

Suttanipāta Commentary

Translated
by the
Burma Piṭaka Association



Suttanipāta Commentary

Translated
by the
Burma Piṭaka Association



Edited by Bhikkhu Pesala
for the
© Association for Insight Meditation
November 2018

All Rights Reserved

You may print copies for your personal use or for Free Distribution as a Gift of the Dhamma. Please do not host it on your own web site, but link to [the source page](#) so that any updates or corrections will be available to all.

Contents

Editor's Foreword.....	vii
Translator's Preface.....	viii
I. Urugavagga (Snake Chapter).....	ix
1. Uruga Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	ix
2. Dhaniya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	x
3. Khaggavisāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xi
4. Kasibhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xi
5. Cunda Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xii
6. Parābhava Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xii
7. Aggikabhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xiii
8. Metta Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xiii
9. Hemavata Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xiv
10. Āḷavaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xiv
11. Vijaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xv
12. Muni Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xv
II. Cūlavagga (Minor Chapter).....	xvi
1. Ratana Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xvi
2. Āmagandha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xvii
3. Hiri Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xviii
4. Maṅgala Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xix
5. Sūciloma Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xx
6. Kapila (Dhammacariya) Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxi
7. Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxi
8. Nava (Dhamma) Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxii
9. Kiṃsīla Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxii
10. Uṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxii
11. Rāhula Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxiii
12. Nigrodhakappa (Vaṅḡsa) Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxiii
13. Sammāparibbājanīya (Mahāsamaya) Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxiii
14. Dhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxv
III. Mahāvagga (Great Chapter).....	xxv
1. Pabbajjā Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxv
2. Padhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvi
3. Subhāsita Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvi
4. Pūralāsa (Sundarikabhāradvāja) Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvi
5. Māgha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvi
6. Sabhiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvi
7. Sela Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxvii
8. Salla Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxviii
9. Vāseṭṭha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxviii
10. Kokālika Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxviii
11. Nālaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxix
12. Dvayatānupassanā Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxx

IV. Atthakavagga (Chapter of the Eights).....	xxx
1. Kāma Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxx
2. Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxī
3. Duṭṭhatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxī
4. Suddhatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxii
5. Paramatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxii
6. Jarā Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxiii
7. Tissa-Metteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxiii
8. Pasūra Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxiv
9. Māgaṇḍiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxiv
10. Purābheda Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxv
11. Kalahavivāda Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxv
12. Cūḷabyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxv
13. Mahābyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxvi
14. Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxvi
15. Attadaṇḍa Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxvi
16. Sāriputta Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxvii
V. Pārāyana Vagga	xxxviii
Vatthu Gāthā Vaṇṇanā.....	xxxviii
1. Ajita Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xl
2. Tissametteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xli
3. Puṇṇaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xli
4. Mettagū Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xli
5. Dhotaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xli
6. Upasīva Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xlii
7. Nanda Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xlii
8. Hemaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xlii
9. Todeyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xlii
10. Kappa Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xlii
11. Jatukaṇṇi Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliii
12. Bhadrāvudha Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliii
13. Udaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliii
14. Posāla Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliii
15. Mogharāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliv
16. Piṅgiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā.....	xliv
Pārāyanatṭhuti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā.....	xlv
Pārāyanānugiti Gāthā Vaṇṇanā.....	xlv
Nigamanakathā.....	xlvi
Commentary on the Suttanipāta	
Foreword (Ganthārambhakathā).....	1
I. The Snake Chapter (Uragavagga).....	1
1. Commentary on the Uraga Sutta.....	1
2. Commentary on the Dhaniya Sutta.....	34
3. Commentary on the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta.....	58
4. Commentary on the Kasibhāradvāja Sutta.....	162
5. The Commentary on the Cunda Sutta.....	198

6. Commentary on the Parābhava Sutta.....	209
7. Commentary on the Aggika Bhāradvāja Sutta.....	218
8. Commentary on the Metta Sutta.....	243
9. Commentary on the Hemavata Sutta.....	269
10. Commentary on the Ālavaka Sutta.....	300
11. Commentary on the Vijaya sutta.....	332
12. Commentary on the Muni Sutta.....	350
II. Minor Chapter (Cūlavagga).....	383
1. Commentary on the Ratana Sutta.....	383
2. Commentary on the Āmagandha Sutta.....	440
3. Commentary on the Hiri Sutta.....	461
4. Commentary on the Maṅgala Sutta.....	469
5. Commentary on the Sūciloma Sutta.....	521
6. Commentary on the Kapila Sutta (Dhammacariya Sutta).....	528
7. Commentary on the Brāhamaṇadhammika Sutta.....	538
8. Commentary on the Dhamma Sutta (Nāvā Sutta).....	560
9. Commentary on the Kiṃsīla Sutta.....	569
10. Commentary on the Uṭṭhāna Sutta.....	577
11. Commentary on the Rāhula Sutta.....	583
12. Commentary on the Nigrodhakappa Sutta (Vaṅgīsa Sutta).....	591
13. Commentary on the Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta (Mahāsamaya Sutta).....	602
14. Commentary on the Dhammika Sutta.....	624
III. Great Chapter (Mahāvagga).....	641
1. Commentary on the Pabbajjā Sutta.....	641
2. Commentary on the Padhāna Sutta.....	648
3. Commentary on the Subhāsita Sutta.....	660
4. Commentary on the Pūraḷasa Sutta.....	669
5. Commentary on the Māgha Sutta.....	687
6. Commentary on the Subhiya Sutta.....	695
7. Commentary on the Sela Sutta.....	720
8. Commentary on the Salla Sutta.....	746
9. Commentary on the Vāseṭṭha Sutta.....	752
10. Commentary on the Kokālika Sutta.....	768
11. Commentary on the Nālaka Sutta.....	781
12. Commentary on the Dvayatanupassanā Sutta.....	812
IV. Chapter of the Eights (Aṭṭhakavagga).....	828
1. Commentary on the Kāma Sutta.....	828
2. Commentary on the Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta.....	832
3. Commentary on the Duṭṭhaṭṭhaka Sutta.....	839
4. Commentary on the Suddhaṭṭhaka Sutta.....	846
5. Commentary on the Paramaṭṭhaka Sutta.....	854
6. Commentary on the Jarā Sutta.....	857
7. Commentary on the Tissa-Metteyya Sutta.....	861
8. Commentary on the Pasūra Sutta.....	865
9. Commentary on the Māgaṇḍiya Sutta.....	872
10. Commentary on the Purābheda Sutta.....	881

11. Commentary on the Kalahavevāda Sutta.....	886
12. Commentary on the Cūlabyūha Sutta.....	891
13. Commentary on the Mahābyuha Sutta.....	897
14. Commentary on the Tuvaṭaka Sutta.....	904
15. Commentary on the Attadaṇḍa Sutta.....	910
16. Commentary on the Sāriputta Sutta.....	915
V. Chapter on the Way to the Beyond (Pārāyanavagga).....	923
1. Commentary on the Vatthu Gāthā.....	923
2. Commentary on the Ajita Sutta.....	937
3. Commentary on the Tissa-Metteyya Sutta.....	940
4. Commentary on the Puṇṇaka Sutta.....	941
5. Commentary on the Mettagū Sutta.....	943
6. Commentary on the Dhotaka Sutta.....	946
7. Commentary on Upasīva Sutta.....	947
8. Commentary on the Nanda Sutta.....	950
9. Commentary on the Hemaka Sutta.....	951
10. Commentary on the Todeyya Sutta.....	952
11. Commentary on the Kappa Sutta.....	952
12. Commentary on the Jatukaṇṇi Sutta.....	953
13. Commentary on the Bhadrāvudha Sutta.....	954
14. Commentary on the Udaya Sutta.....	955
15. Commentary on the Posāla Sutta.....	957
16. Commentary on the Mogharāja Sutta.....	958
17. Commentary on the Piṅgiya Sutta.....	960
Commentary on the verse of Pārāyanatthuti.....	961
Commentary on the verse of Pārāyanānugīti.....	962
Colophon.....	966

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 to 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 Tuvataka Sutta,” and “A Discourse on the Sammāparibbājjaniya 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 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 less well-known. I have also published an *Exposition of the Salla Sutta*, and a page on the *Āmagandha Sutta*.

The words marked in **bold and dark blue** are quoted from the 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 merged into one. This first draft was put together quickly to make the work available as soon as practical. As time permits, I will do a more thorough editorial job 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 when 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
December 2018

Translator's Preface

This Suttanipāta 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 (*dhhammadāna*) by finishing my English translation of the five books of Aṭṭhakathā comprising two volumes of Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, otherwise known as Visuddhajana-vilasīnī, 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 chapters (*vagga*) namely 1) Uragavagga (the chapter about a snake), 2) Cūlavagga (the minor chapter), 3) Mahāvagga (the great chapter), 4) Aṭṭhakavagga (the chapter of octads or eight verses), and 5) Pārāyana vagga (the final chapter).

In the Uragavagga 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:—

“Gāthāsatasamākinno, geyyabyākaraṇaṅkito.

‘Kasmā ‘Suttanipāto’ti, Saṅkhamesa gato’ti ce?

Suvuttato savanato, atthānaṃ suṭṭhu tāṇato.

Sūcanā sūdanā c’eva, yasmā suttāṃ pavuccati.

Tathārūpāni suttāni, nipātetvā tato tato.

Samūhato ayaṃ tasmā, saṅkhamevamupāgato.

Sabbāni cāpi suttāni, pamāṇantena tādino.

Vacanāni ayaṃ tesāṃ, nipāto ca yato tato.

Aññasaṅkhānimittānaṃ, 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.

I. Urugavagga (Snake Chapter)

1. Uruga 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 the Uruga Sutta is the first. The Uruga Sutta starts with the verse:—

*“Yo uppatitaṃ vineti kodhaṃ visaṭaṃ sappaviṣaṃ va osadhehi;
so bhikkhu jahāti orapāraṃ, urago jīṇṇamivattacaṃ purānaṃ.”*ti

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

A monk who removes his arisen anger like expelling the venom of a poisonous snake, which has spread, using a variety of medicines, forsakes the ten worldly fetters, as a snake forsakes its worn-out skin.

The second verse 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 elder Sāriputta, whom he attended, when the Blessed One came to find out if the candidate had successfully carried out the meditation exercise he had prescribed, superseding the one given by his chief disciple. At the end of the teaching the monk became established in Arahantship.

The verse beginning with **yo taṇhamudacchida** was spoken by the Blessed One while he was residing in Sāvatti to teach the Dhamma to a bhikkhu who, while staying on the shore of a lotus lake harboured wild thoughts under the influence of craving. 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 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 path which totally cut asunder the reed-bridge-like defilements. 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 verses of the Uruga Sutta are of the same origin. While residing at Jetavana, an occasion arose for the Buddha to use 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 verse 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 like the worn-out skin forsaken by a snake.

2. Dhaniya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The first verse begins with **pakkodano** which says 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 discourse was taught by the Buddha while residing in Sāvatti. The commentator Buddhaghosa graphically described the life of a cattle-breeder of great wealth, as the name Dhaniya implies. 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 cattle-breeder spoke of his self-sufficiency and material wealth, followed by the Buddha's rejoinder echoing his absence of anger and other defects and abundance of spiritual wealth. At the end of the conversation the cowherd became convinced that such material possessions as sons and daughters, slaves and servants, cattle and cash were only transitory, creating grief and worry. Consequently, both the husband and his wife became recluses and realised Arahantship.

3. Khaggavisāṇa Sutta Vaṇṇanā

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

4. Kasībhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā

While the Blessed One was residing at a brahmin village in Dakkhināgiri, in Magadha, the Blessed One saw in his survey of the world, Kasībhāradvāja, a brahmin to be sufficiently suited for Arahantship. The commentator begins by describing the Buddha's daily routine in detail, working tirelessly morning, noon, and night for the welfare of the entire world including the celestial realms. Accordingly, the Buddha engaged himself early the next morning, put on his lower garment, took his bowl and robe, and stood where the brahmin would see him. Accordingly, the brahmin saw the Buddha standing begging for almsfood and spoke of being a farmer who ploughed his field and sowed seeds (**kasāmi ca vapāmi ca**) ridiculing the latter's reliance on donors. The Buddha's rejoinder to the brahmin was that he was a cultivator who ploughed the earth and sowed seeds. When challenged by the brahmin to show his ploughing equipment and seeds, the Buddha explained the allegory that confidence (**saddhā**) was the seeds; moral shame (**hiri**) the beam, wisdom (**paññā**) was the yoke and plough, mindfulness (**sati**) the ploughshare and goad. Body (**kāya**) and speech (**vaci**) are well-guarded (**gutto**), I am moderate in food (**āhāre udare**). By means of truth (**saccam**), the reaping (**niddānam**) was done, forbearance (**soraccam**) sets me free (**pamocanam**). Unlike the brahmin's ox, yoked to the plough, which would turn once it had reached the end of the field, the Buddha's plough kept going without turning, (**anivattantam**), until it reached freedom from bondage (**yogakkhema**). Having arrived there (**yattha gantvā**), one does not grieve (**na socati**).

Having heard the profound teaching of the Buddha, the brahmin became pious and offered milk-rice (**pāyāsa**) in his own gold tray, worth a hundred thousand, to the Tathāgata, who declined the offer, giving an opportunity to show a miracle. The farmer was awe-stricken and sought life-long refuge in the Buddha, asking for the going-forth in faith. Consequently, he became fully endowed with wisdom. 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 verse beginning with “I ask the sage” (**pucchāmi munim**). By the nature of the question, the Buddha immediately understood that it referred to the evil monk. To give an appropriate answer, therefore, the Buddha gave his definition of a genuine recluse.

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 celestial king Sakka gave orders to a certain celestial youth to ask the Buddha about the path to ruin (**parābhava**). The celestial youth (*devaputta*) duly did so. In response to the request made by Sakka’s delegate, the Buddha enumerated the path to ruin thus:—

One who is dear to the wicked (**asanto piyo**), and does nothing to be dear to good people (**sante na kurute piyaṃ**), has the habit of laziness (**niddāsīli**) and fond of society (**sabhāsīli**), he is idle (**anuttthāta**), lazy (**alaso**), and irascible (**kodhapaññāṇo**), he does not support (**na bharati**) his aged parents though leading a comfortable life (**pahusanto**) and capable of looking after them. He deceives recluses, brahmins, and others with falsehood (**musāvādena vañceti**). Although wealthy (**pahūtavitto**), flush with gold and provisions, he enjoys them by himself, consuming them in private without even sharing them with his own children. Proud of his lineage (**jātitthaddho**), he belittles his own relatives (**sañātiṃ atimaññeti**). He is a womaniser (**itthidhutto**), a drunkard (**surādhutto**) and a gambler (**akkhadhutto**). Not content with his own wife (**sehi dārehi**) he has intercourse with courtesans (**vesiyāsu padussati**) and the wives of others (**paradāresu**). Though long past his youth, he brings (**āneti**) as a wife a young woman with breasts like timbaru fruits (**timbarutthanim**), spending sleepless nights jealously watching over his unwilling partner (**tassā issā na supati**). Placing in authority a man or woman who is addicted to drink (**soṇḍim**) a spendthrift (**vikiraṇim**) with many opportunities to accept bribes. A person of meagre wealth (**appabhago**), but strong craving (**mahātaṇho**), from an influential family (**khattiye jāyate kule**) who aspires to sovereignty (**rajjam**), is ruined.

7. Aggikabhāradvāja Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Aggikabhāradvāja,¹ a fire-worshipping brahmin, considered the sight of a shaven-headed recluse on the occasion of rituals to be inauspicious. The Buddha saw him in his divine-eye, while residing at Jetavana, as one suited to become a disciple. In the course of begging for almsfood from door to door (**sapadānam**) the Buddha reached the residence of Aggikabhāradvāja who had bathed himself and was busy with his preparations for fire worship. As soon as he saw the Blessed One, he lost his temper and addressed the teacher harshly with words of abuse using the term outcaste (**vasala**). The Buddha pointed out that parentage is not the primary factor to be an outcaste and that the status of an outcaste must be determined by deeds. Thus, one who is angry (**kodhano**), malicious (**upanāhi**), an evil-minded hypocrite (**pāpamakkhī**) of perverse views (**vipannadiṭṭhi**), and a fraud (**māyāvī**) is known as an outcaste. Who kills living beings or treats them cruelly (**pāṇam vihimsati**) without compassion (**dayā n'atthi**) is known as an outcaste. Who plunders villages and towns by besieging them (**parirundhati**) is known as an outcaste. Who steals or robs the belongings of others in a village or forest is known as an outcaste. Having incurred a debt (**īṇamādāyā**), one who denies it on being pressed by a creditor is known as an outcaste. One who is a mugger, stealing even trifling things (**kiñcikkhakamyatā**) from those on the street is known as an outcaste. One who, for his own sake (**attahetu**), for the sake of others (**parahetu**), or for wealth (**dhanahetu**), when questioned as a witness (**sakkhipuṭṭho**), speaks falsehood (**musā brūti**) is known as an outcaste. One who has illicit sex, whether by force (**sāhasā**) or by mutual affection (**sampiyenā**) with the wives of his relatives or friends is known as an outcaste. Who does not support his aged parents in spite of having abundant means to do so (**pahu santo na bharati**) is known as an outcaste. These and other evils and bad manners make one an outcaste.

8. Metta Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Blessed One taught this discourse for the purpose of providing protecting and for the benefit of a meditation exercise for the monks who were harassed by tree deities in the foothills of the Himalayas. They had approached him to ask for his advice due to the troubles they were having. After criticising the monks for infringing the rule of discipline by departing from their rains retreat (*vassa*), the Buddha admonished them to develop the meditation on loving-kindness.

¹ This discourse is named the Vasala Sutta in the Pāli text.

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 mass of gold and at whose time the span of human life extended up to sixteen thousand years. In the wake of a super-shrine having been set up over the relics of that Buddha, two young friends entered the Order in the presence of the surviving disciples, consequently to become two ogre leaders of celestial power 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 the Himalayas and the latter in the middle country of India. Subsequently, the Buddha Gotama arise in the world with wonderful phenomena such as earthquakes all over the continent of the Rose-apple (Jambudīpa). Consequently, both the ogre generals, accompanied by their armies left their homes to redeem their pledges by informing one another of the strange and surprising phenomena that each had seen and heard, which they did when they met half-way. Sātāgiri, thereafter, took his friend Hemavata to the Buddha of whom they uttered words of praise and to whom they put 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 a daily supply of human individuals in such a way as to create a crisis that involved the risk of life of his own son. The sovereign's son, however, escaped from this eventuality to later become a novice disciple 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. 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 an age when the child could attend on the Blessed One and the Order of monks. Subsequently, after having been established in the fruition of a non-returner **Ālavaka** mastered the teachings of the Buddha, secured a retinue of five hundred devotees 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 sāvakaṇa, upasakānaṃ catūhi saṅgaha-
vatthūhi parisam saṅganhantānaṃ yadidaṃ Hatthako Ālavako.”*

11. Vijaya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Commentator Buddhaghosa mentioned two different origins of this discourse, as it was spoken by the Blessed One on two occasions. The first 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 the Dhammapada Commentary beginning with:—

“Āturaṃ asuciṃ pūtiṃ passa Nande samussayaṃ.” (DhpA.iii.117)

Having heard the entire verse, Nandā became a Stream-winner. Subsequently, the Buddha taught this Vijaya Sutta to Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā to serve as a meditation subject for the purpose of achieving the higher paths. The second occasion for the teaching of this Vijaya Sutta by the Buddha occurred at Rājagaha regarding the beauty of Sirimā the courtesan, the younger sister of Jīvaka, when a monk became infatuated and confined to bed without eating. While that monk was behaving in this way Sirimā died. Under royal orders, her body was laid bare at the cemetery to be seen by everybody including the love-sick monk who became disillusioned over the gradual decomposition and disintegration of her corpse. To admonish the remorse-stricken monk and teach the Dhamma to the assembled audience, the Buddha taught the discourse, 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 obvious defects on closer inspection.

12. Muni Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Buddhaghosa enlightened his readers that the first four verses of the sutta were spoken by the Blessed One in blaming a poverty-stricken widow and her only son, who after having entered the Order, went about together

enjoyed their gains. Later, having disrobed, they lived as husband and wife, regardless of being mother and son. To arouse shame in others the remaining portion of the discourse was employed by the Buddha to teach the Dhamma describing the definition of a sage as assessed by the wise.

The Commentary on the Muni Sutta is complete.

II. Cūlavagga (Minor Chapter)

1. Ratana Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The Blessed One taught this discourse for the purpose of dispelling the calamity that Vesāli was facing due to famine and its consequences. In commenting on this discourse, Buddhaghosa gave the origin of the Licchavī clan and their capital city with the title 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 after a 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 outside the city, non-human beings entered it and epidemic diseases arose in every locality. Consequently, all the kings and people of Vesāli sent two of their sovereigns with many gifts to the presence of King Bimbisāra at Rājagaha to request him to persuade the Blessed One to travel to Vesāli out of compassion.

In response to the royal request of the Licchavī, King Bimbisāra arranged for the two messengers to meet the Buddha. They approached and informed him of the calamity in their homeland. The Blessed One consented when he foresaw the boundless benefits that could be bestowed, not only on the people of Vesāli, but also on the entire world by his teaching of the Ratana Sutta to the Licchavī and all the people of the city. Buddhaghosa mentions how King Bimbisāra arranged the joyful journey of the Buddha to Vesāli with comfort and ceremony and how the Licchavī nobles greeted the Blessed One with even greater honour than that done by King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha.

Immediately after the arrival of the Blessed One at Vesāli, the celestial king Sakka, followed by his crowd of devas, came to pay homage to him. With the assembling together of the deities of great power, numerous non-human beings fled with fright. Under the instruction of the Blessed One, the Venerable Ānanda memorised the Ratana Sutta to ward off the calamity from the residents of Vesāli. He fetched water using the begging bowl of the Buddha and wandered around the 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 elder, the non-human beings, who previously hid in garbage heaps, wall-corners and so forth, fled through the four city gates. Those who could not get out at the gates broke through the city walls and went away hurriedly for good. Later, seated in the assembly hall at the centre of the city, the Blessed One taught the Ratana Sutta to the huge audience comprising the entire Order of monks inclusive of Ānanda, the celestial crowd headed by Sakka and the citizens of Vesālī led by the Licchavi nobles. At the end of the teaching, the previous prosperity of the city was restored, which was completely cleansed by a heavy shower of rain as a result of the recitation of the Ratana Sutta as a protection, which was the Buddha's solemn statement of truth (*saccavacana*), and which resulted in the realisation of the truth by eighty-four thousand living beings.

2. Āmagandha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The commentator traced the origin of this discourse 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 Himalayas where he had a hermitage built and lived on forest fruits and roots, absolutely abstaining from fish and meat. Due to deficiency of salt all of the hermits suffered from jaundice (**paṇḍuroga**). Consequently, the hermits had to go to a border village to beg for salt and sour nourishment (**loṇambilādini**). 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 villages. Subsequently, the Blessed One arose in the world and in the course of turning the Wheel of Truth, arrived at Sāvatti. While residing there, the Blessed One 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-returns, and Non-returns, 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 been benefited. As soon as the ascetic Āmagandha heard of the Buddha, he and his pupils immediately proceeded as directed to reach the

presence of the Blessed One in Jetavana at Sāvatti, where the Buddha was seated to teach the Dhamma, when the ascetics arrived. After exchanging friendly greetings, the ascetic Āmagandha enquired of the Blessed One as to whether the latter, in taking his daily meal, avoided the eating of fish and meat, which he considered to be a foul stench (**āmagandha**). The Buddha replied that meat and fish could not be considered as stench; on the other hand, all forms of depravity and evil deeds must be understood as stench. 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 had asked about the same subject. The hermit was humbled and entered monkhood to attain Arahantship along with his retinue.

3. Hiri Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Prior to the arising of the Buddha Gotama, there lived in Sāvatti a brahmin banker with bountiful wealth of eight hundred million. He had a single son who was handsome, lovely and dear to his heart and who grew up like a celestial youth. When both his parents died intestate, the custodian of the family property fulfilled his 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 with them even a portion of their property though they had accumulated. 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 Sāvatti gave great charity to amass the wealth of good conduct until he had depleted all of his material wealth.

Later, he became an austere ascetic (**vaṇṭamuttika**) living on fallen fruits and leaves. He went far into the forest beyond the foothills of the Himalayas, had a hermitage built and lived there. Thereafter, the Buddha Gotama appeared in the world, set turning the Wheel of the Dhamma, gradually reached Sāvatti and resided at Jetavana, the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika. From a citizen of Sāvatti, who happened to have reached his hermitage, while searching for sandalwood and other forest fragrances, 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 paṇṇākāra**) 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 Sāvatti. 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 verses beginning with **Hirim tarantam** defining a shameless scoundrel who should not be associated with, a faithful friend who should be followed and the method of making an effort.

4. Maṅgala Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Buddhaghosa gave the origin of the Maṅgala Sutta thus:-

In many assembly halls, in countless towns 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, 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 (**ditthamaṅgalika**) claimed that he understood exactly what a blessing was, which would comprise such visible objects (**rūpa**) as had been highly recognised (**abhisammata**) as auspicious and cited such cases as the sight of a talking bird (**cātakasakuṇa**), a musical instrument (**beluvalatthi**), an expectant mother (**gabbhini**), a youth (**kumāraka**), a well-dressed and decorated damsel (**alaṅkatapatiyatte**), a jar full of water (**punṇaghaṭa**), a fresh red fish (**allarohitamaccha**), a thorough-bred horse (**ājañña**), a chariot drawn by a thorough-bred horse (**ājaññaratham**), a powerful bull (**usabha**) or a cow (**gāvi**), 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 blessings, which must be what had been heard highly auspiciously, namely: news of past and present prosperity (**vaddha vaddhamāna**), the statement of being brimful (**punṇa**), having been permeated (**phussa**), delighted (**sumana**), splendid (**siri**), greatly graced (**sirivaddha**); the talk of today as being astronomically auspicious (**sunakkhatta**) etc., heard by one who had just awakened from his night-long sleep.

A exponent of excellent experience (**mutamaṅgalika**) suggested, after claiming complete comprehension of blessings, that the feeling of sweet smell, taste and touch, excellently experienced by one who had got out of bed at day-break, must be regarded as a blessing.

Since no one in the assembly could be convinced to understand 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 celestial realms too, provoking a cosmic portent (**maṅgala kolāhala**).

Incidentally, Buddhaghosa mentions five types (**pañcavidha**) of cosmic portents of events coming in the near future (**kolāhala**) namely: the celestial announcement of the destruction of the world (**kappakolāhala**), of the imminent arrival of a world-turning king (**Cakkavatti kolāhala**), of the appearance of a Fully Enlightened One (**Buddha kolāhala**) after a thousand years, an announcement by the Suddhavāsa Brahmā about the teaching of the Maṅgala Sutta by the Buddha within twelve years (**Maṅgala kolāhala**) and foretelling of highest wisdom (**Moneyya kolāhala**).

Accordingly, Sakka the king of devas, realising that it was his duty to settle a controversy of twelve years' standing, convened a conference of all celestial beings and sent a dutiful celestial-youth to the presence of the Blessed One to hear what the master had to say about blessings. Immediately, the young deva dressed and decorated himself so that he was shining brightly like lightning, and proceeded to the Jetavana monastery where he arrived at midnight. He paid homage to the Blessed One and put the question about blessings in a single verse. In answer to his question, the Blessed One taught the Maṅgala Sutta enumerating thirty-eight things to do and abstain from for one's welfare in the current life-time and hereafter.

5. Sūciloma Sutta Vaṅṅanā

The commentator traced the origin of this discourse to the occasion when the Buddha came and occupied the splendid seat of the ogre Sūciloma since the Blessed One 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 the ogre Khara 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 to escape from *samsāra*. At the end of this discourse, both ogres became Stream-winners.

6. Kapila (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,¹ 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 conscientious 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 Aciravati 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 discourse 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 suffering.

7. Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta Vaṇṇanā

In this discourse, the Buddha spoke nine verses giving a description of ancient brahmins (**porāṇānaṃ brāhmaṇānaṃ vaṇṇaṃ bhāsivā**) identifying them with brahmā and deva by verses beginning with: **Yo nesam paramo** and **Tassa vattamanusikkhantā** demarcating the boundary (**mariyādaṃ**) by means of four verses beginning with: **Taṇḍulaṃ sayanam**.

The Blessed One then spoke seventeen verses beginning with: **Tesaṃ āsi vipallāso**, stating the split of the boundary (**sambhinnamariyādam**) and terminated his teaching (**desanaṃ nitthāpesi**).

¹ The Pāli text names this as the Dhammacariya Sutta. The Commentary calls it the Kapila Sutta, but also gives the alternative name.

8. Nava (Dhamma) Sutta Vaṇṇanā

This discourse¹ was spoken by the Blessed One in connection with the Venerable Sāriputta who was often seen by his fellow monks paying homage 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, becoming his chief disciple and commander-in-chief of the faith as well as being proclaimed the foremost among monks of great wisdom. The elder'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 celestial ear and disillusioned them by telling them that the Venerable Sāriputta was paying homage to his first teacher and spoke this discourse for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma to the assembled audience.

9. Kimsila Sutta Vaṇṇanā

A son of a vastly wealthy brahmin, a lay associate of the Venerable Sāriputta, having renounced his fortune of five billion, six hundred million, became a monk in the presence of the elder and studied in full the entire teaching of the Blessed One (**sabbam Buddhavacana pariyāpuṇi**). In every respect the elder admonished his disciple and gave him the meditation exercise to be carried out, but the latter did not gain any attainment. Consequently, the elder took his pupil to the Blessed One who taught the Dhamma, which served as preliminary proper practice (**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

The Blessed One spoke this discourse for the sake of teaching the Dhamma to the five hundred newly ordained monks who had been put to fright and made remorse-stricken by Mahā-Moggallāna, at Migārāmatupāsāda in Sāvattthi, as instructed by the Blessed One, because they were being negligent. At the end of the teaching, all five hundred new monks became repentant, established in themselves mindful of that teaching, developed insight, and gained Arahantship.

¹ The Pāli text names this as the Nava Sutta. The Commentary calls it the Dhamma Sutta, but also gives the alternative name.

11. Rāhula Sutta Vaṅṅanā

While the Blessed One 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 instructed the Venerable Sāriputta to ordain Rāhula as a novice. Later, when Rāhula had grown up, he was ordained by the Venerable Sāriputta, assisted by Mahā-Moggallāna as the *kammavācācariya*. From the time when the prince was young until he attained the stage of a Noble One, the Blessed One always taught this discourse to admonish his son so that he would not be proud about his noble parentage, clan, etc. At the end of the teaching of the Cūlarāhulovāda Sutta, Rāhula became established in Arahantship, along with many thousand deities.

12. Nigrodhakappa (Vaṅṅisa) Sutta Vaṅṅanā

The commentator Buddhaghosa gave the previous life story of the Venerable Vaṅṅisa¹ who was ordained by the Venerable Nigrodhakappa on the instruction of the Buddha. By carrying out the meditation on the five repulsive aspects of the body ending with skin (*tacapañcaka kammaṭṭhāna*) given by Nigrodhakappa, in due course the Venerable Vaṅṅisa became an Arahant on whom the honour of foremost amongst monks who possessed ready-wit was bestowed by the Buddha. Since he had a high regard and deep respect for his spiritual preceptor Nigrodhakappa, the early verses in this discourse constitute an anxious enquiry made to the Blessed One by the Venerable Vaṅṅisa on the demise of his preceptor (*upajjhāya*) whether he had attained parinibbāna and the remaining verses were uttered by the Buddha in reply to allay his doubts.

13. Sammāparibbājanīya (Mahāsamaya) Sutta Vaṅṅanā

The commentator Buddhaghosa here begins by giving the origin of the Sākya clan.² Thereafter, he traced the origin of the Koliyā clan. Subsequently, he spoke of intermarriage between the Sākya and the Koliyā. Accordingly the Sākya Suddhodana, the eldest of the five sons of Sīhahanu married the Koliyā Mahāmāyā-devī, the eldest daughter of Añjana, who gave birth to Siddhattha, the prince who became the Buddha. In due course, the Blessed One arrived back at his native city, Kapilavatthu, established his father

¹ The Pāli text names this the Nigrodhakappa Sutta. The Commentary also gives the alternative name as the Vaṅṅisa Sutta.

² The Pāli text names this the Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta. The Commentary also gives the alternative name as the Mahāsamaya Sutta. Six discourses were given on this Great Occasion when many Arahants and deities assembled. See the [Purābheda Sutta](#) and those following it.

Suddhodana and Sākya princes as Noble Ones and later lived with fifteen hundred monks at the Banyan grove (Nigrodhārāma) in Kapilavatthu. On that occasion, a dispute arose between the Sākya and Koliya in connection with irrigation water, which had to be carried across the river Rohiṇī in every low-water season, by both Sākya and Koliya, 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 the Blessed One 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 Sākya and Koliya each offered to the Blessed One 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 the Blessed One in Mahāvana, they became dissatisfied because their former wives kept on sending messages to them. To dispel their dissatisfaction the Buddha took them to the Himalayas 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 showed itself last in the procession.

The monks were awestruck 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 Kuṇāla Rājā, at the request of the five hundred monks. Having heard it, the displeasure in the monkhood of those monks, due to disturbance by their former wives, disappeared. Subsequently, the Blessed One spoke to them on the Noble Truths (**sacca kathaṃ**).

At the end of the teaching, the five hundred monks achieved at least the stage of Stream-winning and at best attained the stage of Non-returning; not one of them remained as an ordinary person (*puthujjana*), but none became an Arahant. However, by means of their own mystic powers, they followed close behind the Buddha when the latter returned to Mahāvana. 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 lifetime of the Blessed One, a devotee named Dhammika lived up to his name by being righteous. He took refuge in the triple gem (**saraṇasampanno**), was endowed with moral precepts, was greatly learned, had memorised the Tipiṭaka, was a Non-returner, with higher knowledge (**abhiññālābhi**) 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 in him beyond the mid-night hour (**majjhimayāmasāne**) an intention to ask the Buddha about the proper practice (**paṭipadā**) 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 vāṇijjam**); with the income accruing from that kind of commerce, he should support his parents by means of his lawfully acquired wealth (**dhammena bhogena mātāpitāro bhareyya**). Doing this duty diligently, that householder, on the dissolution of his body, would approach the celestial domain, where darkness is dispelled by one's own rays of light (**sayampabhā**).

III. Mahāvagga (Great Chapter)

1. Pabbajjā Sutta Vaṇṇanā

While the Blessed One was residing in Sāvatti, the Venerable Ānanda taught this discourse relating the renunciation of the Blessed One to the monks. The elder narrated the arrival of the Bodhisatta at Rājagaha for alms after his departure from the bank of the Anomā river. Wandering about the streets of the city for alms, the Bodhisatta was sighted by King Bimbisāra, who had his messenger offer almsfood until the almsbowl was full. He followed the recluse to his destination since the sovereign was impressed by his glorious personality and perfect purity. The messenger informed the king that the stranger was taking his meal on Mount Paṇḍava. When the king learnt that the recluse was the son of the Sākya Suddhodana, he offered him his sovereignty. This offer was declined, but he secured a promise that his kingdom would be the first to be honoured with a visit by the Buddha.

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 arduous striving (**padhāna**) for six full years. Accordingly, the Buddha taught this discourse narrating how Māra met him and tried to dissuade him from striving, then later attacked him with his army. Then he told of his final 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 discourse, wherein the definition in detail is given of well-spoken speech (**subhāsita**).

4. Pūraḷāsa (Sundarikabhāradvāja) Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Surveying the world by means of the eye of the Buddha one afternoon, the Blessed One found the brahmin Sundarika Bhāradvāja¹ 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 a 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 a conversation with him and taught this discourse.

5. Māgha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Māgha was a young man (**māṇava**), a donor and a master of charity (**dāyako ahosi 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 Blessed One gave an answer commensurate with the question. The Māgha Sutta comprises the question raised by Māgha while the Blessed One was residing on Vultures’ Peak in Rājagaha and the answer made by the Blessed One 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

¹ The Pāli text names this the Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta. The Commentary gives the alternative name as the Pūraḷāsa Sutta.

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 (**nānāsathāni uggahetvā**), became a great exponent of views (**mahāvādī**), wandered all over Jambudīpa, challenging every philosopher to debate with him. After finding that he was peerless, he had a hermitage built at the city gate and lived there teaching the arts and sciences to young princely warriors (**khattiya kumāra**). 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 the Blessed One soon after he met him. The answers made by the Blessed One were satisfactory to Sabhiya so that he spoke a verse 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 enquiring, Sela heard of the Blessed One with his one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples, who had been invited for the next-day's meal by the ascetic with braided hair. Immediately after he had heard about the Buddha and his whereabouts Sela was desirous of meeting the Blessed One, whose presence he reached and satisfied himself with the handsome personality, golden complexion and thirty-two characteristics of a great man (*mahāpurisalakkhaṇā*) which the Buddha possessed. To make Sela more convinced of his being a spiritual sovereign, the Buddha declared himself to be the incomparable righteous sovereign (**Dhammarājā anuttaro**) 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 intent 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 due to the death of his son. Out of compassion for him, the Blessed One went to his house and taught this discourse 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. Vāseṭṭha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

First, the origin of the name Pokkharasāti was given as he was found in a lotus in a pond. Jāṇussoṇi was the royal chaplain (*purohita*), so he was named thus. The commentator later mentions Icchānaṅgala village where all well-known and renowned brahmin bankers lived for the purpose of recitation and all-round investigation of their charms (**vedasajjhāyanapari-vimaṃsanattham**). 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 and Jāṇussoṇi would intermittently (**antarantarā**) go and stay in that village.

On their way to that 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 discourse detailing the requisite qualifications of a true brahmin who must be judged not by his family lineage, 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 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 Rains Retreat (*vassa*) 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 requisites from the citizens of Kokālika, he approached the two elders, censured them with rude remarks, and proceeded at once to report the matter to the Blessed One. The Blessed One told Kokālika that he was committing a serious sin by falsely accusing and abusing the two chief disciples. Kokālika, however, was obstinate; he would not apologise although admonished again by an Non-returner brahmā. Immediately after he had shown that he incorrigible, all over the body of Kokālika boils and blisters, sores and ulcers arose, and he became the target of blame with shouts of shame made by multitudes of monks and laymen, devas and brahmā.

Finally, Kokālika died and was reborn in the Lotus hell. 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 comprising countless millions of years, comparable to counting sesame seeds in twenty cartloads of a *khārī* capacity.

11. Nālaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The hermit Nālaka was the nephew of the ascetic Asita who previously was the royal chaplain of the sovereign Sīhahanu, the father of Suddhodana, who as a prince was the pupil of the chaplain in political science. After developing the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) and five higher knowledges (*abhiññā*), while staying in the royal garden in response to the request of the sovereign Suddhodana, the ascetic Asita was able to travel to the Himalayas and the celestial realms, where he would spend the afternoon when he had finished 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 celestial throne in Tāvatiṃsa, as he spent the afternoon, experiencing the sweet serenity of concentration from which he arose at sunset, when at the point of his departure he heard the resounding requests made by various 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 definitely become a Buddha, but he was sad that he himself would not survive to listen to the Dhamma that 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 once, assigned to him all the duties of a recluse and kept on giving his nephew his advice and admonition, until he passed away. On the seventh day after the teaching of the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta for the first time, the hermit Nālaka, the nephew of Asita, approached the Blessed One and spoke two verses asking the latter about the proper practice of a sage **moneyyapaṭipadam** beginning:—

Moneyyam te upaññissam the Blessed One answered Nālaka.

12. Dvayatānupassanā Sutta Vaṇṇanā

It was in the open air at Migāramātā's monastery that the Blessed One gave this discourse to many thousand monks after mentally scrutinising their spiritual maturity to determine a suitable discourse. To show two things for consideration (**dvayatam anupassanam**) the Blessed One spoke beginning 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**).

IV. Aṭṭhakavagga (Chapter of the Eights)

1. Kāma Sutta Vaṇṇanā

It was to console a brahmin farmer who met with crop failure that the Buddha taught this Kāma Sutta at his house in the course of 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**), he overcomes his craving for sensuality.

2. Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Guhā is an allegory for the body (**kāya**). Just as lions live in caves, so also wild thoughts and actions dwell 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 lament about when they are about to die. The occasion for the teaching of this discourse arose at the time when the Blessed One was staying in Sāvattī. It so happened that the Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja would spend the afternoon seated in meditation at a cool corner in the riverside royal park of Utena in Kosambī. One day, this coincided with a royal picnic in which the whole harem participated. The jealousy of the king over the young ladies brought about an ugly incident necessitating the soaring up into the sky by the elder in order to give Utena, the king, no chance to commit a serious sin, out of compassion for him. The elder then dived into the earth, emerging 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 discourse to the Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja.

3. Duṭṭhatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Consequent upon the conspiracy contrived by heretics (*titthiya*) with the co-operation of Sundarī, the beautiful 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 Sāvattī. The Blessed One assured Ānanda that the rumours and gossip would continue for only seven days. Then he spoke this verse beginning 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 discourse concludes with the conversation between the Buddha and the king of Kosala.

4. **Suddhaṭṭhaka 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 Tāvātimsa to become famous as a sandalwood-scented celestial youth with moonshine like rays (**candābho devaputto**).

At the time of the appearance of the Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in Sāvātthi as the son of a brahmin banker, with moonshine like rays radiating from his chest. 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 to gain both mundane and supramundane benefits. Having been all over Jambudīpa and adored everywhere, the brahmins brought him back to Sāvātthi. At that time, the Blessed One 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 Venerable Candābha happened to be the topic of talk among monks to whom the Buddha taught this discourse showing the way to secure purity.

5. **Paramatṭhaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā**

On the comment 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, the Blessed One spoke this discourse 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 (**ditṭhiṃ 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 Blessed One 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 the Blessed One 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 and gave this teaching to the multitude who were about to carry out the cremation. In that discourse the Blessed One started by stating that life is brief; one dies either before or soon after a hundred years of 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 Blessed One after the departure of the audience and asked for monkhood, which was conferred on them by a monk, under the instructions of the Blessed One.

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 over, they arrived at Sāvatti to pay their homage to the Blessed One 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 discourse 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 mahāvādi**). He claimed himself to be the foremost disputant (**vādena aggo**) in the entire continent of Jambudīpa. After having made a branch of the Rose-apple tree (**jambusākha**) as his banner (**dhaja**) he went all over the continent challenging everyone to come forward and dispute with him. Since he saw no rival, he eventually came back to Sāvatti, where at the city-gate he set up his branch. The Venerable Sāriputta had it broken 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 Lāḷudāyī to learn the art of debate (**vādasattham sikhissāmi**). Encouraged by his success in disputing with his preceptor Lāḷudāyī, he became emboldened to try his luck with the Blessed One who silenced him to his great disappointment. The sea of spectators surrounded the dumb-founded Pasūra, shouted at him and forced him to make a retraction. Thereupon, the Blessed One spoke this discourse for the purpose of teaching the Dhamma.

9. Māgaṇḍiya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

Early one morning, while the Blessed One was residing in Sāvatti, the Blessed One sighted, in the course of his usual survey of the world by means of his divine-eye, a brahmin named Māgaṇḍiya, along with his wife, who were residents of the market town of Kammāsadhamma in the kingdom of Kuru as candidates with sufficing qualification for the attainment of Arahantship. The Blessed One, immediately departed from Sāvatti, went to that market-town and sat down in a nearby forest radiating his rays of golden colour, attracted by which Māgaṇḍiya approached and found in the great person a suitable candidate for the hand of his only daughter of golden complexion (**suvaṇṇavaṇṇa**). Māgaṇḍiya hurried home, brought his wife and daughter, and offered his daughter in marriage to the Blessed One, who, without making any reply to the brahmin spoke this verse beginning 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

Having understood the minds of multitudes of deities who were lustful by nature (**rāgacaritadevatā**) and who had been thinking of what ought to be done prior to the dissolution of their bodies (**purā sarirabhedā**), the Buddha, for the purpose of doing them a favour, brought his mind-created Nimitta Buddha, through the sky, surrounded by one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, and made the latter put questions, which the Blessed One himself answered by teaching this discourse beginning with **Vitattaṅho purā bhedā** (one must forsake craving before the break-up of one's body).

At the end of this discourse, 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 discourse was taught by the Blessed One in answer to questions asked by a Nimitta Buddha. To the question:— Whence have happened quarrels and disputes (**Kuto pahūtā kalahā vivādā?**) along with lamentation, grief, and meanness (**paridevasoka maccharā**), together with pride (**māna**) and excessive pride (**atimāna**) as well as backbiting (**pesuṇa**)? The Buddha's answer was that all of these defilements (**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 beginning 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. Cūlabyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On that self-same great occasion (**tasmiṃ yeva mahāsamaye**), the Blessed One, in the same way as before made the mind-created Nimitta Buddha ask questions which he himself answer in order to make that

matter clear to some of the deities, who were conjecturing as to whether the statement made by all those who held wrong views (**diṭṭhigatikā**) that they were good (**sādhurūpamha**) would constitute the opinion held by themselves or that of others. Of the answer comprising three verses, the latter half has stood (**ḥhitā**) 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 discourse (**tena byūhena uttarasuttato ca appakattā**) this discourse gains the name “**Cūḷabyūha**.” By means of this discourse, the Blessed One brought about the disillusionment of those deities advising them in conclusion to dispel all decisions (**vinicchayāni hitvāna**) by means of the Noble Path (**ariyamaggena**). At the end of this discourse there was realisation of the truth by innumerable deities exactly equal to the occasion when the Purābheda Sutta was taught.

13. Mahābyūha Sutta Vaṇṇanā

On that same great occasion the Blessed One gave his reply to questions raised by his mind-created Nimitta Buddha to disillusion the deities to whom had arisen such thoughts as: “How is it, indeed, do these who abide in heresy (**diṭṭhiparibbasānā**) 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 satipaṭṭhanādihi**) 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. Tuvaṭaka Sutta Vaṇṇanā

This discourse was taught on that same great occasion by the Buddha in reply to the question put to him by the Nimitta Buddha as created by himself for the purpose of making clear the proper practice that some celestial beings were anxious to know for the attainment of Arahantship. At the end of the teaching of this Tuvaṭaka Sutta there was the realisation of the truth by innumerable deities identical with the number of those on the occasion of having heard the Purābheda sutta.

15. Attadaṇḍa Sutta Vaṇṇanā

This discourse was taught by the Buddha after he had stood between the two armies of the Sākya and Koliyā, 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 present or future (**ditṭha-dhammiḥ vā samparāyikā vā bhayaṃ**), used to arise in ordinary people and yet they, the Sākya and Koliya 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 Koliya 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 discourse began with the bowl of sandalwood set up on a tall bamboo pole by a millionaire of Rājagaha, which was taken by the Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja 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 the three months of the Rains Retreat, he taught the Dhammā. He descended using the middle ladder of gems, at the base of which he was worshipped first by Venerable Sāriputta, closely followed by the Venerable Uppalavaṇṇā and a multitude of people, in the presence of whom the Buddha showed the quality of wisdom (**paññāguṇena**) of the Venerable Sāriputta by putting questions to him. The elder answered them all — those about ordinary persons (**puthujjanapañham**), learners (**sekkhapañham**), and adepts (**asekkhapañhañca**). The 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 elder 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 adhigataṃ**). On the other hand, the absent pupil, who would later be the Venerable 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 verses beginning with this verse of praise:— **Na me diṭṭho 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 discourse, the five hundred monks attained Arahantship and three hundred million celestial and human beings realised the truth.

V. 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 attended by sixteen pupils, each with a thousand resident apprentices. From the foot-hills he used to cut down trees, join the logs into a raft, bring it down the river to Benares, where he would, if the sovereign wished, build a royal palace of one 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, and furnished it with machinery (**pavisitvā yantaṃ puresi**). The wooden bird soared into the sky, flew above the trees and landed in front of his pupils, whom he advised to build similar aircraft for making air-raids on 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 aircraft and invaded a city near the Himalayas. Subsequently, they had their teacher, who was known as Kaṭṭhavāhana, crowned as the king. The city was named similarly. By sending three priceless pieces of rare velvet cloth by traders packed neatly in ivory containers concealed in three lacquer balls (**lākhāgolaka**) 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 (**adiṭṭhasahāya**) King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the king of Benares had the sacred information about the three gems (**vatthuttayaratana** **suppanabhāva**) and the proper practice (**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 (**pela**), which again was wrapped (**veṭhetvā**) in a piece of turban cloth (**dussena**). Having sealed it (**lañchetvā**) and mounted it 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 (**hemajālasañchanna**), the king had the pious present shaded by a white umbrella and himself led the procession along the duly decorated road, which reached the 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 of 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 the Buddha Gotama, King Kaṭṭhavāhana was reborn as the son of the royal chaplain of Mahā-Kosala, the predecessor and father of Pasenadi Kosala bearing the name "Bāvari." 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 of his former pupils also were reborn to become his pupils.

Bāvari, 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 Bāvari, surrounded by his pupils who were 16,016 matted-hair ascetics (Jaṭilā) and being looked after (**anuggahamāno**) by two ministers, departed from Kosala, known as the northern districts (**Uttara-janapada**), in the direction of the Southern districts (**Dakkhīṇa-janapada**). When he reached the peninsula formed by the watershed of the river Godhāvari, 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 Godhāvārī, 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, Pāsāṅaka-cetiya in Magadha is suitable. When I teach the Dhamma there the multitude will gain realisation of the truth.” Subsequently, the Blessed One, surrounded by a large congregation of monks, went towards Rājagaha from Sāvatti. Having, by stages, reached Setabya, Kapilavatthu, and so forth, the Blessed One’s following successively swelled until he finally arrived at Pāsāṅaka-cetiya. The Jaṭilā also, after they had ascertained the genuine Buddhahood of the Blessed One at Sāvatti, hurriedly departed to pursue the Blessed One and caught up with him at Pāsāṅaka-cetiya where they saw the Blessed One 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 meanness does not allow the virtue of charity to manifest and negligence did the same to morality (**silā**). 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**)

beginning 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**).

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 spontaneously attired in robes and holding begging bowls, with shaven heads, adoring the Blessed One with joined palms as monks ordained by the Buddha's words "Come monk (*ehi bhikkhu*)."

2. Tissametteyya Sutta Vaṇṇanā

The two brahmins put their questions to dispel their doubts. The Buddha's advice, in reply, was to be endowed with the right path of chaste conduct (**maggabrahmacariyena**), 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 crosses 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 practice 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**) 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 (Ājīvaka) 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 (**akīñcana**)

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, the Blessed One 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 ahosi. Kiñcananti rāgādikiñcanam**)."

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 (**ādānataṇham**). 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 (**aññāvimokkham**) in a variety of ways (**nānappakārato**) 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 (**ākīñcaññāyatana**) should be led out (**netabbo**) of *saṃsāra* and roused up (**uppādetabba**) to superior knowledge (**uttariñāna**) as follows:– "After having understood about the action of higher mental formations (**kammābhisaṅkhāra**), 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 (**indriyaparipākaṃ 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 celestial domain, as being empty (**suññato**) in two ways (**dvihi kāraṇehi**): by way of lacking any control by oneself (**avasiyapayattasallakhaṇavasena**) or by way of regarding (**samanupassanā**) the empty condition of formations (**tucchasaṅkhārā**), having extracted (**uddharitvā**) the false personality-view (**sakkāyaditthim**).

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 colourless, 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 being infirm and old, he could not make any achievement, but spoke a verse 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 highest attainment, 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 discourse 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 Pāsāṇaka-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 the 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 Pāsāṇaka-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, beginning with "**Pārāyanamanugāyissam.**"

At the end of this verse, 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 (**obhāsam**) 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 joined palms 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 verse beginning 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 **Mahāvihāravāsinaṃ Buddhaghoso** and named his commentary on the Suttanipāta as **Paramatthajotikā**.