualification for the attainment of Arahantship. Accordingly, the Buddha went to that village, taught the Dhamma, after having heard which, the villagers became Stream-winners, Once-returners, and Non-returners, while a few of them entered the Order of monks and became Arahants. When, therefore, the hermits led by Āmagandha, made their next visit to seek salt as usual, they noticed a conspicuous change in the conduct of the villagers, who spoke to them, in answer to their anxious enquiry over the altered atmosphere all over their village, about the appearance of the Blessed One, whose teaching of the Dhamma for the welfare of the multitude they had heard and by which they all had become benefited. As soon as the ascetic Āmagandha heard of the Buddha, he and his pupils proceeded post-haste as directed to reach the presence of Sakyamuni at Sāvatti, where at Jetavana the Buddha was seated to teach the Dhamma, when the ascetics arrived. Subsequent upon mutual exchange of friendly greetings, the ascetic Āmagandha enquired of the Blessed One as to whether the latter, in taking his daily meal, avoided, or not, the eating of fish and meat, which he considered to be a foul stench (**āmagandha**). The Buddha's reply was that meat and fish could not be considered as stench; on the other hand, all forms of depravity (**sabbe kilesā**) and evil deeds (**pāpakā akusalā dhammā**) must be understood as stench. In order to completely convince the hermits, the Blessed One reproduced and reiterated the dialogue between him and the Buddha Kassapa, in whose dispensation he was a brahmin by the name of Tissa, who as an ascetic asked had about the same subject. Consequent upon that the head hermit was humbled and entered monkhood to attain Arahantship along with his retinue.

3. Hiri Sutta Vaṅṅanā

Prior to the arising of our Blessed One, the Buddha Gotama, there lived in Sāvātthi a brahmin banker with bountiful belongings of eight hundred million. He had a single son who was handsome, lovely and dear to his heart and who grew up like a divine youth. When both his parents died intestate, the custodian of the family property fulfilled his faithful duty by showing all the huge heritage to the young handsome heir including the inventory of his parents' property as well as the accumulated treasure of his forefathers. At the sight of his bountiful belongings bequeathed to him by his ancestors, the heir felt sorry that neither his parents nor his grand-parents could take away with them even a portion of their property though they themselves had perseveringly piled up the same. He therefore determined to get the full benefit of such belongings as he had inherited. In the beginning, he did a daily donation of a hundred thousand and later with the cooperation of the sovereign of Sāvātthi gave great charity in order to amass the wealth of good conduct (**sucaritadhana**) until he had depleted all his material wealth.

Later, he became a hermit of an acutely austere type (**tāpasapabbajjāsu vaṅṅamuttikapabbajjameva pabbajitvā**), went far into the forest beyond the foothills of the Himavanta, had a hermitage built and lived there. Thereafter, the Buddha Gotama appeared in the world, set turning the Wheel of the Dhamma (**pavattitavaradhammacakko**), gradually reached Sāvātthi and resided at Jetavana, the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika. From a citizen of Sāvātthi, who happened to have reached his hermitage, in the course of the former's search for sandalwood and other forest fragrance, the ex-heir hermit heard of the Buddha and became desperately desirous of proceeding to his presence. Since he opined that he should not go empty-handed and realising the fact that the Blessed One would not care for material gifts, the young hermit composed a verse containing four questions as a spiritual present (**dhamma paṅṅākāra**) for him. It was when the Blessed One was seated for the purpose of delivering the Dhamma, that the ex-heir hermit arrived at Jetavana in Sāvātthi. With him, who had himself seated on one side, without having paid his homage, the Blessed One exchanged his friendly greetings. In order to apply an acid test for finding out the genuine reality of his being the Buddha, the ex-heir hermit put his four questions merely mentally (**manasā eva**). On having been asked, the Blessed One answered speaking two and half stanzas starting with **Hiriṃ tarantaṃ** defining a shameless scoundrel who should not be associated with, a faithful friend who should be followed and the method of making one's effort.

4. Maṅgala Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Buddhaghosa gave the origin of the Maṅgala Sutta thus:– In many an assembly hall, in countless cities all over Jambudīpa, many men, on payment of gold nuggets and coins (**hiraññasuvaṇṇam datvā**), had stories told about the abduction of Sītā and so forth. Thereafter, in those self-same gatherings, one day, there arose a controversy on blessings (**maṅgalam**) asking among themselves such questions as: “What indeed, is a blessing? Does a blessing depend on what has been seen or heard or experienced (**muta**) and who is there to claim that he knows (**jānāti**) the way to welfare (**maṅgalam**)?”

In that great gathering an exponent of auspicious sights (**ditṭhamaṅgalika**) claimed that he understood exactly what a blessing was, which would comprise such visible objects (**rūpam**) as had been highly recognised (**abhisammata**) as auspicious and cited such cases as the sight of a speaking bird (**cātakasakuṇa**) a musical instrument (**beluvalatṭhi**), an expectant mother (**gabbhinī**), a youth (**kimāraka**), a well-dressed and decorated damsel (**alaṅkatapatiyatte**), a jar full of water (**puṇṇaghaṭa**), a fresh red fish (**allarohitamaccha**), a thorough-bred horse (**ājañña**), a chariot drawn by a thorough-bred steed, a powerful bull (**usabha**) or a cow, when one had got up from bed early in the morning. An exponent of sweet sounds (**sutamaṅgalika**) declared that he fully knew the meaning of blessing, which must be what had been heard highly auspiciously, namely: news of past and present prosperity (**vaḍḍha vaḍḍhamāna**), the statement of being brimful (**puṇṇa**), having been permeated (**phussa**), delighted (**sumana**), splendid (**siri**), greatly graced (**sirivaḍḍha**); the talk of today as being astronomically auspicious (**sunakkhatta**) *etc.*, heard by one who had just awakened from his night-long sleep. A sponsor of excellent experience (**mutamaṅgalika**) suggested, after having claimed as one who had complete comprehension of blessings, that the feeling of sweet smell, taste and touch, excellently experienced by one who had freshly got out of his bed at day-break, must be regarded as a blessing. Since no one in the assembly could be convinced to comprehend blessings in the light of what had been explained by the three exponents as above, the controversy over blessings grew greater and wider everywhere, not only in the human realm, but in the world of devas and brahmās to provoke such a phenomenon as a cosmic commotion (**maṅgala kolāhala**). Incidentally, Buddhaghosa mentions five forms (**pañcavidha**) of shadow-like forecasts of coming events in the near future (**kolāhala**) namely: the divine announcement of the event of definite destruction of the world (**kappakolāhala**), divine notification of the imminence of a world-turning

king (**Cakkavatti kolāhala**), the broad-cast by brahmā about the appearance of an Awakened One (**Buddha kolāhala**) after a thousand years, information given by brahmā of Suddhavāsa heaven about the teaching of the Maṅgala Sutta by the Buddha with the lapse of twelve years (**Maṅgala kolāhala**) and forebodings of highest wisdom (**Moneyya kolāhala**). Accordingly, at last, Sakka, the king of devas, having realised that it was his duty to settle a controversy of twelve years' standing, convened a conference of all celestial beings and deputed a dutiful divine-youth to the presence of the Blessed One to hear what the master said about blessings. Immediately, the young deva had himself so well dressed and decorated that he was shining splendidly like lightning, proceeded to the Jetavana monastery where he arrived at midnight, paid homage to the Blessed One and put the problem of blessings by means of a single stanza. In answer to his question, Sakyamuni taught the Maṅgala Sutta enumerating thirty-eight things to do and abstain from for one's welfare in one's own life-time and thereafter.

5. Sūciloma Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The commentator traced the origin of this sutta to the occasion when the Buddha came and occupied the splendid seat of the ogre Sūciloma since Sakyamuni saw the latter in his net of knowledge as a suitable candidate to be converted and guided to the right path for the attainment of nibbāna. Incidentally, Buddhaghosa mentions the origin, not only of Sūciloma but of Khara yakkha too. In his answers to the questions put by Sūciloma, the Buddha emphasised lust (*rāga*) as the root of craving (*taṇhā*) which would bring about attachment (*upādāna*), and the removal of lust for escape from saṃsāra. At the end of the teaching of this sutta, both the ogres became Stream-winners of golden complexion.

6. Kapila Sutta (Dhammacariya Sutta) Vaṇṇanā

Two brothers became monks in the presence of the disciples of Buddha Kassapa soon after the latter had attained parinibbāna. The elder brother was Sodhana who practised meditation in a forest by way of shouldering the responsibility of insight (**vipassanādhura**) and consequently attained Arahantship. The younger brother named Kapila, on the other hand, took on the responsibility of learning (**ganthadhura**) and became learned in the Tipiṭaka. Due to his knowledge, Kapila came to have retinue, gain, and fame. Intoxicated with his achievement, he misused his learning and did not give up his mischief-making however much he was admonished by all conscien-

tious monks including his elder brother. Consequently, he died and was reborn in hell (*niraya*). After suffering in hell, Kapila became a gold-fish with a foul-smelling mouth in the Aciravatī river. One day, five hundred young fishermen headed by Yasoja were fishing in the river, when the gold fish was caught in their net along with other fish. The fishing folk presented it to the king who had the fish carried to the presence of the Blessed One Gotama who put the fish to task for the revelation of his former sinful act. After having related its story of the past, the fish became overwhelmed with its mental malady and committed suicide by hitting the boat with its head. The multitude became agitated and remorseful. Thereafter, the master taught this sutta to the audience of recluses and householders as befitted that momentous occasion. At the end of the teaching, the five hundred fishermen felt remorseful, became monks in the presence of the Blessed One, and succeeded in putting an end to misery (*dukkha*).

7. Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In this sutta, the Buddha spoke nine stanzas giving a description of ancient brahmins (**porāṇānaṃ brāhmaṇānaṃ vaṇṇaṃ bhāsivā**) identifying them with brahmā and deva by means of such stanzas as starting with: **Yo nesam paramo** and **Tassa vattamanusikkhantā** demarcating the boundary (**mariyādam**) by means of four verses beginning with: **Taṇḍulaṃ sayanam**. Subsequently, Sakyamuni spoke seventeen stanzas starting with: **Tesaṃ āsi vipallāso**, stating the split of the boundary (**sambhinnamariyādam**) and terminated his teaching (**desanaṃ niṭṭhāpesi**).

8. Dhamma Sutta (Nāvā Sutta) Vaṇṇanā

This sutta was spoken by Sakyamuni in connection with the Venerable Sāriputta who was often seen by his fellow monks doing his adoration in the direction of the **Venerable Assaji**, who was his first teacher, through whom he became a Stream-winner and reached the presence of the Blessed One to become his chief disciple and commander-in-chief of the faith as well as the recipient of foremost among monks of great wisdom. The Thera's act of adoration was misunderstood by many monks (as worshipping the cardinal points), who consequently criticised his conduct. The Blessed One heard about the misunderstanding of the monks by means of his divine ear and disillusioned them by telling them that the Venerable Sāriputta was the worshipper of his teacher and spoke this sutta for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma to the assembled audience there.

9. Kiṃsīla Sutta Vaṇṇanā

A son of vastly wealthy brahmin, a lay associate of the venerable Thera Sāriputta, after having all round forsaken his entire assets of five hundred and six hundred million, became a monk in the presence of the Thera and finished studying the entire teaching of the Blessed One (**sabbam Buddhavacana pariyāpuṇi**). In every respect, the Thera admonished his disciple and gave him the meditation exercise to be carried out, but the latter did not make any achievement. Subsequently, the Thera took his pupil to the Blessed One who taught the Dhamma, which served as preliminary proper performance (**paṭipadā**) and showed the subsequent practice by means of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). At the conclusion of the teaching (**desanāpariyosāne**) that monk attained the fruition of Stream-winning and soon afterwards became established in Arahantship.

10. Uṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Sakyamuni spoke this sutta for the sake of teaching the Dhamma to the five hundred newly ordained monks, who had been punished, put to fright and made remorse-stricken by Mahā-Moggallāna, at Migārāmatupāsāda in Sāvattī, as instructed by the Master, because they were leading negligent lives. At the end of the teaching, all the five hundred new monks became repented, kept themselves mindful of that teaching, developed insight, and established themselves in Arahantship.

11. Rāhula Sutta Vaṇṇanā

While Sakyamuni was staying on at Kapilavatthu, his home town, after his arrival there, the prince Rāhula approached his father and asked for his heritage. Accordingly, the Buddha gave orders to Sāriputta for ordaining Rāhula as a novice (*sāmaṇera*). Later, when Rāhula had grown up, he was ordained by the Venerable Sāriputta, assisted by Mahā-Moggallāna, who played the role of master of ceremonies (**kammavācācariya**). Beginning from the time when the prince was young up to the moment when Rāhula attained the stage of a Noble One, the Blessed One always spoke this sutta in admonishing his son so that the latter would not be proud and intoxicated over his noble parentage, clan, handsomeness, etc. At the end of the teaching of the Cūlarāhulovāda Sutta, along with many thousand deities, Rāhula became established in Arahantship.

12. Nigrodhakappa Sutta (Vaṅgīsa Sutta) Vaṅṇanā

The commentator Buddhaghosa gave the origin of the Thera Vaṅgīsa who was ordained by the Venerable Nigrodhakappa at the instruction of the Buddha. By carrying out the meditation on the five repulsive aspects of the body ending with skin (**tacapañcaka kammatthāna**) given by Nigrodhakappa, Vaṅgīsa, in due course, became an Arahan̄t on whom the honour of foremost amongst monks who possessed ready-wit was bestowed by the Buddha. Since Vaṅgīsa had a high regard and deep respect for his spiritual preceptor Nigrodhakappa, the early stanzas in this sutta constitute an anxious enquiry made to the Master by Vaṅgīsa on the demise of his preceptor (*upajjhāya*) whether he had attained parinibbāna and the remaining verses were uttered by the Buddha in reply to Vaṅgīsa, to allay his doubts.

13. Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta (Mahāsamaya Sutta) Vaṅṇanā

The commentator Buddhaghosa, here, in the beginning gave the origin of the Sākyan clan. Thereafter, he traced the origin of the Koliyan clan. Subsequently, he spoke of intermarriage between the Sākyaans and the Koliyaans. Accordingly the Sākyan Suddhodana, the eldest of the five sons of Sīhahanu married the Koliyan Mahāmāyā-devī, the eldest daughter of Añjana, who gave birth to Siddhattha, the prince who became the Buddha. Subsequent upon his Buddhahood, Sakyamuni, in the course of his turning the Wheel of the Dhamma, in due course, arrived back at his native city, Kapilavatthu, established his father Suddhodana and other Sākyan princes in the fruition of the Noble Ones and later lived with fifteen hundred monks at the Banyan grove (Nigrodhārāma) in Kapilavatthu. On that occasion, there arose a dispute (**kalaho**) between the Sākyaans and Koliyaans in connection with water, which had to be carried by building bridges across the river Rohinī, in every low-water season, by both Sākyaans and Koliyaans, to irrigate their crops. Though the dispute began with bridge-builders, their kings, on coming to know the seriousness of the situation, made ready their respective armies and stood facing one another to give battle on opposite banks of the river. Their war was warded off by the timely arrival through the sky of Sakyamuni to stop his relatives from hating one another by revealing their relationship and teaching the Attadaṇḍa Sutta, after having heard which, all of them became remorse-stricken, dropped down their weapons, and stood adoring the Blessed One, who having had himself seated on the prepared seat related the birth story of Phandana, Laṭukika, and Vaṭṭaka, along with their ancient ancestry. After the teaching of the Dhamma, the Sākyaans and

Koliyans each offered to Sakyamuni two hundred and fifty of their sons, totalling five hundred princes, to become the followers of the Buddha by becoming monks. Later, when they were staying with Sakyamuni in Mahāvāna, they became dissatisfied because their former wives kept on sending messages to them. In order to dispel their disgust for monkhood, the Buddha took them to the hills of Himavanta through the sky by means of his magical powers, showed them the gold, silver, and gem mountains along with the parade of all beasts and birds, of whom **Kuṇāla sakuṇa** showed itself last of all in the procession. The monks were thunderstruck over the exhibition of the animal kingdom and were curious about the grace of glory of the bird-king Kuṇāla and its royal retinue. To satisfy their curiosity, the Buddha related the story of the past of **Kuṇālarājā**, at the request of the five hundred monks. After having heard it, the displeasure in the monkhood of those monks, due to disturbance by their former wives, disappeared. Subsequently, Sakyamuni discoursed to them on the truth (**sacca kathaṃ**). At the end of the teaching, the five hundred monks achieved at least the state of a Stream-winner and at best attained the fruition of a Non-returner; not one of them remained as a worldling (*puthujjana*) and none became an Arahant. However, by means of their own magical powers, they followed close behind the Buddha, when the latter returned to Mahāvāna. Later, for their attainment of the higher paths, the Blessed One taught the Dhamma again and they all attained Arahantship.

14. Dhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā

During the lift time of the Blessed One Gotama, there lived a devotee, named Dhammika, who lived up to his name by being righteous. He took refuge in the triple gem (**saraṇasampanno**), was endowed with moral precepts, much learned, had memorised the Tipiṭaka, was a Non-returner, with higher knowledge (**abhiññālābhī**) and a sky-soarer (**ākāsacāri**). He had a retinue of five hundred devotees (**upāsakā**), who were also like him. One day he observed the Sabbath duties (**uposathikassa**) retired in solitude (**rahagatassa paṭisallānassa**) and there arose at a time beyond the mid-night hour (**majjhimayāmasāne**) an intention to ask the Buddha about the proper performance (**paṭisadā**) of householders and of those gone-forth. Accordingly, surrounded by his five hundred devotees (**upāsakehi**) he approached the Blessed One and asked about that matter. The Blessed One taught the Dhammika Sutta in reply to his question, which in brief is to be understood thus:– Endowed with perpetual observance of Sabbath duties,

good moral precepts and giving of charity, a pious devotee should carry on commerce, which must not comprise sinful acts (**payojaye dhammikam vāñijjam**); with the income accruing from that kind of commerce, he should support his parents by means of his lawfully acquired wealth (**dhammena bhogena mātāpitaro bhareyya**). Doing this duty diligently, that householder, on the dissolution of his body, would approach the divine domain, where darkness is dispelled by one's own rays of light (**sayampabhā**).

3. Mahāvagga (Great Chapter)

1. Pabbajjā Sutta Vaṇṇanā

While the Blessed One was residing in Sāvatti, the Venerable Ānanda taught this sutta announcing the monkhood of the Master to the monks. In doing so, the Thera narrated the arrival of the Buddha at Rājagaha for alms after his departure from the bank of the Anomā river. Wandering about the streets of the city for alms, the Buddha was sighted by King Bimbisāra who had his messenger offer almsfood making the begging bowl of the Buddha brimful and follow the stranger to his destination since the sovereign was impressed by the glorious personality and perfect purity. When the royal messenger informed his king that the stranger was having his meal on the Paṇḍava mutually, found him out to be the son of the Sākya Suddhodana, offered his sovereignty which was declined and later secured the promise that his kingdom would be the first to be honoured with the visit of the Buddha on having attained Buddhahood.

2. Padhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā

When the Venerable Ānanda had finished teaching the Pabbajjā Sutta, the Buddha, seated in his fragrant chamber, thought of making the monks know about his strenuous effort (**padhāna**), a difficult task, for six solid years; accordingly, the Buddha spoke this sutta narrating how Māra met him and first dissuaded him from making strenuous effort and later attacked him with his army and his eventual victory to the disappointment of the Evil One.

3. Subhāsita Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Blessed One was fond of well-spoken words. By means of his own behaviour of speaking good words the Buddha would prohibit the habit of speaking bad words by living beings and in doing so taught this sutta, wherein the definition in detail is given of well-spoken speech (**subhāsita**).

4. Pūraḷāsa Sutta (Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta) Vaṇṇanā

Surveying the world by means of the eye of the Buddha one afternoon, Sakyamuni found the brahmin Sundarika Bhāradvāja to be endowed with the sufficing qualification for the attainment of Arahantship. The Blessed One said to himself: "When I go to him, there will be conversation, and after having heard the Dhamma taught by me, this brahmin will become a monk and attain Arahantship." Accordingly, the Blessed One went to the brahmin, held conversation with him and spoke this sutta.

5. Māgha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Māgha was a young man (**māṇava**), a donor and a lord of charity (**dāyako ahoṣi dānapati**). He wanted to know whether or not the charity given to the destitute and travellers, *etc.*, who had duly reached him was conducive to bountiful benefit. Accordingly, the young donor approached the Blessed One and made his enquiry. The Master made his answer to be commensurate with the question. The Māgha Sutta comprises the question raised by Māgha, the young lord of charity to the Buddha while the Master was residing on the Vultures' Peak (**Gijjhakūṭe pabbate**) in Rājagaha and the answer made by the Master to the question.

6. Sabhiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Sabhiya was so named because he was given birth to by his mother, a female wandering philosopher, in an assembly hall (*sabhāyaṃ*) in the middle of her journey. When he grew up, he renounced the world as a wandering recluse (*paribbājaka*), took up the study of different varieties of text-books (*nānāsattāhāni uggahetvā*), became a great propounder of views (*mahāvādī*), wandered all over Jambudīpa, challenging every philosopher to hold a debate with him. After having noticed that he was peerless, he had a hermitage built at the city gate and lived there teaching arts and science to young princely warriors (*khattiya kumāra*), *etc.* Subsequently, when the news of the appearance of the Buddha in the world was indirectly broken to him by one of his two former associates, the non-returner brahmā of *Suddhāvāsa*, Sabhiya had himself prepared twenty questions, which he asked Sakyamuni soon after he met him. The answers made by the Master were satisfactory to Sabhiya so that he spoke a stanza in praise of the Buddha whom he conspicuously worshipped and requested for ordination which was approved and conferred upon him without any restriction meant for members of all religious sects outside the dispensation (*sāsana*) of the Buddha.

7. Sela Sutta Vaṇṇanā

First, the commentator gave a detailed description of the Anotatta lake, in Jambudīpa, as being the source of five rivers, beginning with Mahā Gaṅgā, in order to explain the etymology of Aṅguttarāpa, name of a district (janapada) where the Blessed One was making a tour to be met and invited by Keniya, a vastly wealthy brahmin, who kept himself disguised as an ascetic with braided hair for the purpose of protecting his property. On the occasion of his calling on Keniya at the ascetic's ashram, Sela saw the people of Keniya making huge preparations for a great offering of food. On enquiry, Sela heard of Sakyamuni with his one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples, who had been invited to the next-day meal by the ascetic with braided hair. Immediately after he had heard about the Buddha and his whereabouts Sela was desirous of meeting the Master, whose presence he reached and satisfied himself with the handsome personality, golden complexion and thirty-two characteristics of a great man (mahāpurisalakṣaṇā) which the Buddha possessed. To make Sela more convinced of his being a spiritual sovereign, the Buddha declared himself to be Dhammarājā anuttaro (incomparable righteous sovereign) with his commander-in-chief (senāpati) in Sāriputta, who would turn the Wheel of Dhamma after him and that the result was he had vanquished Māra, defeated all his enemies and become free from all danger. Sela at once became full of pious faith in the Blessed One, and bent on entering monkhood which the Buddha conferred on him and his young followers.

8. Salla Sutta Vaṇṇanā

A certain devotee attending upon the Buddha was staying without eating anything for seven days because of being overwhelmed with grief owing to the death of his son. Out of compassion for him, the Blessed One went to his house and spoke this sutta for the purpose of removing his sadness. Therein the Buddha made his devotee realise that everyone must encounter death somehow and to be wise he must remove his dart (salla) of sorrow.

9. Vāsetṭha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In the beginning, the origin of Pokkharasāti was given, along with his official position of a soothsayer, consequent upon which, the post of purohita (royal chaplain) by the name of Jāṇussoṇi was secured by him. Later, the commentator made mention of Icchānaṅgala village where all well-known and renowned brahmin bankers lived for the purpose of recitation and

all-round investigation of their charms (**vedasajjhāyanaparivīmaṣṣa-nattham**). It so happened that on one occasion all the learned brahmins of the kingdom of Kosala assembled at that very village for the purpose of chanting and properly probing the Vedas. Consequently, such learned brahmins as Caṅkī, Tārukkha and Todeyya as well as Pokkharasāti Jāṇussoṇi would intermittently (**antarantarā**) go and stay in that village. On their way to the very village, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, two prominent pupils of Pokkharasāti and Tārukkha, respectively, had a mutual discussion regarding purity of parentage for seven generations both maternally and paternally of each of their teachers and of themselves, along with their achievements (**kammunā**). Later, both of them approached the Blessed One, who on having been praised and requested by Vāseṭṭha, spoke this sutta detailing the requisite qualifications of a true brahmin who must be judged not by his breed but by his behaviour and deeds. The conclusion was such that the young brahmin Vāseṭṭha became clearly convinced.

10. Kokālika Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The origin of Kokālika as being the son of a millionaire of the same name in the city of Kokālika in the kingdom of Kokālika was given by the commentator in the beginning, to be followed by his becoming a monk who resided in the very monastery built by his father. Later, Buddhaghosa narrated the story of the same son of Seṭṭhi Kokālika playing host to the two chief disciples for a whole vassa period of three months, at the end of which there arose an occasion for the host-monk Kokālika to get annoyed with his guests. Consequently, when he next saw the two chief disciples accepting ecclesiastical essentials from the citizens of Kokālika approached the two Theras, censured them with rude remarks and proceeded post-haste to report the matter to the Master. The Blessed One made Kokālika realise that he was committing a serious sin by wrongly accusing and abusing the two chief disciples. Kokālika, however, was adamant and obstinate; he would not seek any atonement although admonished again by an anāgāmī brahmā. Immediately after he had shown his state of incorrigibility, there arose all over the body of Kokālika bone-cracking boils and blisters, sores and ulcers and he became the butt of blame with shouts of shame made by multitudes of monks and laymen, devas and brahmās. In the end, Kokālika died and was reborn in the Paduma niraya (Lily purgatory). Incidentally, mention was made by Buddhaghosa of such a purgatory as Lohakumbhī and another one known as Vetaraṇī with dreadful details along with their durations to

be calculated in terms of abbuda and nirabbuda units, comprising countless millions, comparable to counting sesame seeds in twenty cartloads of khārī capacity.

11. Nālaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The hermit Nālaka was the nephew of the ascetic Asita who previously was the purohita of the sovereign Sihahanu, the father of Suddhodana, who as a prince was the pupil of the chaplain in political science (sippa). After having developed eight sorts of samāpatti and five forms of abhiññā, while staying in the royal garden in response to the request of the sovereign Suddhodana, the ascetic Asita was able to travel to Himavanta and devaloka, where He was wont to spend the afternoon daily as and when he had finished doing his duty of eating his meal at the royal household, and spent his time enjoying the bliss of concentration (samādhi). The ascetic was, one day, seated on the bejewelled divine pedestal in Tāvatiṃsa, as he kept on spending his afternoon, as usual, experiencing the sweet serenity of concentration from which he woke up at sunset, when at the point of his departure from that devaloka he heard of the resounding requests made by divers devas to one of their kith and kin, the Bodhisatta, whose qualities they were praising at the point of passing away, to be reborn as a human being with a view to attaining Buddhahood. Later when the sovereign Suddhodana showed his baby boy who was to pay homage to him, the ascetic Asita ascertained astrologically and became completely convinced of the fact that the prince would positively be the Buddha but was sorry that he himself would not survive to listen to such dhamma as would be taught by him. Without delay, therefore, the ascetic Asita approached the home of his younger sister, spoke to her of the coming event, and his desire to see that her son Nālaka, his nephew, should not miss the golden opportunity of making his quick contact as soon as it would provide itself. With the consent of the mother, the ascetic Asita took over charge of his nephew, Nālaka, made him a hermit at that very moment, assigned to him all the duties of a recluse and kept on giving his nephew his avuncular advice and admonition, till such time as he passed away. Consequently, on the seventh day after the teaching of the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta for the first time, the hermit Nālaka, nephew of the ascetic Asita, approached the Blessed One and spoke two stanzas asking the latter about **moneyyapaṭipadam** (the proper performance of a wise saint). In the manner, starting with: **Moneyyam te upaññissam** the Blessed One answered Nālaka.

12. Dvayatānupassanā Sutta Vaṇṇanā

It was in the open air at Migāramātā's monastery that the Master gave this discourse to the many thousand silently seated monks after mentally scrutinising their spiritual maturity for the purpose of determining a suitable discourse for the congregation. To show two things for consideration (**dvayatam anupassanam**) the Blessed One spoke starting with: "**Idam dukkham**." By seeing one's misery that is mundane (**lokiya**) either in detail or along with its cause (**hetu**), this is one continuous consideration (**ayam ekānupassanā**); the other, the supramundane (**lokuttara**), the second in detail (**duṭṭiyassa avayavassa**) by the seeing of either along with manner (**sa upāyassa**) or cessation (**nirodhassa**) is the second thing for consideration (**duṭṭiyānupassanā**). In this way, to one who continually considers the state of the two rightly (**sammā dvayatānupassino**) with the presence of awareness, diligently with physical and mental energy, regardless of one's own body and life, there is bound to be what should be desired, namely, Arahantship in the present existence or the state of a Non-returner should there be any remainder (**upādisesa**).

4. Aṭṭhakavagga (Chapter of the Eights)

1. Kāma Sutta Vaṇṇanā

It was to console a brahmin cultivator who met with crop failure that the Buddha taught this Kāma Sutta at his house in the course of his walking for almsfood, while the Blessed One was residing at Jetavana in Sāvatti. Here, **kāma** is to be interpreted as sensual pleasure of realities (**vatthukāmam**), which, when gained, makes the gainer elated with joy. Should his wealth of sensual pleasure diminish, he feels harassed as if pierced by an iron spike. Whoever would avoid sensual pleasures absolutely (**samucchedena**) just as he would do the head of a venomous viper with his feet, being mindful (**sato**) overcomes his craving for sensuality.

2. Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Guhā is an allegorical alternative for the body (**kāya**). Just as lions live in caves, so also wild thoughts and actions abound in the human body. The Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta is therefore a discourse on the strands of sensual pleasures (**kāmaguṇa**) which people like to indulge in only to repent later and bewail when they are about to die. The occasion for the teaching of this sutta arose at the time when the Blessed One was staying in Sāvatti. It so happened

that the Thera Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja was wont to spend a few afternoons seated meditatively at a cool corner in the river side royal park of Utena in Kosambī and one of his day sojourns coincided with a royal picnic in which the whole harem participated. The jealousy of one of the young ladies brought about an ugly incident necessitating the soaring up into the sky by the Thera in order to give Utena, the king, no chance for committing a serious sin, out of compassion for the latter. Later, the thera dived into the earth, emerged in the presence of the Blessed One, who was lying like a lion in his fragrant chamber. On being informed about the incident in its entirety, the Buddha taught this sutta to the Thera Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja.

3. Duṭṭhatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Consequent upon the conspiracy contrived by heretics (*tiṭṭhiya*) with the co-operation of the lovely looking Sundarī, a wandering philosopher in white cloths, there arose a serious scandal, over which the Venerable Ānanda became panic-stricken on the occasion when the Blessed One was residing at Jetavana, in Sāvatti. Sakyamuni assured Ānanda that the nonsensical noise would subsist for seven days only and spoke this stanza starting with: **Vadanti ve duṭṭhamanā pi** for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma to the Venerable Ānanda, who was instructed to advise the monks how to behave and what to say indirectly as and when they were accused of murdering Sundarī. Accordingly, the truth prevailed; people finally found out that the heretics were the real culprits; the tables turned and the heretics encountered relentless retribution. The sutta concluded with the conversation between the Buddha and the king of Kosala.

4. Suddhatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The origin of this discourse on the pure (*suddha*) went back to the time of the Buddha Kassapa when an owner of five hundred carts befriended a forester, who gave such co-operation as to make himself rich over a huge haul of sweet-scented sandalwood from the forest where he invited his guide to visit him in Benares and advised the forester to bring with him the choicest fragrance. Subsequently, the forest-wanderer (**vanacarakam**) collected sandalwood, went to Benares, where he gained the opportunity of worshipping the shrine of the Buddha Kassapa, where he donated some quantity of this fragrant sandalwood. As a result of that act of merit, on his death, he was reborn in Tāvatiṃsa to become famous as a sandalwood-scented divine youth with noon-like rays (**candābho devaputto**). At the time of the

appearance of the Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in Sāvatti as the son of a brahmin banker, with moonshine like rays radiating from his breast. Bearing the name Candābha, as soon as he came of age, he was taken by brahmins who seated him in a chariot to be worshipped and honoured as a brahmā. Wherever he went, people worshipped him with offerings with a view to gaining both mundane and supramundane benefits. Having been all over Jambudīpa and adored everywhere, the brahmins brought him back to Sāvatti. At that time, Sakyamuni, in the course of his turning of the Wheel of the Dhamma had arrived at the city and was residing at the Jetavana monastery. Emulating the excellent example of all pious devotees, who were on their way to listen to the teaching of the Dhamma, Candābha, who by then had become like a stream that had entered the vast ocean, went to the presence of the Blessed One, became disillusioned, entered the Order, developed insight and soon attained Arahantship. Subsequently, the thera Candābha happened to be the topic of talk among monks to whom the Buddha had to teach this sutta showing the way of securing purity.

5. Paramatthaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On the repost made to the Buddha as to how the king of Kosala settled the dispute of different denominations amongst the multitude of heretics by making congenitally blind people describe in various ways an elephant kept close to them for feeling with their hands in the presence of the disputing parties, Sakyamuni spoke this sutta for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma to his assembled disciples. By way of foreword, the Buddha, remarked: "O monks! Like those born blind, not knowing what an elephant is, feeling this and that limb, form different impressions of the animal and dispute accordingly, the heretics also, not knowing the doctrine for deliverance, dealing with this and that view (**ditthim parāmasitvā**) dispute among themselves; in saying regarding their individual view, they make use of the term absolute (**parama**) to assert that their view is the most exalted.

6. Jarā Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Here the commentator spoke first about the departure of the Buddha from Sāvatti on a tour of the districts and his eventual arrival in Sāketa, where the Master met a brahmin banker and his wife who had been his father and mother for five hundred continuous rebirths. Both the husband and wife, out of their faithful fondness for Sakyamuni entertained him and the Order of monks sumptuously on the very next day, who out of compassion for

them and at their request taught the Dhamma every day throughout his stay in Sāketa. The result was that both the brahmin and the lady first of all became Stream-winners and later attained Arahantship, in the wake of which they attained *parinibbāna*. The Buddha went to the funeral field and gave this teaching to the multitude who were about to carry out the cremation. In that sutta Sakyamuni started saying that this life has a short span; one dies either before or soon after a hundred years of old age.

7. Tissa-Metteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Tissa and Metteyya were two associates who happened to have heard the teaching of Dhamma by the Buddha while the latter was residing at Jetavana in Sāvatti. Realising that they, as laymen, would not be able to put the teaching into practice, both of them approached the Master after the departure of the audience and asked for monkhood, which was conferred on them by a monk, under orders of the Blessed One. After having given them meditation objects (*kammaṭṭhāna*), their preceptor (*upajjhāya*) departed to lead a forest life. Metteyya went along but Tissa tarried behind with the excuse of listening to more teachings of the Buddha, but was disrobed by his female relatives when he visited his village in the wake of the death of his oldest brother. Doing his duties diligently, Metteyya, on the other hand, soon attained Arahantship, along with his preceptor, in their forest residence. Subsequently, when the Rains Retreat was just over, they arrived at Sāvatti to pay their homage to the Master on the eve of his departure on a tour of the districts. In due course, the Buddha accompanied by Metteyya reached the village where the ex-monk Tissa was living and at the request of the monk Metteyya, taught this sutta to teach the Dhamma to his friend. At the end of the teaching Tissa gained the fruition of Stream-winning and later, after having become a monk again, realised Arahantship.

8. Pasūra Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Pasūra is the name of a great wandering philosopher (**paribbājako mahāvādī**). He claimed himself as the topmost disputant (**vādena aggo**) in the entire Jambudīpa. After having made a branch of *eugenia* tree (**jambusākha**) his standard (**dhaja**) he went all over the island challenging any and every one to come forward and argue with him. Since he saw no rival, he eventually came back to Sāvatti, where at the city-gate he set up his standard, which the Venerable Sāriputta had broken to bits by boys with their feet by way of accepting his challenge. In the debate that ensued, Pasūra

was disgracefully defeated in the presence of a huge audience. Consequently, Pasūra became a monk in the presence of the Venerable Lāludāyī with a view to learning the art of debate (**vādasattham sikhissāmi**). Encouraged by his success in disputing with his preceptor Lāludāyī, he became emboldened to try his luck with the Blessed One who silenced him to his sad surprise. The sea of spectators surrounded the dumb-founded Pasūra, shouted at him and forced the latter make his statement. Thereupon, the Blessed One spoke this sutta for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma.

9. Māgaṇḍiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Early one morning, while the Master was residing in Sāvatti, Sakyamuni sighted, in the course of his usual survey of the world of people by means of his eye of the Buddha, a brahmin named Māgaṇḍiya, along with his wife, who were residents of the market town of Kammāsadhamma in the kingdom of Kuru as convertible candidates with sufficing qualification for the attainment of Arahantship. The Blessed One, therefore, immediately took his departure from Sāvatti, went to that market-town and sat down in a nearby forest radiating his rays of golden colour, attracted by which Māgaṇḍiya accidentally approached and found in the great person a proper candidate for and hand of his only daughter of gold complexion (**Suvaṇṇavaṇṇa**). Accordingly, Māgaṇḍiya hurriedly went home, brought his wife and daughter and made his offer of the latter to the Master, who, without making any reply to the brahmin spoke this stanza starting with **Disvāna taṇham** which constitutes the first verse in the Māgaṇḍiya Sutta, by way of teaching the Dhamma. At the end of the discourse, both the husband and wife became recluses and attained Arahantship.

10. Purābheda Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On having understood the minds of multitudes of deities who were of lustful conduct (**rāgacaritadevatā**) and who had been thinking of what ought to be done prior to the dissolution of their bodies (**purā sarīrabhedā**), the Buddha, for the purpose of doing favour to them brought his created double, through the sky, surrounded by one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, made the latter put questions which the Master himself answered by speaking this sutta which begins with **Vītaṇho purā bheda** (one must forsake craving before the breaking-up of one's body). At the end of this sutta, a billion deities attained Arahantship and those who became Stream-winners and so forth were innumerable.

11. Kalahavivāda Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Similar to the Purābheda Sutta, this sutta was taught by Sakyamuni in answer to questions asked by a Nimmita Buddha. To the question: **Kuto pahūtā kalahā vivādā?** (Whence have happened quarrels and disputes), along with lamentation, anxiety, and jealousy (**paridevasoka maccharā**), together with normal and abnormal pride as well as backbiting (**pesuṇa**)? The Buddha's answer was that all these eight types of depravity (**kilesadhammā**) beginning with quarrels and disputes have their origin in affection (**piya**), the result of greed (**lobha**), which again has sprung from longing (**āsā**); owing to such desires as starting with desire for sensual pleasures (**kāmacchanda**), people wander about with greed; dependent upon pleasant and unpleasant sensations (**vedanā**), desire (**chanda**) arises; after having seen the appearance and disappearance in visible objects (**rūpesu disvā vibhavaṃ bhavañca**), a person makes decisions in the world (**vinicchayaṃ kubbati jantu loke**). Thus, the Blessed One brought his teaching to its conclusion with Arahantship as its climax. At the end of the discourse, there was realisation of the truth by innumerable deities resembling what happened on the conclusion of the Purābheda Sutta.

12. Cūḷabyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On that self-same great occasion (**tasmim yeva mahāsamaye**), the Blessed One, in the same manner as before made the created the Buddha ask questions which He himself answer in order to make manifest that matter of some of the deities, who were conjecturing as to whether the statement made by all those who held wrong views (**ditṭhigatikā**) that they were good (**sādhurūpamha**) would constitute the opinion held by themselves even or that of others. Of the answer comprising three verses, the latter half has stood (**thitā**) forming a proper array (**paṭibyūhitvā**) of the meaning stated by the former half. Since the state of that array is more meagre than the superior sutta (**tena byūhena uttarasuttato ca appakattā**) this sutta gains the name "**Cūḷabyūha**." By means of this sutta, Sakyamuni brought about the disillusionment of the said deities advising them in conclusion to dispel all decisions (**vinicchayāni hitvāna**) by means of the noble right path (**ariyamaggena**). At the end of the teaching of the sutta, there was realisation of the truth by numerous devas exactly equal to the occasion when Purābheda Sutta had been taught.

13. Mahābyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On that same great occasion the Blessed One gave his reply to questions raised by his self-created double in order to disillusion some of the doubting devas to whom have arisen such thoughts as: "How is it, indeed, do these who abide in heresy (**ditṭhiparibbasānā**) receive reproach or gain praise from the wise?" The Buddha's advice was to rise above both blame and praise by seeing nibbāna as a secure place devoid of disputes, realising that besides the four foundations of mindfulness and so forth (**aññatra satipaṭṭhanādīhi**) there is no other path that leads to nibbāna. At the end of teaching this Mahābyūha Sutta, there came about the realisation of the truth by innumerable deities as on the occasion when Purābheda Sutta had been taught.

14. Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

This sutta was taught on that same great occasion by the Buddha in reply to the question put to him by the Nimitta Buddha as arranged by himself for the purpose of making manifest the proper practice which some celestial beings were anxious to know for the attainment of Arahantship. At the end of the teaching of this Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta there was the realisation of the truth by countless celestial creatures identical with the number of those devas on the occasion of having heard the Purābheda sutta.

15. Attadaṇḍa Sutta Vaṇṇanā

This sutta was taught by the Buddha after he had stood himself in between the two armies of the Sākyans and Koliyans, who quarrelled over the river water, which was in short supply, for the purpose of preventing his royal relatives from fighting and waging war. From the very beginning, by means of the first verse, the Buddha made his relatives realise that it was from one's own weapon (**attadaṇḍa**) that danger, whether current or posterior (**ditṭhadhammikaṃ vā samparāyikaṃ vā bhayaṃ**) used to arise to people of the world and yet they, the Sākyans and Koliyans threatened with their weapons to cause mutual injury. By means of the remaining verses, the Blessed One made his relatives remorse-stricken and brought his teaching to a conclusion with Arahantship as its climax. At the end of the discourse five hundred Sākyan and Koliyan princes became monks with the formula "Come monk (*ehi bhikkhu*).” The Blessed One gathered them and entered the great forest (**mahāvana**).

16. Sāriputta Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Sāriputta Sutta is also referred to as the Therapañha Sutta. The origin of this sutta began with the bowl of sandalwood set up on a tall bamboo pole by a millionaire of Rājagaha, which was taken by the Venerable Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja by means of his magical powers. This was followed by the Twin Miracle (*yamaka pāṭihāriya*) by the Buddha, who subsequently ascended to Tāvātimsa, where, for three months of the Rains, he taught the Dhamma. He descended by the middle ladder of gems, at the base of which he was worshipped first by Sāriputta, closely followed by the Therī Uppalavaṇṇā and a multitude of people, in the presence of whom the Buddha publicised the quality of learned wisdom (**paññāguṇena**) of the Venerable Sāriputta by putting questions to the latter. The Thera answered them all particularly those pertaining to worldlings (**puthujjanapañham**), learners (**sekkhapañham**) and adepts (**asekkhapañhañca**). The entire audience came to know that the Venerable Sāriputta was foremost in wisdom (**paññāya aggo**).

To let the multitude of monks and lay people know that in the past also when the Thera was the eldest of more than a thousand resident pupils of a forest fruit eating ascetic, he could ascertain the destiny of his teacher, who died while he was away in search of medicine to cure the ailing teacher's disease and who said: "**N'atthi kiñci**." at the approach of his death. All the thousand pupils, who were told by their teacher at their hearing, misunderstood what was said by their dying master to the effect that their teacher had not made any achievement (**na kiñci ācariyena adhigatam**). On the other hand, the absent pupil, who would later be Sāriputta, at once announced that their teacher had gone to one of the four formless brahmā abodes known as Ākiñcaññāyatana. When the birth story (Jātaka) had thus been related by the Buddha, the Venerable Sāriputta spoke eight stanzas starting with this verse of praise beginning with **Na me ditṭho ito pubbe** making enquiry about the congenial comfort of their monastic residence, alms resort (**gocara**), precepts and duties (**silavata**), etc., for the benefit of the five hundred monks who were living together with him. Subsequently by means of the remaining verses the Buddha made the reply about that matter. At the end of the teaching of this sutta, the five hundred monks attained Arahantship and there was the realisation of the truth for three hundred million divine and human beings.

5. Pārāyana Vagga (Chapter on the Way to the Beyond)

Vatthu Gāthā Vaṇṇanā

The commentator gave the origin of the verses thus:— There was once a resident of Benares who was a peerless carpenter-wood-cutter cum technician, attended upon by sixteen pupils with a thousand resident apprentices each. From foot-hills he used to cut down trees, bring the logs into a raft, bring it down the river to Benares, where he, should the sovereign so desire, would build a royal palace of one storey to seven storeys or else sell the logs as lumber. One day, he had such wood of scanty substance as fig (**udumbara appasāra**) brought to him by his pupils, built a miniature bird of the same timber, entered inside, furnished it with machinery (**pavīsivā yantam puresi**). The wooden bird soared up into the sky, flew above forests and landed in front of his pupils, whom he advised to build similar air-borne structures for making air-raids of kingdoms to live on as rulers since the science of carpentry could not be conducive towards leading a comfortable life. Accordingly, the pupils completed their individual construction of wooden winged-creatures, and led by their teacher and his family, fully armed with weapons of war, boarded their air-transport and invaded a city near Himavanta. Subsequently, they had their teacher crowned as the king of the city, to be popularly known as Kaṭṭhavāhana; the city also was named similarly. By sending through traders three priceless pieces of velvet cloth of rare type packed neatly in ivory containers concealed in three lacquer balls (**lākhāgoḷaka**) with his forwarding letter he became an unseen ally of the king of Benares. By that time, the Buddha Kassapa had already appeared in the world. As a return-present to his unseen associate (**aditṭhasahāya**) king Kaṭṭhavāhana, the king of Benares had the sacred information about the arisen three gems (**vatthuttayaratanassa uppānabhāva**) and the proper performance (paṭipatti) of a monk till his attainment of Arahantship written in natural vermilion on a sheet of spacious gold-leaf, which subsequently was piously packed in a casket studded with seven sorts of gems (**sattaratanamaye samugge pakkhipitvā**) to be enclosed in successive layers of caskets of emerald, cat's eye (**masāragalla**), ruby (**lohitaṅga**), gold, silver, ivory, heart-wood (**sāramaya**) and encased the same in a casket (**peḷa**) which again was wrapped; (**veḷhetvā**) in a piece of turban cloth (**dussena**), had it sealed (**lañchetvā**) and mounted on a pedestal (**pallaṅke āropetvā**) to be carried on the back of a well-caparisoned elephant, adorned with a golden banner (**dhaja**) and gold ornaments, and covered with golden net (**hemajāla-**

sañchanna). The king had the pious present shaded by a white umbrella and himself led the procession along the duly decorated road, which reached the bounded border of his kingdom, making offerings of all kinds of fragrance, flowers, *etc.*, in honour of the same, singing several songs of praise in the accompaniment of all musical instruments properly played.

King Kaṭṭhavāhana took delivery of the priceless present with equal ceremony of grace and grandeur, unwrapped the sealed cloth cover, opened the successive series of containers in the presence of all his ministers and citizens at the royal courtyard (**rājangaṇa**) and saw the writing on the spacious sheet of gold: Tremendously grateful to his friend, the king of Benares, King Kaṭṭhavāhana, in his joyful elation, at once became keenly desirous of meeting with and paying homage to the Buddha Kassapa who, by then, had attained *parinibbāna*. The king had to be content with approaching an elder disciple who taught him the Dhamma and for whom he built a monastery where the monarch set up a shrine. Prior to the appearance of our Blessed One, Gotama, King Kaṭṭhavāhana was reborn as the son of the royal chaplain (*purohita*) of Mahā-Kosala, the predecessor and father of Pasenadi Kosala bearing the name "Bāvarī." Learned in the three Vedas when he grew up, he succeeded his father when the latter died and became the chaplain of King Pasenadi, who succeeded his father and ascended the throne of the Kosala kingdom. All his former pupils also were reborn again to become his pupils. Bāvarī, along with all his pupils, soon became recluses and at the request of their king, took up residence in the royal park; attended upon morning and evening by the sovereign himself. Subsequently, the teacher Bāvarī, surrounded by his pupils who were 16,016 matted-hair ascetics (Jaṭilā) and being looked after (**anuggahamāno**) by two ministers, took his departure from Kosala, known as the northern districts (**Uttara-janapada**), in the direction of the Southern districts (**Dakkhina-janapada**). When he reached the peninsula formed by the watershed of the river Godhāvarī, which split in two within the jurisdiction of two kingdoms, Assaka and Aḷaka, a land area measuring three leagues, where such ancient ascetics as Sarabhaṅga had lived formerly, Bāvarī had his hermitage built by the two ministers, with the approval of the two kings. Subsisting on forest fruits and almsfood gathered from adjacent villages, the residents of which had been blessed with bumper crops annually since his arrival. From the prosperity of his devotees, Bāvarī was able to give great charity annually. By the time Bāvarī was twenty-nine years of age, and had dwelt for eight full years on the banks of the Godhāvarī, the Buddha appeared in the world.

Resembling Bāvarī in retinue, due to their knowledge and teaching of Vedic lore, were two brahmins Tissa and Metteyya along with fourteen others who travelled from town to town till they duly arrived at Sāketa, where sixteen of the Jaṭilā, with their followers, occupied a space of six leagues.

Thereupon, the Blessed One thought thus: "The Jaṭilā of Bāvarī have come, swelling the multitude of men; for the time being, their spiritual faculties have not reached maturity; this locality, again, is not congenial; for them, however, Pāsāṇaka-cetiya in Magadha is suitable. When I teach the Dhamma there the multitude will gain realisation of the truth." Subsequently, Sakyamuni, surrounded by a large congregation of monks, went towards Rājagaha from Sāvatti. Having, by stages, reached Setabya, Kapilavattu, and so forth, Sakyamuni's following successively swelled until he finally arrived at Pāsāṇaka-cetiya. The Jaṭilā also, after they had ascertained the real Buddhahood of the Blessed One at Sāvatti, hurriedly departed, pursued the Blessed One posthaste and caught up with him at Pāsāṇaka-cetiya where they saw Sakyamuni seated in a supremely spacious pandal specially created by Sakka. Having exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One, Ajita, the eldest pupil, who had stood on one side, became delighted and questioned him mentally. When the answers given by the Buddha were satisfactory to Ajita, whose teacher was mentioned as Bāvarī, and when open invitation was made by the Blessed One, Ajita was the first to take advantage of the golden opportunity and verbally began to ask questions.

1. Ajita Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In answering the questions of Ajita, the Blessed One said that jealousy does not allow the qualities of charity to manifest and negligence did the same to morality (**sīla**). Craving (**taṇhā**) is to one a trap like a sticky sap for snaring monkeys and suffering (**dukkha**) comprises birth (**jāti**), etc. Mindfulness (**sati**) stops the streams of craving and so forth in the sense-faculties (**āyatana**) starting with visible forms (**rūpa**), and wisdom (**paññā**) dries up these streams entirely. The Buddha concluded his answers by showing how to become a learner (**sekha**) and later how to attain Arahantship (**asekha**). Consequently, Ajita became established in Arahantship along with his one thousand pupils, whose matted hair and antelope-skin garments disappeared, and even while seated there, were magically attired in robes and holding begging bowls, with shaven heads, adoring the Blessed One with clasped hands as monks ordained by the Buddha's words "Come monk (*ehi bhikkhu*)."

2. Tissametteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The two brahmins put their questions in order to dispel their doubts. The Buddha's advice, in reply, was: to be endowed with the right path of chaste conduct (**maggabrahmacariyena**) after having seen the disadvantage (**ādinavaṃ disvā**) in sensual pleasures. Thus, contentment could be achieved. Subsequently, one attains cessation (**nibbuto**) with the extinguishing of the fires of lust and so forth (**rāgādinibbānena**). Consequently, along with their thousand pupils the two Jaṭilā became established in Arahantship. The eye of truth (**dhammacakkhu**) arose in others numbering many thousand.

3. Puṇṇaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Buddha's statement in answering the question of this ascetic was: one crossed over the ocean of birth and old age by shunning the smoke of bodily misconduct *etc.*, (**kāyaduccaritādidhūmavirahito**) and avoiding the confusing fires of lust and anger *etc.*, (**rāgādi-īghavirahito**). At the end of this discourse, the brahmin Puṇṇaka also attained Arahantship along with his one thousand pupils.

4. Mettagū Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Blessed One taught the truth on the deathless (**nibbānadhamma**) as well as the proper performance for its achievement (**nibbānagāminipaṭipadā**) in this very existence. The ascetic Mettagū appreciated the teaching and for him also there was realisation of the truth (**dhammābhisamaya**).

5. Dhotaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In response to this recluse's request, the Buddha gave instruction to Dhotaka similar to that given to Mettagū.

6. Upasīva Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Being the gainer of a formless meditation (**ākīñcaññāyatana-lābhi**) this ascetic first of all asked the Blessed One about the life-span in that formless realm. The answer was sixty-thousand aeons (**saṭṭhikappasahassa**). Later, in answer to his question on eternalism and nihilism (**sassatucchedabhāva**) the Buddha advised the ascetic not to cling to either but to strive to attain immortality (**anupādāya parinibbāyeyyā**) step by step, first the trainer's stage and finally the fourth path. At the end of this discourse, there was realisation of the truth (**dhammābhisamayo**) as said before.

7. Nanda Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Buddha rejected the statement made by the ascetic Nanda in connection with naked ascetics (Ājīvakā) and Jains (Nigaṇṭhā), *etc.*, and gave his own definition of a sage (*muni*) as one who comprehensively understood craving (**parijānitvā**), and worked for the destruction of craving to become free from defilements. Then Nanda and others realised the truth.

8. Hemaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Over his own admission to the effect that whatever he had heard from Bāvarī and others had worsened his wild thoughts on sensual pleasures, the Buddha instructed the recluse Hemaka to develop clear insight by contemplating on the impression that all formations are impermanent (**sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā**) so that in due course he would completely comprehend the nature of impermanence and become constantly aware by means of mindfulness of the body and so forth, to finally attain nibbāna in his present existence (**ditṭhadhammābhiniibbutā**). At the end of this teaching, as said before, the recluse Hemaka and others realised the truth.

9. Todeyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Although he was made to understand that the destruction of craving (**taṇhakkhaya**) itself was emancipation (**vimokkha**), Todeyya was not completely convinced; and sensual pleasures (**kāma**) and existence (**bhava**) had to be added by the Blessed One to the list of what must be exhausted. Consequently, Todeyya and others realised the truth.

10. Kappa Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In answer to the question raised by the ascetic Kappa, the Buddha assured him that whoever are best (**anāpara**) by being without attachment (**akiñcana**) and clinging (**anādāna**) cannot become servants (**paddhagū**) of Māra. Consequently, Kappa also gained realisation of the truth.

11. Jatukaṇṇi Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Since the ascetic Jatukaṇṇi was keen on knowing (**jāneyya**) the means of abandoning (**pahāna**) birth and old age in this very existence, Sakyamuni showed him what to do: "Having seen nibbāna and the proper practice (**paṭipāda**) that is conducive to immortality (**nibbānagāmini**) as security (**khema**), there should not exist in you any such attachment as lust and so

forth (**mā te vijjitthāti mā te ahoṣi. kiñcananti rāgādikiñcaṇaṃ**).” At the end of this discourse Jatukaṇṇi and others realised the truth.

12. Bhadrāvudha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

At the request of the brahmin Bhadrāvudha who wanted to cut off his craving and be unperturbed by the various vicissitudes of life, the Buddha taught the Dhamma in conformity with his desire thus:– Māra known as mass of conception (**paṭisandhikkhandha**) follows a creature (**jantu**) who is one of those attached to the mundane world owing to their craving for visible forms (**ādānataṇhaṃ**). One should not, therefore, let oneself get attached to anything in the world to free oneself from the domain of death. At the end of this discourse Bhadrāvudha and others realised the truth.

13. Udaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Since the questioner Udaya was a gainer of the fourth jhāna, the Buddha gave his answer by showing emancipation by means of higher knowledge (**aññāvimokkhaṃ**) in a variety of ways (**nānappakāraṭo**) by way of his aptly-gained jhāna. Consequently, there was for him mindfulness (**sati**), clear comprehension (**sampajāna**), and realisation of the truth.

14. Posāla Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Buddha gave his advice to the ascetic Posāla when the latter wanted to know how a gainer of absorption on nothingness (**ākīñcaññāyatanaḷābhi**) should be led out (**netabbo**) of *saṃsāra* and roused up (**uppādetabba**) to superior knowledge (**uttariñña**) as follows:– “After having understood about the action of higher mental formations (**kammābhisankhāra**), which brought into being the formless meditation, he should realise that the joy (**nandī**) reckoned as formless lust (**arūparāga**) there is a worldly fetter (*saṃyojana*) and consequent upon that (**tato**) he is to develop clear insight (**vipassato**) by way of that attainment (**samāpatti**) as being impermanent etc., after he has arisen from that formless jhāna. While that individual is developing clear insight in this way, in due course there is bound to be the arising of the knowledge of Arahantship.” At the end of this teaching the ascetic Posāla and others gained realisation of the truth.

15. Mogharāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Though twice disallowed by the Buddha to ask due to the immaturity of his spiritual faculties (**indriyaparipākamaṃ āgamayamāno**), Mogharāja did not give up, so when he put his question a third time, the Blessed One gave

his answer. The ascetic was asked to look at the world inclusive of the divine domain, as being empty (**suññato**) in two ways (**dvīhi kāraṇehi**): by way of lacking any control by oneself (**avasiyapayattasallakhaṇavasena**) or by way of regarding (**samanupassanā**) the empty condition of formations (**tucchaśaṅkhārā**), having extracted (**uddharitvā**) the false personality-view (**sakkāyadiṭṭhim**). At the end of this teaching Mogharāja and others gained realisation of the truth.

16. Piṅgiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

At the ripe age of one hundred and twenty years, the Jaṭila Piṅgiya, admitting to being old, feeble, and ugly, begged the Buddha to teach him the Dhamma so that he could dispel birth and old age and attain immortality. The Blessed One urged him to forsake his fondness for his body, since the sight of visible forms is instrumental in causing suffering. Thus, in spite of the fact that such proper practice as would make him attain Arahantship had been heard by Piṅgiya, because of his being infirm and old, he could not make any achievement, but spoke a stanza in praise of the Blessed One, who had to teach again the proper practice for the aged brahmin to attain the highest path. At the end of the teaching Piṅgiya became a non-returner only; since while listening to the teaching he kept on thinking of his uncle Bāvarī who had not yet gained the opportunity of hearing such a wonderful teaching as he had been doing. Although he himself failed to reach the zenith of achievement, his one thousand pupils attained Arahantship. All instantly became monks replete with robes and bowls by means of the Buddha's declaration: "Come, monks (*Ehi bhikkhavo*)."

Pārāyanatthuti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā

Along with Piṅgiya, the serving attendant of Bāvarī, and all the pupils of the sixteen leaders who were formerly matted-hair ascetics became the followers of the Blessed One. Seated on the right and left sides as well as before and behind the Buddha, they were twelve leagues across. As requested, the Blessed One named these sutta by the term "Pārāyana" with the significance of going (**ayana**) to the further shore (**pāra**) of nibbāna.

Pārāyanānugīti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā

Indeed, when the Pārāyana had been taught by the Blessed One, sixteen thousand Jaṭilā attained Arahantship. The rest of the audience reckoned as a hundred and forty million humans and deities also realised the truth. At the conclusion of the teaching in the monastery of Pāsāṅka-cetiya, all such

human beings as had come there arrived back at their respective residential homes in various villages, towns, and cities by means of the power of the Buddha, who also, surrounded by the sixteen serving attendants who were formerly Jaṭila leaders together with many thousand monks, went back to Sāvatti. There, Piṅgiya paid his homage to the Buddha, begged leave to go and inform Bāvarī about the advent of the Blessed One. With the approval of the Blessed One, Piṅgiya proceeded on his pedestrian journey to the bank of Godhāvarī in the direction of Bāvarī's hermitage, where, seated inside looking out towards the road, the brahmin sighted Piṅgiya coming from afar.

On having noticed the latter, shorn of his matted-hair, but dressed as a monk in yellow robes, Bāvarī at once became convinced that the Buddha had appeared in the world. On his arrival, Bāvarī asked Piṅgiya whether the Buddha had arisen. Piṅgiya answered in the affirmative and informed Bāvarī about the Buddha's teaching of the Dhamma to himself and other Jaṭilā at Pāsānaka-cetiya and that he would repeat the teaching to him. Bāvarī with his retinue honoured Piṅgiya with great respect and had a seat prepared. Having sat there, Piṅgiya spoke, starting with "**Pārāyanamanugāyissaṃ.**"

At the end of this stanza, the Blessed One came to know of the maturity of the spiritual faculties of both Bāvarī and Piṅgiya and emanated his golden rays while still stood in Sāvatti. Piṅgiya, who was still seated speaking the praise of the Buddha to Bāvarī, saw that ray of light (**obhāsaṃ**) and looking at it, noticed the Blessed One as if he was stood in front of him and accordingly informed Bāvarī that the Buddha had arrived. The brahmin immediately rose up from his seat and stood with his clasped hands raised. The Blessed One thrilled the brahmin with rapture by showing himself and having found out the congeniality of both, addressed Piṅgiya alone and spoke this stanza starting with: "**Yathā ahū Vakkali.**" On its conclusion, Piṅgiya attained Arahantship, Bāvarī became a non-returner and the five hundred pupils of the brahmin Bāvarī became Stream-winners.

Nigamanakathā

In this colophon, the commentator revealed his identity as **Mahāvihāravāsīnaṃ Buddhaghoso** and named his commentary on the Suttanipāta as **Paramatthajotikā**.