An Intelligent Man's Guide to Buddhism

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FOREWARD

I am very happy to bring out the second edition of this book. The author, late Ven. Dr. Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan Mahathera wrote this book in Hindi during his stay at Vidyalankara University Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. From 1959 to 1968 he was the Head of the Department of Hindi in above University.

First Hindi edition was published by Ven. Gose Lama of Sarnath about 25 years back. Now its fifth edition is out of print.

The author himself prepared this English version. In 1980 it was published first time.

Buddha Bhoomi Prakashan has privilege to publish the second edition of this book. The credit goes to Mr. Kashinath Meshram and Madam Vimal Ale of SOS Children’s Village, Nagpur, for this edition. It was possible to bring out this edition because of their effort. I should not forget to thank Mr. Vidyaneshwar S. Banhatti of Shrinivas Mudranalaya Nagpur. He has done all the works in time.

I do not want to write anything about this book. The name of this book tells everything about it.

I hope the intelligents readers will get the answers for their questions.

Sabbe satta sukhi hontu

Ashok Vijayadasami
14-10-1992
Buddha Bhoomi, Bhikkhu Savangi Medhankar
Kamptee Rd, NAGPUR.
Buddhism

a rational representation

Question. 1. Is religion obligatory for everybody?

Answer. The answer to this question depends upon another question, as to what we understand by the word “religion”. We should use this word in its wider sense. The way in which a man thinks and acts, is his ‘religion’. According to this definition, even Communism can be enlisted as one, for these traditional religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam also, are just gross classifications of men, according to their specific way of thinking and acting.

Q. 2. If so, then who can be termed a Buddhist, who a Hindu, who a Christian and who a Muslim?

A. Any individual, if he has taken refuge in the three gems, i.e. Buddha, Dharma & Sangha, and tries to conduct his life according to the teaching of the Blessed One, is termed a “Buddhist”. It is not easy to say, who a “Hindoo” is? In a general sense, we can say, any Indian, who is neither a “Buddhist”, nor a “Muslim”, nor a “Christian,” nor perhaps a Jain and Sikh also, is a Hindu. One who believes in GOD and his Messenger is a “Muslim”, and one who believes in GOD & his Son, is a “Christian”.

Q. 3. Who is a Jain then?

A. Like Buddhists, all such followers of the Non-vedic (Sraman) culture, who try to tread the path shown by Great teachers (Tirthankaras), such as Parshwanath and Niganthnathputra (Mahavir), are called “Jains”.

Q. 4. And who happens to be known as a “Sikha”?

A. Anybody, who believes in the teaching of the ten
great teachers, beginning from Guru Nanak and ending with Guru Govind Singh, and tries to live up to them, is known as a "Sikh".

Q. 5. It is believed that Buddhists do not believe in any Bhagawan (the creator), then what do they mean, when they say Bhagawan Buddha?

A. Buddhists do not believe in any men-made creator, about whom, it is believed by some, that He made men. Buddhists use the application ‘Bhagawan’, only for one or those who according to them, was or were “greatest and best amongst men”.

Q. 6. It is the contention of the Muslims, that Prophet Mohammad was the “messenger of god” no human being can become messenger of God, it is the contention of the “Christians” that Jesus Christ was the “son of God”, no human being can aspire to become the “Son of God”, : it is the contention of some “Hindoos,” that Rama and Krishna, along with such several others were the “Incarnations of God”, no human being can become an “Incarnation of God”, is it so, that according to “Buddhism” also, no man can become a “Buddha”?

A. According to Buddhism, every body is a potential Buddha, i.e. can become a Buddha, provided he fulfils the necessary conditions or attains the requisites of that sublime stage.

Q. 7. Was Siddharth Gautam the Buddha, the first and the last Buddha?

A. It is believed that there had been many Buddhas, even before Siddharth Gautam the Buddha, but their historicity is not beyond question.

Q. 8. Is there any doubt, as regards the historicity of Siddharth Gautam, the Buddha also?

A. None. His historicity is beyond doubt.
Q. 9. At which place was Siddharth Gautam, the Buddha born?

A. It is stated, in the introduction to the Jatak of Nidankatha of the Jatakatthakatha, that "Then the great being thought as regards the opportune time to be born....Then making decision as regards the country, he concluded that as the Buddhas are born only in Jambudweep (India), so he would also take birth in Jambudweep." The continent of India is large, thought He, "Being ten thousand leagues around. In which of its countries (provinces) are the Buddha born"? He decided on the middle country or Madhya-Pradesh.

The middle country has been defined in Vinaya as follows—

"It lies in the middle, on this side of the town Kajangala on the East, beyond which is Mahasala (Sala forest), and beyond that the border districts. It lies in the middle, on this side of the river Salalavati the South coast, beyond which are the border districts. It lies in the middle, on this side of the town Seta Kannika, on the South, beyond which are the border districts. It lies in the middle, on this side of the Brahmanical Town Thuna on the West, beyond which are the border districts. It lies in the middle, on this side of the hill Usirahaja, on the North, beyond which are the border districts."

It is three hundred leagues (yojanas) in length, two hundred and fifty in breadth, and nine hundred in circumference. In this country (part of the country) are born the Buddhas, the Pacceka-Buddhas, the chief-disciples, the eighty great disciples, the Universal Monarchs and other eminent-ones, magnates of the warrior caste, of the Brahmin caste & wealthy house-holders. And in it is this city called "Kapilavasthu" thought He and concluded that there he ought to be born.

It is natural for any body to ask, as to how can one take decisions as regards one’s own birth, before one is actually born? It is obvious that the purpose of the whole of this tradition, is to enhance the grandeur of the country and of that part of the country, which was blessed by the Buddha by taking birth therein. It has been stated that this "middle-country" was three hundred leagues (=2400 miles) in length, 250 (=2000
miles) in breadth, and that its circumference was 900 leagues (=7200 miles). This length and breadth measurement, cannot be taken as literally correct. What to speak of the middle country—even the whole of the present day India is not of the above size. Again if a portion of a country is stated to be 300 leagues length and 250 leagues breadth, then its circumference should be about 1100 leagues and not 900 leagues as stated above.

What is really acceptable, in the above tradition, is only this much that Siddharth Gautam was born in the town of Kapilavastu, which has now been identified as Tilorakota, Tautilahwa, and which is situated five miles, on the northern side within the boundary of Nepal.* This Kapilavastu was situated in middle country. Present Kankajola, district Santhāl Pargana (Bihar) can be accepted as its Eastern boundary. Present Silai (Hazari Bagh and Medanipur districts) river flowed through it. In the Southern Portion, there was a town known as Setakannika, in the Hazari-Bagh district. Thaneswar a Brahmin village, in the district of Karnal (Haryana), was its Western boundary. Some Himalayan Hilly tract known as Usirdhwaja, was, most probably its northern boundary.

Q. 10. In which family was Siddharth Gautam born?

A. In this connection also, there is a statement, in the introductory portion of the Jātakṭhakathā, that, then the great being made the observation concerning the family. "The Buddhas," thought He, "are never born into a family of the peasant caste (Vaishya Kula), or of the servile caste (Shudra Kula), but into one of warrior caste (Kṣhatriya-Kula), or of the priest caste (Brahmin Kula) which ever at the time is the higher in public estimation. I will be born in to a warrior family."

Whoever may have conceived the above tradition, it is obvious that it is sullied with the superstition of caste prejudice. The first objection in this case also, of course, can be that how can one make any observation as regards being born in this or that family, before one is actually born? The other is that, how can a really great being always think of taking birth in a caste, 'which ever at the time is the higher in public estimation,' and

*A recent identification has been asserted by K.M. Srivastava at Pipparawa (District Basti, U.P.)
never into a family of the peasant caste or of the servile caste? Many a great man in this world, did not take birth in any caste, which at the time was held “higher in public estimation.” Awfully sullied as it is, with caste-prejudice, it is utterly unaccep-
table. What can be accepted here as a fact, is only this much, that he was born in a warrior-class.

Q. 11. Who were the parents of Siddharth Gautam?

A. At the same place, in the introductory portion of the Jātakatthakathā, it is stated that he made observation as regards his father and decided that, “King Suddhodana shall be my father”. Then making the observation concerning the mother, he thought, that “the mother of a Buddha is never a wanton, nor a drunkard, but is one who has fulfilled the perfections through a hundred thousand cycles, and has kept the five precepts unbroken from the day of her birth. Now this Queen Mahamaya is such a one; and she shall be my mother, and hereafter she shall live only for a period of ten months and seven days.”

Here also, cannot the first and the same observation be held valid, as to how can one possibly think of one’s future parents, before one is actually born? And as regards the statement that “king (Raja) Suddhodana, shall become my father,” it can be admissible only when it is conceded that either Suddhodana would have not been a king (Raja), or at least that he would have not been a king (Raja), in the present sense of the term. Suddhodana has been, perhaps, never mentioned as a king (Raja) in the sacred Pali scriptures known as three baskets (Tripitakas). What comments has been made, as regards the selection, of the country, the clan and father, equally apply to the selection of the mother also? Can any being possibly select one’s mother, before one is actually born? One thing, of course, must be conceded here, that the mother of Siddharth Gautam, ought to have been a virtuous lady, for “a tree is cognizable, only by the fruits it produces”. Children are, in fact, primarily nothing more than the projections of their parents’ physical and mental faculties. But Mahamaya Devi had passed away, just, on the seventh day of Siddharth Gautama’s birth. She, it appears merely lived for a
week, to become known as the mother of an insensible child.

**Q. 12.** Who, then, fostered Siddharth Gautam?

**A.** Siddharth Gautam was brought up by his foster mother Prajapati Gautami, the younger sister of Mahamaya Devi, and the second wife of Suddhodana.

**Q. 13.** Innumerable miracles are associated with the birth-stories of many a great man. Are there any miracles associated with the birth account of Gautam the Buddha also?

**A.** Not only of ancient days, but there is hardly a single "great man" of even mediaeval days, whose birth-account remains totally bereft of miracles. The birth-story of Siddharth Gautam is also no exception to this rule. It is further stated in the introduction to Jātakatthakathā:

"At that time the midsummer festival had been proclaimed in the city of Kapilavasthu, and the multitude were enjoying the feast. And Queen Mahamaya abstaining from strong drink, and brilliant with garlands and perfumes, took part in the festivities for the six days previous to the day of full moon. And when it came to be the day of full moon, she rose early, bathed in perfumed water and dispensed four hundred thousand pieces of money in great largesse. And decked in full gala attire she ate of the choicest food; after which she took the eight vows, and entered her elegantly furnished chamber of state. And lying down on the royal couch, she fell asleep and dreamed the following dream—

'The four guardian angels came and lifted her up, together with her couch, and took her away to the Himalaya Mountains. There is the Manosila table-land, which is sixty leagues in extent, they laid her under a prodigious Sal-tree, seven leagues in height, and took up their positions respectfully at one side. Then came the wives of those guardian angels, and conducted her to Anotatta lake, and bathed her, to remove every human stain. And after clothing her with divine garments, they anointed her with perfumes and decked her with divine flowers. Not far off was silverhill, and in it a golden mansion. There they spread a divine couch with its head towards the east and
laid her down upon it. Now the future Buddha had become a superb white elephant, and was wandering about, at no great distance, on gold hill. Descending thence, he ascended silverhill, and approaching from the north, he plucked a white lotus with his silvery trunk and trumpeting loudly, went into the golden mansion. And three times he walked round his mother’s couch, with his right side towards it, and striking her on her right side, he made to enter her womb. Thus the conception took-place in the mid-summer festival.”

Mostly dreams are results of what one sees, hears or experiences. It appears that this anecdote of a superb white elephant striking Mahamaya on her right side, and then entering her womb, has been incorporated just in order to give a supernatural or abnormal touch to a normal function of conception. About this very dream it is further stated—

“On the next day the Queen awoke, and told the dream to the king. And the king caused sixty-four eminent brahmans to be summoned, and spread costly seats for them on ground, festively prepared with green leaves, dalbergia flowers, and so forth. The brahmans being seated, he filled gold and silver dishes with the best of milk-porridge compounded with ghee, honey, and treacle; and covering those dishes with others, made like-wise of gold and silver he gave the brahmans to eat. And not only with food, but with other gifts, such as new garments, tawny cows, and so forth, he satisfied them completely. And when their every desire had been satisfied, he told them the dream and asked them what would come of it.

“Be not anxious, great king!” said the brahmans;” a child has planted itself in the womb of your queen, and it is a male child and not a female. You will have a son. And he, if he continues to live the household life, will become a Universal Monarch (Chakkavarti), but if he leaves the house-hold life and retires, he will become a Buddha and roll back the clouds of sin and folly of this world.”

It appears that it occurred to some jolly commentator to draw a cartoon of Brahmanism. Just think of a Suddhodan getting down sixty-four eminent brahmans, spreading costly seats for them, offering them gold and silver dishes with the best of milk-porridge compounded with ghee, honey, and
treacle, and those dishes covered with others, again made of gold and silver. Not only food, offering them other gifts too, such as new garments, tawny cows etc. And all this just to ask them, what would come out of a dream! What an investment!

And to put it in the mouth of brahmins, “that you will have a son. And he, if continues to live the household life, will become a Universal Monarch, but if he leaves the household life and retires, he will become a Buddha,” simply proves that it is an interpolation of a period, when no greater aim of life could he thought of than becoming a Universal monarch! And even becoming a Buddha, the all enlightened one, had to be bracketed with a Universal Monarch, in order to emphasise and establish its grandeur!

- In the earlier portion of this description, it is stated that Mahamaya, the mother of Siddharth Gautam, kept the five precepts undertaken from the day of her birth. Everybody knows that the fifth precept is total abstention from taking all kinds of alcoholic drinks. But it is stated here that “Mahamaya Devi, on this particular occasion of mid-summer festival, having abstained from strong drinks,” took part in the festivities. If she was an observer of five precepts unbroken from the day of her birth, how does the question of her abstention, on this particular occasion arise? Most probably it is just a slip of the otherwise imaginative commentator.

Q. 14. Shall we understand then, that the dreams have no “effects”, whatsoever? And such persons, as claimed to be the interpreters of dreams, trade in sheer nonsense?

A. A man’s dreams, more or less, are the outcome, of his life, good or bad or otherwise as he leads it. There is greater truth in the assertion that the life “affects” the dreams, than in the statement that dreams “affect” the life. Therefore intelligent people, to some extent, even by learning of one’s dreams, can imagine or draw a picture of the life, one is actually leading. It is true that it also cannot be, emphatically stated that dreams have no “effect”, upon one’s life, whatsoever. Nocturnal emission and people getting actually afraid, as a result of seeing certain dreams, demonstrate satisfactorily the
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“effect” of dreams upon an individual’s life. Otherwise all the so called interpretations of dreams and forecasting based thereupon are just conjectures. There does not exist any “science of dreams”, which may enable any one to foretell future events.

Q. 15. Has any other supernatural phenomenon also been associated with the birth of Siddharth Gautam?

A. Yes, as we continue, in the same introduction it is stated :-

“From the time, the future Buddha (Bodhisatva) was thus conceived, four angels with swords in their hands kept guard to ward off all harm from both the future Buddha and the future Buddha’s mother...And where a womb that has been occupied by a future Buddha, is like the shrine of a temple, and can never be occupied or used again, therefore it was that the mother of the future Buddha died, when he was seven days old, and was reborn in the Tusita heaven.”

Once, when Mahamaya Devi is seated on the high pedestal of “mother of the Bodhisatva,” it becomes natural for such abnormal or supernatural phenomenon to be associated with her. Many a mother do pass away after giving birth to their issues. But it is never presumed to be their special characteristic. Mahamaya Devi also must have just similarly passed away within a week after giving birth to Siddharth Gautam. The rest is just fiction.

Q. 16. We so often come across the word “Bodhisatva” in Buddhist literature. Here also mention has been made of the “mother of the Bodhisatva.” What connotation does actually the word “Bodhisatva” convey?

A. The word “Bodhisatva” is just a compound of the two words Bodhi and Satva. “Bodhi” means enlightenment and “Satva” means a “being.” Hence “Bodhisatva” would mean “any being, who is destined to become “The all Enlightened one”, at some stage or the other”. In other words a “being aspiring after ‘Enlightenment’.” In Buddhist literature, Siddharth Gautam, before he became “The All Enlightened One,”
is always mentioned or referred to by this appellation.

Q. 17. Was Siddharth Gautam born in Kapilvastu itself?

A. No, it is stated; "Queen Mahamaya carried the future Buddha in her womb, as it were oil in a vessel, for ten months; and being then forgone with child, she grew desirous of going home to her relatives, and said to king Suddhodana:—

"Sire, I should like to visit my kinsfolk in their city Devadaha."

"So to be," said the king; and from Kapilavastu to the city of Devadaha, he had the road made even, and garnished it with plantain-trees set in pots, and with banners, and streamers, and seating the Queen in a palanquin made of gold, borne by a thousand of his courtiers, he sent her away in great-pomp."

Once Suddhodana was made "the great king," it appears that it became inevitable that the palanquin should always be "made of gold." Undoubtedly Mahamaya Devi seated in a palanquin "made of gold," must have felt greatly vexed in the May-June (Chaitra-Vaisakh) months of a north Indian summer.

It is still further stated—"Between the two cities, and belonging to the inhabitants of both, there was a pleasure-grove of Sal-trees, called Lumbini grove. .. throughout the whole of Lumbini grove the scene resembled the Cittalata grove in Indras paradise, or the magnificently decorated banqueting pavilion of some potent king.

"When the queen beheld it, she became desirous of disporting herself therein, and the courtiers therefore took her into it. And going to the foot of the monarch Sal-tree of the grove, she wished to take hold of one of its branches. And the Sal-tree branch, like the tip of a well steamed reed, bent itself down within reach of the queen's hands. Then she reached out her hand, and seized hold of the branch, and immediately her pains came upon her. Thereupon the people hung a curtain about her, and retired. So her delivery took place while she was standing up, and keeping fast hold of the Sal-tree branch.

"At that very moment came four pure minded Mahabrahma angels bearing a golden net; and receiving the future Buddha
on this golden-net, they placed him before his mother and said:-

"Rejoice, O Queen! A mighty son has been born to you."

It is evident that this anecdote of Siddharth Gautam being taken charge of by the four angels and that too in a golden-net, is the fabrication of some imaginative commentator, who wanted to extol the birth of Siddharth Gautam, and it is really a great pity that he could not do so, without giving it a touch of abnormality. How unabashed these four "pure minded" Mahabrahmas would have been to have intruded, when people after having hung a curtain about Mahamaya Devi, had retired! And then imagine a babe being held up in a golden net, at the very moment of its birth! The commentator's fancy for gold is really incomprehensible.

Q. 18. Does the following further statement as recorded in the introduction to Jatakathakathā that, 'other mortals on issuing from the maternal womb are smeared with disagreeable, impure matter, but not so the future Buddha. He issued from his mother's womb like a preacher descending from his preaching seat, or a man coming down a stair, stretching out both hands and both feet, unsmeared by any impurity from his mother's womb, and flashing pure and spotless, like a jewel thrown upon a vesture of Benares cloth', sounds correct?

A. Such statements can at their best be taken as aberration of an imaginative mind, and deserve to be just ignored.

Q. 19. And can this further statement that, "the Brahma angels, after receiving him on their golden-net, delivered him to the four guardian angels, who received him from their hands on a rug which was made of the skins of the black antelopes, and was soft to the touch, being such as is used on state occasions; and the guardian angels delivered him to men who received him on a coil of fine cloth; and the men let him out of their hands on the ground, where he stood, and faced the East. There before him lay many thousands of worlds, like a great open court; and in them, gods and men, making offerings to him of perfumes, garlands, and so on, were saying,-
Great being! there is none your equal, much less your superior."
"When he had in this manner surveyed the four cardinal points, and the four intermediate ones, and the Zenith, and the Nadir, in short, all the ten directions in order, and had nowhere discovered his equal, he exclaimed "This is the last direction" and strode forward seven paces, followed by Mahabrahma holding over him the white umbrella, Suyama bearing the fan, and other divinities having the other symbols of royalty in their hands. Then at the seventh stride, he halted, and with a noble voice, he shouted the shout of victory, beginning—

"The chief am I in all the world;" be accepted as true?

A. This unsubstantial assumption as regards the babe Siddharth Gautam establishes the fact that in the history of Buddhism, there was a period, when due to the influence of Mahayama, not only the teachings of the Buddha were considered, unique and remarkable, but his physical body also, was presumed to be a constituent of uncommon and strange characteristics. In the above statement, it has been put into the mouth of babe Siddharth, that he said, "The chief am I in all the world." If Siddharth, even as a babe, was "the chief am I in all the world," then wherein lay the necessity for him to "renounce" the world, and exert himself so much in order to attain enlightenment?

The above interpolation, as regards babe Siddharth, also proves, that it must have taken place, at a period, when gods like Suyama etc. were already added to the chronology of Indian deities.

This period of interpolation was really a period of tussle, between Hindu gods, and Buddhist Bodhisatvas. Both were being manufactured as if, in an unabated rivalry. Buddhist commentators made Hindu gods not only hold umbrellas upon and fan the Buddha, but even Bodhisatvas or the Buddhas in the making.

Q. 20. Is there any other miracle also supposed to have taken place at the time of the birth of Siddharth?

A: Yes, it is further stated that "at the very time, our future
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Buddha was born in Lumbini grove there also came into existence the mother of Rahula, Channa the courtier; Kaludayi the courtier; the Kanthaka, the King of horses; the great Bodhi tree, and four of treasures.” This statement is indeed subject to question, for nowhere, in the scriptures it is stated the Siddharth Gautam and Rahula Mata (the mother of Rahula) were of the same age. It appears that this conjecture has been thought of, just in order to make it easy to remember, all the important figures intimately associated with the biography of the Buddha. To conceive that Channa the courtier, Kaludayi the courtier, Kanthaka the king of horses, and the great Bodhi tree were connate ones has some sense in it, but to add the Royal elephant and the four Urns of treasures—also to the the list does not seem to have any meaning at all.

Q. 21. Is there any other extraordinary event also associated with the childhood of Siddharth?

A: Yes, this too is stated, that an ascetic, named Kaladevala descended from the world of the gods in haste, and entered the dwelling of the king (Suddhodana); and having seated himself on the seat assigned to him, he said:—

“Great King, I hear that a son has been born to you. I would like to see him.”

“Then the king had the prince magnificently dressed, and brought in, and carried up to do reverence to the ascetic. But the feet of the future Buddha turned and planted themselves in the matted locks of the ascetic. In that birth there was no one worthy of the future Buddha's reverence; and if these ignorant people had succeeded in causing the future Buddha to bow, the head of the ascetic would have split in seven pieces.”

It is quite evident that this narration is also meant just to establish the superiority of a Bodhisatva over everybody else. But could not the same babe, who was capable enough to take seven steps, as soon as it came out of the womb of its mother, and declare that he was the chief in the whole world, when grown into a child, say to his father, please do not take me to pay any obeisance to an ascetic, may he be Kaladevala?
Q. 22. Who named Siddhārtha Gautam as such: And what was his real name?

A: There is difference of opinion, as regards the real name of Siddhārtha Gautam. Some opine that his real name was Siddhārtha, and Gautam was his family name (Gotra); others hold the view that his personal name was Gautam, and the word Siddhārtha was just an additional attribute, meaning that ‘which fulfils the purpose’. The introductory portion of the Jātakatthaka-kathā has to say the following with reference to the naming ceremony:—

On the fifth day they bathed the future Buddha’s head, saying, “we will perform the rite of choosing a name for him”. And they prepared the royal palace by anointing it with four kinds of perfumes, and by scattering Dalhergia blossoms and other flowers, five sorts in all. And making some porridge of whole rice-grains boiled in milk, they invited one hundred and eight brahmins, men who had mastered the three Vedas. And having seated these brahmins in the royal palace, and feeding them with delicate foods, and showing them every attention, they asked them to observe the marks and characteristics of the future Buddha’s person and to make prophesy regarding his future.

Among the hundred and eight:—
“Rama, Dhaja, Lakhana, also Manti
Kondanna, Bhoja, Suyama, Sudatta,
These brahmins eight were there with sense six subdued;
They from the magic books disclosed his fortune.”

These eight brahmins were the fortune-tellers, being the same who had interpreted the dream on the night of the conception. Seven of these raised two figures each, and gave a doubtful interpretation, saying, that if a man possessing such marks and characteristics continues in the house-hold life, he becomes a universal monarch; if he retires from the world he becomes a Buddha.

But the youngest of them all, a youth whose clan name was Kondanna, after examining the splendid set of marks and
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characteristics on the person of the future Buddha, raised only one finger, and gave but a single interpretation, saying, “There is here naught to make him to stay in the household life. He will most undoubtedly become a Buddha, and remove the veil of ignorance and folly from the world.”

In the whole of this narration, it is not mentioned at all, that the king had asked the brahmins to suggest a name for the prince. Instead, we find stated here that the brahmins were asked to make prophesy regarding “the future of the future Buddha.” The brahmins also had the same stereotyped answer to deliver, “Either a Universal monarch or a Buddha.”

It is needless to state in ambiguous terms, for it is quite apparent, that the whole of this patch-work is on the one hand based on a blind faith in Astrology, and on the other it is just an attempt to aggrandize “Universal Monarch.” This story must have been coined and interpolated long after Siddharth Gautam’s attainment of “Enlightenment.”

Q. 23. Is the “science of stars”, and making predictions thereby, totally baseless?

A: The “science of stars” is of two sorts—one is Astronomy, the other is Astrology. Astronomy, as a result of the study of the movement of the earth and moon can make exact forecasts as regards the moon eclipse and the sun eclipse. Astrology on the other hand claims to be able to forecast the future of the human-beings, of course also based on the movements and the effects of Sun, moon and other stars on the life of the mortals inhabiting this earth. Astronomy is a science, Astrology just a jugglery of astrologers.

Q. 24. Is there no event associated with the childhood of Siddharth Gautam, which may sound even a little trustworthy?

A: One such incident, there is, which although may not strike as fully trustworthy, yet is worth mentioning. It is stated:-

“On a certain day the king celebrated the sowing festival, as it was called. On that day they used to decorate the whole city, so that it looked like a palace of the gods, and all the
slaves and other servants would put on new tunics; and perfumed and garlanded, they would assemble together at the kings palace, where a thousand ploughs were yoked for the royal ploughing.

On this occasion there were one hundred and eight ploughs all save one, ornamented with silver, as were also the reins for the oxen and the cross-bars of the ploughs. But the plough that was held by the king was ornamented with red gold, as also the horns, the reins, and the goads for the oxen. And the king issued forth with a large retinue, taking his son along with him. Around in the field where the ploughing was to be done was a solitary rose-apple tree of thick foliage and dense shade. Underneath this tree the king had a couch placed for the young prince, and spread over his head a canopy that was studded with gold stars; and he surrounded him with a screen, and appointed those that should watch by him; and then, decked with all his ornaments and surrounded by his courtiers, he proceeded to the place where they were to plough. On arriving there, the king took the gold plough, and the courtiers took the silver ploughs,—one hundred and eight save one, and the farmers the other ploughs, and then all ploughed forward and back. The king went from the hither side to the farther side, and from the father side back again; and the pomp and magnificence of the festival was at its climax.

"Now the nurses who were sitting about the future Buddha came out from behind the screen to behold the royal magnificence."

This description is a testimony to one possibility amongst the three. Either the father of Siddharth Gautam was not a king (Raja), or even the kings of those days did plough now and then, or he was a king, such as one, who, surrounded by his courtiers, ploughed on the festival-occasions, and went from the hither side to the farther side, and from the farther side back again.

Q. 25. What is there in this description, which would make one a bit sceptic about it?

A: It is further stated in the same context that the future-Buddha, looking hither and thither and seeing no one, arose in
haste and sat him down crossed-legged, and mastering his inspirations and his expirations, entered on the first trance. The nurses delayed a little, being detained by the abundance of good things to eat. And the shadow of the rose-apple tree remained steadily circular. Suddenly the nurses remembered that they had left their young master alone; and raising the screen, they entered and saw the Future Buddha sitting crossed-legged on the couch, and also noticed the miracle of the shadow. Then they went and announced to the king,—"Sire, thus and so is the prince sitting; and the shadows of the other trees have passed over to the east, but the shadow of the rose-apple tree remains steadily circular."

And the king came in haste, and seeing the miracle, he did obeisance to his son, saying, "This dear child, is my second obeisance."

The whole of this description sounds considerably unnatural and hence unauthentic. The age of the child Siddharth Gautam has not been mentioned here. If he would have been just a baby, too small to be taken out, then he would have stayed in the palace being looked after by the nurses, but if he would have been grown up enough to be taken out, then surely the young Siddharth also would have come out from behind the screen to behold the royal magnificence. It sounds artificial, for any child—may he be even Siddharth—not to behold a show, when there is an occasion for it, and sit "crossed-legged, mastering his inspirations and expirations." If we could concede that this was a special characteristic of the Future-Buddha, then we shall have to grant the possibility of the existence of the practice of "four contemplations," even before the time, when Siddharth Gautam was born, and of which we do not possess any historical evidence. Otherwise we shall have to admit that this interpolation, pertains to some period, when the practice of four contemplations had already become prevalent among ascetics. It has been said here, that having checked his inspirations and expirations the prince checked the first ecstasy. In pranayam practices of non-Buddhists, the necessity of controlling one's inspirations and expirations is admitted, but not so in the Buddhist-culture of Anapanà. Then this further statement "that the shadows of all other trees had passed to the east, but the
shadows of the rose-apple tree, under which Siddharth sat remained steadily circular”, is wholly incredible. It is just possible that it may have struck so to the nurses, and it is also possible that the apple-rose tree may have had its standing in a position, that its shadows, may have still been shading Siddharth, but the possibility of any “miracle” must be ruled out, because no “miracle” ever took place.

Q. 26. Shall we take it, that all the “miracles”, supposed to have taken place, and mentioned mostly in religious literature of different denominations are mere fabrications?

A. No, it is not impossible that such “happenings” may have been the jugglery displayed by some crafty men, known as “saints,” and the assiduous ones may have later accepted them as “Miracles”: or those happenings may have taken place according to some, till then unknown “law of nature”, and such happenings also may have been accepted as “Miracles”, due to the ignorance of that particular law. This much has to be admitted, that nothing has ever happened or can happen, transgressing all “law of nature.”

Q. 27. Did Siddharth Gautama always remain a “child”, and never became a youth?

A. How could it be! It is related further that; In due course, the future Buddha, attained the age of sixteen years. And the king built three palaces for the future Buddha, suited to the three seasons,—one of nine storeys, another of seven storeys, and another of five storeys. And he provided him with forty thousand dancing girls. And the future Buddha, with his gaily dressed dancers, was like a god surrounded by hosts of houris; and attended by musical instruments that sounded of themselves, and in the enjoyment of great magnificence, he lived, as the seasons changed, in each of these palaces. And the mother of Rahula was his principal queen.

No less than forty thousand dancing girls just to amuse one Siddharth Gautama!

Q. 28. What happened next?
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A. "Now while he was enjoying great-splendour, one day there arose the following discussion among his relatives—

"Siddharth is wholly given over to pleasure, and is not training himself in any manly art. What could he do if a war were to occur?"

The king sent for the future Buddha and said,—

"My child, your relatives are saying that you are not training yourself, but are wholly given to pleasure. Now what do you think we had best do?"

"Sire, I do not need to train myself. Let the crier go about the city beating the drum, to announce that I will show my proficiency. On the seventh day from now I will show my proficiency to my relatives."

The king did so. And the future Buddha assembled together bowmen that could shoot like lightning and at a hair's breadth; and in the midst of the populace, and before his kinsfolk, he exhibited a twelve-fold skill, such as none of the other bowmen could equal...so the assembly of his kinsfolk doubted him no longer.

It appears that the order of the above context has been affected. In ancient India, the occasion of selecting one's wife (Swayamvara), was considered a befitting opportunity to demonstrate one's valour. It is just possible that Siddharth Gautama also, may have proved his skill, on the occasion, when he got married to Yasodhara. But in this description, even when he was just a lad of sixteen years, it is stated that "he lived in the enjoyment of great magnificence". Both of these narrations do not seem to match with one another. It is stated that the king provided Siddharth Gautama with forty thousand dancing girls, and that he the future Buddha, with his gaily dressed dancers, was like a god surrounded by hosts of houris. It is not strange, that the king himself should set up all such gay surroundings and then himself complain, "My child, your relatives are saying that you are not training yourself, but are wholly given over to pleasure. Now, what do you think we had best do?"

Either Siddharth Gautama must have not remained engrossed
"in the enjoyment of great magnificence" as stated in the above extravagant narration, or he could have never succeeded in exhibiting his twelve-fold skill, such as none of the other bowmen could equal. After all, there is no knowledge, which can be acquired by one, who has not exerted for it, and there is no art, which can be accomplished by one, who has not practiced it.

Q. 29. What then made Siddharth Gautama prone towards renunciation? Why did he renounce his house-hold life?

A. Although the chain of the events, which is supposed to have ultimately caused the renunciation of Siddharth Gautama, is a befitting subject, for an epic, yet it strikes one as abundantly unnatural." It is stated that on a certain day, the Future Buddha wished to go to the park, and told his charioteer to make ready the chariot. Accordingly the man brought out an elegant chariot, and adoring it richly, he harnessed to it four state-horses of the Sindhava breed, as white as the petals of the white lotus, and announced to the Future Buddha that everything was ready. And the Future Buddha mounted the chariot, which was like to a palace of the gods, and proceeded towards the park.

"The time for the enlightenment of Prince Siddharth draweth nigh," thought the gods; "we must show him a sign": and they changed one of their number into a decrepit old man, broken-toothed, gray-haired, crooked and bent of body, leaning on a staff, and trembling, and showed him to the future Buddha, but so that only he and the charioteer saw him."

Man first created imaginary angels, and then bestowed upon them the limitless powers. According to this narration also, the gods had such powers that in a particular matter, they could, save for Siddharth Gautama and charioteer, make everybody else blind.

Q. 30. What happened next?

A. Then said the Future Buddha to the charioteer "Friend, pray, who is this man? Even his hair is not like that of other
men.' And when he heard the answer, he said, "Shame on birth, since to every one that is born old age must come," and agitated in the heart, he thereupon returned to his palace.

And again, on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a diseased man whom the gods had fashioned; and having again made enquiries, he returned, agitated in heart, and ascended his palace.

And again on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a dead man whom the gods had fashioned, and having again made enquiry, he returned, agitated in heart, and ascended his palace. And again on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a monk carefully and decently clad, whom the gods had fashioned; and he asked his charioteer, "Pray, who is this man?"

By the power of gods, the charioteer was inspired to say, "Sire, this is one who has retired from the world" and he thereupon proceeded to sound the praises of retirement from the world. The thought of retiring from the world was a pleasing one to the Future Buddha, and this day he went on until he came to the park.

In order to establish the mendicity of the above tradition, it is enough to state that the old man, the diseased man, the dead man, and also the monk, were all "fashioned by gods". How can the gods, who themselves happen to be, nothing more than the mental—creations of man can fashion any other being? Or how can they demonstrate anything to anybody? There is only one reasonable possibility, and it is this, that having witnessed the sight of an old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and of a monk, Siddharth Gautama's contemplative—nature may have been turned to a particular channel of thought. But since there is no uniformity, as regards the tradition, whether all these signs were seen, one by one, on different days, or were seen on a single day, the whole of this story, appears to be the work of somebody's imagination.

Q. 31. Did Siddharth Gautama, after having seen the monk, instantaneously decide to renounce the household life?

A. No, having strolled in the park, the Future Buddha
entered his palace in great splendour, and lay on his couch of state. And straight way richly dressed women, skilled in all manner of dance and song, and beautiful as celestial nymphs, gathered about him with all kinds of musical instruments. They endeavoured to please him. But the Future Buddhas aversion to passion did not allow him to take pleasure in the spectacle and he fell into a brief slumber.

Q. 32. Is falling into a slumber, while listening to song and music, a sure and certain proof of one's aversion to a passion?

A. No, one can equally fall into a slumber under the spell of song and music also.

Q. 33. Did those women go on dancing and singing even when Siddharth Gautama had fallen into a slumber?

A. No, those women also, exclaiming, "He for whose sake we should perform has fallen asleep. Of what use it is to weary ourselves any longer?" threw their various instruments on the ground, and lay down. And the lamps fed with sweet-smelling oil continued to burn. And the Future Buddha awoke, and saw those women lying asleep, with their musical instruments scattered about them on the floor,—some with their bodies wet with trickling phlegm and spittle; some grinding their teeth, and muttering and talking in their sleep, some with their mouths open; and some with their dress fallen apart, so as plainly to disclose their loathsome nakedness. This great alteration in their appearance still farther increased his aversion to sensual pleasures. To him that magnificent apartment as splendid as the palace of Sakka, began to seem like a cemetery filled with dead bodies impaled and left to rot; and the modes of existence, appeared like houses all ablaze. And breathing forth the solemn utterance; "How oppressive and stifling is it all!" his mind turned ardently to retiring from the world.

Evidently, the narration is exaggerated and the picture overdrawn. While king Saddhodana had provided him forty-thousand dancing girls, and while according to tradition Siddharth Gautama had been married to Yasodhara, of the same age, even when both of them were but of sixteen years, then could it be
that till the period of renunciation had drawn near, till the age of twenty-nine years or during this period of full thirteen years, Siddharth Gautama would have felt "the three modes of existence like houses all ablaze" just on that single night? The above loathsome portrayal, is obviously designed to create aversion in the minds of the people, as if this or such other narrations can prove invulnerable before the onslaughts of the cupid. The arrows of the god of lust have always succeeded in piercing through.

Q. 34. Can seeing the old diseased and dead man and also a monk, together with witnessing the loathsome sight of the naked dancing girls, be held as the sole cause of the renunciation of Siddharth?

A. Yes, as far as the literary testimony, which came into existence, centuries after Siddharth Gautama, is concerned, the above can be the only reason of Siddharth's renunciation; but there is every possibility, of some other inducement being the real cause. Late Pali Scholar Dhammanand Kosambi and Dr B.R. Ambedkar, both have covered a different ground, which has been set in a proper order in Dr B.R. Ambedkar's posthumous book The Buddha and his Dharma.

Q. 35. Which of the two reasons of explanations of renunciation sound better?

A. Looked at impartially, the reason and the explanation adduced in The Buddha and his Dharma, sound better.

Q. 36. Having decided to renounce the house-hold life, what step did Siddharth Gautama take next?

A. Having risen from the couch, and going to the door, he called out:

"Who's there?"

"Master it is I Channa," replied the charioteer, who had been sleeping with his head on the threshold.

"I wish to go forth today. Saddle the horse for me."

"Yes, Sire," and taking saddle and bridle with him, the
charioteer started for the stable. There, by the light of lamps fed with sweet-smelling oils, he perceived the mighty steed Kanthaka, in his pleasant quarters, under a canopy of cloth beautiful with a pattern of jasmine flowers. "This is the one for me to saddle today," thought he; and he saddled Kanthaka.

Now the future Buddha, after he had sent Channa on his errand thought to himself, "I will take just one look at my son" and rising from the couch on which he was sitting, he went to the suite of apartments occupied by the mother of Rahula, and opened the door of her chamber. Within the chamber was burning a lamp fed with sweet-smelling oil, and the mother of Rahula lay sleeping on a couch strewn deep with jasmine and other flowers, her hand resting on the head of her son. When the future Buddha reached the threshold, he paused, and gazed at the two from where he stood.

"If I were to raise my wives' hands from off the child's head, and take him up, she would awake and thus prevent my departure. I will first become a Buddha, and then come back and see my son." So saying he descended from the palace.

How very human and natural the whole of this description is! If the Future Buddha would have felt the whole world was as if "a house on blaze," then could he have taken silent leave of Rahula and his mother, with the intention of again coming and seeing Rahula, after having attained the Enlightenment. The Future Buddha had renounced his house-hold life, not the world. Renunciation of the world, while one is still living, is an impossibility.

Q. 37. How did the Siddharth Gautama succeed in getting out of the palace? Because the tradition says, his movements were strictly watched?

A. When the Future Buddha had thus descended from the palace, he came near to his horse, and said—

"My dear Kanthaka, save me now this one night, and then when, thanks to you, I have become a Buddha, I will save the worlds of gods and men." And thereupon he vaulted upon Kanthaka's back.
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The Future Buddha rode on the mighty back of the mighty steed, made Channa hold on by the tail, and so arrived at midnight at the great gate of the city. The divinity that inhabited the gate opened it for them.

Q. 38. What is this divinity?

A. Not only in Buddhist literature, but in the literature of all religious denominations whenever a story-writer or even a historian wants to get anything achieved, which is apparently either impossible or too difficult to be accomplished, he gets it done, by an angel, a divinity or a god. Such people as are credulous enough to believe that a 'God' can always accomplish, what is obviously impossible to execute, are easily satisfied.

Q. 39. What necessity lay here, to get the gate opened by a divinity?

A. This necessity arose, because the commentator had earlier committed himself to the statement, that "the king, in order that the Future Buddha should not at any time go out of the city without his knowledge, had caused each of the two leaves of the gate to be made so heavy as to need a thousand men to move it." Now, if two thousand men would have been brought to open the gate, then the whole of the Kapilavasthu would have woken up. Easy solution has been found—that the divinity opened the gate.

Q. 40. Does it not amount to utter one more falsehood to cover up the previous one?

A. Of course; but when once a certain age or a society, takes the existence of the angels and the gods for granted, then such a falsehood ceases to strike as irksome.

Q. 41. Shall we assume then, that there have never been any angel or gods and there are none so even now?

A. We do not possess any proof of the existence of any species, which remains incognizable to either or all of the six senses. Let those who have it, kindly furnish one.
Q. 42. Are all gods and goddesses nothing more than the creation of human imagination?

A. Yes, there is little doubt in it.

Q. 43. It is stated in Mahamangala Sutta that the Enlightened One said that engulfing the whole of jetavana with immeasurable splendour, 'there came a god and stood steadfast before me.' Do these words of the Blessed One also not pertain to reality, and are not trustworthy?

A. The Blessed One is always trustworthy. The one who is not trustworthy we abhor addressing him as the Blessed One. The 'god' referred to in Mahamangala Sutta, can easily mean "a cultured man." Even now, in Indian languages, when we want to eulogize somebody, we say, that particular person is not a man, he is a devata (god). Had this "Devata", belonged to any other species, than that of men, then in the instructions, provided in Mangala Sutta, there ought to have been something at least, which would have not been meant for men, in general; but for any other species, such as "Gods" in particular. All the auspicious things or belongings that the Buddha, is supposed to have made known to a 'Devata' or an angel or god can be enumerated as follows:

(1) Not to associate with fools, (2) to associate with the wise, (3) to honour those who are worthy of honour, (4) to reside in a suitable country, (5) to have done meritorious deeds in the past, (6) to conduct oneself in the right way, (7) vast learning, (8) perfect handicraft, (9) to be highly disciplined (10) pleasant speech, (11) the support of father and mother, (12) the cherishing of wife and children, (13) peaceful occupation, (14) generosity, (15) righteous conduct, (16) the helping of relatives (17) blameless actions, (18) to abstain from evil, (19) not to indulge in intoxicants, (20) steadfastness in virtue, (21) reverence, (22) humility, (23) contentment, (24) gratitude, (25) opportune hearing of the Dhamma, (26) patience, (27) obedience, (28) sight of the Sadhus, (29) religious discussions from time to time, (30) self-control, (31) noble living (chastity) (32) perception of
the four noble truths, (33) realisation of Nibbana, (35) not to flutter, when coming into contact with worldly contingencies, (36) sorrowlessness, (37) stainlessness, and (38) security.

Now, out of the above thirty-eight teachings which one is such, about which, it could be said, that “it is not meant for men?”

Q. 44. Are then the ‘mara’ of the Buddhist tradition and ‘satan’ of the Christian tradition, just like the ‘angels’ and ‘gods’, mere fabrications of human mind?

A. Yes, as it has been conceived, that the purpose of a ‘Devata’ or an angel is always to assist noble activities, similarly purpose of a ‘mara’ or ‘satan’ is always to obstruct the realisation of noble endeavours. In the context of the “renunciation” of Siddharth Gautama also, it is stated,—” At this moment came mara, with the intention of persuading the Future Buddha to turn back; and standing in the air, he said.

“Sir, go not forth, for on the seventh day from now the wheel of Empire will appear to you, and you shall rule over the four great continents and their two thousand attendant isles. Sir, turn back!”

“Who are you?”
“I am Vasavati Mara.”

“Mara, I knew that the wheel of empire was on the point of appearing to me; but I do not wish for sovereignty. I am about to cause the ten thousand worlds to thunder with my becoming a Buddha.”

“I shall catch you,” said mara, “the very first time you have a lustful, malicious, or unkind thought.” And like an ever-present shadow, he followed after. From this description also, it is evident, that “Mara” is nothing but the personification of the ignoble tendencies of human mind.

Q. 45. Are all the gods and goddesses, he-angels and she-angels, found in the literature of different religious denominations unacceptable?
A. Yes and No. All the gods and goddesses are as much creations of the human-mind as the characters of any modern cinema. We should accept these gods and goddesses, only as the characters, given birth to, by some unknown, unnamed artists, and not as historical realities. The truth of these stories, remains concealed, in the message, beneficial or harmful, conveyed through them, and not in the historicity of those imaginary characters. Unacceptable all of them are, of course, as historical characters, still we need not deny their literary worth and artistic significance.

Q. 46. Where did Siddharth Gautama go forth after descending from his palace?

A. Then, as stated in the text, the Future Buddha, casting away with indifference a Universal sovereignty already in his grasp,—spewing it out as if it were but phlegm, departed from the city, in great splendour on the full-moon day of the month ‘Asalha’ (July), when the moon was in Libra. And when out from the city, he became desirous of looking back at it; but no sooner had the thought arisen in his mind, that the broad earth, seeming to fear, lest the great being might neglect to perform the act of looking back, split and turned round like a potter’s wheel. When the Future Buddha had stood a while facing the city and gazing upon it, and had indicated in that place, the spot for the “shrine of the turning back of Kanthaka”, he turned Kanthaka in the direction, in which he meant to go, and proceeded on his way, to great honour and exceeding glory.”

This great “renunciation”, of Siddharth Gautama was really a great event, and it justly struck as such to the commentator, who rightly described it in such edifying delineation. Adds he, the deities bore sixty thousand torches in front of him and sixty thousand behind him, and sixty thousand on the right hand and sixty thousand on the left hand. Other deities standing on the rim of the world, bore torches past all numbering; and still other deities, as well as serpents and birds, accompanied, and did him homage with heavenly perfumes, garlands, sandal-wood powder,
and incense. And the sky was as full of coral flowers as it was of pouring water at the height of the rainy season. Celestial choruses were heard; and on every side bands of music played, some of eight instruments, and some of sixty,—sixty-eight hundred thousand instruments in all. It was as when the storm clouds thunder on the sea, or when the ocean roars against the Yugandhara rocks.

"Advancing in this glory, the Future Buddha in one night passed through three kingdoms, and at the end of thirty leagues he came to the river named Anoma."

We can accept this narration as "true", only in the sense that it is just a literary flight of the commentator's imagination, otherwise if it would have been a historical fact, then the "great renunciation" of Siddharth Gautama would have never taken place. Was it possible that the citizens of Kapilavastu, could have kept on slumbering when the deities "bore sixty thousand torches in front of Siddharth Gautama, sixty thousand behind him, sixty thousand on the right hand, and sixty thousand on the left hand." Not only this much, "celestial choruses were heard, and on every side bands of music played." Those were the citizens of Kapilavastu and surely not the Kumbhakaranas of Sri Lanka of Ravana!

A yojana is presumed to be of approximately eight miles in length. This statement of having crossed three kingdoms, and of having covered three Yojanas, i.e. 241 miles in a single night is also questionable. It is probable that this Anoma-river may be the present Aumi river of Gorakhpur district. If so, then of course the exact distance between Kapilavastu and Aumi river can be measured.

Q. 47. Having reached the banks of river Anoma, what Siddharth Gautama did next?

A. Stopping on the river-bank, the Future Buddha asked Channa,—

"What is the name of this River?"
"Sire, its name is Anoma,"

"And my renunciation also, shall be Anoma," said the
Future Buddha. There is a pun on the word Anoma, which apart from being the name of a river, can also mean an Illustrious one. Saying this he gave the signal to his horse with his heel; and the horse sprang over the river, which had a breadth of 1120 cubits, and landed on the opposite bank. And the Future Buddha, dismounting and standing on the sandy beach that stretched away like a sheet of silver, said to Channa.

"My good Channa, take these ornaments and Kanthaka and go home. I am going forth out in the world."

"Sire, I also will follow you."

Three times the Future Buddha refused him saying, "It is not for you to go forth into the world. Return now!" and ultimately entrusted him the ornaments and Kanthaka. Next he thought, "These locks of mine are not suited to a monk; but there is no one fit to cut the hair of a Future Buddha. Therefore I will cut them off myself with my sword." And grasping a scimitar with his right hand. he seized his top-knot with his left-hand, and cut it off, together with diadem. His hair thus became two finger-breadths in length, and curling to the right, lay close to his head. As long as he lived it remained of that length, and the beard was proportionate. And never again did he have to cut either hair or beard."

How very human is the whole description! One would wish that this narration did not terminate with the sentence, "As long as he lived, it remained of that length, and the beard was proportionate. And never again did he have to cut either hair or beard." It is evident, that the above statement is a reflection of a period in Buddhist history, when perhaps under the influence of Mahayana, like the teaching of the Buddha, being transcendental, his physical features also had become transcendental.

Q. 48. After all Siddharth Gautama was a "prince". Having entrusted his garments and ornaments to Channa, what dress did he put on?

A. Again the Future Buddha thought, "These garments of mine, made of Benares cloth, are not suited to a monk."
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Now the Maha Brahma god, Ghatikara thought to himself—
“Today my friend has gone forth on the great retirement. I will bring him the requisites of a monk.”

“Robes, three in all, the bowl for alms,
The razor, needle, and the belt,
And water-strainer,—just these eight
Are needed by the ecstatic monk.”

In the above statement Mahabrahma has been made the donor of the eight requisites of a Buddhist monk. In Pali, where names of the eight things are enumerated, one of them is vasi. Among the eight things that are offered to a Buddhist monk even at present, one is a “razor”. The word “vasi” at present is interpreted as a “razor”. But the word “vasi”, in reality does not mean a “razor”. The word for a “razor” is “khura”. Therefore it is not impossible that in ancient days, a scythe or anything like it, may have been of greater utility to the monks living in forests, and later the utility “of a razor” may have become apparent for monks living in the present time. Then the word “vasi” may have been made a synonym of the word “khura”. But the Mahabrahama, could have never offered a “razor” for the simple reason that in the 6th B.C., even a Mahabrahama would have not possessed a “razor”. A “razor” of the modern type was a non-existent thing then. And moreover it is already stated that his hair thus became two finger-breathths in length, and curling to the right, lay close to his head. As long as he lived it remained of that length, and the beard was proportionate and never again did he have to cut either hair or beard. “Of what use was a “razor” to the Future Buddha when he did not have to cut his hair or beard any more!

Q. 49. What happened next?

A. In its condensed form, it is only this, that “Having put on this most excellent venture, the symbol of retirement from house-hold life, he persuaded Channa saying:

“Channa, go tell my father and my mother from me that I am well.”
“And Channa did obeisance to the Future Buddha; and keeping his right side towards him, he departed.

But Kanthaka, who had stood listening to the Future Buddha, while he was conferring with Channa, was unable to bear his grief at the thought, "I shall never see my master anymore." And as he passed out of sight, his heart burst, and he died, and was reborn in the heaven of the thirty-three as the god Kanthaka.

“At first the grief of the Channa had been but single; but now he was oppressed with a second sorrow in the death of Kanthaka, and came weeping and wailing to the city.

It looks that all that is mentioned after, "And Channa did obeisance to the Future Buddha, and keeping his right side towards him, he departed," is an after thought. If Kanthaka, as mentioned earlier, had assisted the Future Buddha in a noble endeavour, then there was little necessity for him to be grieved. His rebirths "in the heaven of the thirty-three as the god Kanthaka" is obviously sheer imagination, but no doubt it is an expression of the devotion of Kanthaka towards his compassionate master.

Q. 50. Having retired, whither did Siddharth Gautama proceed, and what was his first major experience?

A. Now the Future Buddha, having thus retired from the house-hold life, spent a week, in the joy of retirement, in a mango-grove of a town, namely, Anupiya. Then he in a single day, having traversed distance of thirty league, on foot, reached Rajagaha. Having entered the city, he begged for food from house to house without passing away. By the beauty of the Future Buddha, the whole city was thrown into a commotion. Then ran the king’s men to the palace, and made announcement—

"Sire, there is a being of such and such appearance going about the city begging for food. Whether he be a god, or a man, or a serpent, or a bird, we do not know."

Once before also Siddharth Gautama had been made to traverse thirty leagues in a single night. Here again exactly thirty leagues in a single day! When he left Kapilavastu, he
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had at least a Kanthaka to ride upon; but now $38 \times 8 = 240$ miles in a single day and on foot!

Q. 51. How did the king Bimbisara react then?

A. Then the king Bimbisara standing on the roof of his palace, and thence beholding the great being, became amazed and astonished, and commanded his men—

“Look ye now! go and investigate this! If this person be not a man, he will vanish from sight as soon as he leaves the city; if, namely, he be a god, he will depart by way of the air; if a serpent, he will sink into the ground. But if he be a human being, he will eat the food, he has obtained in alms.”

Now the great Being, after collecting a number of scraps, sufficient, as he judged, for his sustenance, left the city by the same gate he had entered, and sitting down with his face to the east, in the shade of Pandava rock, he attempted to eat his meal.

But his stomach turned, and he felt as if his inwards were on the point of coming out by his mouth. Thereupon, in the midst of his distress at the repulsive food, for in that existence he had never before so much as seen such a fare, he began to admonish himself saying, "Siddharth, although you were born in a family having plenty to eat and drink, into a station in life where you lived on fragrant third season rice with various sauces of the finest flavours, when you saw a monk clad in the garment taken from the rubbish heap, you exclaimed, 'Oh, when shall I be like him, and eat food which I have begged? Will that truth ever come?" And then you retired. And now that you have your wish, and have renounced all, what, pray, is this you are doing? When he had thus admonished himself, his disgust subsided, and he ate his meal.

The above is indeed a remarkable account of the human aspect of Siddharth Gautama. It is really fortunate that at least this remained unsullied at the hands of any seraphic commentator, otherwise he could easily get down a few dainty dishes, by some Ghaitikaa Brahma!

Q. 52. What news, those men, sent by the king to make an exact report, brought?
A. Then the king's men went and announced to the king what they had seen. And the king, on hearing the report of the messengers, issued hastily from the city, and approaching the Future Buddha, and being pleased with his deportment, he tendered him all this kingly glory.

"Great king," replied the Future Buddha," I do not seek for the gratification of my senses or my passions, but have retired for the sake of the supreme and absolute enlightenment."

"Verily," said the king, when his repeated offers had all been refused, "you are sure to become a Buddha; but when that happens, your first journey must be to my kingdom."

Is it not an enticing picture of Siddharth Gautama's determination? Nothing of any worth, has ever been achieved, without such firmness?

Q. 53. Where did Siddharth Gautama proceed from Rajagaha?

A. Then the Future-Buddha, having made the king, the required promise, proceeded on his way; and coming to Alara Kalama and Uddaka, the disciple of Rama, he acquired from them the eight stages of "meditation". But becoming convinced that they did not lead to enlightenment, he ceased to practice them. And being desirous to practice the "great penance," he went to Uruvela, and saying, "truly, delightful is this spot," he there took up his abode, and began the great penance.

Q. 54. Did that "great penance," prove beneficial to Siddharth Gautama in any way?

A. The only good it did, was that it convinced Siddharth Gautama that "the great penance" also could not lead to attainment of enlightenment.

Q. 55. At the time, when Siddharth Gautama was going through the "great penance," and had lost consciousness and had even fallen on the "walking-place," was there nobody to assist and attend upon him?

A. Why not? Kondanna and four others, in all five persons,
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who were wandering about for alms through villages, market towns, and royal cities, here met the Future Buddha. And during the six years of the great struggle, they did all manner of service for him and kept constantly at his beck and call, all the time saying, "Now he will become a Buddha, now he will become a Buddha."

But when the Future Buddha, coming to the conclusion that "these austerities are not the way to enlightenment," started begging for ordinary material food; then the hand of those five monks also thought. "It is now six years that this man has been performing austerities without having been able to attain Enlightenment; how much less can he be expected to do so in future, now that he has again taken to ordinary material food! He has become luxurious, and given up the struggle...we will have nothing more to do with him."

With that they took their bowls and robes, and left the Great Being, and going eighteen leagues off, entered Isipatana.

It is worth noticing that amongst these five, who had forsaken the Great Being and gave away, one was the very same Kondanna, who previously had prophesied that the "Great Being would become an All Enlightened One."

If he believed in his own prediction, then why did he leave the "great being" and go away? It was not his fault for which he could be blamed. The astrology as claimed is not a "trustworthy science" at all.

Q. 56. How is the story of Sujata's "milk rice" being offered to the Buddha related?

A. Now at that time there lived in Uruvela a girl named Sujata, who had been born in the family of the house-holder Senani. On reaching maturity she made a vow to a certain Banyan tree, saying: "If I get a husband of equal rank with myself, and my first born is a son, I will make a yearly offering to you of the value of a hundred thousand pieces of money."

And her prayer was granted.
Sujata said to her slave-girl Punna—
"Run quickly, and get everything ready at the holy place."
“Yes, my lady,” replied the slave-girl, and ran in great haste to the foot of the tree. She saw the Future Buddha sitting at the foot of the tree, contemplating the eastern quarter of the world. When she beheld the radiance from his body lightening up the whole tree, she became greatly excited, saying to herself, “our deity, methinks, has come down from the tree today, and has seated himself, ready to receive our offering in person.” And she returned in great haste, and told Sujata of the matter.

When Sujata heard this news, she was overjoyed; and saying, “From this day forth be to me in the room of an eldest-daughter,” she decked Punna with all the ornaments appropriate to that position.

She, then poured the milk-rice in a golden dish. Then covering the dish with another, which was also made of gold, and wrapping it in a cloth, she adorned herself in all ornaments, and with the golden dish on her head proceeded to the foot of the banyan tree...And taking the pot from her head, she uncovered it, and with some flower-scented water in a golden vase, drew near and took up a position close to the Future-Buddha.

The earthen ware bowl which the Future Buddha had kept so long, and which had been given him by Ghatikara, the Mahabrahma, at that instant disappeared; and the Future Buddha, stretching out his right hand in an attempt to find his bowl, grasped the vase of water. Next Sujata placed the dish of milk-rice in the hand of the great-being. And she departed, craving no more for her golden dish worth a hundred thousand pieces of money than if it had been a dead leaf.

Now when he had consumed the milk-rice, he took the golden dish, and threw it into the water.

Literary artists—particularly of the cinema-world, have unreasonably enhanced the importance of this narration. From the point of view of Buddhism, it has no significance at all. The first thing to be noted is that when Sujata offered her milk-rice in that golden plate, the Future Buddha, had not attained enlightenment as yet. So this milk-rice offering was not an offering, made to a “Buddha” at all.

The second point, similarly, which deserves serious mention, is that Sujata, according to her belief had made this offering to a deity residing in the tree. She particularly rejoiced, when she
learnt from her maid-servant that the deity had come down from the tree and had seated himself to receive their offering in person.

And the third one, is that one would like to know the reason, as to why the earthen vessel offered by Ghatikara Brahna disappeared just at this very moment. Was it merely to enable Siddharth Gautama to eat from a golden dish!

Siddharth Gautama also, after having finished the contents had thrown the golden dish away. The earthen-ware offered by Ghatikara Brahna had disappeared earlier, and this golden-dish also was thrown away by Siddharth Gautama. Thus out of the eight requisites offered by Ghatikara Brahna, now Siddharth Gautama would have remained, hereafter, in possession of one less, i.e. seven. And that one thing too, most useful one such as an eating bowl!

Q. 57. As Siddharth Gautama did not receive enlightenment, as a result of "meditation", learnt from Alara-Kalama, and becoming convinced that it did not lead to enlightenment, he had ceased to practice it; and as he did not receive "enlightenment," as a result of the "great penance", also, then how did he receive that "Buddha-hood," that "enlightenment," which made him known as "All Awakened One?"

A. The Future Buddha took his noon-day rest on the banks of the river, in a grove of Sala-trees in full bloom. And at nightfall...he went towards the Bodhi-tree...just then there came from the opposite direction a grass-cutter named Sothiya, and he was carrying grass. And when he saw the great being, he thought that he was a holy man, he gave him eight handfuls of grass. The Future Buddha took this handful of grass by one end, and shook it out there. And straightaway the blades of grass formed themselves into a seat......

The Future Buddha seated at this spot, turned his back to the trunk of the Bodhi-tree and faced the East. He then made this mighty resolution, "Let my skin, and sinews and bones become dry, welcome! and let all the flesh and blood in my body dry up! but never from this seat will I stir, until I have attained the supreme and absolute wisdom!" He sat himself
down cross-legged in an unconquerable position, from which not even the decent of a hundred thunderbolts at once could have dislodged him.

At this stage, it appears that the weaker aspect of Siddharth Gautama's personality, the unworthy disposition in his character, had once shaken him to the utmost. He must have experienced the "dark night" of the saints. This in Buddhist literature is termed as "Mara, the evil one," and is depicted profusely by a large number of artists and sculptors of all ages and climes. At the end of this fierce struggle "the followers of Mara, the evil one fled one in all directions."

Then the hosts of the gods, when they saw the army of the Mara flee, cried out, "Mara is defeated, Prince Siddharth has conquered! Let us go and celebrate his victory."

It was before the sun had set that the Great Being thus vanquished the army of Mara. And then he acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of the previous existences; in the middle watch of the night, the diviae eye; and in the last watch of the night, his intellect fathomed Dependent Origination. This in short can be said, the "Enlightenment" the Siddharth Gautama had attained on a full-moon night of the month of Vaisakha, and having attained the same, he felt such a great joy, that he breathed forth the following utterance—

"Through birth and rebirths endless round,
Seeking in vain, I hastened on,
To find who framed this edifice.
What misery! —birth incessantly!
O builder! I have discovered thee!
This fabric thou shall never rebuild!
Thy rafters all are broken now,
And pointed roof demolished lies!
This mind has demolition reached,
And seen the last of desire!"

The above couplets depict the "bliss," Siddharth Gautama, must have experienced, at the realisation that the purpose, for which he had renounced his family life, and carried on an incessant struggle for six long years, was ultimately fulfilled.
These do not, in any way reveal to us the "knowledge," he had attained. It has been earlier stated, that in the first watch of the night he acquired "the knowledge of previous existence," in the middle watch of the night, "the divine eye" and in the last watch of the night, his intellect fathomed "dependent origination." Now it is worth discussing this three-fold "knowledge" and learning as much as one can, about this.

Q. 58. Did the Blessed One remain sitting for some time, under the Bodhi-tree, even after he had attained the Buddhahood?

A. Yes, the Blessed One sat cross-legged for seven days together at the foot of the Bodhi-tree, experiencing the bliss of emancipation.

Then the Blessed One, during the first watch of the night, thought over dependent origination both forward and back:

On ignorance depend intellectual differentiations;
On intellectual differentiations depends consciousness;
On consciousness depend name and form;
On name and form depend the six organs of sense;
On the six organs of sense depends contact;
On contact depends sensation;
On sensation depends desire;
On desire depends attachment;
On attachment depends existence;
On existence depends birth;
On birth depend old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair;
Thus does this entire aggregation of misery arise. But, also, on the complete fading out and cessation of ignorance cease all intellectual differentiations; on the cessation of intellectual differentiation cease consciousness;
On the cessation of consciousness cease name and form;
On the cessation of name and form cease the six organs of sense;
On the cessation of the six organs of sense ceases contact;
On the cessation of contact ceases sensation;
On the cessation of sensation ceases desire;
On the cessation of desire ceases attachment;
On the cessation of attachment ceases existence;
On the cessation of existence ceases birth;
On the cessation of birth disease, old age and death, sorrow, 
lamentation, misery, grief, and despair.
Thus does this entire aggregation of misery cease.

Then the Blessed One, during the middle watch of the night, thought over dependent origination both forward and back: On ignorance depend all intellectual differentiations...Thus does this entire aggregation of misery arise. But on the complete fading out and cessation of ignorance cease all intellectual differentiations...Thus does this entire aggregation of misery cease.

Then the Blessed one, during the last watch of the night, thought over dependent origination both forward and back: On ignorance depend all intellectual differentiations...Thus does this entire aggregation of misery arise. But on the complete fading out and cessation of ignorance cease all intellectual differentiations...Thus does this entire aggregation of misery cease.

It has to be noted that the Blessed One, during all the three watches of the night, thought over only dependent origination both forward and backward. Hence, there is ample scope for the possibility and the doubt, that may it be, that the real "knowledge" attained by the Blessed One, did consist in the law of dependent origination alone, and "the knowledge of the previous existences" and the attainment of "divine eye," might be just a "redundant edifice." Had it not been so, then it was perfectly natural that the Blessed One, during the three watches of the night would have thought over all the three "knowledges" attained previously; why on "dependent origination" alone?

Q. 59. Did the Enlightened One remain sitting under the Bodhi-tree for a very long period?

A. No, the Enlightened One remained seated under the Bodhi-tree only for a single week. After that he spent six other weeks consecutively seated cross-legged under six other trees.
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Q. 60. Under which tree did the Enlightened One sit, after having arisen from under the Bodhi-tree? Did anything specific happen there?

A. Then, the Blessed One, leaving the foot of the Bodhi-tree, drew near to where the Ajapala banyan tree was, and he sat at the foot of the Ajapala tree for seven days together, experiencing the bliss of emancipation.

Then a certain Brahmin, who was of a proud and contemptuous disposition, drew near to where the Blessed One was; and having drawn near, he exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, and stood respectfully at one end. Then the Brahmin spoke to the Blessed One:

"Gotama, what constitutes a Brahmin? What are the Brahmin-making qualities?"

The Blessed One replied:

"Any body and every body, whose evil-traits are banished, who is free from pride, who is self-restrained, who is spotless, who is learned, can be called a Brahmin."

This was the Buddha's first onslaught on the four-fold division of Indian Society, known as Chatuvanna. It appears that he must have thought that the first things must come first.

Q. 61. Whither did the Buddha proceed further after having remained seated under the Ajapala banyan tree for a week?

A. After having remained seated under the Ajapala he proceeded to Mucalinda, and after Mucalinda underneath Rajayatana tree. At that time the two merchants named Tapassu and Bhallika, came from Utakala (modern Orissa). Standing respectfully on one side, they requested the Buddha, seated under Rajayatana tree, to accept their "rice-cakes and honey." The Buddha accepted their offering. When the Buddha had partaken of it, they requested the master to accept them as his disciples. They became the first lay disciples of the Buddha, and their formula of refuge contained no reference to the "Sangha." It consisted of taking refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma alone.
It is only as regards these two lay disciples of the Buddha that it can be said that they took refuge only in the two gems. The simple reason was that the Sangha had not come into existence till then.

Q. 62. At present, some intensely dedicated people to the memory of late Babasaheb Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar desire, that they might be permitted, to take a fourth refuge in “Bheema” also, along with the three traditional refuges in the Buddha, in the Dhamma and in the Sangha, at the time of their conversion to Buddhism. Is it advisable to do so?

A. No, it is neither advisable nor permissible. If for no other reason, then for this simple reason that as a result of this, the seeds of friction can easily be sown amongst the lay disciples of the Buddha, as the three refuged ones and the four refuged ones. Baba Sahib himself had become an Upasaka, by taking three refuges. Hence it is advisable to insist on three refuges alone.

Q. 63. Where did the Blessed One proceed after Rajayatana?

A. After Rajayatana, the Blessed One, proceeded and occupied a seat under Ajapala Banyan tree. While he was meditating, under that tree, he thought that he had discovered that profound truth, so difficult to perceive, difficult to understand, tranquillizing and sublime, which was not to be gained by mere reasoning, and was visible only to the wise. The world, however, is given to pleasure, delighted with pleasure, enchanted with pleasure. Truly such beings will hardly understand the law of conditionality, the dependent origination (Paticca-samuppāda) of everything, incomprehensible to them will also be end of all formations...the fading away of craving, detachment, extinction, Nibbana...“If I teach and the others do not comprehend, then I shall be exerting with no result. It shall be a fruitless strain for me.”

But then the Blessed One saw with the eye of a Buddha—the eye of compassion and sympathy—and it struck him: “yet there are beings whose eyes are only a little covered with dust; they will understand the truth.” In the interest of such people and
for the good of all people, the Blessed One decided to teach his
document. How magnificent was this decision of the Blessed One,
can be gauged from the fact, that if he had decided otherwise,
then not only millions and millions of the inhabitants of the
present world, but also the past generations of the last two
thousand five hundred years, would have been devoid of the
three “refuges”.

Q. 64. Having roamed forth in Uruvela, according to his
liking, the Blessed One proceeded towards Varanasi. One
Upaka, the follower of Ajivaka sect, having seen the Blessed One
asked:

“Recluse! your countenance is attractive. Your demeanour
is bewitching. Friend, whom did you accept as your teacher?
Who is your guide? Whose doctrine do you adhere to?”

The Blessed One replied: “I have conquered everything.
I have known every thing. I am not attached to any thing. I
shall preach according to my own enlightenment.”

“Friend, as you claim, you can then be even an all-con-
queroor!”

“Upaka, it is beings like me, who become all-conquerors. I
have conquered all evil. In this sense I too am an all-con-
queroor.”

Saying “just possible you might be one,” the Upaka Ajivika
turned and went aside.

Although the doctrine of the Blessed One, was “extraordi-
nary,” but it appears that there was nothing so very “extraordi-
nary” in his physical features, as to make him identifiable, by
each and everybody all of a sudden.

Q. 65. It is said that there gushed forth rays of six different
colours from his body. Is this statement doubtful?

A. If any person would have seen these rays gushing out
from the body of the Blessed One, then that particular truth
“could be his individual truth.” Otherwise these rays can be
taken to be nothing more than the fancy of an imaginative mind.

Q. 66. Thus advancing gradually, the Blessed One, reached
Isipatana Migadavana (deer park). What did he do there?
A. It was at this very place that the Blessed One delivered his first sermon well-known as the turning of the wheel of the law. The substance of that sermon in short is:

“O monks, these two extremes are not to be practiced by a recluse. What are the two? That conjoined with the passions, low, vulgar, common, ignoble, and useless, and that conjoined with self-torture, painful, ignoble, and useless. Avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the Middle way, which gives knowledge, and lends to calm, to insight to enlightenment, to Nirvana.

“What O monks, is the middle way, which gives sight...? It is the noble eight-fold path, namely right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.”

This the Blessed One preached, and the five wanderers who had deserted the Blessed One earlier, became his admirers and requested him to ordain them as his disciples. While this sermon was being preached; Kondanna attained the knowledge that every thing that is subject to origination is also subject to cessation.

Then the Lord uttered this Udana; “verily Kondanna (one of the five wanderers) has attained the knowledge.” It appears that the essence of the teaching of the Blessed One, in short is only this much that “every thing that is subject to origination is also subject to cessation.” The same, can be thought of, to be the essence of the “Law of dependent origination” also.

Q. 67. Who were to follow the elder Kondanna, in the attainment of the knowledge?

A. After Kondanna, it was the turn of elder Bhaddiya, elder Vappa, elder Mahanama, and elder Assaji to obtain the “eye of wisdom”. This “eye of wisdom”, this new insight was needed in realizing the truth that “every thing that is subject to origination is also subject to cessation.” There is no exception whatsoever to this rule.

Q. 68. Tapassu and Bhallika, the two merchants had become lay disciples by taking refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma
alone. Who was the first lay disciple of the Buddha, to take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha also?

A. It was a rich merchant of Varanasi whose son Yasa also was later ordained and made a monk.

Q. 69. Were certain other companions of Yasa also ordained?

A. Yes, there were some fifty companions of Yasa, who were also ordained. They had their Pabaja (ordination) and Upasampada (higher ordination) ceremony performed by the words, "come, monk (ehi Bhikkhu), well proclaimed is the doctrine; lead a religious life for making a complete end of pain." When the number of such worthy ones (Arahatas) as had received higher ordination rose to sixty one, the Blessed One addressed them thus:

"Monks, delivered I am of all bondages mundane or celestial. Delivered you too are of all bondages, mundane or celestial. Go forth, ye Bhikkhus, for the good of many, out of compassion for gods and men. Do not go two in one direction. Preach the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle and glorious in the end, in the spirit, as well in the letter. There are beings, whose eyes are scarcely covered with dust, but if the doctrine is not preached to them they cannot attain salvation. Proclaim to them a life of holiness. They will understand the doctrine and accept it, I too, O monks, am going to Uruvela, to Senani village, in order to preach the doctrine."

About one thousand and two hundred years, earlier than the birth of Prophet Muhammad, and about six hundred years earlier to the birth of Jesus Christ, in the religious history of mankind, the Blessed One was the first and foremost to have sent his worthy-disciples, out in the open world, to preach. Not only that he sent others, but he himself had also gone forth for the fulfilment of the same ideal.

Having charged his monks to show compassion not only to men, but 'gods' also, the all Enlightened One proclaimed that his disciples were higher in status than even 'Gods'.

Q. 70. Did the Blessed One continue conferring ordination
and higher ordination, on those who applied for it, all by himself?

A. No, when the Blessed One saw, that the Bhikkhus, were bringing such men, as were applicants of ordination and higher ordination, from various lands, various regions, it occurred to him, that he could authorise the Bhikkhus themselves to confer ordination and higher ordination, on men, such as were applicants for it and had come from various lands and various regions. He called the Bhikkhus and enjoined upon them; "Monks, hereafter, Ientrust you with the responsibility of conferring the ordination and the higher ordination, in the different countries, upon those who are eager to receive it, and if you find them worthy of it."

"And thus monks, should one ordain: First having made him have his hair and beard cut off, having made him put on yellow robes, having made him arrange an upper robe over one shoulder, having made him honour the monks' feet, having made him sit down on his haunches, having made him salute with joined palms, he should be told: speak thus: 'I go to the Awakened One for refuge, I go to the Dhamma for refuge, I go to the order of Sangha for refuge. And a second time I go...And a third time I go to...the order for refuge...I allow monks, the ordination and the higher ordination by these three goings for refuge.'"

The Buddha had the "monopoly" of ordaining others. How easily did he let it slide away.

71. Q. A large number of young men, from different parts of the country did seek ordination. Were there some "Sadhus" also, who sought ordination at the hands of the Blessed One?

A. Not only ordinary "Sadhus", but even their Chiefs sought ordination. Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa and Gaya Kassapa—the three matted hair ascetics, together with their thousands of followers, had received their ordination and higher ordination at the hands of the Awakened One.

Q. 72. To which place did the Blessed One, proceed, after having stayed at Uruvela, as long as he liked. And did he deliver any important sermon over there?
A. While residing at Gaya-sisa (present Brahmayoni) in Gaya district, together with a thousand former ascetics of matted hair, the Awakened One did deliver a sermon of extraordinary significance. He said: “Monks, every thing is burning. And, what every thing, is monks burning? The eye, monks, is material. Material shapes are burning. Consciousness through the eye is burning, impinement on the eye is burning, in other words the feeling which arises from impingement on the eye, be it pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant, that too is burning. With what is it burning? I say it is burning with the fire of passion, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of stupidity; it is burning because of birth, ageing, dying, because of grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair.

“The ear is burning, sounds are burning......the nose is burning, odours are burning...the tongue is burning, tastes are burning...the body is burning, tangible objects are burning. The mind is burning, mental states are burning, consciousness through the mind is burning, impingement on the mind is burning, in other words the feeling which arise through impingement on the mind, be it pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant, that too is burning. With what is it burning? I say it is burning with the fire of passion, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of stupidity; it is burning because of birth, ageing, dying, because of grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair.

“Seeing this monks, the instructed disciple of the Aryans disregards the eye, and he disregards material shapes and he disregards consciousness...disregarding, he is dispassionate; being dispassionate he is freed, in freedom the knowledge comes to be, ‘I’m freed,’ and he comprehends; ‘Destroyed is birth lived is the noble life, done is what was to be done; there is no more of being such or such.’

“He realises that it is all becoming ..

This is the Nirvana, as taught by the Blessed One. This is the incomparable freedom or Moksha, which is “attainable in this very physical body of six feet.”
Q. 73. King Bimbisara had requested Siddharth Gautama, that after the attainment of Enlightenment, he should be the first to be obliged, by a visit to his kingdom, to which the Awakened One had agreed. Did the Buddha forget that promise?

A. No, the Lord having stayed at Gaya-sisa, for as long as he found suitable, set out on tour for Rajagaha together with his retinue of monks—with all those some thousand monks, who had formerly been matted hair ascetics. Then the Lord on tour, in due course arrived at Rajagaha.

The King Bimbisara of Magadha heard—“Verily, the recluse Gautama, the son of the Sakya, who has gone forth from the Sakyan clan, has reached Rajagaha and is staying at Rajagaha in the palm grove pleasure ground in the Supatitha Chaitya.” The King Bimbisara, reached there, and having been convinced of the sublimity of Dharma, became a lay disciple of the Awakened One, and made the following submission: “May, I, Lord, give this Bamboo Grove, a pleasure park to the order of the Monks with the Awakened Ones at its head,” The Lord accepted the park and declared that he had no objection to accept residential places.

Thus was laid the foundation for the “homeless ones” to become the inheritors as member of the Sangha, of the property, formerly owned but later donated by the lay disciples of the Buddha.

Q. 74. It can be taken for certain that the number of Bhikkhu chief disciples of the Buddha must have been on increase. Can any of them be considered as the chief disciples of the Buddha?

A. Generally speaking Maha Kasyapa, Upali, Ananda, Sariputta, Moggallana and many others can be considered as the chief disciples of the Buddha, but amongst them Sariputta and Moggallana the two elders, are regarded as the two chief disciples.

Q. 75. How did these two elders enter the order?

A. At that time the wanderer Sanjaya was residing in Rajagaha together with a great company of five hundred wanderers. Sariputta and Moggallana were abiding by his
instructions and they were in his charge. There was an agreement, between the two that “whoever attains the deathless state first, let him announce it to the other.”

Both of them achieved that deathless state. What was that? It was the doctrine of the Buddha, which was put in a nutshell by the elder Assaji thus:

“Those things which proceed from a cause, of these the truth-finder has told the cause,
And that which is their stopping—the great recluse has taught this doctrine.”

When the wanderer Sariputta had heard this tense expression of Dhamma, there arose Dhamma-vision, dustless, stainless, that “whatever is of the nature to uprise all that is of the nature to stop.”

Indeed the elder Assaji had wonderfully condensed the doctrine, in its letter and in its spirit, in a single couplet. No wonder that this is often quoted as the essence of Buddhism, and is carved on innumerable stone-slabs particularly in Tibet.

Q. 76. Were these the same Sariputta and Moggallana, whose sacred relics from Sanchi (Bhopal), were taken away by the British government to Britain and which have been brought back to India, after a lapse of about a hundred years, and which are at present enshrined in a magnificent Vihar at Sanchi?

A. These were the same chief disciples of the Lord.

Q. 77. The Buddha was continuously getting young men ordained in large numbers. Most people must have been enthusiastic about it. But, were there none, who criticised it?

A. It is not that the Lord was never criticised. He was not only often criticised, but even rebuked by ignorant people. It is stated:

“Now at that time very distinguished young men belonging to respectable families of Magadha, were being tutored by the
Lord. People looked down upon, criticised, spread it about saying: "The recluse Gautama gets along by making widows, the recluse Gautama gets along by breaking up families. A thousand matted hair ascetics have now been allowed to go forth by him, and these five hundred wanderers of Sanjaya have been allowed to go forth, and these very distinguished young men belonging to respectable families of Magadha are being tutored by the recluse Gautama."

The Buddha's reply was:

"Verily great heroes, truth finders, lead by what is true Dhamma.

Who would be jealous of the wise, leading by Dhamma."

The criticism lasted only for seven days. After seven days it ceased.

Q. 78. When the member of the Bhikkhu-disciples would have considerably increased, it would have become obligatory for the Lord, to promulgate certain rules and regulations and lay down the duties to be performed by the brethren?

A. Yes, the Buddha had to discipline the lives of the monks, by laying down their duties towards their teachers and preceptors, and of the teachers and preceptors also, towards those who shared their calls, the Buddha said:

"Monks, I allow a preceptor. The preceptor, monks, should arouse in the one who shares his cell, i.e. a pupil, the attitude of a son; the one who shares his cell should arouse in the preceptor the attitude of a father.

The pupil should conduct himself properly towards the preceptor. Having got up early, having taken off his sandals, having arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, he should give tooth-wood, he should give water for rinsing the mouth, he should make ready a seat. If there is conjey, having washed a bowl, the conjey should be placed near (the preceptor). When he has drunk the conjey, having given him water, having received the bowl, having washed it properly without rubbing it,
it should be put away. When the preceptor has got up, the seat should be removed...If the preceptor wishes to enter a village, his inner clothing, etc. are to be given to him...If the preceptor desires an attendant, (the latter) should follow him as his attendant. He should not walk too far away (from him), he should not walk too close.

"He should not interrupt the preceptor when he is speaking ......(But, if the preceptor is bordering on an offence, then speaking courteously, he should warn him. When, he is returning, he should make a seat ready, having come back first...If there comes to be alms-food, and the preceptor wishes to eat, having given him water, alms-food should be placed near (him) ...If the preceptor wishes to bathe, he should prepare a bath... he should wipe out the water from the preceptor's limbs... he should give him his robes.

"Whatever dwelling-place the preceptor is staying, if that dwelling place is soiled, it should be cleaned...If there come to be cobwebs in the dwelling place, he should first remove them... having looked for any rubbish, here move it to the side.

"If the weather is cool, he should open the windows by day, he should close the windows at night. If the weather is warm, he should close the windows by day, he should open them at night...If a privy comes to be soiled, the privy should be swept."

The Buddha did not enjoin upon the pupils alone, their duties towards their preceptors, but he had laid down the duties of the preceptors towards their pupils also. He dictated: "A preceptor should be compassionate towards his pupil...If he has a bowl, a robe, etc. and his disciple has none, he should exert so that the latter also may possess one. If the pupil becomes ill, having got up early he should give tooth-wood, he should give water for rinsing the mouth, he should make ready a seat. If there is coney...that place should be swept. If the one who shares a cell becomes ill, he should tend him as long as life lasts, he should wait upon until he recovers."

Q. 79. Were the details of the ordination and higher ordination maintained as before, or were there any alterations also in it, later on?

A. At the time of the ordination and higher ordination of
Radha Brahman, the Lord made the needed change. He observed:

"From this day forth, monks, I abolish that ordination by going to the three refuges, which I allowed. I allow you, monks, to ordain by a (formal) act consisting of a motion and a resolution put three times.

"And thus, monks, should one ordain. The order should be informed by an experienced, competent monk, saying: 'Honoured Sirs, let the order hear me. This (person) so and so wishes for ordination from the venerable so and so. If it seems right to the order, the order may ordain so and so, through the preceptor so and so. This is the motion.

"Honoured Sirs, let the order hear me. This person so and so...may ordain so and so. The order is ordaining so and so. Through the preceptor so and so. If the ordination of so and so through the preceptor so and so is agreed upon by the venerable ones let them be silent; he who is not in agreement should speak."

And a second time I speak forth this matter...should speak.

And a third time I speak forth this matter...should speak.

So and so is ordained by the order through the preceptor so and so. It is agreed upon by the order, therefore everybody is silent.

Thus do I understand.

Our Lord had thus been making necessary alterations in the rules of the order according to the different circumstances. To make the necessary changes, and to observe the changed ones, is conducive to the welfare of the Buddha Sasana.

Q. 80. When the Bodhisattva had departed from Kapilavastu, he was determined to return to his home-town, only after attaining Enlightenment. Did he return to Kapilavastu, after having become All Awakened One?

A. Yes, while the Lord was residing at Veluvana, Suddhodana the father of Siddharth Gautama became extremely
desirous of seeing his son. He requested Kaludayi, his trusted adviser, and playmate of Siddharth Gautama to go and return together with his son, the Awakened One. With great tact he succeeded in escorting the Lord back to Kapilavastu.

Q. 81. How did the Lord travel?

A. After becoming an All Awakened One, the Lord spent his first rainy-season at Isipatana (Varanasi) itself. After that he resided at Uruvela for a period of three months. Having converted the three asetics of matted hair there, he proceeded to Rajagiri and resided there for a period of two months. Thus five months had elapsed, since his departure from Varanasi. After leaving Rajagiri, the Lord used to travel only eight miles per day. He wanted to cover the distance of 240 miles, between Rajagiri and Kapilavastu in full two months. Therefore he moved on rather leisurely.

Q. 82. In his home-town and particularly in his own family the Awakened One, would have been received in a most gorgeous manner?

A. Thinking that the grove of Nigrodha Sakya would prove a suitable residence for the Lord, the proud Sakyas first got the grove cleared, then had all the small boys and girls, of the decorated town, first sent to welcome him, with garlands and perfumes in their hands. Then they sent the princes and princesses. Then they themselves followed with garlands and perfumes in their hands and respectfully escorted the Lord to the Nigrodharama.

The next day, the Lord, from one corner of the city, started his alms-begging.

When the people heard that the Noble Siddharth Gautama was going from house to house, with a bowl in his hands, they all got dazzled, while looking towards him through their opened windows.

Seeing the Lord begging, Rahula Mata (the mother of Prince Rahula) was immeasurably perturbed. She spoke to the king—"your son is begging alms!"

Taking care of his dress, the king hurried to the Lord "Sire,
what makes you put us to shame? Why this alms begging? Do not we possess food enough to serve you and your retinue?"

"Great king, this is our tradition."

"Sire, we come from Kshatriya clan. None of us has ever begged."

"O king, you may have come from the Kshatriya clan. I belong to the generation of the Buddhas."

The Awakened One did not attach any value to any body's birth. He was concerned with an individual's intrinsic worth.

Q. 83. Did Yasodhara, the mother of Rahula also come forward to extend welcome to the Lord?

A. No, when, she was persuaded, by the king to go and pay her obeisance, she replied: "If she was of any worth, and had remained, truly devoted towards him, then he himself would condescend to come to her and accept her homage." It was Siddharth Gautama, who had forsaken Yasodhara, and it was but appropriate, assessing it from the angle of human sympathy, that even the Lord should return to his former wife. An adjustment took place, between the self-respect of the mother of Rahula and the compassion of Siddharth Gautama the Blessed One. Accompanied by his two chief disciples Sariputta and Moggallana, the Lord entered the chamber of the mother of Rahula. He had instructed both his chief disciples not to obstruct and to let the mother of Rahula pay her homage, the way she thought best and felt most satisfied. "Yasodhara paid her homage by laying her head on the master's feet."

While residing at Kapilavastu, the Lord, saw that not only the son of his foster mother Prajapati Gautami was ordained, but even his own son was ordained.

Q. 84. Can anybody be ordained all of a sudden?

A. No, it is stated that after the ordination of Nanda and Rahula had taken place, Suddhodana the Sakya approached the Lord; having approached, having greeted the Lord, he sat down at a respectful distance. As he was sitting down at a respectful distance, Suddhodana the Sakya spoke thus to the Lord:
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“I, Lord, ask the Lord for one boon.”
“But Gautama, the Awakened Ones, are beyond (granting) boon.”
“Lord, it is what is allowable, it is what is blameless.”
“Speak on, Gautama.”
“Lord, when the Lord went forth there came to be not a little sorrow, likewise when Nanda did; it was extreme when Rahula did. Affection for a son, Lord, cuts into the skin, having cut into the skin, it cuts into the hide, having cut into the hide, it cuts into the flesh...the ligaments...the bones, having cut into the bones and reaching the marrow, it abides. It were well, Lord, if the masters did not ordain a child without the consent of the parents.”

Thus the Lord on this occasion, in this connection, having given reasoned talk, addressed the monks, saying;

“Monks, a child who has not his parents’ consent should not be ordained. Whosoever shall ordain, he shall be committing an offence of wrong doing.”

For the last two thousand years, this injunction of the Lord, has been observed, to its very letter.

Q. 85. After Nanda and Rahula, who were the other distinguished ones to enter the order?

A. Bhaddiya, Anuruddha, Ananda, Bhrigu, Kimbila, Devadatta and Upali had been all ordained at one and the same time. Out of these the earlier six belonged to the Kshatriya clan, but the seventh one, Upali came from a barber family. Together with Upali the barber, when the Sakyan-princes, approached the master, they addressed him thus:

“Venerable Sir, we Sakyans are of a proud disposition. This Upali be-ber has been serving us for a long period. Let him be first to be ordained, so that, then, we may have to pay our homage, demonstrate our respect, by folding our two hands together...This would reduce our pride of belonging to the Sakyan-Kshatriya.”

The Lord, got Upali, ordained first, and the Sakyans to follow him.

In the First Council which took place at Rajagiri, after the
passing away the Lord, the Elder Maha Kassapa got this Upali Maha Thera to act as the final authority, as regards the questions, that were asked, about the discipline.

Q. 86. When the Lord was residing at Kapilavastu, and Rahula had been ordained, then Suddodana and Yasodharara also would have at least, having taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, become the lay he-disciple and she-disciple of the Lord?

A. Of course. It was the characteristic of the doctrine of the Awakened One, that it never drew distinctions between individuals, as near and dear ones, and those who were otherwise. Once he addressed Rahula thus: "Rahula, those who are not ashamed of telling a lie consciously, their holy-life is not worth a farthing. Rahula, one should not tell a lie even in jest. Rahula, when one is about to do anything, one should contemplate, would it be conducive to my well-being? Would it be conducive to other’s well-being? Would it be conducive to both mine and other people’s well-being? Rahula, when one is about to utter any word, one should contemplate, would it be conducive to my well-being? Would it be conducive to other’s well-being? Would it be conducive to both mine and other’s well-being? Rahula, when one is about to entertain any thought one should contemplate, would it be conducive to my well-being? Would it be conducive to other’s well-being? Would it be conducive to both mine and other people’s well-being? Rahula, thus, with circumspection, one should indulge in all activities."

Q. 87. Was the doctrine of the Awakened One, accepted and observed, by the people of his own Saky clan alone or was it accepted and observed by others also?

A. It was accepted by all categories, but undoubtedly, Brahmins, Kshatriya and Vaishyas formed the majority. Once the Lord, was residing at Sita-grove at Rajagaha. The householder Anathapindika, who was the husband of a sister of a (great) merchant of Rajagaha, went to Rajagaha on some business or other. There he was privileged to pay his homage to the Lord. On that occasion Anathapindika spoke thus to the
Lord: "Lord, may the Lord consent to a rains-residence from me at Savatthi together with the order of monks." The Lord accepted the invitation.

Now at that time the house-holder Anathapindika had many friends, many companions, his word carried weight. Having concluded his business at Rajagaha, he set out for Savatthi, and enjoined the people on the way, saying: "Masters, build monasteries, prepare dwelling places, furnish gifts; an Awakened One has arisen in the world."

When the Lord, reached Savatthi, the house-holder Anathapindika having paid an enormous price to the Jeta-Kumar, secured the plot of land, belonging to him, and built a vihar over it. As Jeta-Kumar also had shared the merit of giving, by donating a plot of land, without accepting any price, the monastery built over that piece of land became known as Anathapindika's Jetavanarama. This monastery was gifted over to the community of the Bhikkhus as a whole, with the Awakened One as its head.

Even today the ruins of this monastery can be witnessed at Saheta-Maheta (Distt. Gonda, U.P.).

Q. 88. Was it that the rich people alone caused the monasteries to be built for the community of the Bhikkhus or did the men of ordinary means also strive to get Viharas built for them to reside in?

A. Not only the rich, but even men of very ordinary means, did strive to get Viharas built for the community of the Bhikkhus. Once it occurred to a poor weaver: "Now this can be no ordinary matter inasmuch as these people are getting Viharas built, what now if I too should get one built." Then that poor weaver, having himself kneaded mud, having piled up bricks, had wattle and dauh walls erected. But because he was not skilful the piling was crooked and a wall fell down. And a second time...And a third time...a wall fell down.

Then that poor weaver...spread it about, saying: "These recluses, sons of the Sakyans, exhort, instruct those who give them the requisites of robes, alms-food, lodgings, medicines for the sick, and these look after their constructions. But I am
poor. No one exhorts or instructs me or looks after my construction.”

Monks heard this poor weaver as he was spreading it about. Then these monks told this matter to the Lord. Then the Lord on this occasion, in this connection in charge (of a monk). Monks, the monk who is in charge of construction, should make an effort, thinking, ‘How can the dwelling-place be brought to a speedy termination?’ and he should restore broken and dilapidated parts.

Q. 89. As all the monks were getting ordained after having taken refuge in the Buddha, in the Dhamma and in the Sangha; so there would have not been one superior to another, or inferior from another?

A. Just possible, in the beginning, it might have been exactly like this; but later the Lord had enjoined that even in order of Monks, there should be elder-monks and younger-monks, in the sense that everybody is elder from somebody and almost everybody was junior to somebody. One who was ordained later was expected to think of one, who was ordained earlier, as his elder. It was expected of him, moreover that he should pay his obeisance, and show his regard in every possible way, to his elder and give him priority in each matter.

Q. 90. Individuals make a group, and individual monks in their totality is a Sangha. It is from the lay disciples of the Lord, that the Bhikkhus receive their four requisites of the robes, food, etc. Is it preferable to give “charity” to an individual Bhikkhu, or to the community of the Bhikkhus as a whole.

A. Although the All Awakened One declared charity in general to be a meritorious task, yet charity offered to the “community”, or “the order of the Bhikkhus”, is to be of greater “merit” than “charity” to any “Individual monk”. Once Prajapati Gautami, the step-mother of the Lord himself, approached the Lord, with a twofold cloth spun and woven, by the Prajapati Gautami herself, and expressed her intense desire to make an offering of the same to the Lord himself. The All Awakened One exhorted her:

“Gautami! make this offering to the Sangha. If you offer
this to Sangha, both shall be honoured, myself as well as the Sangha."

The Venerable Ananda, who was in constant attendance upon the Lord, also put in a word on behalf of the Prajapati Gautami. Still the Lord maintained—"I always prefer charity being offered to the Sangha, than to the Individual Bhikkhu".

To give preference to society, over an individual is the basic tenet of socialism.

Q. 91. Till now, mention has been made, of the ordination of the male members of the society alone. Was getting ordination as nuns, for the females, prohibited by the All Awakened One? In case, not, then do, females enter the "Bhikkhuni order" as nuns, even now?

A. In theory, neither the Lord could have objected, nor he did raise any objection against the females, becoming nuns; but looking at its practical aspect, he did hesitate. Along with another Sakyayan woman, when Prajapati Gautami approached the Lord with the request of permitting women folk also to enter the order, the Lord admonished thus:

"Be careful Gautami, of the going forth of women from home into homelessness in the Dhamma and discipline proclaimed by the Tathagata."

As Prajapati Gautami was steadfast and insisted on getting the permission for the women-folk to enter the order, as nuns, and as the Elder Ananda also vigorously advocated their cause, the All Awakened One, somehow or other most unwillingly, entertained the request, but before doing so laid down extra eight conditions, to be observed by the nuns, over and above others, which were common to all the members of the order. Out of those eight conditions two are as follows:

(1) "A nun who has been ordained (even) for a century must greet respectfully, rise up from her seat, salute with joined palms, do proper homage to a monk ordained but that day. And this rule is to be honoured, respected, revered, venerated, never to be transgressed during her life."
(2) "From today admonition of monks by nuns is forbidden, admonition of nuns by monks is not forbidden. This rule too is to be honoured, respected, revered, venerated, never to be transgressed during her life."

There is ample scope for presupposing, that these prejudicial and obnoxious conditions against nuns, may have never been promulgated by the Lord himself, and may be later interpolations of the male-members of the order by themselves.

Unlike the order of the Bhikkhus, the order of Bhikkhunis did not last very long. It does not exist in any of the countries, which hold steadfast to the Theravada cult of Buddhism, such as Ceylon, Burma and Siam.

Astonishing though it might appear, yet it is a fact that the tradition of the order of the Buddhist nuns, transplanted to China, by Ceylonese nuns, still persists.

Q. 92. All those who entered the order, could not have possibly become Arhatas (worthy ones) all of a sudden. It is most probably that now and then, they may have become antagonistic towards one another. How did the Lord behave then?

A. Wherever there are a few-vassels, it is but natural that they get rubbed against one another. The Bhikkhus also, were no exception to this rule. Sometimes quarrels arose due to very minor matters.

At one time the Lord was staying near Kosambi in Ghosita’s monastery. Now at that time the monks of Kosambi, who were disputatious, quarrelsome, and contentious, lived wounding one another with the weapons of the tongue. Then a certain monk approached the Lord; having approached and greeted the Lord, he stood at a respectful distance. This monk spoke thus to the Lord, "Venerable Sir, the monks of Kosambi, who are disputatious, quarrelsome, and contentious, live wounding one another with the weapons of the tongue. It would be good, venerable sir, if the Lord out of compassion were to approach these monks."

The Lord consented by remaining silent. Then the Lord approached those monks and having approached, he spoke thus
"Enough monks; no disputes; no quarrels, no contention, no argument."

When this was said, a certain monk spoke thus to the Lord: "Venerable Sir, let Lord, the Dhamma-master, wait; let the Lord, the Dhamma-master stay at ease. We shall somehow settle this dispute amongst ourselves."

The Lord exclaimed:

When all in chorus howl, none feels a fool, nor though the order is divided, thinks otherwise. Nay, not by the wrath are wrathful moods allayed here (and) at anytime,

but by not wrath are they allayed, this is an ageless rule.

Ruffians who maim and kill, steal cattle, steeds, and wealth, who plunder realms—for these is concurred. Why should there not be for you?

If one find friend with when to fare rapt in the well abiding apt,
surmounting dangers one and all,
with joy fare with him mindfully.

Finding none apt with whom to fare,
none is the well abiding rapt,
as Rajah quits the conquered realm,
fare lonely as bull elephant in elephant-jungle.

Better the faring of one alone
than companionship with the foolish,
fare lonely, unconcerned, working no evil,
as bull-elephant in elephant jungle."

Q. 93. If everybody considered another a "fool", and just fared alone as bull-elephant in elephant jungle, then would it be adjustable in actual practice?

A. Nobody is a "fool" in all respects. Let one associate even with a "fool", to the extent his association is profitable, and let one not associate with any "fool", regarding matters, in which his association might prove harmful. It is better to
associate even with greater "fools" than one oneself might be, on compassionate grounds; so that they also could be helpful and benefited.

Q. 94. It is just probable, for some quarrel, to arise even amongst the members of the order, but normally speaking they would have lived, with greater brotherly feelings towards one another?

A. Yes, once the venerable Anuruddha and the venerable Nandiya and the venerable Kimbila were staying in the Eastern Bamboo grove, and they went out to meet the Lord, one received his bowl and robe, one made ready a seat, one set out water for the feet...As the venerable Anuruddha was sitting down at a respectful distance, the Lord spoke thus:

"I hope things are going well with you, Anuruddhas, I hope you are keeping going, I hope you are not short of Alms-food?"

"Things are going well with us, Lord, we are keeping going, Lord, and Venerable Sir, we are not short of alms-food."

"I hope that you, Anuruddhas, are living all together on friendly terms and harmoniously, as milk and water blend, regarding one another with the eye of affection" "Yes, certainly, venerable sir, we are living all together on friendly terms and harmoniously, as milk and water blend, regarding one another with the eye of affection." "And how is it that you, Anuruddhas, are living all together...regarding one another with the eye of affection?"

"As to this, Venerable Sir, it occurred to me: 'Indeed it is a gain for me, indeed it is well gotten by me, that I am living with such noble companions. On account of this, Venerable Sir, for these Venerable ones, friendliness as to acts of body... acts of speech...acts of thought, whether openly or in private, has risen up in me. Because of this, Venerable Sir, it occurred to me: 'Now, suppose that I, having surrendered my own mind should live only according to the mind of these Venerable ones, Venerable Sir, divers bodies, but assuredly only one mind.

"Good, it is good, Anuruddhas, but I hope that you, Anuruddhas, are living diligent, ardent, self-resolute."
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“'Yes, certainly, Venerable Sir, we are living diligent, ardent, self-resolute.'

'As to this Venerable Sir, whoever of us returns first from (going to) a village for alms-food makes ready a seat, sets out water for drinking and water for washing (the feet), and sets up a refuse-bowl. Whoever returns last from (going to) a village for alms-food, if there are the remains of a meal and if he so desires, he eats them; if he does not desire to do so, he throws them out where there are no crops, or he drops them into water where there are no living creatures; he puts up the seats, he puts away the water for drinking and the water for washing, he puts away the refuse bowl, he sweeps the refectory. Whoever sees a vessel for drinking-water or a vessel for washing water or a vessel (for water) for rinsing after evacuation, void and empty, he sets out (water). If it is impossible for him (to do this) by a movement of his hand, having invited a companion to help him by signalling (to him) with the hand, we set out (the water); but we do not Venerable Sir, for such a reason, break into speech. And then we, Venerable Sir, once in every five nights sit down together for talk on Dhamma. It is thus, Venerable Sir, that we are living diligent, ardent, self-resolute.'"

Q. 95. Has it ever happened that the Lord, surrounded by monks, nuns, by male disciples and female disciples; encircled by kings, ministers, ascetics (belonging to other sects and by their disciples; or because of the quarrelsome Bhikkhus, felt vexed and perturbed?

A. Yes, it once struck the Lord that surrounded as he is by so many, he did not live in comfort. Hence why should he not retire to solitude and lead a lonely life.

At that time the Lord, after returning from the alms round and having taken his food,...carrying his robes and begging bowl by himself, without making it known even to his attendant, without informing the order, went forth in the direction of Parileyya forest. The Lord stayed there at Parileyya at the root of the lonely Sal tree. Then as the Lord was meditating in private, a reasoning arose in his mind, thus: ‘Formerly, beset by those monks of Kosambi, makers of strife, makers of
quarrels, makers of disputes, makers of brawls, makers of legal questions in the order, I did not live in comfort, but now that I am alone with no other, I am living in comfort removed from those monks, makers of strife...makers of legal questions in the order.'

Having resided in Parileyya forest, as long as he felt like doing so, he proceeded in the direction of Sravasti. Gradually he reached Sravasti. At Sravasti, the Lord stayed there at Sravasti in the Jeta Grove in Anathapindika's monastery.

Then the lay-followers of Kosambi thought: "These masters, the monks of Kosambi, have done us much mischief; the Lord is departed, embarrassed by those; come! we should neither greet the masters, the monks of Kosambi, nor should we stand up before them, nor should we salute them with joined palms or perform the proper duties; we should not revere, respect, esteem or honour them and neither should we give them alms-food when they come (to us); thus they, when they are neither revered, respected, esteemed nor honoured by us, will depart unrevered, or they will leave the order, or they will reconcile themselves to the Lord."

Then the lay followers of Kosambi neither greeted the monks of Kosambi nor stood up before them...nor they gave them alms-food when they came (to them). Then the monks of Kosambi, spoke thus: "come now, your reverences, let us having gone to Sravasti, settle this legal question in the Lord's presence."

Everybody heard that the quarrelsome monks were coming to Sravasti, and they all, Sariputta being the chief amongst them, asked the Lord. "How shall we behave in regard to these monks?"

The Buddha exhorted: "Both sides should be heard. Having heard both sides, the views, the approval, the persuasion, and the creed of these monks who are there speakers of the Dhamma, should be applauded."

Anathapindika, the householder also asked:
"It is said Lord, that the monks of Kosambi...are coming to Sravasti. How am I Lord, to behave in regard to these monks?"

"Well then, do you, householder, give gifts to both sides,
and then, hear both sides. Having heard both sides—the views, the approval, the persuasion, and the creed of those monks who are their speakers of the Dhamma, should be applauded.”

**Q. 96.** One can suffer due to internal disturbances, and as well as due to external causes. Mental unrest, caused by passion, hatred and ignorance, can be said to have come into existence due to internal disturbances, and pain caused by the non-availability of food and dress, or due to excessive cold or heat can be said to have come into existence, as a result of external causes. What treatment has the Lord prescribed for the ailment caused by internal disturbances?

A. The Lord has prescribed the contemplation of the body, the contemplation of sensations, contemplation of mind and the contemplation of mind-objects as the only way that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the attainment of knowledge, and to the realisation of Nibbana.

**Q. 97.** How does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the body (Kayanupassana)?

A. Herein the disciple retires to the forest, to the foot of a tree, or to a solitary place, seats himself with legs crossed, body erect, and with mindfulness fixed before him; mindfully he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out. He beholds how the body arises, beholds how it passes away, beholds the arising and passing away of the body... he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world.

And further, whilst going, standing, sitting, or lying down, the disciple is conscious of going, standing, sitting or lying.

And further the disciple contemplates about the body in various ways... he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world.

**Q. 98.** How does the disciple dwell in the contemplation of the sensations?

A. In experiencing an agreeable sensation, the disciple
knows. 'I have an agreeable sensation', or in experiencing a disagreeable sensation the disciple knows, 'I have a disagreeable sensation'; in experiencing an indifferent sensation, the disciple knows, 'I am experiencing an indifferent sensation.'

Q. 99. How does the disciple dwell in the contemplation of the mind?

A. There the disciple knows the greedy-mind as greedy, and the not-greedy mind as not-greedy; knows the angry-mind as angry and the not-angry mind as not-angry, knows the deluded-mind as deluded, and the undeluded-mind as undeluded.

Q. 100. How does the disciple dwell in the contemplation of mind-objects?

A. There the disciple dwells in the contemplation of all the objects that appear before his minds eye...He lives independent, unattached to anything in the world.

101. Q. What beneficial results accrue from the contemplation of the 'four fundamentals' of mindfulness.

A. We remain attached to each of our small and big physical activity day and night, to our each sensation, to our each factor of consciousness, to our each object of consciousness. Attachment causes exhaustion, weariness, vexation and suffering. As the disciple becomes independent, unattached to each small and big physical activity; becomes independent, unattached to each sensation; becomes independent, unattached to each factor of consciousness; becomes independent, unattached to each object of consciousness, he does not accept anything as I or Mine. He is freed from the clutches of attachment. His exhaustion terminates. His vexation ceases. His suffering comes to end.

Q. 102. How can we accept, that this does take place?

A. The only possible answer is, try and see it for yourself.

Q. 103. It is stated that once the contemplation of the physical activities is practiced, developed, often repeated, has
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become one's practice, one's foundation is firmly established, strengthened and perfected, the disciple can expect ten blessings, with the following as some of them:

1. He may enjoy supernormal powers.
2. With the heavenly-ear (dibba-sota) the purified, the superhuman he may hear both kinds of sounds, the heavenly and the earthly, the distant and the near.
3. With the mind he obtains insight—into the minds of other beings.
4. He may obtain remembrance of many previous births.

Q. 104. Can the attainment of the above blessings, be vouched for?

A. We cannot assert with any certainty, that one who contemplates on the various physical activities, does obtain the above 'blessings'.

Q. 105. When the Buddha had just attained enlightenment, during the first part of the night, He was contemplating on dependent origination; during the middle part of the night, He was contemplating on dependent origination, during the last part of the night, He was contemplating on dependent origination; hence this law of dependent origination, should be very profound, too difficult to be grasped. Is it not at all possible—to comprehend it in a simple manner?

A. No doubt, the law of dependent origination is very penetrating, too subtle to be easily comprehended. Once, when the Exalted One, was dwelling in the country of Kuru, in a town named Kammadamma, the venerable Anand said to the Exalted One—Wonderful, Lord, and marvellous it is, that whereas this doctrine of events as arising from causes is so deep and looks so deep, to me it seems as clear as clear it can be."

"Say not so, Anand, say not so! Deep is this doctrine of events as arising from causes, and it looks deep too. It is through not understanding this doctrine, through not penetrating it, that the people have become a tangled skein, a malted ball of thread, unable to surpass the doom of the waste, the woeful way..." Anand, if you were asked: "Is old age and death due to a particular cause?" You should say: "Birth is the cause of
old age and death.” “Anand, had there been no birth, could there be old age and death?”

“Venerable Sir, No.”

“Hence Anand, birth is the cause of old age and death.”

“Anand, if you were asked: ‘Is birth due to a particular cause?’ you should say: ‘It is’ and to the question ‘from what cause is birth?’ you should say: ‘Becoming is the cause of birth.’”

“Anand, had there been no ‘becoming’, could there be birth?”

“Venerable, Sir, No.”

“Hence Anand, ‘Becoming’ is the cause of birth.”

“Anand, if you were asked, ‘Is becoming due to a particular cause’? You should say: ‘It is’ and to the question: ‘From what cause is becoming?’ you should say: ‘grasping’ is the cause of becoming?”

“Anand had there been no ‘grasping’, could there be becoming?”

“Venerable Sir, No.”

“Hence Anand, grasping is the cause of becoming”

“Anand, if you were asked: ‘Is grasping due to a particular cause?’ you should say: ‘It is’ and to the question: ‘From what cause grasping’ you should say: ‘Craving’ is the cause of grasping.”

“Anand, had there been no craving, could there be grasping?”

“Venerable Sir, No.”

“Hence Anand, craving is the cause of grasping”

“Anand, if you were asked, ‘Is craving due to a particular cause?’ You should say: ‘It is’ and to the question; ‘From what cause is craving.’ You should say, ‘Sensation is the cause of craving.”

“Anand, had there be no sensation, could there be craving?”

“Venerable Sir, No.”

“Hence Anand, sensation is the cause of craving.”

“Anand, if you were asked: ‘Is sensation due to a particular cause’? you should say: ‘It is’ and to the question: ‘From what cause is sensation?’ you should say: ‘contact is the cause of sensation.”
"Anand, had there been no 'contact', could there be sensation?"

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Hence Anand, contact is the cause of sensation."

"Anand, had there been no name and form (mind and matter) could six senses arise?"

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Hence Anand, if you were asked: 'Is name and form (mind and matter) due to a particular cause?' you should say: 'It is' and to the question 'From what cause is name and form (mind and matter)' you should say 'cognition is the cause of name and form (mind and matter).'

"Anand, had there been no cognition, could there be name and form (mind and matter."

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Hence Anand, cognition is the cause of name and form (mind and matter)."

"Anand, if you were asked 'Is cognition due to a particular cause?' you should say, 'It is' and to the question, 'From what cause is cognition' you should say 'numerous intellectual differentiations (Sankharas) are the cause of cognition'.

"And, were there none of the various intellectual differentiations, could there be any cognition?"

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Hence Anand, numerous intellectual differentiations are the cause of cognition."

"Anand, if you were asked, 'Are numerous intellectual differentiations due to a particular cause?' you should say, 'They are' and to the question 'From what cause are numerous intellectual differentiations?' you should say 'Ignorance is the cause of numerous intellectual differentiations'."

"Anand, had there been no 'ignorance', could there arise numerous intellectual differentiations?"

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Hence Anand, 'Ignorance is the cause of numerous intellectual differentiations'."

Thus beginning from Ignorance (Avidya) and ending with birth, old age, this twelve-fold chain of causation exists. Although, there is no mention of the 'rebirth' in it, yet, in modern
days this too is always explained in terms of 'rebirth', other 'causes' are explicit. The difficulty lies in grasping the full significance of ignorance, intellectual differentiations and cognition.

Ignorance, or avidya is not merely the absence of knowledge, as the word avidya implies; it is much more than that. It is the blindness of the mind. In this particular state it is not possible for any human being to see "transient" things as "transient", to see the disquietude (dukkha) as disquietude: to see devoid of permanent entity (Anatma) as devoid of permanent entity (anatma). Therefore it is the ignorance, which causes the numerous intellectual differentiations. If ignorance does not exist, the numerous intellectual differentiations, do not exist. Cognition (mind) is just another name for numerous intellectual differentiations. If the numerous intellectual differentiations do not exist, cognition, mind (vigyan) does not exist. Mind is the fore-runner of all mental-physical activities. Mind can claim to be the base of the whole edifice, known as mind-matter. If there is no mind, the mental-physical existence cannot arise. Mental-physical existence causing the six sense organs, the six sense organs causing contact, contact causing sensation, sensation causing craving, craving causing grasping, grasping causing becoming, becoming causing birth, old age, death, etc. are, relatively speaking, such dependent originations, as can be easily comprehended.

Q. 106. What place is assigned to the 'soul' (Atma) in this law of dependent-origination?
A. None, whatsoever.

Q. 107. Does Buddhism deny the existence of the 'soul' in its totality?
A. Yes.

Q. 108. Then, who do you think is this one, that while residing in the body sees, smells, hears, tastes and touches?
A. There does not exist any entity in or out of our body, separate from our body, about which it is supposed that through these sense organs he, she or it sees, smells, hears, tastes and
touched. All activities come into existence as a compound manifestation of three entities, mind, particular sense-organ and the object. Let us, as an example, try to analyse the statement "one sees a book"; if the mind is not present, if one is absent-minded, one can never 'see' the book. If one does not possess the eye-organ, if one is blind, one cannot 'see' the book. If the book itself is out of existence, then also of course, one cannot 'see' the book. Hence in order that the book could be 'seen', the existence of three things is presupposed—of the mind, of the eye-organ, and of the object.

Q. 109. Is it totally erroneous to say that the 'soul' performs all the different functions such as seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting and touching, through the windows of different sense-organs?

A. Yes, it is totally erroneous to make any such assertion. Otherwise it should be possible for the soul to see through the ears of a blindman, or to hear through the eye of a deaf person. But no 'soul' can possibly do it. Hence there is no justification in the statement that "The soul exists."

Q. 110. If there is no 'soul', then what evidence, there is, to admit the existence of even a 'mind'?

A. We see a certain book with our eyes, lift it with our hands. The harmony between the two functions of seeing and lifting can be only explained by admitting the existence of a 'mind'; without 'mind' the coordination in any two physical activities cannot be explained. As the 'soul' does not serve any such useful purpose at all, hence the existence of a soul cannot be taken for granted.

Q. 111. Some people say, that sometimes a man falls into deep slumber to the extent that he does not even see a dream, and that very man, when he arises from his sleep says, "Today I had a sound sleep", the one who kept awake, and the one, who, when a man arises from his sleep says, "Today I had a sound sleep", is no other than the 'soul'.

A. In the first place to say that somebody 'slept' and also
to say, that he remained ‘awake’ is contradiction in terms. What happens, actually is only this much, that when a man enjoys a ‘sound’ sleep, he, when he gets up, feels refreshed, and thereby he concludes, “Today I had a sound sleep.” There does not exist any ‘soul’ to keep awake, when the man was sleeping. Man is nothing more than a combination of mental physical activities. Apart from that, there does not exist anything else, which could be termed a ‘soul.’

Q. 112. Is Buddhism merely a monkish religion. Has the Lord not pronounced anything for the welfare of the lay disciples?

A. No, it is not so. Most of the teachings of the lord, are as good and beneficial for the lay disciples as for monks. Many a discourse have been addressed to lay disciples alone. But since it were the monks who collected his teachings, after his demise, and since he naturally remained surrounded mostly by monks, hence this misunderstanding.

It is said that once, the Exalted One had entered the high road between Mathura and Veranja, at that very time, also, many householders and their wives had joined the high road. Then the Exalted One having left the road took a seat under a certain tree, and there householders and their wives saw the Exalted One seated under a certain tree. So seeing they came to where the Exalted One was. They made obeisance to the Exalted One and sat at one side. To the householders and their wives so seated at one side the Exalted One spoke thus:

“Householders, there are four ways of living together. What are the four? A vile man (corpse) lives with a vile woman, a vile man (corpse) lives with a goddess, a god lives with a vile woman (corpse) and a god lives with a goddess.

“Householders, how does a vile man (corpse) live with a vile woman (corpse). Herein Householders, a husband kills, steals, commits ‘impurity’, lies and indulges in fermented liquor, and thus leads life of misconduct. Also, his wife kills, steals, commits impurity, lies, and indulges in fermented liquor, and thus leads a life of misconduct. Thus, indeed, householders, a vile man (corpse) lives with a vile woman (corpse).
"Householders, how does a vile man (corpse) live with a goddess? Herein, householders a husband kills, steals, commits impurity, lies and indulges in fermented liquor, and thus leads a life of misconduct. But his wife abstains from killing, thieving, sexual impurity, lying and indulgence in fermented liquors and thus leads a virtuous life. Thus, indeed, householders, a vile man (corpse) lives with a goddess.

"Householders, how does a god live with a vile woman (corpse)? Herein householders, a husband abstains from killing, thieving, sexual impurity, lying, and indulgence in fermented liquors and thus leads a virtuous life. But his wife kills, steals, commits impurity, lies and indulge in fermented liquor, and thus leads a life of misconduct. Thus, indeed, householders, a god lives with a vile woman (corpse).

"Householders, how does a god live with a goddess? Herein householders, a husband abstains from killing, thieving, sexual impurity, lying, and indulgence in fermented liquor and thus leads a virtuous life. His wife also abstains from killing, thieving, sexual impurity, lying, and indulgence in liquor and thus leads a virtuous life. Thus indeed householders, a god lives with a goddess."

Thus in the eye of the Exalted One, such as did not lead a virtuous life, were worse than a corpse.

Q. 113. As there were so many well to do people, who considered it a task of great ‘merit’ to be able to provide any of the four requisites, to the members of the Buddhist order, and particularly to the Buddha himself, so it cannot be even thought of that there could have been occasions when the master may not have had any food to eat. Yet, were there any such occasions when the members of the Buddhist order and the master himself had some difficulty in obtaining their food?

A. Yes, once the brahmins of the Veranja had requested the Master to spend the rainy season in their company together with the company of monks. The All Awakened One accepted it. At that time, there was shortage of food, and Veranja was suffering from famine. It was not easy to maintain oneself.
At that time some horse dealers of the Uttarpashak were spending their rainy season, together with five hundred horses. In the horse rings they had arranged to offer pattha measure of rice to each monk.

The monks rising early and taking their bowls and robes, entered Veranja for alms-food. Being unable to obtain alms-food, they went in to the horse-ring for alms-food. Having brought the pattha measure of rice each of them, pounded it and ate it.

The Venerable Anand, having crushed a pattha measure of rice on a stone, took it to the Lord, and the Lord ate it. When the Lord heard the sound of the mortar, he addressed Anand, saying:

“What Anand, is this sound of a mortar?”

The Venerable Anand told this matter to the Lord.

“Well done, Anand, you noble man, have won (yourself). Those who come after will hanker after the meaty rice and the gruel.”

Then the Lord addressed Anand saying; “Now, Anand, it is the custom of Tathagatas not to tour the country for alms-food without having (first) taken leave of those by whom they have been invited to spend the rains. Let us go, Anand, to the brahmins of Veranja, and we will take leave.”

“So it be Lord” answered the Venerable Anand; then the Lord, taking his bowl and robe and departing with the Venerable Anand as his attendant, came to the dwelling of brahmins of Veranja; and having come up he sat down on the appointed seat. Then the brahmins of Veranja came up to the Lord, and greeted the Lord and sat down to one side. The Lord said to the brahmins of Veranja, as he was sitting on one side:

“Brahmins, having spent the rains, invited by you, are taking leave of you; we wish to tour the country for alms.”

Then the Lord having remained at Veranja for as long as he found suitable, returning by Sorayya (Soro, distt. Etah U.P.) Sankass, Kannakuja (Kannauja), came to Payag Patithan (Prayg-Prastishthan), and having come to Payag Patithan and crossing the river Ganges, he went down to Benaras (Varanasi). And the Lord having remained at Benaras, for as long as he
found suitable, set out for Vaisali for alms.

Q. 114. Solicited by Suddhodana, the Lord had laid down the rule, that thereafter no body will be ordained without the explicit permission of his parents. Was it so, that all parents willfully permitted their children to be ordained?

A. No, some parents definitely refused to do so. In such cases certain young men had to resort to ‘satyagraha’, or civil resistance, in order to persuade their parents to agree to their request. Once there lived at Kalandaka, a village not far from Vaisali, Sudinna the son of a great merchant of Kalandaka. He went to Vaisali, together with many friends, on some business. At that time the Lord was surrounded by a great company of people, teaching Dhamma. Sudinna listened to it, and thought, what now if I were to cut off my hair and beard and don the yellow robes and go forth from home into homelessness.

He made this one solemn request to the Lord, saying “Lord, so far as I understand Dhamma taught by the Lord, it is not easy matter for one who lives in a house to lead the noble life, complete and undefiled and polished like a conchshell. I desire, Lord, having cut off my hair and having donned the yellow robes to go forth from home into homelessness. May the Lord let me go forth.”

“But Sudinna, have you your parents consent to go forth?”

“No, Lord, I have not my parents consent to go forth.”

“Sudinna, Tathagatas, do not ordain a child without the parents consent”

“Lord, I will do whatever is necessary, so that my parents will consent to my going forth from home into homelessness.”

Having finished his business in Vaisali, Sudinna, returned to his village Kalandaka, and having seen his parents, spoke to them thus: “Mother or father, give me your consent to go forth from home into homelessness.”

When Sudinna parents expressed their inability to do so, he lay down on the ground and said, “I will die here, or go forth.” Could his parents deny him then? Sudinna went to the Lord. The Awakened One ordained him.
Q. 115. As contemporaries of the Lord, there were many eminent teachers of other persuasions. Where did the Lord stand in the observance of etiquette, in contrast with such other teachers?

A. Amongst the prominent teachers, who taught other doctrines, Niganthnathputra, better known as Mahavira, was eminent. One of his reputed disciples was Sinha, the general.

Now at that time a great many Licchavi notables were seated assembled in the mote hall; and in many figure they were speaking in praise of the Buddha, in praise of Dhamma, in praise of the order. And Sinha, the general, who was seated in that assembly thought: "Surely that Exalted One must be arahant (fully Awakened One). Thus indeed these many notable Licchavis, assembled and seated in their mote hall, in many figure praise the Buddha, praise Dhamma, praise the order. Now suppose I were to go and see him,—the Exalted One,—the fully Awakened One."

The Sinha approached the Nigantha and said to him, "Sir, I wish to go and see the recluse Gautama."

"Sinha, how can you, who believe in action, go and see the recluse Gautama, who affirms the theory of inaction?"

He was discouraged thrice from going and seeing the Lord. On the third occasion, Sinha, the general thought: "What can the Nigantha do to me, whether they are consulted or not? What if I go without the Nigantha's leave and see that Exalted One."

So at noon, Sinha, set out from Vaisali, to see the Exalted One. Approaching him, he saluted and sat down at one side. So seated, he said to the Exalted One; "Lord, I have heard this: The recluse Gautama affirms the theory of inaction. He teaches the doctrine of inaction and in that he trains his disciples; Lord those who speak thus...I presume they report what the Exalted One has said and do not misrepresent the Exalted One by lying."

"There is one way, Sinha in which one might speak, if he would speak rightly of me: 'The recluse Gautama affirms the theory of inaction, he teaches the doctrine of inaction and in
that he trains his disciples.’ There is one way, Sinha, in which one might say, if he would speak rightly of me: ‘The recluse Gautama affirms the theory of action, he teaches the doctrine of action, and in that he trains his disciples.’”

“And what, Sinha, is the way in which speaking rightly of me, one would say. The recluse Gautama affirms the theory of inaction? I declare inaction of misconduct indeed, word and thought; I proclaim inaction as to all evil and sinful conditions.

“In what way...would one say: The recluse Gautama affirms the theory of action...? I declare action as to good conduct in deed, word and thought. I proclaim action as to all righteous conditions.”

Sinha, the general, asked several other questions. When he was fully satisfied, he spoke thus:

“Wonderful, wonderful, Lord, Lord, let the Exalted One accept me as a lay disciple, as one who has found refuge from this day to life’s end.”

“Make a thorough examination of the matter, Sinha for investigation is profitable to a well-known man like yourself.”

“Lord, I am even better pleased, better gratified by this remark of yours. Had I been won over as a disciple by some other sect, they would have gone through the whole of Vaisali with hammers, shouting: ‘Sinha, the general has joined our discipleship’ but the Exalted One merely advises me thus: ‘Examine the matter, Sinha for investigation is profitable to a well-known man like yourself.’ For a second time, Lord, I go to the Exalted One for refuge, to Dhamma and to the order of the monks. Let the Exalted One accept me as a lay disciple, as one who has found refuge, from this day to lives’ end.”

“Your family, Sinha, for many a day has been as a well-spring to the Nigantha, wherefore I deem it right to give aims to those who approach you.”

“Lord, I am still better pleased, better gratified by this last remark. Lord I have heard it said: the recluse Gautama asserts thus: ‘Not unto others, but unto me alone should alms be given, not to the disciples of others, but unto mine alone should alms be given. For alms given unto me alone are most fruitful and not so are those given unto others; alms given unto my disciples
alone are very fruitful and not so are those given unto the disciples of others. But now the Exalted One incites me to give alms among the Niganthas; we shall know (what to do) when the time arrives. For a third time Lord, I go to the Exalted One for refuge, to Dhamma, and to the order of monks. Let the Exalted One accept me....."

This is a unique testimony of the instinctive generosity of the Lord.

**Q. 116.** Did there never arise the necessity of framing a new rule for the order of the monks in changed circumstances?

**A.** Why not. The rules of the order of the monks have always remained subject to addition and alteration. Once the Lord, having dressed in the morning, taking his bowl and robe, approached the residence of Mendaka the householder. Having approached he sat down on the appointed seat together with the order of monks. Then Mendaka the householder addressed the cowherds; "Well now, my goodmen, let each one (of you) having each taken a milch cow, after a monk, and we will offer them fresh milk." The monks, being scrupulous, did not accept the milk. The Lord said: "Accept it, monks, make use of it." As he was sitting down at a respectful distance Mendaka the householder spoke thus to the Lord: "There are, Lord, wilderness roads with little water, with little food; it is not easy to go along them without provisions for the journey. It were good Lord, if the Lord allowed monks provisions for the journey."

Then the Lord on this occasion, having given reasoned talk, addressed the monks, saying, "I allow you, monks, five products of the cow; milk, curd, butter-milk, butter, ghee. There are, monks, wilderness roads with little water, with little food; it is not easy to go along them without provisions for the journey. I allow you, monks, to look about for provisions for a journey; husked rice for him who has need of husked rice; kidney beans for him who has need of kidney beans; beans for him who has need of beans; salt for him who has need of salt; sugar for him who has need of sugar; oil for him who has need of oil; ghee
for him who has need of ghee. There are, monks, people who have faith and are believing; they deposit gold (coins) in hands of those who make things allowable; saying by means of this, give the Master that which is allowable. I allow you, monks, thereupon to consent to that which is allowable. But this, monks, I do not say, that by any method may gold and silver be consented to, may be looked about for.” Then the Lord, walking in due course arrived at Apana.

Q. 117. Not only milk, curd and butter, etc. can be had as provisions for the journey, but even husked rice, etc. also can be had as provisions for the journey; if in modern days, any monk feels like carrying a tin of biscuits, made of wheat powder, milk and sugar, can any objection be raised against that?

A. It could be expected from the rationality of the All Enlightened One, that there could not be any objection as to that.

Q 118. In matters, which have neither been prohibited nor been sanctioned by the Lord, how should a monk behave?

A. In such matters he should use his commonsense and take decisions.

Q 119. Although, the Lord has proclaimed that by no means the acceptance by a Buddhist monk of gold and silver could be approved, yet can he have anything to do with gold and silver or can he under special circumstances touch it?

A. At present, where does one get gold and silver even to touch? The question, which can be legitimately asked is, can a Bhikku handle money? Again more explicitly it is not a question of a Bhikku being able to ‘touch’ money or not, it is a question, whether he can use it and collect it? Some Bhikkus keen on observing the above rule, can be seen handling coins, only, either, when the coins are put in a handkerchief or in a piece of paper. They generally do not hold currency notes, in a piece of paper, because it looks ridiculous enough even to those very Buddhist monks. But they think that they are not transgressing on the injunction laid down by the Lord as long as
they do not directly touch metal coins. In our humble opinion the injunction has been laid down not against ‘touching’ money, but against owning and using it. As matters stand, one may not actually touch it but one can still easily use and own it. On the other hand it is possible that one may actually ‘touch’ it, and still one may not own it. All monks, who own, use and collect money, of course without ‘touching’ it, are comparable to those wealthy men, who have all financial transactions carried on their behalf by accountants or treasurers.

Coins by themselves, are no ‘wealth’ at all. As they are only ‘token wealth’, one can neither eat them, nor use them as protection against cold and heat. The things, such as food and clothes, etc. which of course can be purchased with money, are real ‘wealth’, because they have utility-value. In case a monk is in an enviable position of getting all his four requisites, without actually being obliged to ‘handle’, use or collect money, why should he go out of his way to ‘handle’, ‘use’ or ‘collect’ money? He need not. But if in modern times, when neither the bartering of different commodities is possible nor convenient for any body to provide all the necessities of each and every monk without letting them not touch money, if and where such arrangements are not possible, the Bhikkus may handle or ‘use’ money, as the lay people do. All the crooked ways that are adopted and the zig-zag path, that is trod upon, by certain monks merely to avoid the ‘touching’ of money, will make them ridiculous in the eyes of any intelligent person.

Q. 120. What Zig-zag paths are trod upon by certain monks, in order to avoid the ‘touching’ of money?

A. If any lay disciples want to make a donation in cash, then such Bhikkhus do not accept the cash in their own hand. but cause it to be paid to a boy, technically known as kappiya-karaka, any lad entrusted to carry on the allowable duties on behalf or for the sake of a monk. The kappiya-karaka ‘touches’ the money, but the monk ‘maintains’ the account. In certain cases, as soon as the lay disciples disappear, the cash is taken charge of by the monk himself.

There are monks, who keep money in the drawers of their
tables or in the shelves of their almirah and the keys in their own pockets, but when there is any transaction to be made or any sum is to be paid to somebody, they call one of the boys since they do not ‘touch’ money. According to their interpretation they perhaps do not ‘touch’ money, but if you come in close contact with them you will find that their minds are mostly occupied with thoughts about money.

Q. 121. In that case, is there anything wrong for a Buddhist monk, to carry on any financial transactions?

A. If either any individual or any institution relieves a Buddhist monk of the necessity of using ‘money’ and agrees to look after his various requirements, it is in a monk’s own interest to remain free from financial dealings, and then he can use all his time and energy in his own improvement and in the service of others. But if neither any individual nor any institution, is ready to relieve him of this ‘vexation’ and he has to look after himself as regards the fulfilment of his requirements, then it is but proper that he carries on his own financial dealings, like everybody else. Lord Buddha’s teachings and the code of discipline cannot afford to be irrational.

Q. 122. Does a Buddhist monk renounce his family life or does he renounce the world? Who can be termed a true renouncer of family life?

A. Nobody can renounce the world, as long as one is living. The Lord on all occasions had addressed his disciples only as ‘homeless ones’. And a ‘homeless one’ also is not one who merely renounces his ‘home’ but one who renounces all defilements. Not to a member of the order of Buddhist monks, but, the Lord had proclaimed thus to a householder himself. Once when the Lord was staying at a township named Āpana, he went early in the day, duly robed and bowl in hand, into the town for alms; and, after his meal, on his way back, went into a wood to rest under a tree during the day. Thither too, in the course of his walk, came the householder, and after courteous greetings stood at one side. As he stood there, the Lord said to him “There is sitting room, householder, be seated if you will…” Invited by the Lord for the third time, the indignant householder
rejoined that it was neither nice nor proper to address him thus.

"Well, householder, you have all the indications and characteristics and marks of a householder."

"But Gautama, I have renounced and given over."

"How have you managed householder?"

"Why, I have handed over to my sons as their inheritance all my wealth and substance, all my gold and coins of silver, in connection with which I no longer issue orders as to what to do and what not to do, but get just my food and clothing. That is how I have renounced and given over."

"There is a difference between what you call 'renouncing' and the real 'renunciation' under the law of the nobles."

"What pray is that real 'renunciation'? Would the Lord be so good as to expound on it for me."

"Hear then, householder, and pay attention; and I will tell you," said the Lord, who then spoke as follows to the listening Potaliya: "In the law of the nobles, there are eight states of consciousness which amount to real 'renunciation' and these are the eight. All stealing should be banned by never taking what is not a free gift; lying should be banned by strict adherence to truthfulness; calumny should be banned by never stooping to caluminate; coveting should be banned by never taunting, angry rage should be banned by placidity; and arrogance should be banned by humility."

By this noble exposition, the Lord, established the real 'renunciation', on a sound basis.

Q. 123. Such monks whose means of livelihood, was only begging, must have been going to town for alms, only in the forenoon. If they received anything in the afternoon hours, could they make use of it?

A. Once it occurred to Keniya, (the follower of) the matted ascetics. Now what could I get conveyed to the recluse Gautama? What could possibly be accepted by him at a wrong time or during the night? Having had abundant drinks prepared, having had them taken on carrying poles, he approached the Lord. Having approached the Lord, and having stood at a
responsible distance, he spoke thus: "Let the revered Gautama accept drink from me."

"Well, Keniya, give it to the monks."

The monks, being scrupulous, did not accept it. "I allow you, monks, eight (kinds of) drinks; mango drink, rose apple drink, grape drink, edible lotus root drink and pharusaka drink. I allow you monks the juice of all fruits except the juice of the fruit of the corn. I allow you, monks, the juice of all leaves except the juice of 'vegetable leaves'. I allow you, monks, the juice of all flowers except liquor rice juice. I allow, you monks, sugarcane juice."

Q. 124. It is observed, that during the afternoon hours, Buddhist monks at present consume a good deal of tea. Is tea permissible, and if yes, under which injunction?

A. There was no tea available round about the 6th century n.c. during the lifetime of the Lord. Hence the taking of 'tea' cannot be included in any injunction. Perhaps it could be somehow or other brought under the injunction permitting the juice of all leaves. But 'tea' is not, the juice of even tea leaves, it is a concoction of tea leaves.

Q. 125. Is it permissible to put a little milk in tea in the afternoon hours?

A. It is perhaps, neither permitted nor prohibited. Those who are very particular about certain scruples, avoid even taking of tea, and those who do, have it without any addition of milk.

Q. 126. Is it explicitly prohibited to take milk along with tea, or even separately in the afternoon hours?

A. As far as the scriptural injunctions are concerned, it is perhaps, neither permitted, nor prohibited. But in practice Buddhist monks, think, that to add milk to tea in the afternoons, is against the rules of the discipline of monks. But along with the understanding, that it is not conducive to health, to take a lot of tea without milk in the afternoon; with sugar in it, but with no milk in it, the practice of taking milkless tea
is on the decrease, and a number of Bhikkhus do not hesitate to take. Milk-tea, even in the afternoon irrespective of the injunctions of the scriptures for or against, most of the Bhikkhus, at present partake of tea, soda, or cold drinks, etc.

Q. 127. When the regard for the order of the Buddhist monks, was on the increase, and the people became passionately devoted, then possibly, there may have been such lay disciples, as would have desired that the order of the Buddhist monks should exclusively accept any gifts of food, robes, etc. only from them and none else.

A. Yes, one such lay disciple was Rajo-Malla. His submission was, "it were well, Lord, if the Bhikkhus might receive the requisites of robes, alms-food, lodgings, medicines for the sick only from me, and not from others."

The Lord did not oblige him. He said: "But those, Rajo, who with the knowledge of a beginner, with the vision of a beginner, have seen Dhamma, as you have done, would also think: 'Now indeed the Bhikkhus should receive the requisites of robes, alms-food, lodgings, medicines for the sick, only from us, not from others.' Well then, Rajo, they shall receive them from you as well as from others."

The Lord did not want his order of monks to become dependent on any single person.

Q. 128. As now the Lord has attained Pari-nibbana, and he is no more, what can be the possible criterion to decide whether a certain thing is allowable or not?

A. In this respect the Lord has laid down, saying Whatever, monks, has not been objected to by me, saying: "This is not allowable" if it fits in with what is not allowable, if it goes against what is allowable, that is not allowable to you. Whatever, monks, has not been objected to by me, saying: "This is not allowable," if it fits in with what is allowable, if it goes against what is not allowable that is allowable to you. And, whatever, monks has not been permitted by me, saying: "this is allowable", if it fits in with what is not allowable, if it goes against what is allowable, that is not allowable
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to you. Whatever, monks, has not been prohibited by me, saying: “this is allowable,” if it fits in with what is allowable, if it goes against what is not allowable, that is allowable to you.”

The question arises, as to who is to decide whether a certain decision ‘fits in with what is allowable, and does not go against what is allowable?’ Would it not be the individual himself or the monks collectively themselves? Would not the Compassionate One, would not the great rationalist one—the Buddha—put his faith in any one else except his own monks?

Q. 129. If some one asks, what in a nutshell is the doctrine of the All Enlightened One? What answer can possibly be given to him?

A. The Venerable Sariputta has once addressed the monks thus: “Reverend Sirs, just as the foot of every creature that walks the earth will go into the elephants foot print, which is pre-eminent for size, even so, sirs, are all right states of mind comprised within the four noble truths, which are the noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the origin of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of suffering.

“What now is the noble truth of suffering?”

“Birth is suffering, Decay is suffering, Death is suffering, Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; not to get what one desires is suffering; in short, the five groups of existence are suffering.

Q. 130. Is the whole existence nothing else but ‘suffering’ Is there nothing which may be termed as ‘Happiness’?

A. Why not? In this world along with ‘unpleasant’ sensations, pleasant sensations also do exist. The original Pali word Vedana is at present understood to mean pain. It really means sensation. Sensations are of three kinds—unpleasant, pleasant and neither unpleasant nor pleasant. Similarly it can be presumed, that in earlier days the Pali word dukkha also must have conveyed some such meaning that the ‘pleasant’ sensation also
could be included in it. It is just possible that the earlier connotation of the word dukkha may have been more or less the same, as that of the present usage of the word ‘unsatisfactory’ and again it is often misstated that in short the five aggregates known as khandha are ‘Dukkha’. People do not draw distinction between the five aggregates or aggregates five ‘khandhas’ and five ‘upadan-khandhas’, and assert that in short five khandhas are suffering. If the five aggregates, would be suffering, by their very nature, then how could even an ‘Arhata’ end suffering, in this very body of ‘six feet’, for he still possesses five aggregates? The truth, to be made more explicit, should be stated, by asserting that the five aggregates, in themselves are neither ‘suffering’ nor the ‘end of suffering’. It is the clinging, the attachment, the adherence towards the five aggregates that causes suffering, and it is the elimination of the clinging, of the attachment, of the adherence towards five aggregates that destroys suffering.

Q. 131. What are known as the five aggregates?

A. Corporeality is the first ‘aggregate’. Sensations are the second aggregate. Perceptions are the third ‘aggregate’. Mental formations or the intellectual differentiations are the fourth ‘aggregate’. Consciousness is the last and fifth ‘aggregate’. Now what is the aggregate of ‘corporeality’? It is the four primary elements, and corporeality is derived from them. What are the four primary elements? They are the solid element, the fluid, the heating element, the vibrating element. These four elements are popularly known as earth, water, fire and wind. A better rendering is inertia, cohesion, radiation and vibration. All these four elements can be ‘ones’ own also, and can as well as be external and irrespective of the fact of being ‘ones own’ or ‘external’; they are collectively known as the four primary elements.

Q. 132. Is an individual nothing more than a collection of the five aggregates?

A. A definite No. Just as one calls ‘hut’ the circumscribed space which comes to be by means of wood and rushes, reeds, and clay, even so we call ‘body’ the circumscribed space that
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comes to be by means of bones and sinews, flesh and skin.

Q. 133. Is it erroneous to state that there does exist a fifth element known as void (akas) also as others do?

A. The existence of void (akas) is admissible, but we cannot call it an 'element', for it is exactly the non-existence of the four primary elements, which is known as void (akas).

Q. 134. In what way is the arising of the other aggregates, out of these four elements caused?

A. If one's eye be intact, yet if the external forms do not fall within the field of vision, in that case there occurs no formation of eye-consciousness. If, however, one's eye is intact, and the external forms fall within the field of vision, in that case there arises the eye-consciousness.

Q. 135. Is it that the mere conjunction of eye and form is enough to cause the arising of eye-consciousness?

A. No, eye and forms alone cannot cause the arising of eye-consciousness: the inevitable pre-existence of consciousness is pre-supposed. When the eye is intact, when the external forms fall within the field of vision, and when the consciousness is also functioning, it is only then that the arising of eye-consciousness can take place. The eye, the forms, and the consciousness, are the three prerequisites inevitable for causing the arising of any eye-consciousness.

Q. 136. How does this third prerequisite consciousness originate?

A. As regards eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, etc., all the six consciousnesses arise as a result of coming into contact with the ear, etc., six sense organs with their objects of forms, sound, etc. they never arise, if the corresponding conjunction of the sense organ and its object does not take place. But how does this third prerequisite known as consciousness, which is inevitable for causing the coming into existence of any of the eye-consciousness, etc. six consciousness arise is not clear, mental formations, also, are stated to be the cause of consciousness,
and then again in its turn consciousness also is stated to be the cause of consciousness. The existence of one, perhaps, cannot be even imagined without the existence of another. It appears that it is pre-supposed.

Q. 137. If so, what is the difference between Buddhism and materialism?

A. As far as materialism is concerned, it states in no ambiguous terms, that consciousness is the outcome of matter. It is believed that there was a period, when the matter alone did exist, and the consciousness did not. On the other hand Buddhism neither conforms to the view that consciousness arose out of corporeality, nor tells us in explicit terms as to how consciousness did arise in the first instance? "monks, inconceivable is the beginning of this universe, not to be discovered is the first beginning of beings" had been declared by the All Enlightened One. "Whatsoever there is of 'corporeality' (rupa) on that occasion, this belongs to the group of corporeality. Whatsoever there is of feeling (vedana), this belongs to the group of feeling. Whatsoever there is of 'perception' (Sanna) this belongs to the group of perception. Whatsoever there are of mental formations (sankhara), these belong to the group of mental formations. Whatsoever there is of consciousness (vinnana), this belongs to the group of consciousness. Hence, the Lord has maintained, the arising of consciousness is dependent upon conditions, and without these conditions, no consciousness arises. And whatsoever conditions the arising of consciousness after that it is called eye-consciousness, etc. And it is impossible that any one can explain the passing out of existence, and the entering into a new existence, or the growth, increase and development of consciousness, independently of corporeality, feeling, perception, and mental formations. All the five groups of existence are subservient to the law of dependent origination. The existence of preconditions is presupposed. If the pre-conditions are available, the five groups of existence come into origin. In case the pre-conditions are not available, the five groups of existence do not come into origin. The delight, the attraction, the attachment, towards all these five clinging aggregates, is the arising of suffering. The undoing of the delight, the attraction,
the attachment towards all these five clinging aggregates is the annihilation of suffering.

Thus the five aggregates in themselves are neither suffering, nor the annihilation of suffering. As a result of the delight, the attraction, the attachment towards the five aggregates, the five clinging aggregates come into origin. Those five clinging aggregates are suffering. And the eradicating of the delight, the attraction, the attachment towards the five aggregates, is the annihilation of suffering. Ensnared with lust, enraged with anger, blinded by delusion...man aims at his own ruin, at the ruin of others...he experiences mental pain and grief. But if lust, anger and delusion are given up, man aims neither at his own ruin, nor at the ruin of others,...he experiences no mental pain and grief. This is Nirvana, or Buddhist Moksha, which is immediate, visible in this life, inviting, attractive, and comprehensible to the wise.

Q. 138. How does the above analysis of an individual as nothing more than a conglomerate of corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness fit in with the analysis of a being, as stated in the Abhidhamma texts as a cluster of forms (rupa), consciousness (chitta) and factors of consciousness (cetasikas).

A. Corporeality and forms are synonymous terms. All feelings, perceptions, and mental formations have been grouped together as factors of consciousness, which are counted fifty-two in number. And there is no difference whatsoever between the consciousness (vinnana) of the five groups of existence and consciousness (chitta of the Abhidhamma classification). Vinnana and Chitta merely denote the variation in words, but not in meanings.

Q. 139. What are known as the factors of consciousness (Chetasikas) and what is known as consciousness (Chitta)?

A. All such mental formations, as put together are known as consciousness, are called the factors of consciousness. And that which arises as a result of the factors of consciousness, is termed consciousness. Factors of consciousness and
consciousness both are co-existent entities.

Q. 140. To ignore ‘soul’ and ‘God’ and to establish the entity of the five aggregates alone, is, no doubt, to propound a revolutionary view of life, as far as the universe is concerned. Did the Buddha propound anything equally revolutionary as regards social system also?

A. Yes, when according to the four-fold division (chaturvarna) Brahmins claimed to belong to the uppermost state of Indian society to propound then that all the four classes of the Indian society were entirely equal in status was to play a unique revolutionary role in social matters also. Once the Assaeyana Brahmin youth urged by elderly Brahmins, to go and to have an argument with the ‘recluse Gautama’ approached the Buddha, and spoke thus to the Enlightened One: “Good Gautama, brahmins speak thus: Only brahmins form the best caste, all other castes are dark: only brahmins form the fair caste, all other castes are dark; only brahmins are pure, not non-brahmins; only brahmins are the own sons of Brahma, heirs to Brahma. What does the good Gautama say about this?”

The Buddha silenced him, by putting forth, as many as ten arguments, one more convincing than the other.

He said: How can Assalayan brahmins claim ‘only brahmins form the best caste heirs to Brahma’; when wives of brahmins are known to have their seasons, and to conceive and to give birth?

2. What do you think about this, Assalayan? Have you heard that in Yona and Kanauja and other adjacent districts there are only castes masters (arya) and slave (dasa)? Having been a master one becomes a slave; having been a slave one becomes a master?

“Yes, I have heard this, sir. In Yona and Kanauja having been a slave one becomes a master.”

“In reference to this then, Assalayan, on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus: ‘only brahmins form the best caste...heirs to Brahma’?

(3) What do you think about this, Assalayan? If a noble Kshatriya attacked creatures, took what had not been given,
wrongly enjoyed pleasures of the senses, was a liar, of slanderous speech, of harsh speech, a covetous, malevolent in mind, of wrong views...would he alone suffer, and not a brahmin? Nor yet a merchant (vaisya)? And would a worker (Sudra) make onslaught on creatures...would he so alone suffer, and not a brahmin?"

"This is not so good Gautama. If the noble...if a brahmin,...if a merchant (Vaishya)...if a worker (Sudra) all the four castes would suffer."

"In reference to this then, Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus; 'only brahmins form the best caste...heirs to Brahma?'"

(4) What do you think about this Assalayana? If a brahmin refrained from attacking creatures...were benevolent in mind and of right view...would he alone be benefited thereby; and not a noble (Kshatriya) nor a merchant, nor a worker?"

"That is not so, good Gautama, if a noble refrained from attacking creatures...was benevolent in mind and of right view...all the four castes would be benefited thereby, and not a brahmin alone."

"In reference to this then, Assalayana on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus, only brahmins form the best caste...being heirs to Brahma?"

(5) What do you think about this, Assalayana? Is only a brahmin capable of developing a mind of friendliness that is without enmity, without malevolence and not a merchant, not a worker?"

"That is not so, good Gautama. A noble too, is capable of developing a mind of friendliness that is without enmity, without malevolence,... all the four castes are capable of developing a mind of friendliness that is without enmity, without malevolence."

In reference to this then, Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus, only brahmins form the best caste...heirs to Brahma?

(6) What do you think about this, Assalayana? Is it only a brahmin who, taking a back scratcher and bath powder and going to a river, capable of cleansing himself of dust and mud? And not a noble, not a merchant, not a worker?
“That is not so, good Gautama. A noble too taking a back scratcher... Good Gautama, all the four castes, taking a back scratcher...are capable of cleansing themselves of dust and mud.”

In reference to this then, Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus, only brahmins form the best caste...heirs to Brahma?”

(7) What do you think about this, Assalayana. If one were to assess a hundred men of high origin, saying to them; ‘Let the sirs come, and let those who are of noble, priestly...families, bring an expensive kind of fire stick...light a fire and get it to give out heat, and let those who are from a despised family bring firestick...light a fire and get it to give out heat. What do you think about this, Assalayana? Is the fire that is lit and the heat that is got of the same, which is from a noble family alone has flame and hue and brightness? Is the fire that is lit and the heat that is got by someone, who is from a despised family has neither flame nor hue nor brightness?”

“That is not so, good Gautama. Whoever from a noble family...lights a fire...This fire has flame and hue and brightness...So good Gautama, all those fires have flame and hue and brightness.”

In reference to this then, Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmins speak thus, only brahmins form the best caste...heirs to Brahma.?

(8) What do you think about this, Assalayana, suppose a noble youth were consorting with a brahmin girl and as a result a son were born to them. Would that son of the noble youth and the Brahmín girl be like his mother and also like his father, and should he be called ‘noble’ and also ‘brahmin’.

Whatever son, good Gautama, were born to a noble youth and a brahmin girl, he would be like his mother and also like his father, and he should be called ‘noble’ and also ‘brahmin’.

What do you think about this, Assalayana? Suppose a brahmin youth were to consorted with a noble girl and as a result a son were born to them.

“Would that son...and also ‘brahmin’?”
"Whatever son, good Gautama, were born to a brahmin youth and a noble girl, he would be like his mother and also like his father, and be... and also 'brahmin'."

What do you think about this, Assalayana? Suppose a mare were mated with an ass and as a result a foal were born of this mating, would that foal of the mare and the ass be like the mother, and also like the father, and should it be called 'horse' and also 'ass'?

Because of its crossed birth, good Gautama, it is a mule. This, good Gautama, is a difference that I see for it, but also where, for the others... I see no difference at all.

In reference to this then Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmans speak thus, 'only brahmans form the best caste...heirs to Brahma'?

(9) What do you think about this, Assalayana? There might be two brahmin youths here, uterine brothers, the one skilled (in the Vedas), educated (in them), the other unskilled, uneducated. To which of those would brahmans first send offerings for the dead...or meals for the guests?

Good Gautama, Brahmans would first send offerings for the dead...or meals for the guests to that brahmin youth who is skilled (in the Vedas), educated (in them). For good Gautama, what great fruit could there be of a gift to an unskilled, uneducated (person)?

In reference to this then, Assalayana, on what strength and authority do brahmans speak thus, 'only brahmans form the best caste...heirs to Brahma'?

(10) What do you think about this, Assalayana. There might be two brahmin youths born, uterine brothers, the one skilled (in the Vedas), educated (in them), but of bad moral habits, of evil character, and the other not skilled, uneducated, but of moral habit, lovely in character. To which of those would brahmans first send offerings...or meals for guests?

"Good Gautama, brahmans would first send offerings for the dead...or meals for guests to that brahmin youth who is not skilled (in the Vedas), uneducated (in them), but who is of moral habit, lovely in character. For, good Gautama, what great fruit could there be of a gift to (a person of) bad moral habit, of evil character?"
First you, Assalayana, went on about birth, leaving birth you went on about (Vedas) mantras; leaving mantras you arrived at the purity of the four castes, which is just what I lay down.

Assalayana did not realize how imperceptibly he was drawn to the stand taken by the Buddha, that all the four castes are equally "pure" or impure. No special characteristic can be said to be the monopoly of Brahmins.

When, the all enlightened had finished, his thesis of the equality of all the four castes, the Brahmin youth Assalayana sat silent, ashamed, his shoulders drooped, his face cast down, overcome with disappointment, at a loss for an answer.

Q. 141. Some people opine that the Buddha had never denied the existence of "Soul" and "God". When questioned about "soul" he simply kept quiet. Is it correct?

A. No it is sheer misleading indoctrination. The Buddha has clearly stated that if there really existed the self (Atman) there would also exist something which belonged to the self. As however, in truth and reality neither the self, nor anything belonging to the self can be found, is it not therefore really an utter fool's doctrine to say "this is the world, this am I; after death I shall be permanent, persisting and eternal". About God also he has explicitly said, there are some people who assert that "God" created this world; in case, this view, is accepted, it shall also have to be assumed that "God", must have been totally devoid of compassion to have created such a world, with so much of suffering for everybody.

Q. 142. Did the Buddha not keep quiet in any matter whatsoever?

A. Yes he did maintain his silence, and did not commit himself either way, when certain questions were asked. The number of those questions is exactly ten. "Soul" and "God" both are conspicuous by their absence in that list. We have no business to increase the number of those questions, by making any addition to the list.

Q. 143. Which are the questions, the All Enlightened one did not care to answer, or left "unexplained"?
A. When the All Awakened One addressed Poṭhapada thus "Hard it is for you, Poṭhapada, to grasp this either", he ad-
mitted, "Sir, then tell me at least. Is the world eternal?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that the world
is eternal?"

"Is the world finite?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that the world
is finite?"

"Is the life same as the body?"

"Poṭhapada, when I express this opinion that the world
is finite."

"Poṭhapada, when I express this opinion that the life is
the same as the body?"

"Is the life one thing, and the body another?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that the life is
one thing, and the body another?"

"Does one who has gained the enlightenment live after
death?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that the
Tathagatas live after death?"

"Does one who has gained enlightenment not live after
death?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that those who
have gained enlightenment do not live after death?"

"Does he both live, and not live, after death?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that those who
have gained enlightenment do both live and not live after death?
"Do they neither live, nor not live after death?"

"Poṭhapada, when did I express this opinion that those who
have gained enlightenment do both live and not live after death?"

"But why has the Exalted One expressed no opinion on these
matters?"

"These questions are not calculated to profit; are not con-
cerned with the norm (the Dhamma), do not refer even to the
elements of right conduct, nor to detachment, nor to puri-
fications from lusts, nor to quietitude, nor to tranquillisation of heart,
nor to real knowledge, nor to the insight (of the higher stages of the path), nor to Virnana. Therefore it is that I have expressed no opinion on them."

"Then what is it that the Exalted One has expressed opinion about?"

"I have expounded on what is the origin of suffering; I have expounded on what is the cessation of suffering; I have expounded on what is the methods by which one may reach the cessation of suffering."

"And, why had the Exalted One expound on all this?"

"Because, these are calculated to profit, are concerned with the norm (the Dhamma).....lead to Nirvana. Therefore it is that I have expounded on all this."

The Exalted One did not like any individual to waste his energy in discussing such fruitless topics, when he could by reasonable effort attain the ideal of the cessation of suffering in this very life.

144. Q. Did the Buddha talk about the possibility of ending suffering in this very life, and laid stress on this likelihood?

A. Yes, the all enlightened one, once, related his personal experience thus: once, when I was staying at Rajagaha in the vultures peak, there were a number of Niganthas at Blackrock on the slopes, where they were undergoing paroxysms of acute pain and agony. Arising towards evening from my meditations, I went to Blackrock and asked those Niganthas why it was they subjected themselves to all those pains by maintaining the upright posture and never sitting down? Their answer was—our teacher (Mahavir) is all knowing and all seeing, had taught us—'Niganthas, you have done evil in the past; extirpate it by these severe austerities. Every present restraint on body, speech and mind will hereafter undo the evil doings of the past. Hence, by expelling through penance all past misdeeds, and by not committing fresh misdeeds, the future becomes cleared; with the future cleared, the past is wiped out; with the past wiped out, suffering is no more; with suffering no more.....this teaching commends and approves itself to us and we rejoice in it.

Thereupon, I said, to those Niganthas: "Do you know, reverend sirs, whether you had an existence before this and were not non-existent?"
“Do you know that, in a former existence, you were guilty, and not guiltless, of misdeeds?”
“No.”
“Do you know that (in that former existence) you were guilty, and not guiltless, of this or that specific misdeed?”
“No?”
“Do you know that a precise amount of ill has already been outworn, or that a precise amount of ill has to be outworn, or that, when a precise amount of ill has been outworn, all ill has become outworn?”
“No.”
Thus the Blessed One demonstrated that all discipline based on the total ignorance, as regards past life, and similar ignorance, as regards further life, was untenable like the wall made of sand.

Q. 145. The blessed one of course did not approve neither of self-mortification, nor of unbridled pleasure-enjoyment, what attitude he held towards the sacrifices, common in ancient India?

A. The ancient “sacrifices” were nothing more than the picnic parties of the people, with animal slaughter, as an indomitable corollary of those functions. The Compassionate One abhorred the merciless assassination of all dumb creatures. In spite of this the Buddha did not totally decry those “picnic” parties, a scene of social enjoyment as they were, for the masses. It was not necessary to do so. After all the public—particularly the masses—must have some sport to amuse itself by.

Q. 146. Did the Buddha never condemn anything in its totality?

A. Sometimes He did and sometimes avoided doing so. There were occasions, when he got the opponent himself, by asking questions, admit the truth of even his exposition. Once, when Sonadanda Brahmin approached the All Awakened One, to have an argument with him, the Buddha himself was the first to interrogate.

He asked:
“What are the things, Brahmin, which the Brahmins say a
man ought to have in order to be a Brahmin, so that if he says: 'I am a Brahman,' he speaks accurately and does not become guilty of falsehood."

"The Brahmins, Gautama, declare him to be a Brahmin who can accurately say 'I am a Brahmin' without being guilty of falsehood, who has five things. And what are these? In the first place, sir, a Brahmin is well-born on both sides, on the mother's side and on the father's side, of pure descent, back through seven generations with no slur put upon him, and no reproach, in respect of birth....

"Then he is a repeater (of the sacred words), knowing the mystic verses by heart, one who has mastered the three Vedas, with the........the ritual, the phonology, and the exegesis (as a fourth); and the legends as a fifth, learned in the phrases and in the grammar, versed in Lokayata sophistry, and in the theory of the signs on the body of a great man."

"Then he is handsome, pleasant to look upon, inspiring trust, gifted with great beauty of complexion, fair in colour, fine in presence, stately to behold."

"Then he is virtuous, increased in virtue, gifted with virtue that has grown great.

"Then he is learned and wise, the first, or it may be the second, among those who hold the ideal."

"But of these five things, O Brahmin, is it possible to leave one out, and to declare the man who has the other four to be a Brahmin; to be one accurately, and without falling into falsehood, claim to be a Brahmin?"

"Yes, Gautama, that can be done; we could leave out colour. For what does colour matter? If he has the other four—good birth, technical training, virtue, and wisdom, as just set forth—Brahmins would still declare him to be a Brahmin; and he could rightly, without danger of falsehood, claim to be one."

"But of these four things, O Brahmin, is it possible to leave one out, and to declare the man who has the other three to be a Brahmin, to be one who can rightly, and without falling into falsehood, claim to be a Brahmin?"

"Yes, Gautama, that could be done, we could leave out birth. For what does birth matter? If he has the other two—virtue and wisdom—Brahmins would still declare him to be a Brahmin, and
he could rightly, without danger of falsehood, claim to be one."

"But of these two things, O Brahmin, is it possible to leave one out, and to declare the man who has the other one to be a Brahmin, to be one who can rightly, and without falling into falsehood, claim to be a Brahmin."

"Not that Gautama for wisdom, O Gautama, is purified by uprightness. Where there is uprightness wisdom is there and where there is wisdom, uprightness is there...Just, O Gautama, as one might wash hand with hand, or foot with foot, just even so, O Gautama, is wisdom purified by uprightness, and uprightness is purified by wisdom."

"That is just so, Brahman. And I, too say the same."

Thus the Buddha, got Sonadanda. Brahmin, to admit the truth of his own exposition. He made a Brahmin, say, that a man's status in life, should not depend on his "birth", but on his real "worth". The all Awakened One had repeatedly declared—

'Birth neither makes a pariah, nor a Brahmin, action makes one either a pariah, or a Brahmin.'

Q. 147. When the number of persons, who were anxious to see the Blessed One had immensely increased, there must have been quite a few who found it difficult to see the Lord?

A. Yes. Once the Blessed One was staying at Vesali at the Gabled Hall in the great wood. At that time the Venerable Nagita was acting as the personal attendant on the Blessed One. The Brahmins from Kosala and Magadha, who had come down to see the Blessed One, approached Venerable Nagita and said:

"Where is it, Nagita, that Venerable Gautama is lodging now for we wish to see him."

"It is not a fitting time, sirs, to call upon the Blessed One. He has retired in solitude."

Then they sat down declaring their intention not to go away without seeing the Venerable Gautama.

There were others also anxious to see the Blessed One.

Then Sinha, the novice went where the Blessed One was, and
saluted him, and standing reverently apart, he said to him, “It were best, that all these folk should be allowed to see the Blessed One.”

“Very well, Sinha, spread out a seat for me in the shade, in front of the house.”

And Sinha did so. And the Blessed One came out from the house, and sat down.

Out of the many, who had come to see the Blessed One, a person known as Mahali, asked:

“Sir, is it for the sake of attaining the ability to see the heavenly forms and hear the heavenly sounds, that the brethren lead the religious life under the Blessed one?”

“No, Mahali. There are things, higher and sweeter than that, for the sake of which they do so.”

“And what, sir, may those other things be?”

“Mahali, those are to become a ‘stream enterer,’ to become a ‘once-returner,’ to become ‘non-returner’ and ultimately to become a ‘holy one.’”

Q. 148. What should we understand, by the phrases to become a ‘stream-enterer’, etc.?

A. A “stream-enterer” in Pali is termed as sotapanna. This can be explained in two ways—by giving an explanation pertaining to ‘this world’ and by giving an explanation pertaining to the ‘other worlds’. The Buddha’s doctrine was primarily pertaining to this world (Sudhiphika), hence such explanation of the term ‘stream-enterer’, etc., as ‘pertaining to this world’ is more befitting. A ‘stream-enterer’ means a noble person, whose consciousness is bound sooner or later, to become unsullied of all defilements. Such defilements or fetters are enumerated as ten. One who is totally liberated of the first three fetters, namely, self-illusion, scepticism, attachment to mere rules and rituals is known as ‘stream-enterer’ or sotapanna. Another advanced stage in a man’s spiritual progress is termed as sakadagami and is translated and interpreted as ‘once returner.’ The Sanskrit word Sakadagami is a combination of two words Sakrit and Agami, which would mean ‘once returner’, and seems to bear some near relationship, with another word Sakritagami, which can conveniently be translated as prone towards noble activities.
Along with the three earlier mentioned bondages or defilements, when one becomes free from two other bondages also, namely, passion and hatred; then he is supposed to have become Sakadagami (Sakrīt, once returner, or inclined towards noble activities). The third stage is known as Anagami 'never returner', which is traditionally interpreted, as never returning to this world, 'even attaining Nirvana, from there itself, from some Brahma Loka.' Can it not have a simpler meaning as one who no more feels inclined towards ignoble activities, a 'never-returner'? This Brahma Loka can reasonably mean, a specific condition of the consciousness of a 'yogi'. Anagami, i.e., non-returner has been classified into five different categories. The fourth and the last stage to denote one's spiritual progress is of course Arhatship. One who has freed himself of all the ten "bondages" or has washed away all the ten "defilements" in their toto is known an "Arhata". Its other meaning is, one whose chance of being re-born is wholly destroyed. When according to the doctrine of the Buddha, to become an Arhata here itself and in this very life itself is possible, then there is nothing wrong in preferring the above "this worldly" explanation of such terms as 'stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner,' etc.

Q. 149. What path has one to tread upon in order to make oneself free from all bondages, or in order to clean oneself from all defilements?

A. None else but the well known Aryan Eight-fold path. The word 'Arya' means just a noble or excellent. As it is a composition of eight-facets so it is known as "eight-fold" path. The eight angas of this one composite whole are—

1. Right Perspective (Samma ditthi)
2. Right Aspiration (Samma Sankappo)
3. Right Speech (Samma-vaca)
4. Right Action (Samma Kammanto)
5. Right Livelihood (Samma agivo)
6. Right Effort (Samma Vayamo)
7. Right Mindfulness (Samma Satti)
8. Right Concentration (Samma Samadhi)
Q. 150. What shall we understand by Right Perspective?

A. *Sammaditthi* or Right Perspective, as far as the literal meaning is concerned, the words are clear enough, 'such perspective, as may not be incorrect.' If one intends to raise a building, the survey of the land, on which the building is to be raised, is necessary. Similarly, to proceed along the eight-fold path, a kind of circumspection is inevitable. The Buddha did not expect his followers to become attached to any particular view. His stress is on the possession of 'right views'. If one has been holding a particular 'view' assuming that that particular is the "right view", but on learning better, he realises what he has so far taken as "right view", in reality was not a right view", then he should be the first to give up that particular view. This is gradual progress on the road to righteousness. This rejecting of what one has realised to be wrong view and accepting what one has realized to be "right view", is to make gradual progress on the road to righteousness.

Q. 151. Then what views are "right views" according to Buddhism?

A. (1) To see all evil-conduct as evil-conduct is 'right views'.
(2) To see noble-conduct as noble conduct is 'right views'.
(3) To understand that greed, hatred and delusion are the root causes of the evil conduct is 'right views'.
(4) To understand that the absence of greed (unselfishness), absence of hatred (kindness) and absence of delusion (wisdom) are the root causes of noble-conduct is 'right views'.
(5) To understand suffering, to understand the origin of suffering, to understand the path that leads to the extinction of suffering is 'right views'.
(6) To endeavour to make oneself free from ten fetters is 'right views'.
(7) Not to get entangled in any views as regards the self, such as 'I have a self', or 'I have no self', 'with self, I perceive the self', or with that which is no self, I perceive the self, is 'right views'.
(8) To remain detached from all "views" is 'right views.'
(9) To understand all the implications of the law of dependent origination is "right views".
Q. 152. What do we mean by right aspirations (Samma Sankappo)?

A. When a man's life is more affected by his 'aspirations' then even his "aspirations", should be wholesome. All such aspirations which are ultimately conducive to one's well-being, to others well-being, to one's own and to others well-being put together should be designated as "right aspirations". According to Buddhism, to give up one's house-hold, with the intention of making one's self fit for something higher is "right aspirations". Absence of ill-will and absence of cruelty are "negative only in their mould, but not in their contents". Absence of ill-will and absence of cruelty both mean a strong feeling of friendliness and in themselves are efficacious spiritual forces.

Q. 153. What is right speech?

A. It is word, which links individual and society together. Hence the immeasurable importance of the 'word' or the 'speech'. Total "silence", is of little use, for those who although do not utter a single syllable from their mouth, yet in their hearts they are turbulent to the extreme. One does not cultivate "right speech", by remaining totally 'silent', one can cultivate "right speech" by only "speaking", such speech, as is devoid of all falsehood, all harsh words, all frivolous talk. It needs great self culture to ascend to such heights. These are general precautions to be taken by one who wants to cultivate "right speech". But in special circumstances one has sometimes to utter words which are merely true, but not necessarily 'sweet'. Such words are to be uttered only when one believes that they might be conducive to ones own well-being, to others well-being and to the well-being of both.

Q. 154. What now is right action?

A. To think and realize a certain action separated from "right view" as 'right action', is useless. And "right action" without "right view" is unthinkable. If one realizes that to abstain from killing is "right view", then to actually refrain
from “killing” is “right action”. As none of us wishes to be killed by anyone, hence it is but humane that we all refrain from “killing”. To think and realize that “to steal” is an unsocial instinct, which is harmful to every one in the long run is “right action”. To think and realize that “unlawful sexual intercourses”, ultimately create social problems, too difficult to be solved, is “right view”. To curb unworthy instincts, and to try to lead a clean life is “right action”.

Q. 155. What then is “right livelihood”?

A. As all beings subsist on food, hence everybody must have a “livelihood”. To maintain oneself by alms, as the Buddhist monks have been doing throughout is also a means of “livelihood”. This should be such as may enable one to maintain oneself adequately, while not causing injury to any other living being. According to Buddhist tradition dealing in “arms and ammunitions” is one of the wrong means of “livelihood”; considering the use to which “arms and ammunition” are put by human beings. In the modern world the dealers in “arms and ammunition” are amongst the great ‘industrialists’ of the world. Our wealth, which is produced from the soil, instead of being used for the good of humanity, is being utilised for the manufacture of such arms and ammunition, as can become detrimental even to the existence of the human race. Like dealings in “arms and ammunitions” (slave) trade in human beings is also anti-social. And so is the utter callousness shown towards the dumb creatures, when they are sold and purchased for human consumption. Similar is doing business in any, poison, an effective instrument to kill living beings.

Q. 156. Doing business in ‘flesh’ and in animals, for the sake of human consumption has been enlisted as a “wrong” means of livelihood. Is then, non-vegetarianism totally prohibited in Buddhism?

A. In Mahayan texts, taking of non-vegetarian food is totally condemned. Most probably, as a result of that, although an average Chinese citizen would eat anything, but all Chinese
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Buddhist Monks are strict vegetarians. In Pali scriptures, trade in flesh is decried, trade in living beings is taboo but the taking of non-vegetarian diet is not totally forbidden. Not only the lay householders, but even the Monks, in Theravada country, generally speaking, are not vegetarians. Of course a Buddhist refrains from killing, and a Buddhist monk is enjoined not to partake of any animal food, if the creature has been killed to provide meet for him.

Q. 157. Is there no inconsistency between not only a Buddhists's eating meat but even that of a Buddhist Monk, and between the teaching of the Buddha that non-killing is the highest religion (Ahimsa Parmo Dharmah)?

A. This particular phrase that non-killing is the highest religion (Ahimsa Parmo Dharmah) occurs in Mahabharata (an epic of the Hindus) and not in any Buddhist scripture. It is really not only a matter of surprise, but even regret that in spite of this phrase that “non-killing is the highest religion” found in Mahabharata, there took place a fierce war between Kaurvas and Pandavas. As regards the non-vegetarian diet of not only the Buddhists but even of the Bhikkus (barring the Chinese Buddhist monks), there is only one sensible explanation, which can be given. And this is, that a major portion of the Indian population, the peoples residing in Buddhist countries, also have been used to non-vegetarian diet from ancient times. As a result of the teaching of non-violence, Buddhists gave up the killing of animals. There are no butchers to be found amongst Buddhists. Sellers of meat, of course, you may meet here and there.

It is permissible for a Bhikku to eat fish and flesh, as may be “pure on three counts” which means an animal should have not been seen, should have not been heard, should have not been even suspected to have been killed to provide food for a Buddhist monk. Hence it is not obligatory for a Buddhist monk to be vegetarian. Not only this much, total vegetarianism may find some advocates amongst Buddhist lay-men but seldom amongst Buddhist monks.

Much can be said for and against “vegetarianism” and “non-vegetarianism.” As far as this explanation of a non-vegetarian
diet being "pure on three counts" is concerned, is not tenable in the modern world at all. Because all the animals slaughtered by machines, in big slaughter-houses of the so-called developed countries, are not slaughtered for particular individuals. Their flesh is just packed and exported to any and all consumers in foreign lands. Nobody who eats that flesh can individually be held responsible for the killing of these animals. Hence it has to be admitted that this rule of fish and flesh being "pure on three counts", must have been laid down taking into consideration individual-responsibility alone. It is not impossible that the conception of "social-responsibility" may have been a notion, to be yet grasped by the society in later days.

Q. 158. What then is the "right effort"?

A. The Pali words of which the "right effort" is a translation, is "Samyak-Vyayama". The word vyayama in present-day use means 'physical exercise', but its older meaning must have been either effort or endeavour or some similar one. We make all sorts of efforts to achieve all sorts of objects, but it need not be repeated that no effort can be of greater worth than one made to reform one's own self. To see that such evil traits as one does not possess in one's character may not imperceptibly take possession of his personality; to see that such evil traits as one possesses in one's character may be abrogated in their totality, to see that such noble traits as one possesses in one's character may remain preserved in one's personality, to see that such noble traits as one does not possess in one's character are assimilated in one's personality is right-effort.

Q. 159. What then is "right concentration"?

A. The Pali word Samma Sati, of which right-concentration is an English rendering is also misunderstood, because the Sanskrit form of sati that is Smriti is, in all modern Indian languages, understood to mean memory. Pali Sati means constant wakefulness. Irrespective of the volume of the task, may it be a small one or a big one, to remain conscious of the fact, that one is busy in carrying on that particular physical activity is "right concentration". While inhaling to be conscious
of the fact that one is inhaling; while exhaling to be conscious of the fact that one is exhaling; while sitting, standing, walking, etc. to remain conscious of the fact that one is sitting, standing, walking, etc., not to do any thing absent-mindedly is right-concentration”.

Q. 160. What is a right-meditation?

A. One-pointedness in carrying on noble activities is “highest” meditation. The Pali word for samadhi is understood or misunderstood in various ways. To be able to stop the inhaling and exhaling process, temporarily is said to have attained samadhi. To be able to stay for a few hours or even a few days, under the earth, in a “grave” is also known as the attainment of samadhi. To become completely unconscious, even when the process of inhaling and exhaling is still on, is also termed as the attainment of “samadhi”. Even the death of a saintly person is also known as “Samadhi.” “Right meditation” or Sammasamadhi has got nothing to do with any such meditation or Samadhi. Right-meditation or concentration of the mind in one direction is one thing and concentration of mind on a particular object is quite another thing. Such enthusiasts as have forced their mind to concentrate on a particular object, are often known to have been adversely affected. To attempt to channel one’s mental activities in one noble direction, is to make a noble effort, but to try to concentrate one’s mind on any one point or object may even prove harmful.

Under the belief that they shall be able to attain many “supernatural powers”, certain people have done immense harm to themselves.

It is not impossible that certain laws of nature might still be unknown to humanity, particularly the laws which pertain to human consciousness, therefore new experiments in the sphere of the activities of consciousness, should not be tabooed, but they should be carried on in a scientific spirit, and the results should remain open to scientific measurements and tests.

Q. 161. Some people believe that “God, who created this
world was omniscient"), others believe that certain persons, who had reached the highest summit of sublimation, according to their particular doctrine, were "omniscient". Do Buddhists also believe that the Buddha was "omniscient"?

A. This question was once asked of the Awakened One himself. A wanderer of Vatsa-clan interrogated—"It is said that the Sraman Gautam claims to be omniscient. He asserts that he is 'all knowing and all seeing, with nothing outside his ken and vision, who claims that, whether he is walking or standing still, whether he is asleep or awake, his ken and vision stand ready, always ready. Do such as make this assertion about the Awakened One, report correctly?"

The All Enlightened One's answer was, "those who call me 'omniscient allege me with a false statement." Buddhist tradition has neither maintained the All Enlightened One to be "omniscient," nor accepted any one else to be one. The elder Anand, once ridiculed the omniscience of Mahavir, one of the Jain Tirthankaras thus: "take the case of a teacher who is 'all knowing and all seeing with nothing outside his ken and vision, who claims that, whether he is walking or standing still, whether he is asleep or awake, his ken and vision stand ready. This teacher goes to a house which is empty and gets no alms given him, is bitten by a dog; encounters a violent elephant or horse or bullock; asks a man or woman their name and clan; or needs to ask the name of, or the way to, a village or a township. When asked how he explains this, he answers that he had to do each of these things and was constrained to do as he did."

In one who bears intelligence, this pronouncement awakens the following reflection: "All knowing and all seeing though he is, this reverend teacher yet does all these things and must!"

Q. 162. Shall we take it, that the All Awakened One was not omniscient?

A. In conformity with the textual testimony, this too cannot be said, because a synonymous of the word omniscient
(Sārvagnya) another word all knowing-one (Sarva-vida) has been used by the Master himself also. But when he is further asked to explain what did he mean by saying that he was an all knowing-one (Sarva-vida), his answer was that he knew the suffering, and the way that leads to the cessation of suffering. In this particular sense, he claimed that he was an all-knowing-one.

**Q. 163.** Are both the statements not incompatible with each other?

**A.** Although the two synonyms are there, yet as there is difference in their content, hence the question of inconsistency does not arise. The explanation given by the Buddhist tradition of this apparent inconsistency is that he was an all-knowing-one in the sense, that whenever he desired to know anything he had the capacity to know it, there was nothing which he could not comprehend, if he so desired; but he was not an “all-knowing one,” in the sense that he knew ‘everything, everybody, on every occasion.’ It appears that this attempt at hair splitting is the result of the fact that later day Buddhism became too anxious to retain the “All-Knowing-One” appellation for the Buddha also. They maintained that after all, sabb-vid (one who knows everything) and sabbhūnu (one who knows everything) are more or less synonyms. Hence why not call him sabbhūnu (an all knowing one) also. Why should Buddhas lag behind Jain Tirthankras, in the matter of being all-knowing-ones!

**Q. 164.** One of the appellations of the Buddha is tevijja (knower of three knowledges) also. What does this term actually convey?

**A.** Just as in Jain tradition to be a sārvagnya (all knowing one) was the highest achievement to which one could aspire, similarly it appears that in Brahmanic tradition also to be a knower of three Vedas, was considered to be no mean an achievement. From propaganda point of view it could be essential, to uphold only the sabbhūnu (all knowing one) appellation; trividya (knower of the three Vedas’) did not convey any sense in the Buddhist context. Hence, it appears
the word *tevijja* was maintained but a different meaning was given to it.

Similarity of word, but diversity in meaning. Instead of "knower of three Vedas", he was made "knower of three knowledges." Etymologically the word 'Veda' also means knowledge. What were the three knowledges, which the Buddha was claimed to have mastered? They were the capacity to know the details of his previous life as and when he desired, the capacity to know the details of other people's previous lives and to move about with a free mind bereft of all defilements.

Buddhist literature is replete with such stories. It is really difficult to say whether they are just stories, or historical occurrences. It is not impossible that they might be stories woven round actual events.

Q. 165. Did the incident, which according to Late Prof. Dhammanand Kosambi and Late Dr B. R. Ambedkar was the immediate cause of the Siddharth Gautama "entering into a life of Homelessness", not take place in the life of Siddharth Gautam, the Buddha?

A. Why not? Buddhist literature has maintained a reliable record of the same. The difference is that according to Prof. Dhammanand Kosambi and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the event took place, before Siddharth Gautama had entered into a life of homelessness, but according to Buddhist tradition, this took place, when Siddarth Gautama had become an All-Awakened One. The incident is stated thus: Sakyas of Kapilavastu and Koliyas of Koliya-Nagar were immediate neighbours. Rohini river was the boundry-line which divided their territory. Both used to make use of the Rohini waters for irrigation purposes. In hot summer days, when they felt that their fields were drying up, the Sakya peasants and as well as Koliya peasants, gathered together. Those who belonged to Sakya clan addressed Koliyas as follows: "If we both make use of this water simultaneously it shall neither be sufficient for your fields nor it shall be sufficient for ours. We need just one 'water'. Permit us to have our fields irrigated first."
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The others replied: “Our fields also just need one more ‘water’. Permit us to have our fields irrigated earlier.”

“We are unable to do so.”
“We are also unable to do so.”

Exchange of words, by and by turned into a quarrel and then into getting ready for a battle by the chiefs of both Sakyas and Koliyas. The Sakyas and Koliyas both came out ready for a pitched battle. The All Awakened One also reached there. He asked:

“O Kings, what is this quarrel about?”
“Venerable Sir, we are unaware of it.”
“Then who knows, the cause of this quarrel?”
“The commander in chief knows.”

The commander in chief relied upon somebody else and that somebody else on somebody else. But ultimately it was learnt that the peasants knew, and the cause of the quarrel was the water of river Rohini.

The Buddha interrogated: “O kings, what is the price of water?”

They replied: “No price, it can be had free.”

The Buddha: “What is the price of the blood of Kshatriyas, the members of the warrior class?”

Both sides replied: “Priceless, cannot be purchased at any price.”

“You people, for the sake of water, which can be had free, are ready to shed the blood of Kshatriyas, which cannot be purchased at any price.”

Both sides had no answer. The quarrel subsided. No battle took place. Peace reigned supreme.

The problem of wars, is not limited to human beings alone, but pertains to all living-beings. If humanity failed to find a solution for the same, given the enormous means of destruction at its disposal, it is not an impossibility, that the world might plunge itself into a catastrophe any day, and destroy the whole modern civilization within a
very short period. Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru queried a staggering one: "The Buddha or the Yuddha? The path shown by the Buddha or the road that leads to mutual slaughter?"

Q. 166. The Buddha had enjoined upon Bhikkus to beg alms as a means of maintaining themselves, and permitted them the use of three robes as a covering against indifferent weather. Now when the community of the brethren was permitted to own Viharas, residential quarters, naturally the need for furniture to furnish them also would have arisen?

A. Yes, why not! Of what use could these Viharas be, if they were without any furniture at all? For such Bhikkus as were always roaming forth from place to place, the question of owning or inheriting any property did not arise. Now, there did arise, the question of the ownership and inheritance of the property also.

It has been stated that once the Lord having stayed at Sravasti as long as he pleased, set out on tour for Kitagiri with a large order of monks with Sariputta and Moggallana. There the followers of Asaji and Punabbasu heard "they say that the Lord has arrived at Kitagiri with a large order of Monks...and with Sariputta and Moggallana. Come, your reverences, let us distribute all the lodgings belonging to the order..." They distributed all the lodgings belonging to the order. Then the Lord, walking on tour, gradually reached Kitagiri. Then the Lord addressed several Monks, saying:

"Do you go, monks, and having gone up to the monks who are followers of Assaji and Punabbasu speak thus: "The Lord, your reverences, has come together with a large order of monks...make ready lodgings for the Lord and...for Sariputta and Moggallana."

When they approached the followers of Assaji and Punabbasu, they were told: "There are no lodgings, your reverences, belonging to the order; all are distributed by us. The Lord, your reverence is welcome; the Lord can stay in whatever dwelling place he likes...Sariputra and Moggallana are of depraved desires......we will not make ready logdings for them."
"But, did you, your reverences, distribute lodgings belonging to the order?"

"Yes, your reverences."

Then these monks told the matter to the Lord. He said:

"Low monks, can these foolish men distribute lodgings belonging to the order? It is not, monks, for pleasing those who are not (yet) pleased...Having rebuked them, having given a reasoned talk, he addressed the monks saying:

"Monks, these five things are not to be divided up, should not be divided up by an order or by a group or by an individual... even if divided up they are not (really) divided up, whoever should divide them, there is a grave offence. What are the five? (i) Residential Quarter (ii) Monastery and the furniture belonging to the monastery (iii) bed, bedding, pillows etc. (iv) Iron-made utensils, (v) wooden-utensils and earthen utensils.

"What were the things, which could be divided then?"

"Eight personal belongings of Buddhist monk, three robes, bowl etc."

One may well ask that if the residential quarters and the monastery etc. could not be divided up by a group or by an individual—even if divided up they were not (really) divided up, in such a case although in theory they became the property of the Sangha or community in general, yet who looked after them or who managed them in the past? Who does at present? In Buddhist countries such as Thailand etc. a large number of Viharas are state owned Viharas. One can take them to be permanent rest houses of the Bhikkus. The Government can entrust the upkeep of Vihara to a particular Mahasthavir temporarily and appoint another, whenever such need arises. Such Viharas or wats as they are known in Thailand, as are not looked after by the state directly are managed by elderly Bhikkhus appointed by the Sangha (community) in general. In Thailand it is not easy to demarcate and draw a line to indicate, as to where the state-ownership ends and the Sangha’s ownership begins or vice-versa. The reason being that in Thailand there is an almost parallel “ecclesiastical government” to look after the interests of the Phra or members of the Buddhist order and to exercise complete control upon their activities. No Bhikkhu can get even a passport to travel abroad, if not sanctioned by
the “ecclesiastical authority.”

In Burmah probably there are no “Royal temples.” There must have been many before the British occupation. But now none. Now all the Viharas are, just as in Ceylon, jointly managed by the Bhikkhus and the lay members of the Buddhist order.

In Ceylon, the eldest disciple of a Viharadhipati, the monk entrusted with the upkeep of the temple—is generally accepted and appointed to take up the responsibility after his teacher. In quite a number of cases, Bhikkhus in order to maintain their hereditary control over the Viharas, ordain there near-relations as their chief disciples and thus the Viharas pass on from one generation to another while remaining the property of the same family. To be a blood relation of an owner of a Vihar does not disqualify him from becoming the disciple or the chief disciple or a monk. Thus management of the Viharas, slightly differ from one country to another.

In today’s Pakistan, but in yesterday’s India, there is a district known as Chittagong. Traditional Viharas from hoary past existed and do exist even at present. In Chittagong the Viharas are supposed to be the property of the lay disciples of the Buddha, belonging to a particular locality and it is they who manage the vihar of that particular village or town. If the Viharas do not become the State property as they are in Thailand, and also not the hereditary property of certain families as some of them have become in Ceylon only then “the spirit of the ownership of the Sangha” can be maintained intact.

Q. 167. It is observed that almost all the Bhikkhus do not eat in the afternoon hours, but instead drink a lot of milk tea and that too without milk. What is it due to?

A. Two possible explanations can be given, first natural obstacles which a Bhikkhu would meet if he went for alms during the night. Second moderate eating being conducive to one’s well-being. Reference from scriptures can be cited in support of both the explanations. It is said that an almsman had gone for begging during the night. Thinking him to be a ghost a woman got afraid of him. The Lord got the information. He prohibited begging during the night. Eating during
the night automatically became a taboo, when begging was banned. Once the Lord was on an alms-pilgrimage in Kasi with a large train of almsmen, he addressed them as follows: “I go without a meal at night and find that on this regimen I am healthy and well, buoyant, hale and hearty. Do like me and you too will benefit in the same way.”

Assaji and Punabbasu opined that they took meals in the evening and early in the morning and at noon, outside prescribed hours, and found that on this regimen they were healthy and well, buoyant, hale and hearty. What answer could the Lord give to it? He said, “What I affirm is the result of my own experience. It is not just hearsay. I speak from my own experience.”

There is no greater testimony for a man than his own experience. The question arises, if one’s own experience disagrees with another man’s experience whether one should consider one’s own experience as more trustworthy, or another man’s experience. Generally speaking, one’s own experience should be considered as more trustworthy but not so in special circumstances, just as a student has to abide by the advice of his teacher, or a patient has to follow the dictates of a doctor. Having full trust in what they say, in the beginning, if one’s own experience later contradicts what they say, one should abide by one’s own self-experience. Not to speak about others the Lord has said even about Himself “Monks, just as a goldsmith testifies the purity of gold only when he has tested it on a touch-stone, similarly you should also not accept any statement of mine true simply because of regard for me, but should test it on the touch-stone of your self-experience.”

The doctrine taught by Lord Buddha can be subjected to any test. He does not wish anybody to renounce any “happiness” except the one, which one may have wrongfully assumed to be “happiness”. The Buddha does not want anybody to renounce real happiness. His religion is the religion of happiness par excellence. He has described Nirvana also as “happiness par excellence.” But Neither “Nirvan” nor the attainment of the wisdom that leads to the realization of “Nirvana” is an haphazard achievement. “I do not say that the plenitude of
knowledge comes straightway; it comes by gradual training, by gradual attainment and by gradual progress. A man with faith first draws near, then attends constantly, then pays attention, then hears the doctrine, then carries it away with him, then examines the import of the ideas he has carried away, then is in an ecstasy of delight over those ideas, then grows to ardour, is emboldened by his ardour, becoming emboldened, weighs it all, and, weighing it, strives, till, void of self, he through the medium of his bodily senses, realizes the truth sublime and by his intellect penetrates it and sees it clear."

Thus the teaching of the Lord can be accepted as a "cash doctrine", to be realized here and now in this body of six feet and on this earth and not a "credit doctrine" for the realization of which one has to wait till "hereafter."

Q. 168. In order to fulfil any ideal or achieve any social purpose in life, man has to remain united. What qualities of a leader keep his followers united and attached to him?

A. Once a similar question was asked of Naṭṭhaka, the wanderer by the Lord himself and he had seconded his answer. The Lord questioned: "This following of yours, Naṭṭhaka, is very large. How do you manage to gather it together?"

"Lord, it is by those four bases of gatherings, which have been declared by the Exalted One, that I gather this following together. Lord, when I realize that this man be enlisted by a gift, I enlist him in this way; when by a kindly word, then in that way; when by a good turn, then so; or when I know that he must be treated as an equal, if he is to be enlisted, then I enlist him by equality of treatment. Lord, there is wealth in my family. Nobody likes to give a hearing to a poor man.

"Well done", declared the Lord, "Well done, Naṭṭhaka. This is just the way to gather together a large following. Whosoever in the past gathered together a large following, did so on these four bases; likewise whosoever shall do so in future; yes, whosoever now gathers a following together, gathers it on these four bases."

Q. 169. Has the Lord not delivered any discourses to make
family life a bliss? Has he always preferred a homeless ones’ life to a householders life?

A. In the case of certain persons it may be beneficial to them that they stay at home and lead a householders life instead of becoming a homeless one, and in case of certain other persons it might be considered beneficial that they go forth from a householders life and become homeless ones. The question is to be decided keeping in view one’s ability, tendency, circumstances and situation in which one is placed. The Exalted One delivered many a discourse to make a householder’s life a happier one. The famous discourse delivered to Sigala is one of them and runs thus—

“The Exalted One was once staying near Rajgaha in the bamboo wood at the squirrels feeding ground.

“Now at the time young Sigala, a householder’s son, rising betimes, went forth from Rajgaha and with wet hair and wet garments and clasped hands uplifted, paid worship to the several quarters of earth and sky:—to the east, south, west, and north, to the Nadir the Zenith”.

“And the Exalted One early that morning dressed himself, took bowl and robe and entered Rajagaha seeking alms. He saw young Sigala worshipping and spoke to him thus: “Why, young householder, do you, rising betimes and leaving Rajagaha, with wet hair and raiments, worship the several quarters of earth and sky?

‘Sir, my father, when he was a dying, said to me: Dear son, you should worship the quarters of earth and sky. So I Sir, honouring my father’s word, revering, holding it sacred, rise betimes and leaving Rajagaha, worship on this wise”.

“You have not understood your father alright. One’s parents should be considered the eastern direction, one’s teachers should be considered the southern direction, one’s wife and children should be considered the western direction, friends and companions to be considered northern direction, servants and work people to be considered Nadir and holy men as the Zenith.”

“In five ways a child should minister to his parents as the eastern quarter: Once supported by them I will now be their
support, I will perform duties incumbent on them; I will keep up the lineage and tradition of my family. I will let my son be worthy of my heritage.

In five ways parents thus ministered to, as the eastern quarter, by their child, show their love for him: they restrain him from vice, they exhort him to virtue, they train him to a profession, they contract a suitable marriage for him and in due time they handover his inheritance. Thus is this eastern quarter protected by him and made safe and secure.

In five ways should pupils minister to their teachers as the southern quarter by rising from their seat in salutation, by waiting upon them, by eagerness to learn, by personal services and by attention when receiving their teaching.

And in five ways do teachers, thus minister to as the southern quarter by their pupils, love their pupils; they train him in that wherein he has been well trained; they make him hold fast to that which is well held; they thoroughly instruct him in the lore of every art; they speak well of him among his friends and companions. They provide for his safety in every quarter. Thus is this southern quarter protected by him and made safe and secure.

In five ways should a wife as western quarter be ministered to by her husband; by respect, by courtesy, by faithfulness, by handing over authority to her, by providing her with adornment.

In these five ways thus the wife, ministered to by her husband as the western quarter loves him; her duties are well performed, by hospitality to the kin of both, by faithfulness, by watching over the goods he brings, and by skill and industry in discharging all her business. Thus is this western quarter protected by him and made safe and secure.

In five ways should a clans-man, minister to his friends and familiairs as the northern quarter; by generosity, courtesy and benevolence, by treating them as he treats himself, and by being as good as his word.

In these five ways, thus ministered to as the northern quarter, his friends and familiairs love him. They protect him when he is off his guard, and on such occasions guard his property; they become a refuge in danger, they do not forsake in his troubles and they show consideration for his family. Thus is the
northern quarter protected by him and made safe and secure.

In five ways does an employer minister to his servants and employees as the Nadir: by assigning them work according to their strength; by supplying them food and wages; by tending them in sickness; by sharing with them unusual delicacies; by granting leave at times.

In these ways ministered to by their employer, servants and employees love their master in five ways; they rise before him; they lie down to rest after him; they are content with what is given to them; they do their work well; and they carry about his praise and good fame.

Thus is the Nadir protected by him and made safe and secure.

In five ways should the clans-men minister to recluses (Sramanas) and brahmans as the Zenith; by display of affection in act and mind; by keeping open house to them by supplying their temporary needs.

Thus ministered to as the Zenith, recluses and Brahmins show their love for the clans-men in six ways, they restrain him from evil, they exhort him to do good, they love with kindly thoughts, they teach him what he had not heard, they correct and purify what he has heard, they reveal to him the way that leads to his well-being.

This 'Sraman brahmin' used as a compound word often recurs in Buddhist literature. It can bear only two interpretations. The first is that in ancient days the word 'brahmin' also meant any individual possessing certain qualities. It had nothing to do with one's birth. The second is, that after the traditional antagonism between Sramans and brahmans, both may have accepted the principles of co-existence. No other explanation is possible of this compound phrase so often mentioned in Buddhist scriptures. At present of course there does not seem much to make a choice between Sramanas and Brahminas. Yet one thing is perfectly clear; a Sramana is made while a Brahmin is born. Anybody fulfilling the requisite of a Bhikkhu can enter the order and become one, but a "Brahmin" has to be born of "Brahmin" parents. Nothing he does can make a non-brahmin a brahmin.
Q. 170. According to the doctrine of the Exalted One, who can be termed a real Sraman or a recluse?

A. Once when the Lord was staying in the Angas country, where they have a township named Assapura, He addressed the listening, alms men as follows.

Recluses: that is the name by which you would describe yourselves, if asked who you were. How does an Almsman tread the recluse's path of duty? The Almsman who is not greedy but has put greed from him; who is not malicious but has put malice from him of such an almsman I say that he succeeds in treading the recluse's path of duty.....I say it is not the robe which makes the recluse....if the wearing of the robe could banish greed, malice and so forth, then, as soon as a child was born his friends and kinsfolk would make him wear the robe and would address him saying: come, thou favoured of fortune, come wear the robe, for by the wearing of it, your greed will leave you, your malice will leave you...but it does not happen: It is just as if there were a lake of clear bright water easy to get down to, and in every way delightful, as if from the east or the west, or from the north, or from the south, there should come a man overcome and overpowered with the benumbing heat of summer, exhausted and beside himself with thirst who should quench in that lake's waters the thirst and the fever which parches his frame, just in the same way may he be a "recluse" or not, if he develops goodwill, compassion, happiness and poised equanimity as to win inward peace...he treads the recluse's path of duty.

Q. 171. Are goodwill, compassion, sympathy, and poised equanimity to be developed, irrespective of any preconditions towards each and everybody?

A. No, goodwill of course towards everybody in general, but that too with certain restrictions at least in the beginning. Compassion is meaningful only towards those who deserve to be pitied and similarly a sense of happiness only towards those who are better off than ourselves. And poised equanimity is meant to be maintained only as regards those people, who for
some reason or other best known to themselves, maintain an antagonistic attitude towards us.

Q. 172. Is it advantageous to obstruct or to suspend the working of one’s organs, senses in order to attain control over them?

A. If self-control could be achieved only by obstructing or thwarting the working of one’s senses, then the blind, the deaf and the dumb would find it easiest to control their senses, as they can neither see, nor hear, nor speak—see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

Q. 173. What characteristic would entitle a certain doctrine to be known as sanditthika, capable of bearing fruit now and here itself?

A. Such a doctrine alone can be termed as Sandittika, living according to which may generate beneficial results now and here itself; one may not have to wait till hereafter. Once the Exalted One was residing at Selavati in a region known as Sumora. At that time, not far from the Exalted One, there lived a few brethren, who were diligent, energetic and of controlled senses... the evil one dressed as a Brahmin approached them and spoke thus—

“You, who have all gone forth to the life of homelessness are young, very young, are possessed of black hair, have just entered the earlier span of beautified youth... you should all enjoy human pleasures. For the sake of such delight as is supposed to be enjoyed hereafter and is known as Nibbana, do not forsake the enjoyment of such pleasures as can be had here itself and now itself.”

“O Brahmin, we are not forsaking such delights as can be had here itself and now itself in the interest of such pleasures which are supposed to be enjoyed hereafter.”

The Evil One is nothing else except the personification of the evil characteristics of man. In reality this tussle between what tastes as ‘good’ and what is really ‘good’ is a permanent one. One view is that all that tickles one’s senses, one likes to enjoy,
should be considered as “good.” Another view is, what is really good and beneficial and is in the ultimate interest of the person concerned should alone be considered as “good”.

**Q. 174.** Can “meditation” all of a sudden alone lead one to the attainment of Nibbana?

**A.** No, all progress is gradual. In certain cases it can be accelerated, but still it is gradual. Once the Exalted One was staying at the mountain known as Charika. At that time elder Meghiya was in attendance upon the Lord. One day elder Meghiya addressed the Lord thus:

“Lord, I in the forenoon went for alms in village Jantugram. After having finished my meals proceeded to the bank of river Kimkilaya. There I saw a fascinating mango-grove. It struck me that this is just the place for practicing intensive meditation. If the Lord, would permit me, then I would fain enter this lonely mango grove to practice intensive meditation.

The Blessed One reply, “Meghiya, I am alone. Have patience as long as another Bhikkhu does not come to wait upon me.”

The elder Meghiya persistently repeated his request thrice. Then the Exalted One exclaimed “Meghiya, what more can be said to one, who is persistent on practicing intensive meditation. Do whatever you think proper.”

Then the elder Meghiya, having risen from his seat and having paid his respects to the Master proceeded to the place, where stood the pleasant mango grove. Having reached that spot, he sat under a tree. In the mind of the elder Meghiya, who was keen on meditation, there repeatedly arose thoughts concerning sensual desires, thoughts concerning antagonism, thoughts concerning ill-will towards others.

In the evening the elder Meghiya reported the matter to the Exalted One. The Lord exhorted:

“Meghiya, one who is keen on meditation should first undergo preliminary training for meditation. And the means to this end are better association, good conduct, noble advice, perfect behaviour and development of wisdom.

“O Meghiya in order to eradicate the sensuous tendency, one
should contemplate on the repulsive nature of one's physique; in order to pacify the disturbed nature of one's mind, one should contemplate on the inhaling and exhaling of one's breath; in order to renounce the tendency towards antagonism, one should develop the feeling of friendliness; in order to quell one's pride-instinct one should contemplate on the transitory nature of everything; in order to have the experience of soullessness crystallised also one should contemplate on the transitory nature of everything. In one who is saturated with the consciousness of soullessness, the sense of self-pride finds total extinction, and this is the attainment of Nirvana here and now itself.

Q. 175. Has this practice of cutting new cloth into numerous pieces and then again of sewing them together to make one big cloth, (robe) continued from very early days?

A. No, in early days, monks had perhaps been wearing robes, stitched together out of the scattered pieces of cloth found lying at sundry places. Later as the rules regarding the preparation of "civars" altered, due to the change in time and place, this practice of getting civars of different size and colours and out of pieces cut from a new cloth, started. These quadruples sewn together designed to make a monk's robe are symbolic imitations of the fields of Magadha—the land mostly covered by the Exalted One. The Lord having exhorted Ananda to get the civars designed after the Quadruple fields of Magadha had also demonstrated his love and admiration for the nature.

One advantage of getting new cloth cut into several pieces and again getting them sewn together into a civars is that they remain recognisable even after getting washed, even after the colour is no more.

Q. 176. It is observed that the colour of the robes of some monks is reddish, of others yellowish, of still others mixture of yellow black colour. Does the difference in colour of their robes indicate any kind of gradation or superiority and inferiority of status of these monks?
A. The difference in the colours of the robes of the monks has got nothing to do with their status or superiority and inferiority in the order. The colours of the robes is a matter of personal choice. In olden days, the colour, that was common in use, is known as 'Kasaya'—the colour obtained after boiling the bark of certain trees. Some people think that the earthen rosy colour used by Hindu Sanyasis generally known as gerwa is 'Kasaya'. This is a mistaken notion. One is quite different from another. At present in buddhist countries such as Burma and Siam, manufacturing of robes of a Buddhist monk has also become a big industry. You can purchase as many sets of a Buddhist monks robes from the market, as you like, even without any previous order. It is needless to repeat that the colour of all those robes are prepared by modern machines.

Q. 176. It is also observed that certain Bhikkhus while wearing robes leave one shoulder uncovered, others prefer covering both. What does this indicate?

A. It is one of those questions, about which it's generally said that much can be said on both sides. The Buddha enjoined upon Bhikkhus to remain "well dressed" while going about in a town. And there are innumerable references of the fact that the Bhikkhus always paid their respect to the Lord, and also showed their regard towards their elders, always by keeping one of their shoulders uncovered. In scriptures, and ancient paintings, covering of a single shoulder and of both the shoulders also can be seen. Those who subscribe to the one-shoulder view, think that to dress as they do is to be "well-dressed", the others who subscribe to the both-shoulder view think that to dress as they do alone is to be "well-dressed." The conciliatory attitude in this respect, and nevertheless practical also can be to keep one shoulder uncovered during the summer, and to cover both the shoulders covered during the winter. Because the chief purpose of dressing oneself is to protect oneself from the rigours of nature such as heat and cold, and in view of the same necessity the Lord permitted the Bhikkhus to use as many as three robes—a double-sheet covering, a single sheet covering and a loin-cloth.
Q. 178. Even though every member of the order must have been expected to maintain the code of behaviour, yet there must have been transgressions of the rules of the order by certain Bhikkhus, and such Bhikkhus must have received equitable punishment also. Are there any such “offences” by committing which a Bhikkhu ceased to be a “Bhikkhu” and could be expelled from the order?

A. Yes, there are such four “offences”, of which even one committed by a Bhikkhu can result in the termination of the status of a Bhikkhu and according to the rules of the order, he can be expelled from the order. These are: (1) to commit adultery with a member of the opposite sex, (2) to steal anything of such a magnitude as would make any thief punishable by the state, (3) to commit murder, (4) to make a false claim that one can perform miracles.

In countries, such as Thailand, where the observance of Vinaya rules can be enforced by the state, expulsion is possible. In other countries it has become simply a pious wish.

Q. 179. In the opinion of certain modernists cohabitation is not only a natural relationship, but is even essential from the viewpoint of mental and physical health of the individual. In such a case does it not strike one as something over-done that a member of the order, who enters into intimate relationship with the other sex supposed to have committed an offence which is punishable by expulsion?

A. This rule, it appears, has been laid down with an eye on the natural results of cohabitation, i.e., the possibility of becoming father of the child. If there would have been no danger of becoming a father, as the result of such intimacy, perhaps in that case the offence would have not been considered so serious. In the rules of Vinayas, nocturnal emissions are not considered to be even minor transgressions of the rules of the order. Katha Vaññu—one of the seven books of Abhidhamma—quotes a certain view that it was possible even in the case of liberated ones, the Arhatas to experience nocturnal emissions.
Q. 180. Can a Bhikkhu not make use of more robes than three? If he possessed only one loin-cloth and used it as a bathing-garment, with what other cloth, did he have a change?

A. Apart from the three abovementioned robes a Bhikkhu is entitled to possess one more garment also, which is known as bathing-cloth.

Q. 181. Did the Blessed One always stay alone? Was there not a single Bhikkhu who permanently waited upon him?

A. At times the Lord traversed alone, on occasions this or that Bhikkhus carried the Lord’s robes and begging-bowl for him. But when the Lord felt that he was getting rather aged, then once he addressed the assembly of the Bhikkhus thus “O monks, I am now getting old. Some Bhikkhus, when asked to follow me, take up another route, and certain others at times leave my robes and begging bowl on the naked ground. It is time, now, that you select, one amongst yourselves, as my permanent attendant.”

The Elder Anand agreed to attend upon the Lord, but before he would do so, he insisted that the Lord also should agree to his eight conditions, which were (i) the Blessed One may never confer on him, any of the best garments, if and when he received; (ii) the Blessed One may never share with him the choicest food, brought for him; (iii) the Blessed One may not accommodate him in His own chamber; (iv) the Blessed One may not expect him to accompany Him, when invited for a meal. These four were, what, could be termed as ‘negative conditions’. The other four could be termed as ‘positive conditions’ and were, (i) the Blessed One would oblige him by accepting the invitation which he would accept on His behalf, (ii) The Blessed One would condescend to meet, any visitor from a foreign land or a foreign province, even at the time of his arrival, if brought by Anand to do so, (iii) he should have the liberty of seeing the Lord, at all such times, when he thought it fit to do so. (iv) If the Lord had occasion to deliver any sermon in his absence, he would expect the Lord to deliver the same discourse in his presence.
also. The Lord accepted all the conditions submitted by the elder Anand. The Maha Thero was wise and knew the proper occasion for a proper act to be performed. He attended upon the Lord till he passed away.

After the attainment of Enlightenment, for twenty years, the Lord spent His rainy seasons now here and now there. After that for twenty-five years, He spent his rainy seasons only at one of the two places, either at Jetavana, or at Purvarama, which was caused to be built by the lay female-follower Visakha. During this long period of twenty-five years, the elder Anand attended upon the Lord, as if he was, His own shadow.

Q. 182. When a really great man becomes famous and people see that everybody honours him, then some jealous people often try to make false allegations against him, with the evil intention of making him ill-reputed. Were there any such occasions in the Life of the Lord Himself?

A. Why not? Once the followers of one of the Non-Buddhist sects had tried to implicate the Blessed One, alleging him to have committed "the most hideous crime" by making use of one of the young women, whose name was Chinchha. When the Blessed One was preaching to his congregation, she got up and babbled thus:

"Oh great preacher! You are excellent, when it is a case of counselling others. Now I am pregnant, due to you. Neither you show me the way to the nursing home, nor you make any other alternative arrangements. You know only how to share a bed in common with me, but do not know how to look after a pregnant woman!"

The Buddha stopped his discourse for a while and roared like a lion:

"Sister! The truth of what you say, is known either to you or to me."

Chinchha was put to great shame, as she became totally exposed before the public.

Q. 183. The Blessed One had enjoined upon the brethren "to wander forth for the good of the many, for the welfare of
the many.” Could the Bhikkhus observe this injunction of the Lord only by preaching to others, or could they render any actual service also to the people?

A. Not only orally, but physically also the Bhikkhus can serve the people at large. Not only could, but they should. It is on record that once a certain monk was suffering from dysentery; he lay in his own excretion. Then the Lord, as he was touring the lodgings with the Venerable Anand as his attendant, approached the monk’s dwelling place. The Lord saw that monk lying in his own excretion. Seeing him he approached that monk, and having approached he spoke thus to that monk:

“What is your disease, monk?”
“Lord, I have dysentery.”
“But, monk, have you anyone who tends you?”
“I have not, Lord,” he said.
“Why do not the monks tend you?”

“I, Lord, am of no use to the monks, therefore the monks do not tend me.”

Then the Lord addressed the Venerable Anand saying: “Go, Anand, bring water, we will bathe this monk.”

“Very well, Lord,” and the Venerable Anand having answered the Lord in Assent, brought the water. The Lord sprinkled the water, the Venerable Anand washed him over. The Lord took him by the head, the Venerable Anand by the feet, and having raised him up, they laid him down on a couch.

Then the Lord, on that occasion, in that connection, having had the order of monks convened, admonished the monks thus:

“Monks, you have not a mother, you have not a father who might tend you. If you, monks, do not tend one another, then who is there, who will tend you? Whoever, monks, would tend me, he should tend the sick.

“If he has a preceptor, he should be tended for life...if he has a teacher...if he has a pupil, he should be tended for life by the teacher...if he has neither a preceptor, nor a teacher, nor a pupil, he should be tended by the order.”
Q. 184. Can a member of the holy order, tend only another member of the holy order, or can he tend a lay householder also?

A. The Blessed One did not enjoin that one who would tend upon me, should tend a sick monk, but he only said, one who would tend upon me, should tend the sick. Where a lay householder is available to tend upon a lay sick-person, a Buddhist monk should encourage him, should persuade him, should instruct him and make him tend another sick person. If no lay householder is available near at hand, he should himself also tend a sick person.

Q. 185. It is said that the Buddha taught suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, the way that leads to the cessation of suffering. Several other religious teachers also claim to have taught the same. If this is so, then what is the special characteristic of the teaching of the Blessed One?

A. Everybody recognises and accepts the existence of suffering. Who does not! The real question is, what is the cause of suffering? Some people say that all that an individual suffers during his present life is the result of the actions of his past life alone. The Blessed One did not subscribe to this view. Hence his method of cessation of suffering was different from those methods which were taught by other contemporary teachers. Some others assert that whatever a man suffers, or even enjoints in this life is as God desired him to do. Everything is God created. The Buddha did not agree with this explanation also. Hence his teaching as regards the cessation of suffering is different from the teaching of such teachers also, who are known to be "believers in god". There are still others, who opine that all enjoyment and suffering is haphazard. It is causeless. Any effort made towards the attainment of the cessation of suffering is meaningless. The Exalted One disagreed with this explanation also. Hence his teaching as regards the cessation of suffering is his own "invention", and its singularity cannot be over-emphasized.

Q. 186. In such a case, what was the doctrine preached
by the Blessed One, since he neither subscribed to the view that actions of previous life alone are the cause of the present life's sufferings, nor to the view that God being the creator of this world is the sole cause of everything and also did not subscribe to the view that all that happens in this world is just haphazard i.e., causeless?

A. Lord Buddha taught the dependent origination of all suffering, "This being so, this happens thus; this not being so, this does not happen thus." The Lord had exemplified it, saying, "O monks, suppose there is a man, passionately in love with a woman, his desire acute, his longing acute. He might see that woman standing and talking, joking and laughing with another man. What do you think about this, O monks? Would it not be that grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair arise in that man when he sees that woman standing and talking, joking and laughing with another man!"

"Yes, reverend Sir."
"What is the reason for this?"

"It is that that man is passionately in love with that woman, his desire acute, his longing acute. Therefore seeing that woman, standing and...laughing with another man, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair rise up (in him)."

"But then, monks, that man might think thus: 'I am passionately in love with this woman, my desire acute, my longing acute; grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair rise up in me when I see this woman standing and...laughing with another man. Suppose I were to get rid of this desire and attachment for that woman. After a time he may see that woman standing and...laughing with another man. What do you think about this, monks? Would it not be that grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair would not arise in that man on seeing that woman standing and talking, joking and laughing with that other man?"

"No, reverend Sir."
"What is the reason for this?"
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"It is, reverend Sir, that this man is (now) without passion for that woman. Therefore on seeing that woman standing and talking joking and laughing with another man, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair do not rise up (in him)."

"Thus O monks, one having become detached destroys suffering. The sole purpose of treading Aryan eight-fold path is just to practice this detachment."

Q. 187. Is the view that both individual and the whole of this universe is "creations of God" utterly untenable?

A. In order to maintain that "God created the individual and the universe", it is necessary that the existence of a "creator god" should be established earlier. As long as neither through direct perception nor through inference, the existence of "creator god" is proved, till then the existence of God, as far as we are concerned, remains unproved and unestablished.

Q. 188. Theists say that the chief testimony of the existence of God, they possess, are their scriptures.

A. Scriptures of Theists can be a valid testimony to Theists alone. It is not essential that we should also accept it as such. And as far as Buddhism is concerned, it accepts the validity of only two testimonies—that of direct perception and that of inference. It does not accept any "word" as the final authority to establish any truth whatsoever. Hence the question as regards accepting the validity of any scriptures, as far as Buddhists are concerned, does not arise at all.

Q. 189. What objection should one have in accepting "God" as the primordial cause of the Universe?

A. Any "cause" can be of two kinds. It can either be an instrumental cause or a material cause. The potter makes a pot. The potter is the instrumental cause, the clay out of which the pot is made is the material cause. Is God the same kind of "cause" of the Universe as a potter is that of a "pot"? If he is a cause of this specific kind, then who brought into existence the nature, or the particular material out of which this Universe has been manufactured? This query can have two answers. One being
that God created this Universe, without making use of any material at all. If so, then this whole Universe is as Unreal as anything created by a magician. If the world of our direct perception is but the creation of a magician, then how can we trust that there exists the "God", of whom we do not have even any direct perception at all. The second answer can be that God created this Universe out of "the self-created nature." If so, then there arises the question that if "nature" can come into existence by itself, then why cannot the "Universe" also come into existence by itself, without any obligation to "God". If we say that all effects must have a cause, and therefore this Universe also must have a cause, and that cause is "God", then since "God" also in its turn can be termed as an "effect", so "God" also, must have a cause. What is the "cause" for the "God" to have come into existence? If say "God" is "self-created", then cannot we similarly say that "Universe" is also "self-created." Universe is not a creation, Universe is a gradual evolution. It is just possible, instead of making the above assertion, it might be maintained that "God" is the "material cause" of this Universe. The Law is that the qualities found in the substance are always the resultant of the material, of which that substance is made. Now, we see that in this Universe, there is so much of corruption, cruelty and injustice. Shall we suppose then that "God", the material cause of this Universe is also equally corrupt, cruel and unjust. One may say that corruption, cruelty and injustice found in the Universe, is not due to the fact that "God" is the material cause of it, but have come from elsewhere. Then from where? Apart from "God", does there exist any other "material cause" also out of which this Universe is said to have been made of? If there is, then "God" ceases to be omnipresent and omnipotent. He is not "omnipotent" because he does not pervade the "material-cause", of which this universe is made of, and which is different from "GOD" Himself. He is neither "omnipotent", because that particular "material cause", has come into existence without any obligation to "God".

Q. 190. Are Buddhists decisively atheists?

A. They are decisively atheists. Some people due to their
Ignorance think that the Blessed One, did not commit himself as regards the Non-existence of God, and due to self-interest maintain that he always remained "silent" about it. But both of these contentions are ill-founded.

Q. 191. What do theists gain, if the theory of the creation of this Universe by "God" remains intact?

A. Theists make two concrete assertions first God created this Universe and second God is Just. If both these assertions are conceded then the logical inference that follows is, that whatever is taking place in this universe is just and ideal. Even injustice, clear as day light, is philosophised as the activity of a Just "God". All talk as regards bringing about any change in the society affecting its status quo becomes meaningless.

Q. 192. Can under no conditions, "God" be conceived as "Just"?

A. If there would be a "God", then only the question of attributing this or that quality to Him would arise. When there is no "God", the question of attributing him with any of such qualities as omnipresent, omnipotent, just, compassionate one etc. does not arise. All these attributes are nothing but the imaginations of a fearful superstitious mind.

Q. 193. How is it then that the majority of the people who inhabit the two spheres of this world believe in "God"?

A. Majority of the population of this world is atheist. All the Buddhists are atheists. The whole Marxist world subscribe to Atheism. Most of the non-Buddhist Indian philosophers are also atheists. Even the reputed Sankaracharya did not believe that this world was the "creation" of any "God". Thus the majority comprises of atheists.

Q. 194. It is clear that the Buddhists do not believe in the authority of any written or spoken "word", in what do they then believe?

A. Buddhists believe in the testimony of direct-perception
and inference, and they over and above these believe in an individual’s own power of discretion. As ultimately, it is the individual’s own power of discretion, which has to accept or reject the validity of any testimony whatsoever.

Once the Blessed One, while passing through the land of the Kosalas accompanied by a large following of disciples, came to the town of Kesaputta which was inhabited by the Kālamas. When the Kālamas came to know of his arrival they betook themselves thither where the Blessed One was and sat down on one side. So seated, the Kālamas of Kesaputta, spoke thus to the Blessed One:

“There are, Lord, some ascetics and recluses who come to Kesaputta and who elucidate and exalt their own views, but they break up, crush down, revile and oppose the views of others. And there be other ascetics and recluses, Lord, who come to Kesaputta, and they too expound and magnify their own beliefs, but destroy, suppress, despise and set themselves against the beliefs of others.

“And so, Lord, we are in uncertainty and doubt, knowing not which among these Venerable Ascetics speaks truth and which falsehood.”

“Good cause, indeed, have you Kālamas to be uncertain; good cause have you to doubt,” said the Blessed One. “Truly, upon just occasion has uncertainty and doubt arisen in you.”

“Come, O you Kālamas,” continued the Lord, “do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another; do not go by what is commonly reported; do not go merely by what is found written in the scriptures; do not go by subtleties of reasoning, do not go by subtleties of Logic; do not go merely by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by agreeable beliefs and views; do not go merely by what looks to be genuine; do not go merely by word of some ascetic or superior.” “What, then, should we do? What test should we apply?” asked the Kālamas.

“The tests are these,” replied the Blessed One, “ask yourselves, do we know whether: “these things are unworthy; these things are blameworthy; these things are reprehended by the
wise; these things being done or attempted lead to ill being and to suffering."

"Kalamas! use your own discretion and decide whether a certain action is blameworthy or praiseworthy."

This discourse preached by the Blessed One two thousand five hundred years ago to the warrior class known as Kalama residents of Kesaputta, is regarded as the Magna Carta of free thinking in the vast literature of the world.

Q. 195. All people are not of equal intelligence. In such a case whose discretion can be trusted upon?

A. One's own discretion, one's own wisdom is to be ultimately trusted. It is in the interest of the children to accept the decisions of their experienced elders, but if the decision of even an elderly person is not compatible with one's own reason, then one who can think for himself should always abide by his own decision and live up to it.

Q. 196. What harm lies therein in accepting the decision of ones' elders as correct?

A. Many have been in the past who could be considered as "elder than oneself" and there shall be similar "elder ones" in future also. In such a case whose views could be accepted as final, conflicting as they are often amongst themselves too? One can make a decision only by making use of one's own discretion. Hence an individual can ultimately be advised to have complete trust in one's own power of discretion. This is but the first step on the road to mental freedom.

Q. 197. Does Buddhism only show a path towards putting an end to suffering, or does it show a way towards the attainment of bliss also?

A. Just as the end of a disease and the attainment of health differ only in terminology, otherwise they mean the same thing, similarly to put an end to all suffering and to be able to attain bliss differ only in terminology, otherwise they mean the same thing.
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Once the Blessed One, while he was sojourning in Alvi, was resting on a bed of dry leaves, spread on the route of cattle returning from pasture land. While he was strolling one Hasti Sewaka enquired about the Blessed Ones' well-being and further asked:

"Venerable Sir, did you have a nice sleep?"

"Youngman! Yes, of those who enjoy undisturbed sleep, I am one."

"Venerable Sir, this is winter season. The period, when there is extreme cold, the ground, trampled as it is by cattle, is rather hard, the bed of dry leaves too thin, the shade of the tree not dense enough, the robes that you have as your covering have become very cold... yet Lord, you say-youngman! Yes, of those who enjoy undisturbed sleep I am one."

"Youngman, I am asking you a question. You can answer as you think fit to do so... Suppose a noble man or his son is in the possession of a house, which is well plastered, with doors or windows closed so that the unwelcome wind may not intrude in... and there in that house is a high couch, with soft bed strewn over it, pillows on both sides, a covering over-head and oil lamp burning, and four wives in attendance. Would that noble man or his son have a nice sleep or not?

"Venerable Sir, he will enjoy sound sleep. Out of those who enjoy sound sleep, he would be one."

"Youngman! What do you say, if the same noble man or his son would be physically or mentally burning with the fire caused by passion, then, would he in spite of that physical or mental burning sensation caused by passion, be able to enjoy a sound sleep?"

"Venerable Sir, No."

"Youngman, the anguish caused by passion, due to which the noble man or his son cannot enjoy undisturbed sleep, has been totally uprooted in the case of the Blessed One. Hence I enjoyed sound sleep... youngman!

What do you say, if the same noble man or his son would be physically or mentally burning with the fire caused by hatred then, would he, in spite of that physical or mental burning sensation caused by hatred, be able to enjoy a sound sleep?

"Venerable Sir, No."
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"Youngman, the anguish caused by hatred...caused by ignorance, due to which the noble man or his son cannot enjoy undisturbed sleep, has been totally uprooted in the case of the blessed one...Hence I enjoyed sound sleep."

Undoubtedly sleep does not necessarily need soft beds. Peace of mind is the main conducive factor in the enjoyment of sound sleep. But, if along with that one has a comfortable bed also, it too induces sleep. It is rather regrettful that the physical aspect appears to have been totally neglected, and physical aspect eulogized at the expense of the psychical aspect.

Q. 198. It is said that since Siddharth had renounced his family life to search after a cure to the ailments of birth, old age, disease and death, he was already born, hence the question of putting an end to the ailment of birth did not arise, he did grow old, he fell ill also; and in the end he passed away too. How did he then attain freedom from birth, old age, disease and death?

A. One traditional and other-worldly reply, which is given to meet this query is that since Siddharth had ceased to be born hereafter, hence he no more remained subject to birth or old age, disease and death, his birth as prince Siddharth was the last one, that he had to undergo. As he was born no more, so he did not grow old, did not fall ill and also did not die any more. But the other rational and also this-worldly answer, which can be given is that Siddharth Gautam in his last life as the son of a king, had conquered the fear of old age, fear of disease and fear of death. This is the real emancipation taught by the Blessed One. Krishna, Gautami had related her self-experience thus:

"Poor and childless as I was, everybody ignored me. Everybody developed a liking for me, when I became a mother. The child was beautiful, tender and rare in comfort. I loved him no less than my life. He died. Helpless as I became, weeping and shouting I was roaming here and there with the body of my child in my lap. Somebody showed me the way to the great physician. I approached the Blessed One and entreated. "Do give me some medicine, which may bring life to my son." The Lord enjoined me to bring a few mustard seeds, from any house, in which no
death may have taken place. I went from house to house. In the whole city of Savathi, I did not find a single house, which would meet my requirements. From where could I then get mustard seeds. I came to the realization that this phenomenon known as death does not take place in any particular house nor in a particular family, nor a particular clan...This is something universal. One who is born must of necessity die."

I again went to the Blessed One. Seeing me approach He exhorted: Seeing the rise and fall of nature better a day’s life than to live hundred years, without understanding the fall and rise of all phenomena. There is no exception whatsoever to the law of impermanence. I had ordination and having lived hereafter according to the instructions of the Blessed One attained sainthood i.e. attained freedom from the fear of death.”

Q. 199. If any allegation of any “crime” is proved, then the culprit is generally punished by the state. Has the Blessed One on any occasion “endorsed” the punishment pronounced by the State?

A. The Lord has nowhere opposed the pronouncement of the punishment by the State. If a culprit is punished for the crime he has committed, by the Judge, then the Blessed One has always held the culprit to be responsible for the punishment pronounced and never the judge. But on particular occasions the Blessed One has demonstrated the superiority of the method of “change of heart” over that of punishing the culprit. The anecdote of Angulimala, the robber is one such instance.

Q. 200. Is the story of the Angulimala film, originally screened in Hindi, in accordance with the tradition, as recorded in the ancient literature?

A. It considerably differs from the tradition. The original text states that the wife of the Brahmin Chaplain of the King of Kosala gave birth to a child. Her name was Maitraini and the child she gave birth to was named Ahinsaka (Non-Violent one). He was later sent to Taxila, to be educated.

At Taxila there were two kinds of students—those who paid
their fees, and those who instead of paying fees rendered service to their teachers. Ahinsaka belonged to the second category. He was obedient, dutiful and one who never spoke harsh language. The others, who became jealous of him, decided to harm him.

As he was more intelligent than all the others, they could not condemn him as a fool; as he was more dutiful than others, they could not call him disobedient; as he came of a high caste, they could not call him a "low born". But something had to be done.

Then a proposal came that an allegation should be framed that Ahinsaka maintained illicit relations with the wife of the preceptor himself. Students in agreement with this proposal divided themselves into three groups. One group preceded. Students of that particular group, having approached the preceptor paid their obeisance and respectfully stood aside.

"What is the matter?"
"We hear a story of ill repute in this House."
"What kind of story?"
"We believe that Ahinsaka bears intimate relationship with our teacheress."

"Go forthwith ye wretched ones! Do not try to create friction with my son."

Later the second group and still later the third group repeated the same allegation. All of them said—"If you have no faith in us, then examine yourself."

Suspicious teacher had occasions to observe that his wife trusted Ahinsaka immensely. His mind became polluted. He thought:

"Shall I murder him?" But he also thought—"In case I would fain kill him, the people will blame me that this particular well-known teacher makes false allegations against his students and then murders them. Nobody, henceforth may come to study under me. This would be a great loss to me both in fame and gain." Then he resolved that on the completion of Ahinsaka's study, he shall ask Ahinsaka for the fee, and demand the garland of the fingers of one thousand persons
killed by him. Thus I shall also not get a bad name, and there is every possibility, out of the so many, whom Ahinsaka would attempt to murder, some one may kill Ahinsaka himself."

The teacher asked his obedient student—"Son, kill one thousand persons. This would make you debtless as far as the teacher's due is concerned."

"Sir, I am born in a non-violent family. This cannot be expected of me."

"Son, one's education is not complete, and does not bring any benefits to one who has not rendered himself debtless by paying the teacher's dues."

Since that day Ahinsaka turned into a murderer. He did not lay hand on anybody's property. Just in order to fulfill his obligation towards his preceptor, he used to kill people. In order to be able to count the people he had killed, he used to cut one of the fingers of his victims and thereby he prepared for himself a garland of fingers. Hence he became known as Anguli Mala—the robber, who used to put on a garland made of the fingers of his victims.

According to this record, as it is, Angulimala was merely carrying out the orders of his preceptor. The real culprit was his teacher, and the responsibility of Angulimalas' turning into a robber could not be wholly laid on his teachers' shoulder also, because he, in his turn was also made a fool by the designing students, who had conspired against Angulimala.

In order to keep intact the good name of the Brahmin teacher, a film based on Angulimala's life the whole plot has been perceptibly altered. It is said that this film is actually based on a novel written in Thai language. It is not impossible that the authors of the Thai novel may have made some of the changes. But it is most improbable that a Buddhist novelist, in a novel which was expected to be read by Buddhist reader, may have tampered with the sacred traditional anecdote, as regards Angulimala, found in the original texts.

But any film, which is to run for about three hours, and is ultimately a financial investment, must cater to the tastes of those who are expected to patronize it.

When all is said, the film about Angulimala as it has been screened has turned out to be a natural narration. It is bound
to attract those, for whom it is meant, and does leave a healthy after-effect in the minds of those who see it.

Angulimala has a message, which can neither be denied nor over-emphasized.

Q. 201. What is the position of the female members in a household, according to Buddhism? Is the birth of a son more welcome in a family or the birth of a daughter?

A. It is neither a religious proposition nor even social, but economic. After the passing away of the matriarchal age, when patriarchal period came into existence, it was the father who occupied the most prominent position in the family. Man became paramount in all spheres of social relationship. At that period of social organisation, this particular view seems to have been promulgated that if a man does not beget a male issue, then there is no favourable heir after for him. It was the son, who was supposed to uphold the family-tree generation after generation. In order to relinquish oneself from the debt of his father, it was considered obligatory that the son also should become a father of a male-child, definitely not of a female-child.

Once the Blessed One was residing at Jetavan, a grove belonging to the rich merchants of Sravasti. At that time King Prasenjit of Kosala country had reason to approach the Lord. Having paid his respects to the Blessed One, the king reverently sat aside. At that time a messenger quickly came and confided the news to the king that Mallika, the Queen, had begotten a female-child. Having heard this, the king became dejected. When the Blessed One learnt of this, He addressed the king thus:

"O King, in certain matters women are superior to men—they are wise, virtuous, devoted to both their husband and father in-law. The son that they beget is brave and conqueror of the four directions. The son of such a fortunate one rules over a kingdom."

Many a "great man" has become "great" only due to the beneficial influence their mothers have exerted on them at their impressionable age.
Q. 202. Are the rules laid down by the Lord; for the members of the Sangh, supposed to be equally applicable for all times and for all places?

A. No. A large number of rules have their scope limited in relation to time. Still, there are an equally large number of rules, which also have their jurisdiction limited in relationship to the place. The Elder Katyayan through elder Sena-Kuilika had suggested a number of alterations in certain rules of the order, which the Lord accepted and enjoined upon the Bhikkhus to follow. In Avanti southern sphere Bhikkhus could not be as abundantly found as in the middle country. The Lord legalised the higher ordination of a Bhikkhu outside the boundary of the middle country even by a congregation of five Bhikkhus only. Several other amendments were also accepted by the Lord. The whole Vinaya-pitaka (collection of the rules and regulations of the order) is filled with amendments and alterations accepted by the Lord, which were considered more suitable in changed times and places.

Q. 203. Does a man's colour, dress and outward behaviour reflect his inner character?

A. On certain occasions it does, on others it does not. To a certain limit it does, beyond that it does not. Once the Blessed One was residing in Purvarama—the palatial building constructed by Migermata. In the afternoon, after his hour of meditation, he was sitting leisurely outside the main gate. King Prasenjit of Kosala approached the Lord, and after having paid his respects he quietly sat aside.

At that time, quite a number of "holy persons" with their nails and hair lengthened, not at great distance, passed by the Lord. King Prasenjit, thrice, having announced his name, respectfully paid his obeisance—in the direction, in which they were traversing.

"Venerable Sir, I am King Prasenjit of Kosala."

Having paid his obeisance to those "holy persons", the king took his seat, and opined—

"Venerable Sir, amongst those who have either attained
Arhatship, or are aspirants after Arhatship, these are a few.”

"O king, a man is known by long association and that too only by intelligent men."

The king thrice repeated his statement. Lord Buddha also thrice contradicted the king’s statement. Then the king had to reveal the truth. He spoke—

"Venerable Sir, your statement that a man is known by long association and that too by intelligent men is quite correct and simply wonderful. Venerable Sir, all these so called “holy persons” belong to my intelligence department. In front of the public I pay my obeisance to these “holy men.” They keep on moving about from village to village, from town to town and bring the necessary reports...otherwise they just lead their ordinary life of indulgence."

The Lord said, “One’s colour alone does not reveal a man’s inner character. One should not just trust a man, all of a sudden, by only looking at his form. Outwardly well behaved people also are known to be leading questionable lives. Like a coloured earthen vessel or a gold-gilded coin their outward appearance does not reveal their inner nature.”

Q. 204. Some people say, “Do not ‘love’ anybody”, others say “love everybody”. What has Buddhism got to say in this relation?

A. As a man feels thirsty and hungry, naturally thirst and hunger are nobody’s intentional activities; similarly man being a social animal “love” also is born just instinctively. This “love” does not necessarily indicate a relationship between a male and a female; it can and does take place between a male and a female; it can and does take place between a male and another male; also; between male and an animal also; between an animal and another animal also. It is just a natural instinct of all beings. Union with the object of our love—be it animate or inanimate—necessarily brings us joy, and similarly separation from the object of our love—be it animate or inanimate—inevitably brings unhappiness. When one thinks of the joy that a union brings, one starts eulogising “love”, but when one suffers, which one must inevitably do, as a result of the separation, which also in its turn
is bound to take place sometime or the other, one starts denouncing "love".

Such feeling, which may help one to experience the joy of union on one side but may not equally expose oneself to the pangs of separation, is known as the "feeling of friendliness". It is often called "love" also. To love everybody and to be friendly with everybody is the same thing. "Love" pierces one vehemently only when it becomes concentrated in any one object of love—be it animate or otherwise. Any colour equitably and with a design, when spread over a canvas becomes a picture; but even a little of the same colour abruptly fallen on the same canvas is termed a blot. Hence the Enlightened One understandably has on the one hand asked people to love every human being, but on the other hand has warned people against the mistaken practice of it, and said "Love causes suffering."

Q. 205. If it is just a question of intellectual feeling of sympathy towards everybody; then there is no problem about it, but when it comes to doing something concrete in somebody's interest, then a choice has to be made. One cannot serve the "society" as a whole, it is only through the service of particular individuals that the society can be served. The choice of a particular individual or of a few individuals is inevitable, and how one should translate one's feeling of "sympathy for everybody" into practice?

A. This is a real concrete problem. Society in general can be praised, but individual or individuals alone can be served. Therefore the service has to be rendered, as far as possible, with as less an amount of attachment as feasible. Service of any individual or individuals without getting particularly attached to them is "feeling of sympathy for everybody" on the practical plane.

Q. 206. In the history of the whole world, most probably the Blessed One was the first to lay the foundation of the organised propagation of the Dhamma. He was the first to send forth the holy members of his order to propagate his
teachings in various parts of the land. Were such Bhikkhus never confronted with difficult situations? How did they fare under such circumstances?

A. The Blessed One was not unaware of even the dangers that a Bhikkhu sometimes had to face, when he went on a mission. Once when the elder one Punna was about to take leave of the master to go on a mission, the Blessed One questioned him:

"Punna, in which province would you be moving about?"

"Venerable Sir, I propose to reside in Sunaprant."

"Punna, the people of Sunaprant are rather harsh. How would you react, suppose they disparaged you?"

"Venerable Sir, I shall think that the people of Sunaprant are gentle people, noble people. They are not doing physical harm to me."

"Punna, if the people of Sunaprant did you even some physical harm. How would you react then?"

"Venerable Sir, I shall think that the people of Sunaprant are gentle people, noble people. They are not committing murder."

"Punna, if the people of Sunaprant tried even to murder you, how would you react then?"

"Venerable Sir, I shall think that the people have to search for a weapon in order to commit suicide. I got one without making any attempt for it."

The Buddha blessed him, saying, "with such noble forbearance you can surely reside in Sunaprant."

The Venerable Punna reached Sunaprant. Within a month he was able to convert five hundred laymen and make them the devotees of the Buddha. In all ages, in all countries, men with only such forbearance and perseverance succeed.

Q. 207. Out of the eight different grades of the Arya (Noble) men, how can one, who is known as Sotapanna (stream-entered one) be recognised?

A. One who associates with desirable persons is a Sotapanna. One who listens to the doctrine is a Sotapanna. One

* Area round about modern Thana in Surat district.
who reflects upon what he has heard is a Sotapanna. One who lives up to the noble teachings is a Sotapanna—all these are the characteristics of a Sotapanna.

Q. 208. It is stated that Lord Buddha had paid no less than three visits to Ceylon. Can this be taken as a historical fact?

A. As regards the truthfulness or otherwise of any historical event, the only testimony that we can quote is any literary evidence. The text of the holy Tripitaka which, according to the tradition, was for the first time put into black and white, at Alu Vihar, Matale, in the 1st century, nowhere says that "once the Buddha had sojourned to Sri Lanka." But the history of Ceylon known as Mahavansa, which was written by Mahanama in fourth-fifth century A.D., does state that the Lord had blessed this country with his visits thrice and gives all the details of the visits and names of no less than sixteen places which had been sanctified by the visit of the Exalted One. As the Buddha always travelled on foot, so the greater possibility is that he may have not paid any visits to Ceylon.

Q. 209. What are the places, which were frequently visited by the Blessed One?

A. Lord Buddha mostly traversed from Sravasti to the country of Kosala, from Kosala to the country of Malla, from Malla to the country of Vajji, from Vajji to Kashi, and from Kashi to the country of Magadha. The whole of this area is presently covered by the modern states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Q. 210. Was the Blessed One interested even in the supervision of the minor details of the life of the members of his holy order?

A. The Buddha never considered any misconduct however small such a trifle as not to deserve his attention. In reality he attached much significance to such matters as are generally believed to be of little importance in the formation of a man's character. Once the Lord observed that certain monks were
slumbering even after sunrise. The Buddha admonished them thus:

"Monks, starting with the elderly ones and ending with the new comers you all slumber till late even after the sun has arisen. Have you ever known a sovereign king, who may have kept on sleeping till late after sunrise and yet he may have remained a beloved of his subjects and succeeded in reigning over his kingdom during the whole of his life?

"Venerable Sir! we have known none."

"Monks! I too have known none. Hence, monks, you should train yourself thus that we shall maintain control over our senses, we shall remain moderate in our diet, we shall stay awakened during the first and the last hours of the night in order to meditate on wholesome subjects."

It is needless to emphasize that a man's character is built by constantly remaining vigilant even in small matters.

Q. **211.** Some people say even the physical body of the Buddha was transcendental, just as his doctrine was. Is it a fact?

A. If by "transcendental" one would mean only extraordinary, than most probably true, because the personality of all eat men is obviously extraordinary.

Once the Blessed One, was during the afternoon hours resting in the back portion of the Vihara. Venerable Anand happened to approach him just there and then. As he touched the Exalted One's body, he could not refrain from saying, "How extraordinary, now the complexion of the physique of the Blessed One, is not as clear, as earlier, it used to be. The skin is loosened. There are wrinkles all over the body. The stature is bent, and is no more erect. Sense organs such as eyes, etc., also betray a change."

"Anand, so it does happen. Wherever there is youth, there is old age. Wherever there is health, there is disease. Wherever there is life, there is death."

The Buddha has nowhere claimed that his body was transcendental. In the eyes of the later-day devotees even the physique
of the Lord became transcendental.

Q. 212. What caused Devadatta to become so much antagonistic towards the Blessed One as to leave no stone unturned in order to do as much harm as he could to the All Enlightened One?

A. It was the ill-founded ambition of Devadatta which led him to forsake the path of righteousness. What conspiracy had he not tried to get the Buddha removed out of his way. At first he advised Prince Ajatsatru to commit the sin of patricide and make himself occupy the throne. When the latter learnt of this, he of his own accord entrusted the throne to Ajatsatru. Then, having made use of Ajatsatru, Devadatta caused several attempts to be made to get the Blessed One assassinated. He did not succeed. What to speak of rogues entrusted with the task of slaying the Buddha, even the intoxicated elephants became subdued in His presence.

Then Devadatta tried another clever move. He made five extremist proposals, which most probably Devadatta was himself aware of, that they could never be acceptable to the Blessed One. He imagined that there would be some monks at least who would like his proposals and they would become his followers. Thus the holy order of the Blessed One would become disunited. He did not prove absolutely wrong in his conjecture. Some Bhikkhus, who were not shrewd enough to comprehend his evil intention fell into his trap and even became his followers. But after sometime Venerable Sariputta and Venerable Moggallana both went to them and brought all of them back to the Blessed One's fold.

Q. 213. Does bathing in so-called sacred rivers such as the Ganga and Jamuna absolve one from one's sins?

A. Bathing cleans, one's body and thereby makes one happy also to a certain extent, but there is nothing to testify that bathing in any sacred river, etc, can absolve one from his sins. At that time many a recluse, under the belief that this would absolve them from their sins, in severe winter nights, used to bathe in cold flowing water of the sacred river.
would dive into them, would swim and would fain get wet in
the raining water. The Blessed One saw such recluses. On that
occasion the Lord expressed himself thus—

"Many people under the false belief that the water would
absolve them from their sins are bathing here. Water does
not destroy one's sins. One who is truthful and righteous he
alone can be called "pure".

Neither any particular soil, nor any particular water is
"pure" by itself. It is our thinking, which attributes them all
such qualities.

Q. 214. Can a Bhikkhu take part in politics?

A. It depends upon what do we mean by "politics"? If
"politics" means the struggle for power of two contending
political parties, then the wisdom lies in not becoming a par-
tisan in that struggle, because thereby one is sure to displease
one political party or one may sometimes displease both. But
if "politics" means merely a theoretical discussion of the
political or economic organisation of different countries, then
such Bhikkhus, who are really capable of doing so, may take
part in it, with the intention of enlightening their hearers or their
readers.

Q. 215. Did the Exalted One himself ever take any interest
in politics?

A. Several incidents can be referred to, as a testimony of
the fact that the Enlightened One kept himself well informed
of the politics of his time, and whenever there was an appro-
priate occasion, He did not mind discussing it also.

Once when Ajatsatru, the King of Magadha, had sent his
army against Prasenjit, the King of Kosala, and defeated him;
and on another occasion, when Prasenjit, the King of Kosala,
had in his turn defeated the army of Ajatsatru, the King of
Magadha; on both the occasions the Blessed One had received
information about it, and on both the occasions He had com-
mented on the victory and defeat of both the kings.

And, on another occasion, when Ajatsatru, the King of
Magadha, was planning to attack the Vajjis, he had sent advanced information as regards his design, through a Brahmin, named Varashkara, and was anxious to find the reactions of the Lord. At that time, the Exalted One had opined that there are seven extraordinary qualities in Vajjis, and as long as they maintained them, Ajatsatru, the King of Magadha, shall never succeed in defeating them.

Q. 216. What were those extraordinary seven characteristics of Vajjis?

A. (1) The Vajjis used to foregather thus often and frequent the public meetings of their clan, (2) the Vajjis used to meet together in concord, rise in concord and carry out their undertakings in concord, (3) they used to enact nothing not already enacted and act in accordance with the ancient institutions of the Vajjis as established in former days, (4) they used to honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajji elders, and held it a point of duty to hearken to their words, (5) they never used to detain any woman or girl belonging to their clan by force or abduction, (6) they used to honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajji shrines in town or country, and allow not the proper offerings and rites as formerly given or performed to fall into disuse, (7) they used to fully provide rightful protection, defence, and support to the Arhatas, so that Arhatas from a distance may enter their realm, and the Arhatas therein may live at ease.

The above seven extraordinary qualities of the Vajjis, so much eulogized by the Blessed One, on the one hand demonstrate the Buddhas' appreciation of the same, on the other hand the fact that the Buddha, through Varsha Kara, had perhaps conveyed the message to Ajatsatru that if he at all wanted to conquer Vajjis, he could do so only after first destroying the abovementioned qualities of the Vajjis.

Q. 217. Niganth Nath putra (Mahavir Swami) one of the 24 Tirthankaras of the Jains and the Blessed One were both contemporary. Was there no such occasion, when they might have met each other and exchanged views?
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A. In this connection, the literary testimony that can be culled from Buddhist tradition is only this much that the Jain teacher, now and then, had sent some of his disciples to have a discussion with the Lord, but he had never taken the trouble of paying him a visit himself. Once he had sent Prince Abhaya to ask the Lord a question, such as cuts both ways; such as one could ask somebody—Have you stopped beating your wife? If the answer is “yes”, then it is implied that he has been beating his wife so far, if the answer is “no” then it is implied that he is still beating his wife.

Q. 218. What exactly was the issue which Prince Abhaya had taken to the Exalted One? And what was the reply that the Lord had given to Prince Abhaya?

A. Prince Abhaya had asked—“Does the recluse Gautama sometimes use harsh words?” His intention was that if the answer would be in the negative then he would point out to the Blessed One that on certain occasions he had used harsh language as regards Devadatta. If the answer would be in the affirmative, then he would ask him, “How do you then preach to others not to use harsh words?” Enlightened One’s stand was that this question cannot be answered by an exclusive “no”, or by an exclusive “yes”. At that time a small child was playing in the lap of Prince Abhaya. The Exalted One interrogated: “Prince, in case either because of want of vigilance on your part or on the part of the nurse, the child would put into his mouth a piece of wood or stone, what would you do then?”

“Venerable Sir, I shall take it out. In case I did not succeed in the very first attempt, I shall take hold of his head with my left hand, and with my right hand I shall somehow or other extract it out of the child’s mouth. I shall not mind, if in doing so, even his throat might bleed a little.”

“Why go to that extent?”

“Venerable Sir, I have compassion towards the child.”

“Prince! If the Blessed One knows that a particular statement is false, would not do any good to anybody, and would be unpalatable to the ear, he would never make that statement.
Similarly, if the Blessed One knows that a particular statement though true, yet would not do any good to anybody and would be unpalatable to the ear, the Blessed One would never utter such words. But if the Blessed One knows that a particular statement is not only true, but also conducive to one’s good, yet it may not be palatable to the ears, the Blessed One, when he thought the occasion to be a fit one, he could sometimes make such a statement and on other occasions he may refrain from it. Why does he go to that extent? The Tathagata or the Blessed One had compassion for all living beings.”

Q. 219. Can any immediate fruit, visible in this very world, of the life of a recluse be pointed?

A. The whole doctrine of the Blessed One is such as is capable of bringing immediate fruit, visible in this very world, the doctrine that shows the way to put an end to all suffering, here and now, in this very ‘body of six feet.’ All other advantages are but secondary.

Q. 220. When did the two chief disciples—Sariputta and Moggallan pass away? Did it happen earlier than the Maha Pari-Nirvana (passing away) of the All Enlightened One or later than that?

A. Both the Chief disciples of the Exalted One had passed away earlier than he did. And amongst the two also, Sariputta passed away earlier than Moggallan.

Q. 221. How did the Enlightened One react when he learnt about the passing away of one of his chief disciples—Sariputta, commander of the faith?

A. At the time, when both Sariputta and Moggallan had passed away, in company of his following, the Enlightened One was traversing in Ukka-chela, on the bank of the river Ganges, in the country of Vaji. The Lord addressed the congregation thus—

“O monks, till Sariputta and Moggallan had not passed, I felt this congregation always as full. O monks, since Sariputta
and Moggallan have passed away, I feel this congregation as if deserted. O monks, that particular direction in which Sariputta and Moggallan used to roam about, did not need anybody else’s presence...O monks, it is really strange, it is really wonderful, that even when giants like Sariputta and Moggallan have passed away, even then, there had been no anxiety, no discomposure in the mind of the Blessed One. O monks, all that arises is bound to pass away. O monks, there is not even the least chance for it that anything that has come into existence, may not pass out of existence. O monks, the passing away of Sariputta and Moggallan, while the congregation stays can be compared to the falling of the major trunk of a tree getting broken and falling on the ground while the tree is still standing.... Hence O monks, be lights unto yourselves, take refuge in your own selves do not seek refuge outside your own selves.”

Q. 222. Did the order of the Blessed One remain open even to courtesans? It is heard that the famous courtesan, Ambapali, had also sought refuge in the three gems.

A. Ambapali was not an ordinary courtesan of Vaisali. She was the beauty-queen of Vaisali. She heard that the Enlightened One had arrived at Vaisali and was residing in his own mango-grove. She went to pay a visit to the Lord and having saluted him sat respectfully aside. And when she was thus seated the Exalted One instructed, aroused, incited, and gladdened her with religious discourse.

She addressed the Exalted One thus:
“May the Exalted One do me the honour of taking his meal, together with the brethren, at my house tomorrow”.

And the Exalted One gave, by silence his consent.
Now the Licchavis of Vaisali heard that the Exalted One had arrived at Vaisali, and was staying at Ambapali’s mango-grove. They also approached the Exalted One and sat respectfully aside...They also addressed the Exalted One thus—

“May the Exalted One do us the honour of taking his meal, together with the brethren, at our house tomorrow?

“O Licchavis. I have promised to dine tomorrow at Ambapali the courtesan’s house”.

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Then the Licchavis cast up their hands exclaiming: "We are outdone by Ambapali. We are outdone by Ambapali."

They had earlier been to Ambapali with the request to give up that meal to them for a hundred thousand.

Ambapali had replied: "My Lords, were you to offer all Vaisali with its subject territory, I would not give up so honoured a feast."

At the end of the night Ambapali the courtesan, made ready milkrice etc. and announced the time to the Exalted One saying: "The hour, Lord, has come, and the meal is ready."

The Lord, together with the brethren, had proceeded to Ambapali's house and had his meal.

And when the Blessed One had quite finished his meal... Ambapali the courtesan addressed the Exalted One thus—

"Lord, I present this pleasure-garden to the order of mendicants, of which your lordship is the Chief."

And the Exalted One accepted the gift.

Q. 223. Did the Exalted One ever have any physical ailment?

A. After the Exalted One had spent his rainy season at Volu village, there fell upon him a dire sickness and sharp pains came upon him, even unto death. But the Exalted One, mindful and self-possessed, bore them without complaint.

And the Venerable Anand went to the place where the Exalted One was... and said: "I have beheld Lord how the Exalted One was in health, and I have beheld how the Exalted One had to suffer. And though at the sight of the sickness of the Exalted One my body became as weak as a creeper, and the horizon became dim to me, and my faculties were no longer clear, yet notwithstanding this I took some little comfort from the thought that the Exalted One would not pass away until at least he had left instructions as touching the order."

The Exalted One replied: "What, then, Anand, does the order expect more of me? I have preached the truth without making any distinctions between esoteric and exoteric doctrine; for in respect of the truths, Anand, the Tathagata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who keeps some things back. Surely, Anand, should there be anyone who harbours
the thought—it is I who lead the brotherhood, or, the order is dependent upon me. It is he who should lay down instructions in any matter concerning the order. Now the Tathagata, Ananda, thinks not that it is he who leads, the brotherhood, or that the order is dependent upon him. Why then should he leave instructions in any matter concerning the order? I too, O Ananda, am now grown old, and full of years ...I am turning eighty years of age; and just as a worn-out cart, Ananda, can be kept going only with the heap of thongs, so, me thinks, the body of the Tathagata can only be kept going by bandaging it up. It is only, Ananda, when the Tathagata, by ceasing to attend to any outward thing, becomes plunged by the cessation of sensations in that concentration, which is concerned with no material object—it is only then that the body of the Tathagata is at ease...

"Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Hold fast to the truth as a refuge. Look not to anyone for refuge, beside yourselves."

Q. 224. Did the Lord then, consider it totally futile to say to the brethren, anything as his last-exhortation?

A. It appears that it did not actually happen thus. For when the Exalted One was residing in the hall known as Kutagara he had asked Ananda to gather together all the Bhikkhus sojourning round about Vaisali.

'Even so, Lord!' said the Venerable Ananda, in assent to the Exalted One.

When the assembly of the brethren had met together, the Exalted One proceeded to the hall, and sat down on the seat prepared for him. The Exalted One addressed the brethren thus—

'O brethren—ye to whom the truths I have realised have been made known by me—having thoroughly made yourselves masters of them, practises them, meditates upon them, and spread them abroad; in order that pure Dhamma may last long and be perpetuated, in order that it may continue to be for the good
and happiness of the great multitudes, out of pity for the world...

"Which then, O brethren, are the truths which, when I had realised, I made known to you... They are

(i) The four earnest meditations.
(ii) The four-fold struggle against evil.
(iii) The four roads to saint-hood.
(iv) The five moral powers.
(v) The five organs of spiritual sense.
(vi) The seven kinds of wisdom.
(vii) The Aryan eight-fold path.

"Behold now, O brethren, I exhort you, saying. All component things must grow old. Work out your salvation with diligence. The final extinction of the Tathagata will take place before long. At the end of three months from this time the Tathagata will pass away."

Enumerated, all these teachings of the Lord are thirty-seven in number, and possess thirty-seven known Qualities to prove enlightenment.

The four meditations are (1) meditation on the body; (2) meditation on the sensations; (3) meditation on the consciousness; (4) meditation on the objects of consciousness. The four-fold-struggle is—(i) The struggle to prevent evil arising, (ii) the struggle to put away evil states which have arisen, (iii) the struggle to produce goodness not previously existing, (iv) the struggle to increase goodness when it does exist. The four roads to the attainment of celestial powers are—the will, the exertion, the preparation and the investigation. The five senses generally enumerated are eye organ, ear organ, smell organ, tongue organ and touch organ. But here in this context the five senses are faith, energy thought, contemplation and wisdom. The five powers are also the senses i.e. faith, energy, thought, contemplation and wisdom. Amongst the seven factors of enlightenment also energy, thought contemplation and investigation are enumerated. The remaining three are joy, repose and serenity. In the eight-fold path also we find thought and contemplation enumerated. The remaining six are (1) right views, (2) right aims.
(3) right speech, (4) right conduct (5) right livelihood, (6) right perseverance. Thus if we would eliminate the duplication, then the real total of all these comes down to twenty-five only. These twenty-five “goodnesses” appear to be the essence of Buddhism. Otherwise either the Lord himself, or those who later held the three councils would not have given such importance to them.

Q. 225. Were there no such occasions, when a dispute may have arisen as regards a particular statement of the Lord, whether it was really his or not? What advice had the Exalted One given to his followers, to act up to, when such a dispute arose amongst them?

A. In such circumstances the Exalted One had given the following instruction to abide by. He said: “O monks! a brother may say thus: ‘From the mouth of the Exalted One himself have I heard, from his own mouth I have received it. This is the truth, this the law, this the teaching of the Master.’ The word spoken, brethren, by that brother should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood and then put beside the Sutras (the doctrine learnt by heart by the community) and compared with the Vinaya (the rules of the order). If when so compared they do not harmonize with the Sutras, and do not fit in with the Vinaya, then you may come to the conclusion—‘verily, these are not the words of the Exalted One, and have been wrongly grasped by that brother.’ Therefore, brethren, you should reject it. But if they harmonize with the Sutras and fit in with the Vinaya, then you may come to the conclusion ‘Verily, these are the words of the Exalted One, and have been well grasped by that brother.’”

When even during the life-time of the Exalted One doubt could arise as regards the authenticity of his spoken words, now after the lapse of such a long period, since the Blessed One passed away, it is but natural that the uncertainty may arise as regards the authenticity of the spoken word of the Exalted One. Here, one thing is to be noted, that no mention has been made of Abhidhamma, along with Sutra and Vinaya. This may be due to the fact that Abhidhamma for the first time is said to
have been preached to ‘Gods in the heavens’, and not to ‘men of this earth’. During the life-time of the Buddha, there would have existed authority of “Dhamma” and “Vinaya” but now even the contents of “Dhamma” and “Vinaya” are to be studied cautiously and admitted to be correct wisely.

Q. 226. Is this episode correct that the last meal offered to the Exalted One by Chunda, the metal-worker, consisted of the flesh of swine?

A. It is traditionally stated that at that time the Exalted One proceeded with a great company of the brethren to Paua, and there at Paua, the Exalted One stayed at the mango-grove of Chunda, who was a metal-worker.

And Chunda, the worker in metals, went to the place where the Exalted One was, and saluting him took his seat on a side... Then he addressed the Exalted One as follows: “May the Exalted One do me the honour of taking his meal together with the brethren at my house tomorrow?”

And the Exalted One signified his consent by silence.

The next day, the Exalted One robed himself and went with the brethren to the dwelling place of Chunda, the worker in metals. Now Chunda, the metal-worker had got large quantity of choicest food together with ‘Sukar Maddaua.’

Now, when the Exalted One had eaten the food prepared by Chunda, the worker in metals, there fell upon him a dire sickness, the disease of dysentery, and sharp pain came upon him, even unto death. But the Exalted One, mindful and self-possessed, bore it without complaint.

In this version, the actual meaning of the word ‘Sukar-Maddaua’ appears to have been disputed even by earlier commentators. One view has been that Sukar-Maddaua meant the flesh of a pig, of one year’s age, which is supposed to be soft and tasteful...Another view has been the soup prepared with delicate rice is called ‘Sukar Maddaua...’ Still another view is that Sukar Maddaua could have been some dainty dish especially prepared for the Lord.

When after partaking the food offered by Chunda, the metal-worker, there fell upon the Exalted One a dire sickness, the
Compassionate-One more than his own illness became concerned as to how Chunda, the metal-worker would react to the happening, that the Exalted One, after having partaken his meals at his dwelling place fell ill and passed away? He called Ananda and said, "Now it may happen, Ananda, that some one should stir up remorse in Chunda, the metal-worker by saying: 'This is evil to thee, Chunda, and loss to thee in that when the Tathagata had eaten his last meal from thy provision, then he died.' Any such remorse, Ananda, in Chunda, the metal-worker should be checked by saying,—'This is good to thee, Chunda, and gain to thee, in that when the Tathagata had eaten his last meal from thy provision, then he died.'"

Q. 227. In all organised religions, certain places become places of pilgrimage—Which are the sacred places of the Buddhists?

A. Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath and Kusinagara are the four holy places of pilgrim for the Buddhists. The Lord had himself declared:

"There are these four places, Ananda, which the believing classman should visit with feelings of reverence. Which are the four?

"The place, Ananda, at which the believing man can say: 'Here the Tathagata was born?' is a spot to be visited with feelings of reverence.

"The place, Ananda, at which the believing man can say: 'Here the Tathagata attained the supreme and perfect insight!' is a spot to be visited with feelings of reverence.

"The place, Ananda, at which the believing man can say: 'Here was the kingdom of righteousness firmly established by the Tathagata!' is a spot to be visited with feelings of reverence.

"The place, Ananda, at which the believing man can say: 'Here the Tathagata passed away finally in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain behind!' is a spot to be visited with feelings of reverence.

Q. 228. How should the monks conduct themselves with regard to womankind?
A. This very question was asked by Venerable Ananda, to which the Exalted One is on record to have replied:

"Do no seeing them, Ananda."
"But if we should see them, what are we to do?"
"No talking, Ananda."
"But if there is an occasion to talk, what are we to do?"
"Keep wide awake, Ananda."

Some Bhikkhus keep a fan in front of their face, while preaching to a mixed congregation perhaps, so that they may have no occasion to look at women folk. The Exalted One prohibited meaningless looking at; He did not wish his monks to have eyes closed or turn blind. Similarly, He had prohibited useless conversation. He did not mean that his monks should have a cloth tied down to their mouth, and behave as if they had no tongue in their cheeks.

Q. 229. Now, when the Exalted One has passed away long long ago, and we are not in possession of anything material of him, except a few very small pieces of his bones—our sacred relics, what should we do to them?

A. As far as monks are concerned, the Exalted One had asked them “not to worship” his body. He exhorted them to exert all their energy to the fulfilment of the highest ideal. But whatever the Exalted One might have said, one who had been such a great benefactor of all posterity, how can we human beings refrain from becoming sentimental even about his physical remains? Worship in this case is a blessing.

Q. 230. Who happened to be the last disciple of the Lord?

A. When the Blessed One was lying on the bed from which he was not to get up any more, Subhadra, the wanderer, felt, if the Tathagata passed away, then there would be none else, who could quell his doubts. He went to see the Exalted One. Venerable Ananda said:

“This is no time to trouble the Enlightened One.”
He insisted on somehow or other being permitted to see the
Exalted One. The Blessed One himself granted him an interview, and asked Anand to let him come to see him. He said:—

"Anand! Let Subhadra come. He shall not give me unnecessary trouble."

The Buddha preached him the Dhamma. Subhadra got his both ordinations—lower and higher one also. He was the last disciple of the Lord.

Q. 231. It is learnt that some founders of different religions had appointed somebody as their heir, had somebody sit on their throne. Did the Exalted One also appoint somebody as his heir and made him sit on his throne?

A. No. The all Enlightened One had pertinently expressed himself thus: "It may be, Ananda, that in some of you the thought may arise, 'The word of the master is ended, we have no more any teacher.' But it is not thus, Ananda, that you should regard it. The truths and the rules of the order, which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be the teacher to you."

In spiritual matters none can be a substitute for another. How could the throne of the King of righteousness be entrusted to anybody?

Q. 232. Did the Exalted One administer other important behest also before he passed away?

A. Yes. Two important counsels He gave. In one instance He said "Ananda, when I am gone address not one another in the way in which the brethren have heretofore addressed each other—with the epithet, that is, of 'Ayusa'. Even in the form of address, the relationship between an elder Bhikkhu and a younger one should find expression. A younger Bhikkhu may be addressed by an elder by either using the epithet Ayosou, or by his name, or still by his family-name (Gotra). But an elder should always be addressed by a younger as either Ayuslman (Sir) or Bhante (Venerable. Sir). And the second counsel was: "When I am gone, Anand, let the order, if it should so wish, abolish all the lesser and minor precepts."
Q. 233. Has the order made any alterations whatsoever in the rules of theVinaya after the demise of the Lord Buddha?

A. Traditionalists say that they have not touched the rules at all. It may or may not be. The probability is that the rules may have been altered and even abolished since the demise of the All Enlightened One. But whether the rules, as found in the books, have been altered or not is a minor point, because the actual life of the monks has considerably altered since olden days. It was inevitable and necessary also.

Q. 234. What were the last words of the All Enlightened One?

A. The Exalted One addressed the brethren and said:—
"It may be, brethren, that there may be doubt or misgivings in the mind of some brother as to the Buddha, or the doctrine, or the path, or the method. Inquire, brethren, freely. Do not have to reproach yourselves afterwards with the thought: Our teacher was face to face with us; and we could not bring ourselves to inquire of the Exalted One when we were face to face with him?"

He spoke thus a second time also, and He spoke thus a third time also. The brethren were silent. This was no time to remove any doubts. Then the Exalted One addressed the brethren by himself and said:—"Behold now, brethren, I exhort you, saying—'Decay is inherent in all component things.' Work out your salvation with diligence!"

If the attainment of Arhatship alone would have been the ideal of their life, then it would have been already attained by at least most of them. Now most probably the Buddha must have used the word "salvation" in the sense of serving others. The ultimate purpose of all self-culture should be service of humanity. What other nobler purpose could there be?

The Exalted One passed away.

Q. 235. According to Buddhism how should the dead body of a person be disposed of? Should it be cremated or buried?

A. It is not a question concerning religion. This is more
related to geographical conditions or economic circumstances. Where wood can be sought and found easily, it is better to cremate, to dispose of dead bodies. Where wood is not easily available to the people it is fitting that they bury their dead bodies in order to dispose of them.

Amongst Buddhists not only cremation and burial but even feeding of the corpse to the animals—as Parsis do—is prevalent.

Q. 236. Undoubtedly the body of the Exalted One was cremated. What happened to the sacred relics of the Exalted One?

A. There were numerous claimants of the relics of the Lord. They were about to quarrel amongst themselves. As a result of the mediation by a Brahman namely Drona the dispute did not develop. The relics of the Holy One were divided into eight equal parts. The pot, which was used to make this distribution, Drona Brahmin asked and got it for himself.

Q. 237. Who were the people who got the sacred relics of the Exalted One?

A. Ajata Sattu, the King of Magadhā, got a portion. Lichchavis of Vaisali got one. Sakyas of Kapilavasthu got one. Bullis of Allakappa got one. Koliyas of Ramagama got one. Brahmins of Vethdeeapa got one. The Mallas of Pava got one. The Mallas of Kusinagara got one. And ultimately Drona, the Brahmin got the vessel by which the relics were distributed. All had cairns big or small made on them according to their devotion. It is on record,

Eight measures of relics there were of Him of the far seeing eye, of the best of man. In Jambudweep (India) seven are worshipped, and one measure in Ramgrama, by the kings of the serpent-race. One tooth, too, is honoured in Heaven, and one in Gandhar's city, one in the Kalinga realm, and one more by the Naga race.

All the names enumerated can be identified on the continent of India. One lone exception is Heaven.
Q. 238. What need after the passing away of the Lord had arisen for the monks to hold the first council?

A. No sooner had the Exalted One passed away, a monk, who was ordained, late in years, was heard speaking thus: "Enough, your reverences, do not grieve, do not lament, we are well rid of this great recluse. We were worried when he said—'This is allowable to you, this is not allowable to you.' But now we will be able to do as we like and we won't do what we don't like." Then Venerable Maha Kassapa was startled. Hence he addressed the brethren; "Come, let us, your reverences, chant Dhamma and discipline before what is not-Dhamma shines out and Dhamma is withheld, before what is not discipline shines out and discipline is withheld, before those who speak what is not-Dhamma become strong and those who speak Dhamma become feeble, before those who speak what is not-discipline become strong and those who speak discipline become feeble."

Under the patronage of the great Kashyapa, the brethren got together in the cave of Saptapani at Rajgaha and chanted the doctrine (Sutra) and the Vinaya (rules). As far as the doctrine is concerned Elder Anand was admitted to be an authority, and as far as the Vinaya (rules) were concerned, the elder Upali. The great Kashyapa asked questions pertaining to the doctrine and rules both from elders Anand and Upali respectively and they gave appropriate answers. The first council was a success. In this council all the five Nikayas (groups) of the Doctrine and chapters such as Maha Vagga and Culla Vagga were orally edited. In this council there had assembled an exact number of five hundred monks. Hence this council is known as a council of "five hundred ones."

Q. 239. What particular books comprise Sutta Pitaka and Vinaya Pitaka and in what language were they originally written?

A. Sutta Pitaka includes—(1) Digha Nikaya (a collection of long discourses), (2) Masshima Nikaya (a collection of middle-length discourses), (3) Samyutta Nikaya (a collection of mixed

In the first council none of the above mentioned works were put down in black and white. They were merely orally recited and thus consolidated. This very "oral editing" of the text is known as the first council. It is believed that this editing must have taken place in the spoken dialect of that period and that area, known as Magadhi (the language of Magadha).

**Q. 240.** Why did there arise again necessity to hold a second council? When and where did it assemble?

**A.** After the lapse of a period of just one hundred years, it was found the Vajji-Puttiya monks, the residents of Vaisali were promulgating ten points. From their own point of view, they were perhaps "progressive." From the point of view of the orthodox ones, they must have been considered "deviators." The ten practices, they were promulgating, were such as (1) allowance of salt to be kept in a horn, (2) allowance of food to be taken, even when the sun had passed two fingers beyond meridian, . . . allowance to make use of gold and silver. The difference of opinion as regards the above ten points made it inevitable for the second council to take place. As this council had particularly met to settle down the rules of the order, hence it is known as "Vinaya council", and because as many as seven hundred monks had participated in this council, hence it is known as "The council of seven hundred ones" also.

**Q. 241.** It is said that even a "third council" had met. When, where and why did it meet?

**A.** The immediate cause which made the holding of "third council" inevitable was more or less similar to the cause, which resulted in the holding of the "second council" earlier. During the reign of King Asoka, the gain and the honour of the Buddhist monks had immensely increased. Certain followers of other denominations, having put on the garb of a Buddhist monk, had secretly started promulgating their own doctrine.
This was a real danger to Buddhism. The purpose of this third council was to purge such monks as were living under false pretensions. It is not impossible that such monks, as were turned out of the order, may have also claimed themselves to be faithful adherents of the doctrine. Whatever be the case, under the patronage of the Venerable Moggaliputta Tiss, this council had met at Pataliputra and had succeeded in the fulfilment of its purpose.

In this council also “Dhamma” and “Vinaya” alone were chanted. It appears just round about this period, a new collection of “Dhamma”, which later became known as “Abhidhamma” was also edited and consolidated.

Although in Abhidhamma-Pitaka, there is nothing which may be doubted as not to be in agreement with the contents of the Dhamma, as found in Sutta-pitaka, yet it can not be said for certain that Abhidhamma Pitaka also, as it is, was preached by the Exalted One himself. Out of the seven books of Abhidhamma, one is Katha-Vatthu-Pakarana; and about this particular book it is clearly stated that it was recited by Moggaliputta Tissa—the preceptor of king Ashoka, at the time of the third council.

May be, as it is, it can be said with confidence, that at the time of the third council, the teachings of the Exalted One had become settled in the form of three separate “baskets”, as ‘Sutra Pitaka, ‘Vinaya Pitaka’ and ‘Abhidhamma Pitaka.’ It is not easy to say which “basket” contained or did not contain which particular discourse at that time. The possibility of interpolation and subtractions could not be ruled out at least until this stage.

As many as one thousand monks had participated in this third council, and it had carried out for a rather long period of nine months.

Q. 242. In the different parts of the country, the teachings of the Buddha were being promulgated from the very first day of the “turning of the wheel of the Law at Isipatana (modern Sarnath, Varanasi), since when the promulgation of Buddhism in foreign lands began?

A. In foreign lands it appears, that the promulgation of
Buddhism began under the inspiration of Moggaliputta Tissa, the preceptor of king Asoka himself, and during his reign only. Once, while contemplating the services, which Asoka had rendered towards Buddhism, in the form of getting a large number of Viharas constructed, be asked Moggaliputta Tissa whether a benefactor of his calibre was entitled to be considered an ‘heir’ of the ‘kingdom of righteousness’.

Moggaliputta Tissa observed—'O king, there had been no one as great a benefactor of the Buddha Sasan as you are, even during the life time of the Buddha himself, yet you cannot claim to be known as the ‘heir’ of the ‘kingdom of righteousness’.

‘Venerable Sir, what shall I do in order to become legible for this title.’

‘O, King, if your son Mahendra and daughter Sangh Mitra would seek ordination, then you would be legible to the title of the ‘heir’ of the ‘kingdom of righteousness’. King Asoka got both his son and daughter ordained as a ‘Bhikkhu’ and a Bhikkhuni.

Q. 243. Under the inspiration of the great Moggaliputta Tissa, and during the reign of king Asoka, which Buddhist monks went to what countries to promulgate Buddhism?

A. The Venerable Moggali Putta Tissa had sent Elder Majjhantika to preach Buddhism in Kashmir and Gandhar; Elder Mahadeva to Mahinsaka-Mandala (Maheshwar); Elder Rakshit to Vanvasi (Bombay province); the Greek Maharashkit was sent to Aprant; Maha Dharam Rakshit was sent to Maharashtra; Maharashkita was sent to Yonaka (Greece); Elder Madhyana was sent to Himavant (Himalaya provinces); the elders Sona and Uttara were sent to Suvarna-Bhumi (Pegu, Burma); and to Ceylon were sent Mahendra and Sangh Mitra themselves.

Situated as these were outside ‘Middle country’, they could be taken as foreign lands; but really speaking our neighbour countries such as Greece, Burma, and Ceylon alone could be said to be ‘foreign lands.’

These elders did not proceed to these ‘foreign lands’ just by themselves all alone, but all of them would have been accompanied at least by four other monks; since outside ‘middle
council country', the quorum for giving higher ordination to any monk is at least five.

Q. 244. When and where was the Tripitaka scribed for the first time?

A. It was in Ceylon, in 1st century A.D. during the reign of King Vatta Gamini that the Bhikkhus assembled in Aloka-Vihar (Matale) and scribed the Tripitaka. The commentary of Vinaya (Samant Pasadika) records that in Digha-Nikaya which is one of the five books enumerated as Sutta Pitaka there are thirty-seven discourses such as "Brahmajala" etc. In Majjhima Nikaya which also is a part of Sutra Pitaka, there are fifteen divisions and it comprises one hundred and fifty three discourses such as "Mula Pariyaya" etc. In Samyutta Nikaya, again a portion of Sutta Pitaka, there are fifty four Samyuttas and seven thousand seven hundred and sixty-two discourses such as ogh, etc.

In Anguttar Nikaya, the fourth collection of Sutta Pitaka, there are eleven chapters, which again include nine thousand five hundred fifty seven discourses such as Citta Pariyaya etc.

Leaving the four collections such as Digh Nikaya etc., the remaining portion of the "word of the Buddha" is known as khuddaka-Nikaya (collection of minor discourses).

It would have been wonderful, if the details of Vinaya Pitaka and of Abhidhamma Pitaka also would have been recorded in the commentary on Vinaya. It is really a pity that we miss them.

From the above extract, it can be said for certainty that even a thousand years after the Mahapari-Nibbana of the Exalted One, when the commentaries were written the said portion of the Tripitaka was in existence.

At that time, in order to make a distinction between the text and the commentaries, the text used was to be called "Pali." Later the word "Pali" became a synonym for the word "Magadhi" the dialect of the Magadh country; and began to be used to denote the contents of the texts and commentaries together.

Further south of Sumatra is Java-Dweepa, present Java.
AN INTELLIGENT MAN'S GUIDE TO BUDDHISM

In 414-415 A.D. while returning home from India via Ceylon Fa-hien had stayed in Java for a period of nine months. At that time there existed Buddhism in Java and was rather in flourishing condition.

Further down south of Java is Bali islands. In the later half of the seventh century Itsing had visited Bali. According to his writing at that time "Mula Sarvastivada" sect of Buddhism was flourishing there.

Borneo, the other island not very far from Java, also did not remain unacquainted with Buddhism. Ancient architecture of Borneo testifies to it. A portion of Indo-China was in ancient days known as Champa. In the later half of the seventh century, Itsing while visiting Champa also, wrote:—'In this country most of the Buddhists belong to Arya Sammattiya Sect. Some belong to Sarvastivad also. It appears that before the advent of ninth century, Sthavirvada and not Mahayana was prevalent there.

In the west of Champa, there existed another tract of land, which the Chinese had named Funana. In the days of her glory, Funana had usurped even the whole of modern Thailand. Certain inscriptions pertaining to fourth century reveal that on the shore of the ocean several centres of Buddhism existed.

In Cambodia, there had been constant tussle between Buddhism and Brahminism. Wherever the cult of the so-called four divisions of society could succeed, Buddhism could not maintain its foothold, and in case caste system was destroyed, there was no scope for Brahminism to survive. The world famous temple of Angor Vat in Cambodia was formerly a Buddhist temple. Later it changed colours. In Cambodia Buddhism had to pass through many a vicissitude. At present it is a strong hold of Thera-Vada form of Buddhism.

In the north of Burma and Malaya archipelago there is modern Thailand, which till sometime back was known as Siam. It is difficult to say as to when Buddhism was exactly introduced in to Thailand. The Buddhists in Thailand are of the opinion that Indian Buddhist missionaries, who are said to have proceeded to Suwarna Bhumi, had in reality come to Thailand. During the last two thousand years, at certain periods of history Mahayana had predominated, and at other times Thera-Vada
form of Buddhism. At present Thera-Vada form of Buddhism is the state religion in Thailand.

The promulgation of Buddhism had not remained confined only to Eastern Asiatic countries. It was introduced to Western Asia also. During the time of the famous traveller Hayortsang there existed Buddhist Viharas in Samarkand. The Vihar of Bactria was a grand one and equally famous too.

In north-eastern part of India, in cities such as Kashgara, Kucha, Khotan and Turfan etc. also Buddhism had remained established. In the third century A.D. Kucha was a great centre of Buddhism. There were no less than one thousand monasteries and temples.

Q. 245. May it be after the reign of King Asoka, in what other foreign countries and at what times was Buddhism promulgated.

A. We have already mentioned the name of Suvarna-Bhumi together with the Island of Ceylon, where under the inspiration of Moggali Putta Tissa Elders Sona and Uttera had gone to promulgate Buddhism. Suvarna-Bhumi is a part of present day Burma. We can say that as early as third century B.C. Buddhism was introduced to Burma.

Not only Burma is Suvarna-Bhumi, but the whole area of Malaya, Java, Sumatra etc. is ancient Suvarna-Bhumi. It appears that Indians had given this name Suvarna-Bhumi or the land of god, to this part of the world, because they used to make immense profit by trading with these countries. Indians had colonised this area, and inhabited it in such large numbers that the whole of this area became known as Indo-China. Wherever they went, naturally, they took their religion along with them. In 684 A.D. a Buddhist King, namely, Sri Jaya-Naga ruled over the kingdom of Srivijaya, modern Sumatra.

The monasteries were treasure houses of art and architecture. Education was given much importance. Students used to go as far as India, to receive education at Indian Buddhist monasteries.

Her area and population make China really a big country. It is said that the first Indian Buddhist missionaries who had
proceeded to China at the invitation of King Ming were Venerable Matanga and Venerable Dhammaratana. King Ming is said to have reigned during first century A.D. Thus for the last two thousand years Buddhism has had a strong foothold in China.

Q. 246. Does Buddhism still survive even in Communist China?

A. Communist government does not seem to interfere in anybody's personal religion. But there does not seem to be any further scope for that part of any all religions which is based on the exploitation of masses.

Q. 247. As compared to China, geographically speaking Tibet is nearer India. At what period was Buddhism first introduced into this Land of Snow?

A. It was in the seventh century A.D. that Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet. Although Tibet is nearer India than China, yet the reason for this late introduction of Buddhism into Tibet can be the fact that Tibetans were a nomad society. Hence the doctrine of Buddha became available to them rather late. After about a century of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet the famous Samaye monastery was built.

Q. 248. Still north of Tibet is Mongolia. There too Buddhism must have reached?

A. Tibetan Buddhist missionaries did not have much difficulty in promulgating Buddhism in Mongolia also. The teacher was Phagas-pa and Uncle Sakya Mahapandit Anandharaja had proceeded to Mongolia in thirteenth century to promulgate Buddhism there. This was exactly the period when the flame of Buddhism was flickering in India, the land of its birth.

Q. 249. How did Buddhism reach Korea and Japan?

A. From China Buddhism had further migrated to Korea and from Korea still further to Japan. In both these two countries, it is only the Mahayana form of Buddhism that is prevalent. Many Japanese Buddhist monks take great interest
in the erection of Buddhist temples in India and other countries.

Q. 250. Has Buddhism been promulgated in certain European countries also?

A. Yes, there are several republics of USSR, where the remnants of Buddhist tradition still exist. In modern times activities to promulgate Buddhism in all countries such as England, Germany and France etc. are on the increase.

Q. 251. Is Buddhism being promulgated in America also?

A. Not only in America, but in Canada and Africa too.

Q. 252. Although everything is transient and even Buddhism cannot be an exception, yet is it not strange that the doctrine, which because of its intrinsic qualities, had disseminated in so many countries, and is still adhered to by such a great majority became extinct in the very land of its birth?

A. It does happen sometimes that a bad coin turns out a good coin. The prevalence or otherwise of a certain thing does not prove anything. Nobody would say that wine is conducive to one’s health and milk is not, yet, wine is sold dearer than milk.

Still if we want to understand this really strange phenomenon then it would be better if we classify Buddhism into its three aspects—Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist Ethics and Buddhist Society.

As far as Buddhist philosophy is concerned, it can be confidently asserted that all post-Buddhist Indian philosophy is indebted to Buddhist philosophy as such. Really speaking there was no philosophical thought worth speaking, prevalent in India before the arise of Buddhism. Out of the present well-known six schools of Indian philosophy, there is none which could claim to be pre-Buddhist. Advaita Vedanta which is so much eulogized is nothing more than a reflection of Advaita-Vada of Buddhism.

Post-Buddhist Indian ethics is also no less influenced by
Buddhist ethics. Vedic sacrifices, in which innumerable animals were slaughtered are seldom seen. The ten indications of righteousness found in Smriti are all post-Buddhist.

The rest is Buddhist Society. That indeed went out of existence in India. Buddhist society was composed of two groups of people—Bhikkhus and laymen. The society which claimed Varanasmram to be its ideal was composed of four groups—Brahmins being the super most. Buddhist society depended on the intrinsic value or real worth of a class of people, the fourfold division depended on the birth of people belonging to different categories. One of the two systems alone could survive. Buddhist system of social organisation lost the game.

Q. 253. What did then happen to such a vast Buddhist society that existed in India?

A. In spite of being the followers of a different religion, Buddhists of those days did not form a distinct and separate society from other Indians. It may be taken to be something wanting in them when looked from the angle of self-preseuction. Therefore it is just possible that certain section of Buddhist society may have reverted to the Chaturvarna fold.

But such as utterly hated the conception of a four-fold society may have become Mohamedans. The remaining vast majority of Buddhists who neither wanted to revert to Chaturvarna fold nor wanted to get themselves converted to Islam, must have been forcibly made "Shudraas or Untouchables".

Q. 254. Can this be admitted to be a historical truth that the predecessors of most of the modern "untouchables" were Buddhists?

A. It may be as true as any other historical fact can be.

Q. 255. How far is this hearsay trustworthy that Shankaracharya turned Buddhism out of this country?

A. Shankaracharya did not live very long. His ministry was very short. He died rather young. Most probably he lived during seventh and eighth century A.D. After Shankaracharya
Buddhism was a living religion in India for centuries altogether. Those who have made deep study of Shankaracharya's teachings have called Shankaracharya himself a "disguised Buddhist." Buddhist universities like Nalanda, Vikram Shiva and Odantpuri were all in a flourishing condition after Shankaracharya.

Q. 256. What are the chances of the revival of Buddhism in India?

A. Total eradication of Buddhism has never taken place in India. In areas such as Kashmir and Lahul in the north and in districts such as Chittagong (till recently a district of Bengal, but now in Bangla Desh) Buddhism has all along been a living religion. As a result of the sincere efforts made by Indian monks such as Bodhanand Mahasthauri, and Mahabir Swami; and of Burmese monks such as Chandramani Mahasthauri and Kittimaji and also due to the endless endeavour of the well-known Buddhist missionary Anagarika Dharmapala, Buddhism again got a foot-hold in other parts of India also. After the conversion of a vast number of Indians, mainly in Maharashtra following the leadership of late Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar, in the words of Late Mahapandit Rahula Sankrityayan, such a strong pillar of Buddhism has been erected that none may dare to eradicate again.

Q. 257. What would be the total strength of Buddhists in India at present?

A. There are two kinds of Buddhists in India. There are those, who though intensely devoted towards Lord Buddha, yet for reasons best known to them avoid getting them introduced as Buddhists. There are others, who consider it a honour to be introduced as Buddhists. The number of this later kind of Buddhists should definitely exceed ten million. But in the last census they have been enumerated as only thirty seven lakhs.

Q. 258. Why has this number been shown to be less than it actually is?

A. Most probably, it happened so, because amongst the
people who gathered statistics, no one was a "Buddhist" himself. Even after the last census quite a large number of people have embraced Buddhism. Hence the number is sure to be more than shown in the last census.

Q. 259. Can any individual call himself a Buddhist even without the conversion ceremony?

A. Ethically yes, legally perhaps.

Q. 260. What is that stands in one's way against calling himself a Buddhist legally?

A. In this so called secular state, there are certain reserved seats, and if any one wants to contest them he has to declare and prove that he is not a Buddhist. Without any conversion ceremony a Hindu is accepted to be a Hindu, because according to Hinduism not only his caste but even his religion depends upon birth. A 'Hindu' has always to be born a 'Hindu'. Nothing can make a non-Hindu a Hindu. Getting converted to 'Buddhism' holds good where there exist large number of Buddhists, or those who believe in conversion.

Q. 261. What should be the number of Buddhist monks in India?

A. Residing Buddhist monks in Indian shall have to be distinguished from such Buddhist monks as come from foreign countries, but are stationed in India either as missionaries or students studying in different universities. The number of such Indian Buddhist monks who are born in India and are Indian nationals should be no less than three hundred at least.

Q. 262. Which institutions are busy promulgating Buddhism in India?

A. They are too many to be enlisted. Bhartiya Bauddha Maha Sabha and Mahabodhi Society of India are the two chief ones.
Q. 263. It is said that their work is not satisfactory. Is it really so?

A. Destructive criticism does not serve any useful purpose. We should ourselves try to do whatever we can to serve the Buddha Sasan.
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adorn Amitabha Buddha’s Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

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