

A Manual of the Perfections

Pāramī Dipanī

Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D.Litt.



Translated from the Burmese by
U Tin Oo (Myaung)

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Edited by
Bhikkhu Pesala

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Ledi Sayādaw

U Nāṇadhaja
1846-1923

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Abbreviations Used in the Notes

A	Anguttaranikāya	Miln	Milindapañha
AA	° Atthakathā	Nd1	Mahāniddeśa
Abhp	Abhidhānappadīpikā	Nd2	Cūlaniddeśa
Ap	Apadāna	Netti	Nettipakaraṇa
Dukp	Dukapaṭṭhāna	Ps	Paṭisambhidāmagga
Bu	Buddhavaṃsa	Pug	Puggalapaññatti
BuA	° Atthakathā	Pv	Petavatthu
Cp	Cariyāpiṭaka	S	Samyuttanikāya
D	Dīghanikāya	SA	° Atthakathā
DA	° Atthakathā	Sn	Suttanipāta
Dhp	Dhammapada	SnA	° Atthakathā
DhpA	° Atthakathā	Thag	Theragāthā
Dhs	Dhammasaṅgaṇī	ThagA	° Atthakathā
Dpvs	Dīpavaṃsa	Thig	Therīgāthā
Iti	Itivuttaka	ThigA	° Atthakathā
J	Jātaka	Tikp	Tikapaṭṭhāna
JA	° Atthakathā	Ud	Udāna
Khp	Khuddakapāṭha	UdA	° Atthakathā
Kvu	Kathāvatthu	Vbh	Vibhaṅga
M	Majjhimanikāya	VbhA	Sammohavinodanī
MA	° Atthakathā	Vin	Vinaya
Mhbv	Mahābodhivaṃsa	Vism	Visuddhimagga
Mhvs	Mahāvaṃsa	Vv	Vimānavatthu

Editor's Preface

This book was given to me over twenty years ago by James Patrick Stuart Ross, an American who travelled to Burma several times to engage the help of able translators to make the works by Ledi Sayādaw available to Buddhists outside of Burma who were unable to read them in Burmese.

Due to its complexity, I have not, until now, found the time and energy to complete the necessary editorial work to make it worth publishing. The original manuscript would be hard for the average reader to follow, due to the extensive use of quotations from the Pāli texts, Commentaries, Subcommentaries, and other works. This work was written in reply to questions from his teacher. As it says in the Ledi Sayādaw's brief biography (published in the *Maggaṅga Dīpanī*):-

"About 2,000 students attended the lectures delivered daily by the Venerable Sankyaung Sayādaw. One day the Venerable Sayādaw set in Pāli 20 questions on the perfections (*pāramī*) and asked all the students to answer them. None of them except Bhikkhu Nyāṇa could answer those questions satisfactorily." He collected all these answers and when he attained 14 *vassa*, and while he was still in San-kyauṅ monastery, he published his first book, *A Manual of the Perfections (Pāramī Dīpanī)*."

I have reduced the use of Pāli wherever I can, and moved some footnotes into the text. I have checked many of the quotations against the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka* and corrected spellings. In many places, I have given the PTS Roman script edition cross-references. More work remains to be done in checking the accuracy of these references.

The Ledi Sayādaw concluded the work in Burmese Era 1241, which would have been 1880, when he was 34 years of age. That matches what he says in his concluding remarks that he had completed 14 Rains (*vassa*) of monkhood. The name given at his ordination, according to his biography, was Nāṇadhaja, but the name he uses for himself in the conclusion is Nāṇabhivaṃsa. The suffix "*Abhivaṃsa*" is a title appended to his name. The meaning is something like, "Of great repute."

I hope that this first edition will go at least some way to making the late Sayādaw's writings accessible. I realise that it still has many defects, but I will endeavour to fix those as time permits.

This latest update includes many corrections by Antonio Costanzo.

Bhikkhu Pesala
London, August, 2020

A Manual of the Perfections

Pāramī Dīpanī

by

Ledi Sayādaw Mahāthera, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, DLitt.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahanto Sammāsambuddhassa

Veneration to the Exalted One, the Worthy One,
The Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha.

Object of the Questioner

Pucchaka ganthārambha¹

*“Pañhā byākaraṇecchekaṃ, Buddhaṃ paṇāmya pucchisaṃ.
Pañhā byākaraṇecchekaṃ, taṃ taṃ bodhisusāmyuttaṃ.”*

“Homage to the Buddha,
The Adept in questioning and answering!
Worshipping thus done,
I now address myself to the task
Of posing questions –
Intended to foster skilful answering thereto –
On matters pertaining particularly
To the various classes of Enlightened Ones.

¹ Please see the [Pāli Text References](#). Hereafter all references to the Pāli texts in the endnotes are given as 001, 002, 003 *etc.*

The Twenty Questions

The First Question ⁰⁰¹

Someone fulfils meritorious deeds, such as giving, with a view to perfection through sufficiency of merit, wishing for both mundane and supramundane benefits. Will he reap benefits thereof in the mundane field such as high birth and material prosperity; or will he attain to Path and Fruition Knowledge culminating in the bliss of nibbāna? Or will he reap benefits both ways, *i.e.*, mundane as well as supramundane? Or will he miss both?

The Second Question ⁰⁰²

Someone, on the other hand, fulfils meritorious deeds, such as giving and so on, wishing solely for mundane merit. Will he enjoy the fruit thereof in the mundane field only or will he also attain to supramundane bliss (nibbāna)?

The Third Question ⁰⁰³

Further, someone fulfils meritorious deeds, such as giving and so on, wishing solely for supramundane knowledge (nibbāna). Will he attain to such knowledge (nibbāna), or will he also enjoy mundane benefits thereof?

The Fourth Question ⁰⁰⁴

- (a) Now, the Perfectly Enlightened Ones, the All-seeing Buddhas, attain Buddhahood after going through a process of perfecting themselves in merit, such as giving and so on, over periods of four incalculable aeons (*asaṅkhyeyya*)¹ and a hundred thousand great aeons (*mahā-kappa*),² or eight incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, or sixteen incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons.
- (b) Solitary Buddhas (Pacceka Buddhas) attain enlightenment by themselves after going through a process of perfecting themselves in merit, such

¹ *Asaṅkhyeyya*: incalculable, innumerable; an immense period.

² *Kappa*: a cycle of time, reckoned with reference to individual and cosmic life.

Aeons (*kappa*) are of three principal classes, namely; *antara-kappa*, *asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*, and *mahā-kappa*. The interval during which human life-span increases from ten years (due to good conduct and kind heartedness) to infinity and then decreases (due to immorality and wickedness) to ten years, is reckoned as one intermediate aeon (*antara-kappa*). Sixty-four *antara-kappa* of the human world is called one incalculable aeon (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*); four incalculable aeons make one great aeon (*mahā-kappa*). In this context *mahā-kappa* is meant.

as giving, and so on, over two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons.

- (c) And the Chief Disciples (*aggasāvaka*) attain enlightenment after going through a process of perfecting themselves in merit such as giving, and so on, over one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons.
- (d) And the Great Disciples (*mahāsāvaka*) attain enlightenment after going through a process of perfecting themselves in merit, such as giving and so on, over a hundred thousand great aeons.
- (e) And the ordinary disciples (*pakatisāvaka*) attain enlightenment after going through a process of perfecting themselves in merit, such as giving and so on, over a hundred great aeons, or over a thousand great aeons.

As regards each of the five classes of Enlightened Ones, *i.e.*, the Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, the Paccekabuddha, the Chief Disciples, the Great Disciples and the Ordinary disciple, are the requisite periods of fulfilling their perfections to be counted beginning from the time of their expressing their respective wishes for the particular kind of enlightenment; or are they to be predicted (*vyākaraṇa*)¹ from the Buddha concerned?

The Fifth Question ⁰⁰⁵

Do all those various Enlightened Ones win enlightenment by fulfilling the perfections only after receiving the prediction, or do they win enlightenment by fulfilling the perfections without receiving the prediction?

The Sixth Question ⁰⁰⁶

Further, do those future Enlightened Ones, once having been blessed with the prediction, again wish for a different class of enlightenment other than the one assured for? Or don't they?

The Seventh Question ⁰⁰⁷

Someone fulfils meritorious deeds such as giving and so on, without wishing for any specific class of enlightenment, but simply wishing for realising Path Knowledge, its Fruition and nibbāna; what type or class of enlightenment is he entitled to (*katamāya bodhiyā buj्jheyya*)?

If it is the wish of the future Enlightened One to gain enlightenment as a Disciple on fulfilling the necessary perfections, does he attain enlightenment as he wished for (*i.e.*, as a Disciple)? If it is the wish of the future Enlightened

¹ *Vyākaraṇa*: Whenever an earnest Truth seeker reaches a certain stage of spiritual development, the Buddha of the day is wont to prophesy when and under what circumstances he will gain enlightenment; this is infallible and gives assurance to the future Enlightened ones.

One to gain enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha on fulfilling the necessary perfections, does he attain enlightenment as he wished for (*i.e.*, as a Paccekabuddha)? If it is the wish of the future Enlightened One to gain enlightenment as a Perfectly Enlightened One, or Buddha, on fulfilling the necessary perfections, does he attain enlightenment as he wished for (*i.e.*, as a Buddha)?

The Eighth Question⁰⁰⁸

Someone fulfils meritorious deeds such as giving and so on, wishing for enlightenment as a Disciple. Would he, either in the course of fulfilling the necessary perfections, or on having fulfilled the necessary perfections, wish for any other class of enlightenment (*i.e.*, other than that of a Disciple)? Or would he not? Supposing he does wish for some other class, would his wish be fulfilled or would it not? If his alternative wish be allowable, would it be as the result of partial, *i.e.*, supplementary, fulfilment of the perfections instead of the whole that would have been necessary? Or else, would the attainment be conditioned by a fresh undertaking of fulfilling the necessary perfections?

The Ninth Question⁰⁰⁹

Someone fulfils meritorious deeds such as giving and so on, wishing for enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha. Would he, either in the course of fulfilling the necessary perfections, or on having fulfilled the necessary perfections, wish for any other class of enlightenment (*i.e.*, other than that of a Disciple)? Or would he not? Supposing he does wish for some other class, would his wish be fulfilled? Or would it not? If his alternative wish be allowable, would it be as the result of partial, *i.e.*, supplementary, fulfilment of the perfections instead of the whole that would have been necessary? Or also would the attainment be conditioned by a fresh undertaking of fulfilling the necessary perfections?

The Tenth Question⁰¹⁰

Someone fulfils meritorious deeds such as giving and so on, wishing for enlightenment as a Perfectly Enlightened One, the Buddha. Would he, either in the course of fulfilling the necessary perfections, or on having fulfilled the necessary perfections, wish for any other class of enlightenment (*i.e.*, other than that of a Disciple)? Or would he not? Supposing he does wish for some other class, would his wish be fulfilled? Or would it not? If his alternative wish be allowable, would it be as the result of partial, *i.e.*, supplementary, fulfilment of the perfections instead of the whole that

would have been necessary? Or else would the attainment be conditioned by a fresh undertaking of fulfilling the necessary perfections?

The Eleventh Question ⁰¹¹

Do Paccekabuddhas and Disciples of the Buddha attain enlightenment after fulfilling the full thirty kinds of perfection; or do they attain enlightenment after fulfilling something less than that?

The Twelfth Question ⁰¹²

What is the minimum period for fulfilling the perfections for enlightenment as a Buddha's Disciple? Does one have to fulfil perfections for that minimum period so as to attain enlightenment?

The Thirteenth Question ⁰¹³

Do those future disciples (*i.e.*, the Chief Disciples, the Great Disciples and the Ordinary Disciples) who have fulfilled their respective perfections and who happen to be born in a Great aeon devoid of a Buddha (*Buddha-suñña-kappa*) attain enlightenment on their own? Or do they have to mark time until a great-aeon wherein the Buddha arises (*Buddhuppāda-kappa*) comes round?

The Fourteenth Question ⁰¹⁴

Do the Buddha, the Paccekabuddha and the Disciples of the Buddha receive their respective predictions that are of uniform factors; or are the various predictions of varying factors?

The Fifteenth Question ⁰¹⁵

Do the Perfectly Enlightened Ones, the Buddhas, only personally receive the prediction? Do the Paccekabuddhas and the Disciples of the Buddha also personally receive the prediction?

The Sixteenth Question ⁰¹⁶

Do all men or Devas or Brahmās need to fulfil the perfections covering the whole period allotted for the Disciples of the Buddha (*Buddhasāvaka*) *i.e.*, Elders (*thera*), Elder Nuns (*theri*), Novices (*sāmaṇera*), Female Novices (*sāmaṇeri*), and Female Probationers (*sikkhamānas*)? Or do they attain enlightenment after fulfilling the predictions for some lesser periods?

The Seventeenth Question ⁰¹⁷

Do the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, and Disciples of the Buddha arise only in this world-system? Or do they arise in other world-systems as well?

The Eighteenth Question ⁰¹⁸

Further, do the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, and Disciples of the Buddha, having been born in this world-system, fulfil the perfections just here? Or do they take birth and fulfil the perfections in other world-systems as well?

The Nineteenth Question ⁰¹⁹

Moreover, do the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, and Disciples of the Buddha take birth and fulfil the perfections in the Southern continent of Jambudīpa¹ only; or do they take birth and fulfil the perfections elsewhere, *i.e.*, in the other (three) continents and the surrounding lesser islands thereto, and the lesser islands of the Southern continent itself such as Sihala Island, Nāga Island, *etc.*?

The Twentieth Question ⁰²⁰

Further, in the Southern continent itself, do the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, and Disciples of the Buddha, take birth and fulfil the perfections in the Middle Country (*Majjhimadesa*) only; or do they take birth and fulfil the perfections in the outer regions (*paccanta desa*) as well?

The Way of the Wise ⁰²¹

(a) It is usual with questioners to concern themselves with one aspect of the matter only; for if they were to deal with the full aspects to a subject there would be no case for framing a question at all. No question would then arise. However, now that a series of questions are hereby framed it now behoves someone to tackle them.

(b) Why the need for tackling them? Because every question calls for an answer: where there is a question there always is some answer.

As the Suddasāratthajālīnī puts it:

“Where there is obviously an answer,

It is up to the wise man to raise a (fitting) question to it.”

And then the complementary stanza which says:

“Where there is obviously a question,

It is up to the wise man to come up with the answer.”

¹ **Jambudīpa:** the auspicious continent where the Rose Apple (Jambu) tree grows. It is one of the four great continents, constituting the world-system, the three others being Uttarakuru, the Northern, Pubbavideha, the Eastern, and Aparagoyana, the Western continent.

- (c) Now that there are this series of questions and that they demand answers, I call upon those who feel themselves competent, that is, who are standard-bearers of the Buddha's Teaching (*sāsanadhajūpamā*), the pennons of the proud continent of Jambudīpa, and within whose province the task lies (this not being the province of charlatans), who, citing good authority from their encyclopedic knowledge of the canonical texts and commentaries thereon, will interpret the inherent, natural meaning of the questions and satisfy the questioner beyond a shred of doubt, to answer these twenty questions.
- (d) If one should be incompetent, that is, not able to answer clearly and well in the aforementioned manner, one had better remain silent, with shoulders drooped and mouth shut, looking downcast, like the tree-stump at the cross-roads, or the door-slab.
- (e) However, why should the incompetent keep their silence? It is because certain competent persons will rise to the occasion: they being far superior to you are quite able to acquit themselves well (in the task of answering). Like the maned lion (*kesarasīha*), the noblest of the four kinds of lion — the other three being the brown lion (*paṇḍu-sīha*) the grass[-eating] lion (*tiṇa-sīha*) and the human-bodied lion (*nara-sīha* or *manussīha*) — who is the king of beasts, the wise one renowned for his learning in the Three Baskets of scriptures having nine divisions, together with commentaries, and subcommentaries thereon, will spell out the answers with the greatest confidence and mastery just as the king of beasts makes his roar that reverberates in the whole forest of three thousand leagues. When such a man of distinction takes upon the fitting task in elaborate skillfulness let the mediocre keep their silence!

*Here ends the Twenty Questions posed by
the late Sankyaung Sayādaw of Mandalay*

Answers to the Twenty Questions

The Undertaking of the Responder ⁰²²

Vissajjanaka ganthārambha

(a) May the Buddha,
The product of marvellous perfections
Culminating in the Full Enlightenment
Of Perfect Knowledge,
Discoverer of Path Knowledge,
Wielder of the well-developed Knowledge in Teaching
Who has brought the Light of the Fourfold Truth
To those fit for enlightenment,
Imparting the fully-developed Dhamma
Of Path Knowledge to the world,
Bring me success and prosperity!

(b) Our great teacher and benefactor
Sankyaung Sayādaw, recipient of the royal honorific title,
Sudassanavara-dhammasāmi-mahādhammarājādhirājaguru,
Firm (as the stone pillar at the city gate)
In virtue, concentration, and wisdom,
Has framed these twenty (erudite) questions (in Pāli);
I will now answer them (in Pāli)
Translating them fully (*i.e.*, questions and answers)
Into the vernacular (Burmese).

An Explanation on the Object of the Questioner

The questioner composes this verse with the object of demonstrating at the outset the efficacy of worshipping the Triple Gem that will bring success to his noble undertaking of posing the present set of twenty questions, in which (self-imposed) task he wishes to be secure in the knowledge that such veneration will ward off all evil, while ensuring auspiciousness and merit in both the mundane and supramundane spheres.

In this introductory verse the questioner, in framing his questions, implies that the mode of questioning will be both deep and broad, and that it will be more or less in accordance with the following methods:

The five forms of questions in commentarial literature on the Suttas, namely:

1. Adiṭṭhajotanā pucchā (questions illuminating that which is not seen)
2. Diṭṭhasandanā pucchā
3. Vimaticchedanā pucchā
4. Anumati pucchā
5. Kathetukamyatā pucchā

The four forms of questions in commentarial literature on Yamaka (Abhidhamma Piṭaka), namely:

1. Pure pañhā
2. Pacchā pañhā
3. Paripuṇṇa pañhā
4. Mogha pañhā

The four forms of questions in Aṅguttaranikāya, namely:

1. Ekaṃsavyākaraṇiya pañhā
2. Vibhajja vyākaraṇiya pañhā
3. Paṭipucchā vyākaraṇiya pañhā
4. Thapaniya pañhā

The five modes of questioning and answering in commentarial literature on Yamaka (Abhidhamma Piṭaka), namely:

1. Pāligati vissajjanā
2. Paṭivacana vissajjanā
3. Sarūpadassana vissajjanā
4. Paṭekkhepa vissajjanā
5. Paṭisedha vissajjanā

The four modes of answering in commentarial literature on the Suttas, namely:

1. Ekaṃsa vyākaraṇa
2. Vibhajja vyākaraṇa
3. Paṭipucchā vyākaraṇa
4. Ṭhapana vyākaraṇa

Those are the time-honoured methods in the scriptures.

Besides, according to common grammar there are:

(a) the six mixed modes, namely:

1. Antonīta method
2. Nikkhanta method
3. Paduddhāra method
4. Padapavesana method
5. Ābhoga method
6. Ākāra method

(b) the four ways of questioning (*codanā*), namely:

1. Ayutta
2. Ābhoga
3. Byutireka
4. Anvaya

(c) the four ways of answering (*parihāra*), namely:

1. Yutta
2. Ābhoga
3. Byatireka
4. Anvaya

For details the student should consult various works on grammar.

QUESTION: Why should the Buddha alone be worshipped?

ANSWER: Because even though the Dhamma and the Saṅgha are not worshipped, the primary purpose of success in the venture without obstacles is ensured by simply worshipping the Buddha.

For instance, in the Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi, it has been said that the Triple Gem being the fields of merit, veneration made to any one of the three brings success to one who fulfils the conditions of success himself. Such veneration is highly productive (*mahāpphala*), highly meritorious (*mahānisaṃsa*) and highly efficacious (*mahānubhāva*), provided the aspirant himself is not lacking in the conditions of success. For a truly worthy one has full confidence both in his own ability and in the efficacy of veneration to the Buddha, just as a master archer would not bother to carry a bundle of arrows but only one.⁰²³

On the other hand: The Buddha's homage worthiness is identical with that of the Triple Gem so that paying homage to the Buddha also amounts to paying homage to the Dhamma and the Saṅgha as well, *i.e.*, veneration to the Buddha implies veneration to the Dhamma and the Saṅgha too.

See *ibid.*⁰²⁴ See also the Kaṇṇakattala Sutta¹ Aṭṭhakathā.⁰²⁵

¹ The reference is to the previous Sutta, the Dhammacetiya Sutta (ed.)

On the other hand: It has been pointed out that by taking the foremost thing the adjuncts are also taken: “*Padhāne gahite appadhānampi gahitameva*” (cf: *saddhatitathāgatassa bodhiṇi*).

See also the commentary on the *Āṅguttaranikāya*.⁰²⁶

On the other hand: As pointed out in the *Udāna*, the term ‘Buddha’ refers to the Perfectly Enlightened One (*Sabbaññūtabuddha*) as well as a Disciple of the Buddha (*Sāvaka**buddha*).⁰²⁷

Now, when the Buddha and the Saṅgha are venerated, the Dhamma, with which the Buddha and the Saṅgha are embodied, also becomes automatically venerated. See the *Paramatthadīpanī*, the commentary on the *Udāna*⁰²⁸ and the Subcommentary on the *Mahāvagga* of the *Dīghanikāya*.⁰²⁹

The above are the arguments that are relevant and proper to explain why the Buddha alone is venerated here.

Some Remarks on the Mode of Veneration

‘*Paṇāmya*’ in the opening stanza is the same as *paṇāma*, synonymous with the act of veneration (*vandana*). How this act is carried out is defined in the *Āṅguttaranikāya* (Book of the Threes) as: “*Tissa imā bhikkhave vandaṇā kāyena vācāya manasā:*” — “The act consists in physical, verbal or mental veneration.”

(1) As regards the physical act there may be either prostrating (*pañcapatīṭṭhitā vandana*) or just raising the joined palms towards the person or object venerated (*añjalikamma vandana*).

Prostrating means lowering oneself on the ground at the feet of the person venerated so that one’s knees, hands and forehead are touching the ground or floor, hence the term ‘resting on five points,’ (*pañcapatīṭṭhita*). See the Pāḷi definition at.⁰³⁰ Therein, only the five points of resting are mentioned, but whereon to rest on the ground (*bhūmiyaṃ*) is specifically mentioned in the *Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā*.⁰³¹

In the *Vinayālaṅkāra-ṭīkā* another definition of the fivefold mode of worship is given as consisting in these factors:

1. Placing the outer robe on one’s left shoulder,
2. Raising the joined palms,
3. Touching the feet of the person venerated,
4. Feeling adoration, and
5. Showing respect.

The above definition may be relevant to certain situations.⁰³²

In the later commentary on the Silakkhandha, still another version of the fivefold mode of worshipping is stated. According to it the five factors are: the feet, the knees, the elbows, the hands and the head touching the ground or the floor directed towards the person venerated. This is a novel interpretation of the fivefold prostration which has not gained general acceptance.

Raising joined palms as worshipping posture is defined as raising the joined palms over one's forehead towards the person venerated: (*Añjali-kamma nāma karapuṭa samāyogo*). See the commentary on the Theragāthā in elaboration of this definition.⁰³³

Of the two modes of worship, prostration excels raising joined palms: this is the traditional practice. See the Therīgāthā and its commentary.⁰³⁴

In elaboration of the joined palms the commentaries to the Nidāna and the Maṅgala Buddhavaṃsa, say that the palms are so joined as to have the hollow of the hands united in the shape of a full-grown lotus bud,⁰³⁵ and it is in view of these statements that the poet in his '*Kogan pyo*'¹ vividly describes the manner of the congregation of bhikkhus paying homage to the Buddha. It may be mentioned incidentally that in the act of the fivefold prostration the hands are not required to form a lotus-bud shape, but only touching them to the ground is needed.

Regarding verbal veneration: all forms of devotional utterances in praise of the Triple Gem from plain words to the most elaborate eulogies — whether in Pāli or in one's vernacular — constitute verbal veneration.

Mental veneration means remembering the noble attributes of the Triple Gem. Composing devotional literature, though executed by hand (*i.e.*, physically), is included in verbal veneration as the writing is usually uttered.

The act of veneration (*paṇāma*) is often referred to as salutation or showing respect (*abhivādana*). For instance, in the Buddhavaṃsa, showing respect has three synonymous expressions, namely: praising (*thomana*), adoration (*vandana*), and paying homage (*namassana*).⁰³⁶ The commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa defines those four terms.⁰³⁷

"*Pucchissaṃ*" (of course) means, "I shall pose certain questions." See Paramattha-dīpanī, being the commentary on the Vimānavatthu wherein it is said: "*Pucchāmi'ti nātum icchāmi pañhaṃ karomi'ti attho.*"

Here ends the Explanation on the Object of the Questioner

¹ The Venerable Mahā-Raṭṭhasāra of Ava, 15th Century poet and writer famous for poetic renderings of scriptural stories. Kogan-pyo, a ballad-like poem of nine divisions is based on Hatthipāla Jātaka, Visati-nipāta in Jātaka, Birth Stories of the Buddha.

Answer to the First Question

Having worshipped the Buddha as the preliminary task (*pubba kicca*) the questioner sets his questions beginning with the words: “Yo lokiyalokuttarasukhāni.”

The answer to the first question is:

That meritorious acts done with a view to mundane as well as supramundane benefits will result in both mundane and supramundane prosperity — provided it has not become ineffective or inoperative (*ahosi kamma*). If it has become ineffective it will contribute to supramundane prosperity.

That indeed is so. For an act of volition may become ineffective in respect of mundane result only: there is no good kamma that fails to contribute to supramundane welfare, and supramundane welfare is actually not the direct product of mundane merit, but just an advantage (*ānisaṃsa*) accrued.

Advantage Explained

This is no mean benefit since merit sought with a view to Path Knowledge and its Fruition, nibbāna, the release from the resultant round of kamma (*i.e., vivatta*), has wonderful potential. It may be likened to the flash of a thunderbolt hitting a great tree which has the sure effect of killing it, for supramundane merit, however seemingly slight, has the prolonged effect of burning up the defilements that usually overwhelm a worldling. In short, it acts as sufficing condition (*upanissaya*) for enlightenment along the Path.

This has been pointed out by the commentator on the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa as follows:

“Fruit (*phala*) and advantage (*ānisaṃsa*), though synonymous, are quite distinct in meaning. ‘Phala’ connotes abundant fruition of merit, hence it goes by the name ‘mahāpphala.’ ‘Ānisaṃsa’ means the potential for sufficing condition (*upanissaya paccayo*) for the noble (*mahanto*) supramundane happiness, hence it is called ‘mahānisaṃsa.’ That indeed is so because even the simplest offerings by one of virtue, concentration, and wisdom (*sīlādiguṇa-yuttassa*) such as a handful of almsfood or a humble thatched hut, five cubits square with an earthen floor, can prevent the donor from falling to the miserable states over thousands of aeons, and also serves as sufficing condition for the attainment of the deathless element of nibbāna.”⁰³⁸

(From this comment we can gather that supramundane benefit is not a direct fruit yet is a boon, a blessing, a decided advantage (*ānisaṃsa*).

A Possible Question

QUESTION: On what authority is it said that merit done with a view both to mundane and supramundane benefit is rewarding both ways?

ANSWER: There are instances such as that of Bhūridatta the Nāga king, or Campeyya the Nāga king or Saṅkhapāla the Nāga king.

- (a) In the Bhūridatta Jātaka, Mahānipāta, the Buddha recounted thus:– “Longing for the celestial mansions such as Sakka’s Vejayanta Palace, where the gods of Tāvatiṃsa dwell in great luxury and happiness, I kept the fasting-day precepts (*Uposatha sīla*) and dwelled on the top of the hillock.”⁰³⁹
- (b) Again, in the Cariyāpiṭaka, the same abiding of Bhūridatta is narrated as follows:– “Seeing the definitely happy state of those gods at the Realm of the Thirty-three, I took upon myself the practice of virtue with the object of getting there.”⁰⁴⁰
- (c) In the Campeyya Jātaka, the Nāga king tells his captor thus:– “Great King, I keep the fasting-day precepts not for the sake of my children, nor for riches, nor for my longevity as a Nāga; I am making my earnest effort with a view to rebirth as a human being, which I ardently wish for.”
- (d) In the Saṅkhapāla Jātaka the Nāga king Saṅkhapāla kept his fast for similar reasons.

Judging from the above birth stories of the Buddha, we may note that merit acquired with mundane and supramundane objectives mixed together add to one’s perfection necessary for Path Knowledge culminating in nibbāna.

QUESTION: One might ask: in those quotations above, where is the wish for the supramundane?

ANSWER: Those acts of merit are counted as fulfilments of perfections (*pārami*) which, as the term signifies, implies an underlying motive for supramundane benefit. And the fact of their being so counted is expressly mentioned in the Cariyāpiṭaka, which is explained in the Paramatthadīpanī, the commentary thereon. Similar explanations on this point are also to be found in the Aṭṭhasālinī, Paṭhama Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Madhuratthavilāsini (Commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa), Visuddhajanavilāsini (Commentary to the Apadāna), Jātātattakī, etc.

The underlying motive in wishing for rebirth in the human realm has also been stated in the Campeyya Jātaka and Saṅkhapāla Jātaka⁰⁴¹ which

says: "I too, on attaining human existence, will work for the end of the cycle of births and deaths."

As the commentator on the Bhūridatta-cariya points out, the express wishes in keeping the fast have an underlying motive of enlightenment in due course (**Bodhiparipacānaṃ**: lit., Ripening towards enlightenment).

"My virtuous practice of fast-day precepts, while maturing into Perfect Enlightenment, will also be a cause for rebirth in the Realm of the Thirty-three gods," thus I pondered; and thereupon I went to the Nāga realm of Bhogavatī and told my parents: 'Mother, father, I am going to take upon myself the observance of the Uposatha precepts'."⁴²

The commentator then adds that Bhūridatta was reborn in the deva realm after his death.

End of the Answer to the First Question

Answer to the Second Question

Cultivating perfections (*pāramī*), as defined in the Jinālaṅkāra-ṭikā,⁴³ is a meritorious act aimed at nibbāna. Therefore, performing merit with a desire solely for worldly benefit does not amount to fulfilment of perfection. Nevertheless, the questioner uses the term "Meritorious deeds such as giving and so on (*dānādīpāramiyo*)," because such good acts fall in line with the Buddha's Teaching about meritorious acts.

Or, to argue in a different way: since giving and such like deeds of merit are in fact manifestations (*paññatti*) of the wise, the worthy ones, the deeds done by such superior persons may safely be regarded as fulfilment of perfection: "*Paramānaṃ paṇḍitānaṃ kammaṃ pāramī.*"

An act of merit done with purely worldly interest does not constitute a sufficing condition (*upanissaya*) for Path Knowledge: it merely results in worldly success such as high birth or affluence.

As the commentators on the Aṅguttaranikāya and Saṃyuttanikāya, in their works entitled Manorathapūraṇi and Sārathhappakāsini respectively, put it:

- (a) Let it be a humble gift such as a sheaf of grass, or a munificent one like that of the Bodhisatta Velāmaka the brahmin, if it be given with the giver's object directed at lowly rewards of worldly success (*vaṭṭa sampatti*), the deed will result in mere mundane prosperity subject to endless rebirth (*vaṭṭameva*). It is not helpful in taking the giver out of the cycle of rebirths or to nibbāna.

- (b) If, on the other hand, one wishes for the rebirth-free nibbāna, saying, “May this good deed lead me towards the exhaustion of the taints (*āsava*) in my mental makeup” then such rightly-directed merit, by virtue of its absence of longing for rebirth, is capable of enlightenment as an Arahant or a Paccekabuddha or a Perfectly Enlightened Buddha.⁰⁴⁴

End of the Answer to the Second Question

Answer to the Third Question

Merit acquired with the sole intent for supramundane happiness means merit unalloyed with the debasing taints of ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*) etc., but associated with the pure, uplifting forces (*i.e.*, mental concomitants) of faith or confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). It is of the exceptionally noble (*ukkaṭṭhatama*) type. Therefore it carries the sufficing condition for Path Knowledge with its positive powers of destroying the defilements and breaking the fetters that bind one to the cycle of rebirths. Moreover, throughout the intervening period before gaining Path Knowledge it bestows the meritorious author with all the greatest and the highest that the world has to offer by way of glorious birth and exalted position, etc. Herein, worldly benefits such as birth and status are the direct fruits of the good action while Path Knowledge and nibbāna are the potential consequences.

In the commentaries on the Dhammadāyāda Sutta recorded in the Majjhimanikāya and Khuddakanikāya, Itivuttaka, it has been pointed out that the desire for breaking away from the process of rebirth, solely directed towards (lit., ‘leaning on’) nibbāna (*vivaṭṭupaniṣṣitaṃ*) may be present in direct actions as well as in apt applications (*upacāra dhamma*) of the Teaching in everyday life. In this world, some people, desirous of breaking away from the round of resultants may give alms or offerings, observe the moral precepts such as the five fundamental vows, or the eight or ten Uposatha vows, or restraint under the bhikkhus’ fundamental rules (*Pāṭimokkha saṃvara sīla*), make offerings of scents, perfumes and flowers to the Triple Gem, listen to the Dhamma, teach the Dhamma, practise mindfulness and build up concentration. Such persons gradually attain to the unequivocal element (*nippariyāya dhamma*) of the deathless nibbāna. This is how nibbāna is won methodically over time (*pariyāya dhamma*).⁰⁴⁵

A note on the word gradually (*anupubbena*) in the above quotation:—

“Gradually” connotes that one proceeds in surpassing prosperity (*sampatti-atikama*) through happy existences in the human and celestial

planes steadily towards nibbāna. It does not connote the process of enlightenment along the Path and its Fruitions. In the Commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya (Book of the Ones) this has been explained as follows:—

“It is the mind that is crucial here, the mind that is born of a will to abandon the round of rebirths (*vivaṭṭavasena*). For it is that well-directed mind that sets one on the right course whereby one proceeds from one happy existence to another — from human happiness to celestial happiness, and thence to the bliss of absorption (*jhāna sukhaṃ*), and then maturing into the bliss of insight (*vipassanā sukhaṃ*), which leads to the peace of Path Knowledge (*magga sukhaṃ*) and the serenity of its Fruitions (*phala sukhaṃ*), culminating in the ultimate bliss of nibbāna (*nibbāna sukhaṃ*). As it so superbly bears one (*adhivahati*), and carries one (*āharati*) to the bliss of nibbāna, it is called the conveyor, the transport, the vehicle (*adhivāhana*).”⁰⁴⁶

There are certain teachers who believe that merit acquired with the desire for release from *saṃsāra* (*vivaṭṭa kusala*) being in the nature of destroying kamma, good or bad, does not carry any advantage in the mundane sphere (*vattasampatti*). This is incorrect. Merit with the desire for release does not rule out mundane merit: it only excludes volition productive of Path Knowledge (*magga cetanā*) and Path Knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) itself. This has been clearly stated in the commentary to the Kukkuravatika Sutta¹ and in the commentary to the Aṅguttaranikāya (Book of Fours).²

The commentary on the Paṭṭhāna⁰⁴⁷ elaborates on the point as follows:—

- (a) “In the Triplet on the Dhammā which have “Dhammā of lesser efficacy as object” (*appamāṇārammaṇā cetanā*), means the volition associated with Maturity Knowledge (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*) and Reviewing Knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*) that arises in the three classes of the Noble Ones still in training (*sekkha puggala*). Thus should it also be said.
- (b) “Resultant consciousness belongs to the phenomena that have lesser efficacy as object.” They include the rebirth-consciousness of the great resultant type (*mahāvīpāka*) in the happy course of existence in the sensuous sphere (*kāmasugati*) as the mental aggregate (*nāmakkhanda*) with consciousness having three good roots in connection with wisdom (*ñāṇa-sampayutta tihetuka*) that has as its object the kamma characterized by Maturity Knowledge or Change-of-lineage consciousness immediately followed by Cleansing Knowledge (*vodāna-ñāṇa*) and Reviewing Knowledge. They also include the mental groups comprising the Meritorious Resultant (*kusala vipāka*) types of consciousness that

¹ *Akaṇhaṃ asukkanti kammakkhayakaraṃ catumaggacetanākammaṃ adhippetam.* (MA.iii.103).

² *Akaṇhaṃ asukkanti kammakkhayakaraṃ catumaggāñāṇaṃ adhippetam.* (AA.ii.230).

continue to occur in the course of an existence. This class of consciousness arises as the five sense types of consciousness such as eye-conscious, *etc.*, due to contact with the five sensual objects. They arise by way of receiving consciousness (*sampaticchana*) and investigating consciousness (*santirāṇa*). Also included is the mental group comprising the Meritorious Resultant types of consciousness that come to be taken up (by the mind) by way of registration consciousness (*tadārammaṇa*) of the six kinds (pertaining to the six sense-bases) due to sensuous impulsion consciousness (*javana*). All those mental groups are conditioned by kamma operating from a previous (different) time (*nānākkhaṇika kamma*).

The view held by some that Maturity Knowledge or Change-of-lineage consciousness does not result in rebirth is rejected by the above passage.

As the Saddhammapakkāsinī, the commentary on the Paṭisambhidāmagga, also explains:

- (a) The expression, “It is the condition of future rebirth” is to be understood thus: when kamma associated with the Knowledge of Equanimity about conditioned things is very strong and brings forth sensuous rebirth, the attachment to insight, which is greed itself, provides the condition for rebirth in one of the seven fortunate existences of the sensuous sphere. Hence where kamma, the volition that arises as Knowledge of Equanimity about conditioned things, is the direct cause or the generator of rebirth, the defilement, *i.e.*, greed, acts as the supportive condition.
- (b) “In the case of (lit., on the occasion of) those still in training, referred to as ‘those beyond penetrative Knowledge’ — for the Stream-winner or the Once-returner who has won the Fruition of the Path without achieving absorption, their kamma causes rebirth since the attachment to insight provides the condition for rebirth in the fortunate existences of the sensuous sphere, thanks to the kamma associated with the Knowledge of Equanimity about conditioned things.
- (c) “Furthermore, one who has gained absorption and attained the Fruition of a Stream-winner, Once-returner, or Non-returner, being gifted with rebirth (*paṭisandhidānato*) in Brahmā realms does not carry the kamma that conditions rebirth in the sensuous sphere.

To recapitulate:— Knowledge of Adaptation (*anuloma-ñāṇa*) and Maturity Knowledge (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*) belong to the mentality group that is defiled by attachment to insight with the result that they become a condition for rebirth. Thus should it be noted.⁰⁴⁸

Considering the fact as quoted in the above Commentaries that even karmas associated with Knowledge of Equanimity about conditioned things, Knowledge of Adaptation, Maturity Knowledge, Cleansing Knowledge and Reviewing Knowledge, are productive of rebirth and the resultant types of consciousness of mundane existence, it goes without saying that mundane merit such as giving, *etc.*, will bring forth success in the mundane field only.

Answer to a Hypothetical Question¹

The questioner does not frame a separate question on the efficacy of merit done without any specific desire, mundane or otherwise. This is simply because it is obvious that such merit also is capable of resulting in mundane welfare, *i.e.*, fortunate existences and affluent states. If one were to frame such a question it might run as follows:—

“Now, someone performs meritorious deeds such as giving with no particular wish for either mundane or supramundane benefits. Will he enjoy the fruit thereof only in the mundane field? Or will he attain to supramundane Knowledge only? Or will he enjoy both? Or will he be denied both?”⁰⁴⁹

The answer is: such merit does not bring supramundane advantage, *cf.* Commentary on the Cakkavatti Sutta:—

“Tender-heartedness due to parental love towards one’s children, and tender-heartedness due to filial love towards one’s parents are called ‘merit leading to the round of rebirths’ (*vaṭṭa gāmi kusalaṃ*), and in its ultimate influence (*pariyosānaṃ*) it can land one in the glorious existence of a Universal Monarch.”⁰⁵⁰

It will be seen that parental love and filial love are not states of mind with any particular rewards in view and yet such love constitutes merit capable of rebirth as a Universal Monarch. And the commentator is giving here as an example a most trifling class of merit. It therefore follows that any merit without a particular end in view is bound to bear fruit in the mundane sphere in a fitting manner.

To elaborate: Take, for instance, the good works done by a bhikkhu who, having entered monkhood taking up his vows with the prescribed formulae in requesting: “Please give me the going-forth for the sake of liberation from the cycle of rebirth,” and “Out of compassion, Venerable sirs, may the Saṅgha give me the higher ordination.”⁰⁵¹

Who performs such duties, either for himself or for his fellow-monks, such as making an umbrella, making a pair of slippers, baking an alms-bowl, dyeing and making robes out of rags, constructing a monastic shelter or

¹ “Hypothetical question.” (*laddhaguṇasambhava puccha*), lit., “A question that could arise by virtue of the foregoing answers.”

repairing it, and so on. These good deeds, for all their casual nature, are classed as merit divorced from the round of rebirths (*vivaṭṭanissita kusala*), merely by virtue of their purity of good practice (*āgamasuddhi*).

Hence the commentary on the Itivuttaka says:-

“Therein, knowledge may be of various kinds. For instance, an intelligent bhikkhu may have the skill to make an umbrella: while another has the ability to make requisites such as robes, *etc.* All such bhikkhu duties, being performed under the good guidance of the Buddha’s Discipline, those skills cannot be written off lightly: they have the potential to become the proximate cause (*padaṭṭhāna*) of enlightenment along the Path and its Fruition. On the other hand, a bhikkhu who, having gone forth under the Buddha’s Teaching, acquires skills in degeneracy (*kuladūsaṇaṃ*) and impropriety (*anesanaṃ*) such as practising medicine; such skills are a sure source of intensification of mental taints (*āsavā*).”⁰⁵²

The Subcommentary then adds:

“‘Under the good guidance of the Discipline’ (*vaṭṭasisēṭhatvā*)¹ means making the bhikkhus’ rules of conduct as one’s sacred part, *i.e.*, the head. Thus, holding the discipline in the greatest regard, a bhikkhu, pure in livelihood, makes useful things such as umbrellas, *etc.*, either for those fellow bhikkhus who are not able to make them, or for one’s own use, so that it would protect the user against the elements. Such actions amount to providing protection for oneself or others. It constitutes a sufficing condition for Path Knowledge, and therefore should not be discouraged (*na vattaḅbaṃ*) as not serving as a proximate cause of enlightenment.”⁰⁵³

Four Types of Merit

1. Meritorious action done casually, without any consideration for its effect.
2. Meritorious action done just with mundane welfare in view.
3. Meritorious action done with both mundane and supramundane benefits in view.
4. Meritorious action done with the unalloyed desire for the supramundane (*nibbāna*).

Of those four, the fourth one is to be cherished most. In case it fails to appeal to you, the third one is the next best choice, failing which the second, and the first in decreasing order.

Considering the fact that the mundane benefits such as noble existence, noble birth, suitable locality, *etc.*, wished for by *Campeyya* and *Saṅkhapāla*

¹ Lit. “Placing the good practice on one’s head.” See the following Subcommentary.

nāga kings, was actuated by their ultimate desire to effectively carry out the perfections such as giving and observance of moral precepts, *etc.*, as human beings their objective is practical as well as praiseworthy.

This point has been highlighted by the commentator on the Saṅkhārupapatti Sutta¹ thus:—

- (a) “Someone is endowed with the five ennobling qualities (faith, virtue, learning, liberality, and wisdom), but he makes no wish for any particular existence. Then his future destination is uncertain. On the other hand, someone makes some specific wish for a certain existence but he lacks the five ennobling qualities. His future destination is uncertain too. However, for someone who fulfils both aspects (of wishing and personal merit); the future destination is certain.
- (b) “That indeed is so. Just as a spear thrown up into the sky is unpredictable as to how it will fall to the ground, *i.e.*, whether it will fall on its tip, or on its shaft-end, or sidewise, so also the acquiring of fresh becoming (*paṭisandhi-gahānaṃ*) is unpredictable. That being so, it behoves us that we wish for a certain plane of existence whenever some meritorious act is performed.”⁰⁵⁴

Some Possible Questions

QUESTION: If that is the case, would a doer of merit with just the supramundane benefit in view, making no specific wish for any form of existence, be faced with uncertainty as to his rebirth — just like a spear thrown up into the sky?

ANSWER: In accordance with the explanations given in the Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā⁰⁵⁵ and Dhātusamyutta Aṭṭhakathā.

The answer is: That merit done with the supramundane in view is of such distinctly superior type (*ukkaṭṭhatama*) that it has the potential to guide the course of the doer with the result that it always lands one in suitable favourable existences, clans and states so that there is no fear of one falling into disarray.

QUESTION: In that case, would your answer nullify the earlier commentator who says it is well that a merit-seeker should wish for some form of existence?

ANSWER: The distinctly superior type of merit is found to have the inherent advantage of averting the undesirable or disadvantageous craving for

¹ MA.iv.416.

past existences and leading the doer to wish for advantageous existences in the cases of Janavasabha the son of a deva, and Gandhabba the son of a deva. Moreover, this type of merit has other advantages too.

As the Paṭisambhidāmagga puts it:–

“To have done skilful things in the past’ (*pubbe ca kata puññatā*) means to have amassed merit done in previous existences. Further, herein, of the four kinds of fortune or success (*sampatti*), the good fortune of having done merit in previous existences is the measure (*pamāṇam*) of one’s success in the present existence. That indeed is so because when someone, with a prudent mind, *i.e.*, consciousness associated with knowledge (*ñānasampayuttā cittena*) has done an act of merit, that merit leads (*upaneti*) him to a suitable locality (*patirūpadesa*)¹ and lets him consort with the righteous (*sappurisa*). Thus he will find himself properly placed.² Thus should it be noted.”

The commentator on the Dhātu Saṃyutta⁰⁵⁶ likewise says:–

“Merit done with a prudent mind sends the doer to some favourable abode and lets him follow the righteous ones. Thus he will on his own accord find a sound footing.”³

End of the Answer to the Third Question

Answer to the Fourth Question

The gist of the question is: “When do the requisite periods for fulfilling the perfections start?” *i.e.*, whether from the time of expressing the respective wishes or from the day they receive the prediction from the Buddha of the day. In this question five types of enlightenment are involved out of which the first signifies *Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa* and *Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*, *viz.* “*Sammāsambodhin’ti Arahatta-magga-ñāṇaṅceva sabbaññuta-ñāṇaṅca.*”⁴

N.B. In the Commentary to the Cariyāpiṭaka, ‘*bodhi*’ in this context is taken in two senses: *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* as one, *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* and *Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa* as the other. In the Madhuratthavilāsini, the Commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa, only *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* is taken.

In the following cases ‘*bodhi*’ is taken to mean the four stages of path knowledge, and *sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* is excluded.

¹ *Patirūpadesa*: is defined by a place blessed with these four good fortunes (*sampatti*): 1) being born in a fortunate existence, *i.e.*, in the human world and the six sensual celestial planes (*gati sampatti*); 2) having a fine physique (*upadhi sampatti*); 3) to have come upon good times (*kāla-sampatti*); 4) to have a facility for good actions (*payoga sampatti*).

² *So eva puggalo attānaṃ sammā-ṭhapeti*: lit., ‘That person just places himself well.’

³ The Pāli text is almost the same as the Paṭisambhidāmagga above.

⁴ **Paramatthajotikā**, the Commentary on the Suttanipāta.

Incidentally, in all the five cases 'bodhi' may mean nibbāna — *q.v.* 'Patvāna bodhiṃ amataṃ asaṅkhatam' (of the Text).

Now as to the answer to this question:

All the periods required for fulfilling the perfections, namely:

1. For the Perfectly Enlightened Buddhas, four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, or eight incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, or sixteen incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons (according to the type to be explained later on);
2. For Paccekabuddhas, two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons;
3. For the Chief Disciples (*Aggasāvaka*), one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons;
4. For the Great Disciples (*Mahāsāvaka*) a hundred thousand great aeons — are reckoned from the day, *i.e.*, the Kappa, they receive the prediction, and not from the time they made their solemn wishes. Nor is the reckoning done from the time of a general prophesy of their future enlightenment (*aniyata vyākaraṇa*), nor from some later prediction by the subsequent Buddhas after the prediction.
5. As for the ordinary disciples (*pakatisāvaka*) there is no firm declaration amounting to prediction. So their periods of fulfilling the perfections that may vary from a hundred great aeons to a thousand great aeons or more, are to be reckoned from the time they earnestly wish for nibbāna, disdaining all mundane merit, *i.e.*, when *vivaṭṭa kusala* began to be developed.

As regards the three types of Buddhas, the periods for fulfilling the perfections vary in accordance with whether a Buddha relies on wisdom as his mainstay (*paññādhika*), on faith (*saddhādhika*) or on energy (*viriyādhika*); the periods being four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, eight incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, and sixteen incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, respectively.

This can be found in the Commentary on the Cariyāpiṭaka where it says:—

“Those three types of Buddhas (*i.e.*, the wisdom-predominant one, the faith-predominant one and the energy-predominant one) having set their minds firmly (*abhinihāra*) on Buddhahood and done meritorious actions since time immemorial, and having heard from the contemporary Buddha's lips the (enthralling) declaration prophesying their own Buddhahood in the remote future, and having gradually fulfilled the perfections over

periods of four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, or eight incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, or sixteen incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, respectively, attained Perfect Enlightenment."⁰⁵⁷

From that statement we are to note that there is no marked difference in the period of pursuing Buddhahood prior to the august prophesy or assurance, and that only thereafter the periods vary according to the Bodhisatta's own choice.

Just as with each of the three types of Buddhas the periods for fulfilling the perfections vary from four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons and so on, depending on whether it is the 'wisdom' type, the 'faith' type or the 'energy' type, so also with Paccekabuddhas the periods vary as follows:—

For the 'wisdom' type it is two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons; for the 'faith' type it is two incalculable aeons and two hundred thousand great aeons; for the 'energy' type, it is two incalculable aeons and ten million great aeons.

This has been mentioned in the Commentaries on the Suttanipāta⁰⁵⁸ and Theragāthā:—

"This indeed is so. Even with the state of a 'wisdom' type of Paccekabuddha (*paññādhika bhāve*) the aspirant has to fulfil the perfections over two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons. This is the minimum requirement; nothing less would do. In the case of the 'faith' type and 'energy' type of Paccekabuddhas, the term lasts several great aeons beyond two incalculable aeons, but never beyond three incalculable aeons, *i.e.*, they attain *Paccekabodhi-ñāṇa* within three incalculable aeons. Thus should it be noted."

N.B. The expression '*Na tatiyaṃ asaṅkhyeyyaṃ*' implies an indefinite period falling short of the third *asaṅkhyeyya*. The periods assignable to the 'faith' type and the 'energy' type may be distinguished depending on the aspirant's own discretion.

The principle of the three varying periods also applies to the Chief Disciples and the Great Disciples. With the former, the 'wisdom' type needs a minimum of one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons, extending up to any period short of two incalculable aeons; the period beyond the first incalculable in excess of the first hundred thousand great aeons and the last great aeons of the first incalculable is to be suitably apportioned between the three types. Similarly, with the latter, the period between the first great aeon in excess of the first hundred thousand great

aeons and the last great aeon of the first hundred thousand has to be apportioned between the three types.

All those periods, of course, start running from the aeon when the aspirant receives his prediction from the Buddha of the day, *vide* the Commentary on the Theragāthā:⁰⁵⁹

“For the future Paccekabuddhas, having been assured by the living Buddha of success by virtue of the five factors constituting the solemn vow namely; being a human being (*manussattaṃ*), being male (*liṅgasampatti*), seeing a taint-free living Buddha (*vigatāsava dassanaṃ*), being dedicated to perfection (*adhikāro*) and an unflinching desire for Paccekabuddhahood (*chandatā*); and for the Disciples of the Buddha who are endowed with the twofold requisite factors of having performed merit towards perfection as befitting a would-be Arahant and having an unflinching desire to become a Buddha’s Disciple — there is no attaining to the desired goal until the requisite period has been duly served. Why? Because the wisdom has not matured until then.”

In this connection we are also to note that the four classes of enlightened ones — the Buddhas, the Paccekabuddhas, the Chief Disciples and the Great Disciples, prior to receiving the prediction, have to acquire the sufficing conditions through meritorious actions in the presence of myriads of Buddhas in the past.

A Possible Question

In that case, how long would an aspirant to Buddhahood have to undergo acquiring prior merit sufficient to receive the prediction? According to the Samantabuddhikā, the Commentary on the Anāgatavaṃsa:—

First, an aspirant to Buddhahood has to train himself for acquiring a sense of shame of misconduct (*hirisampatti*) for five hundred lives; for a sense of moral dread for misconduct (*ottappasampatti*) for one thousand lives, and for attainment in the proper discipline (religious practice) for five thousand lives; thus making a total of six thousand five hundred lives. Then he has to go through a hundred thousand great aeons, acquiring further merit. Then only does he become fit to receive the prediction. That is the norm (*Dhammatā*).⁰⁶⁰

In the Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi too, the threefold acquisition is mentioned.⁰⁶¹ This is elaborated in Buddhist literature such as the Sotattakī, Tathāgatuppatti, *etc.*, as follows:—

“Sāriputta, for seven incalculable aeons I wished for Buddhahood mentally (only); then for nine incalculable aeons I wished for it by word of mouth; and then for four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons I

wished for it while fulfilling the perfections by doing meritorious acts mentally, verbally and physically. That much did I fulfil the perfections.”⁰⁶²

The period of mental prayers ran as follows:—

1. *Nanda-saṅkhyeyya* marked by five thousand Buddhas beginning with Brahma Deva, etc.;
2. *Sunanda-saṅkhyeyya* marked by nine thousand Buddhas;
3. *Pathavi-saṅkhyeyya* marked by ten thousand Buddhas;
4. *Maṇḍa-saṅkhyeyya* marked by eleven thousand Buddhas;
5. *Dharaṇī-saṅkhyeyya* marked by twenty thousand Buddhas;
6. *Sāgara-saṅkhyeyya* marked by thirty thousand Buddhas;
7. *Puṇḍarika-saṅkhyeyya* marked by forty thousand Buddhas. During those seven incalculable aeons (*asaṅkhyeyya*) those Buddhas totalling one hundred and twenty-five thousand appeared, to whom the future Gotama Buddha made mental wishes to become a Buddha.

The period of verbal prayers ran as follows:—

1. *Sabbabhadda-saṅkhyeyya* marked by five thousand Buddhas beginning with Porāṇa, Sakyamuni, etc.;
2. *Sabbaphulla-saṅkhyeyya* marked by sixty thousand Buddhas;
3. *Sabbaratana-saṅkhyeyya* marked by seventy thousand Buddhas;
4. *Usabhakkhandha-saṅkhyeyya* marked by eighty thousand Buddhas;
5. *Mānibhadda-saṅkhyeyya* marked by ninety thousand Buddhas;
6. *Paduma-saṅkhyeyya* marked by twenty thousand Buddhas;
7. *Usabha-saṅkhyeyya* marked by ten thousand Buddhas;
8. *Khandhuttama-saṅkhyeyya* marked by five thousand Buddhas;
9. *Sabbapāla-saṅkhyeyya* marked by two thousand Buddhas. During those nine incalculable aeons (*asaṅkhyeyya*), the above Buddhas, totalling three hundred and forty-two thousand appeared to whom the future Gotama Buddha made verbal wishes to become a Buddha.

Thus for sixteen incalculable aeons (*asaṅkhyeyya*) the future Gotama Buddha fulfilled the perfections even before he received the prediction (from Dīpaṅkara Buddha). Incidentally, that (sixteen incalculable aeons) is the rule for all other Bodhisattas as well for receiving the prediction.

This is one version.

Another version:

In the Subcommentary to the Mahāvagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya the author says:

The periods for the Bodhisattas to fulfil the perfections that range from four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, eight and sixteen incalculable aeons, for the wisdom type, the faith-type and the energy-type respectively do not refer to the periods that must elapse after receiving the prediction. Rather, it refers to the periods required for maturing into a stage of wisdom fit for receiving the prediction, *i.e.*, as an immature aspirant 16 incalculable aeons are needed; as the middling aspirant 8 incalculable aeons are needed; and as the acute aspirant 4 incalculable aeons are needed for Supreme Enlightenment.

According to that version there is a uniform period of 28 incalculable aeons which every aspirant to Buddhahood has to fulfil the perfections to make themselves worthy of the prediction, the three various intervals representing the gradual maturing periods from the immature to the mature stage.⁰⁶³

Another version:

In the Buddha Apadāna the Buddha said:

“Ānanda, I too, as an aspirant to Buddhahood, had made just mental wishes for Perfect Enlightenment at the feet of previous Buddhas whose numbers are beyond reckoning.”⁰⁶⁴ (There is no commentary on this passage.)

Since, as the text above shows, the number of previous Buddhas before whom the future Gotama Buddha made mental wishes for Buddhahood is beyond reckoning, the time elapsed would be simply immeasurable. That indeed is so. What Buddhist writers have put in Sotattakī *etc.*, as twenty incalculable aeons — during which a mere five hundred and twelve thousand and twenty-six Buddhas, beginning from Brahmā deva to Kassapa, appeared in the world — therefore would seem untenable. For even if that interval of 20 incalculable aeons were increased tenfold, the number of Buddhas would still be countable. Therefore the interval that a Bodhisatta has to wait until he is ripe for the prediction is just infinite.

Should there be any scepticism about this, one may consider the following corroborating records:—

The Past Lives of Yasodharā Therī

Yasodharā devī, the consort of Prince Siddhattha, the future Buddha, herself had fulfilled the perfections quite a long time prior to receiving the prediction from Dipaṅkara Buddha that she would become the life-partner, (successively to the last existence), of Sumedha the ascetic who received the prediction for Buddhahood. At that time she was of brahmin caste, her name being Sumittā. She had joined the huge crowd to witness the great

occasion of Bodhisatta Sumedha's receiving the prediction, and on seeing the superb beauty of the youthful ascetic, the tender feelings she had had for the ascetic having been aroused in her, she offered five out of the eight lotus flowers, meant to be personally offered to Dipaṅkara Buddha, to the Bodhisatta, and offered three to the Buddha, praying for lifelong partnership with Sumedha in all future existences until the Bodhisatta attained Buddhahood. This love at first sight episode was, after all, the result of the two having been wedded over innumerable past existences during which two trillion, twelve thousand, one hundred and seventy-nine Buddhas such as Brahma deva, Porāṇa Gotama, *etc.*, arose in the world, at whose feet the couple had prayed together for Enlightenment as life-partners.

On that great occasion ten thousand young ladies prayed for Enlightenment as Disciples, as the result of which they all were born in the Sākyan clan — the kinsmen of Gotama Buddha himself.

Eighteen thousand young brahmin ladies, in the company of Sumittā, who had formerly prayed to the same Buddhas such as Brahma-deva *etc.*, for Enlightenment as disciples under a future Buddha (*i.e.*, Gotama Buddha) also offered flowers to Dipaṅkara Buddha and received their predictions respectively. They were reborn in the Sākyan clan and won Enlightenment as Disciples. See Therī Apadāna.

When one considers the fact that where the lady disciples headed by the future Yasodharā themselves had to undergo vast periods covering the epochs of over two trillion Buddhas prior to Dipaṅkara, the period covered by the future Gotama Buddha, prior to Dipaṅkara's time, must certainly have been infinite (*Dhammarājā asaṅkhaṇḍā*).

In the text referred to above, "Buddhas beyond reckoning" refers to just mental wishes (*manasāyeva hutvāna*); it does not speak of other previous Buddhas to whom the future Gotama Buddha made his verbal and physical prayers.

Note that mental prayers precede verbal ones and physical ones, which fact will become evident as we go along.

There are different versions in the Therī Apadāna itself about the number of Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas to whom the future Yasodharā prayed for Enlightenment; however, as to the number of Arahants at whose feet she expressed this wish, there is no discrepancy.

Thus we have in the Mahantagūṇa:⁰⁶⁵ that states the number of Arahants as being infinite, whereas, there were 640 million Paccekabuddhas, and three hundred and seventy million, two hundred and sixty thousand Buddhas.

From the foregoing references, we have five different versions relating to the interval that is said to have elapsed before the future Gotama Buddha received the prediction. To recapitulate:

1. The Commentary on the Anāgatavaṃsa and the Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi put it as a period covering six thousand existences and a hundred thousand aeons;
2. The Sotattakī and other works put it as sixteen incalculable aeons;
3. The Subcommentary on the Mahāvagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya puts it as twenty-four incalculable aeons;
4. In the Commentary on the Thera Apadāna it is put as thirty-four incalculable aeons;
5. The Apadāna says that the interval is simply infinite.

Of those five versions, the fifth one, being from the Pāli text, is to be taken as the most tenable (*balavatara*). Let the inquisitive probe further.

There is no direct reference to the intervals that precede the Assurance in the case of Paccekabuddhas and the Disciples.

Now let us turn to some relevant sources such as the Dhammaruci Thera Apadāna wherein it states: “*Tadā dipaṅkaro buddho sumedhaṃ vyākari jino*” — which throws an interesting light on the matter. Here, we are given to understand that the future Dhammaruci Thera began his early aspiration to Enlightenment as a Disciple from the awe-inspiring sight of Sumedha receiving the prediction from Dipaṅkara Buddha. His praise of the future Buddha (*i.e.*, Sumedha) was his earliest step along the Path to gain Enlightenment under Gotama Buddha to become the famous disciple known as Dhammaruci Thera.

In another case, that of the lay supporter Nisseṇi, the Nisseṇidāyaka Thera Apadāna makes mention that his earliest merit gathering began at the time of Koṇḍañña Buddha, some three incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons prior to our present aeon, when he donated a flight of stairs to the Buddha. He won Enlightenment as a lay disciple under Gotama Buddha.

Those instances would seem to indicate that even for a disciple, the pre-prediction period for fulfilling the perfections ran to three or four incalculable aeons. It therefore goes without saying that aspirants to become a Chief Disciple or Great Disciple must require still greater intervals.

In the case of Yasodharā and twenty-eight thousand elder nuns, since they had made their wishes to become maids-in-attendance to the future

Buddha, (*ref: Tuyhatthāya mahāmune*), however ripe some of them might have been to win Enlightenment as disciples, they had to await Gotama Buddha to appear so that their prime aspiration could be fulfilled.

End of the Answer to the Fourth Question

Answer to the Fifth Question

There are:

1. Eight factors required for the prediction as a Buddha;
2. Five factors for Paccekabuddhas;
3. Two factors for the Chief Disciples, the Great Disciples, the Mother to the Buddha, the Father to the Buddha and the personal attendant bhikkhu to the Buddha, which of course implies that those Noble Ones had to be endowed with the abilities (*sāmatthiya*) by way of the requisite factors as well as of the intervals that must elapse before receiving the prediction, for there is no Enlightenment for them without having first obtained the prediction.

As for Ordinary Disciples some obtain the prediction while others do not. As examples we may cite Adhimuttaka Thera as belonging to the former category and Girimānanda Thera as belonging to the latter.

See details in the Thera Apadāna and the Therī Apadāna.

End of the Answer to the Fifth Question

Answer to the Sixth Question

A Bodhisatta, in his own right, is no ordinary person: he is already possessed of the four conditions (*paccaya*) the four root-causes (*hetu*), the four powers or strengths (*bala*) and the three distinct characteristics (*liṅga*) for the unique qualities of which he comes to receive the prediction. That being so, there is no question of a future Buddha reverting to any lesser form of Enlightenment: he would never dream of it. As the commentator on Cariyāpīṭaka: puts it: "As soon as the great resolution (*mahābhinihāra*) has been made, the great man takes upon himself the practice (*paṭipattiṃ okkanto*) of a Bodhisatta. This is because he has the certainty of his mission, which makes it virtually impossible to turn back, and it is that very steadfastness of purpose that entitles him to the name, Bodhisatta."

A Possible Question

QUESTION: From the commentary quoted here, there is no likelihood of a Bodhisatta changing to a lesser form of Enlightenment; however it does not rule out the possibility that he might contemplate doing so.

ANSWER: In reply to such a question the commentator on the Ghaṭikāra Sutta clearly gives a negative answer thus:

“Indeed so. A Bodhisatta goes forth into monkhood in the presence of the Buddha, and thereafter, unlike others, he never slackens.¹ Rather, he gets himself established in the fourfold purity of virtue (*catupārisuddhi sīla*), acquaints himself well (*uggaṇhitvā*) with the words of the Buddha, takes up the thirteen austere practices (*dhutaṅga*) allowed by the Buddha, resorts to a forest abode and practises seclusion (*gatapaccāgatavattaṃ*). There he performs the duties of a recluse, and cultivates insight (*vipassanā*) up to the stage of Knowledge of Adaptation (*saccānuloma-ñāṇa*) where he would abide (*tiṭṭhanti*), without striving for (*vāyāmaṃ na karoti*) Path and Fruition Knowledge.”⁰⁶⁶

As the commentaries on Pañcapakaraṇa and Puggalapaññatti put it:—

“In the successive existences in the past, recounted from this last one, the Bodhisattas would go forth into monkhood under the Buddha’s Teaching, learn the Three Baskets of the Scriptural knowledge and, proceeding spiritually upwards through bhikkhu practice of seclusion, work up to the level of Conformity-Knowledge (*anuloma-ñāṇa*) and Maturity Knowledge (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*) whereat they stay (without pursuing further).”⁰⁶⁷

In the Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā the level of insight attained to by the Bodhisattas is mentioned as “in the proximity of Knowledge of Adaptation and Maturity Knowledge (*anuloma gotrabhusamīpaṃ*).”

From the above three sources we may infer that the Bodhisattas worked for insight up to the level of Equanimity towards all conditioned things, (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*).

This has been elaborately described in the Jinālaṅkāra-ṭikā:—

“The Bodhisatta has attained to these eight stages of Insight, namely: Knowledge of Arising and Passing Away (*udayabbayānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅgānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Fearfulness (*bhayānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Misery (*ādinavānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Disgust (*nibbidānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Desire for Deliverance (*muccitukamyatā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Re-observation (*paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*), Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations (*saṅkharupekkhā-ñāṇaṃ*). Thanks to his previously-acquired merit, to wit: his having gone forth as a bhikkhu under many Buddhas in the past, learned the scriptures (Piṭaka) and cultivated insight along the Path — those stages of Insight arose in him in no time and he abode in them as steadily as a flame set in an enclosed monastery where no breeze stirs.

¹ *Patitisingā*: Lit., ‘having let fall the horn (of endeavour).’

Only the ninth stage, *i.e.*, the Adaptation Knowledge (*anuloma-ñāṇa*) is what he has never acquired previously before attaining Buddhahood, and he stayed that way (*thitaṃ*) until the last existence.”⁰⁶⁸

The Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi explains the matter thus:–

The term in the proximity of Adaptation Knowledge and Maturity Knowledge may be taken in this light: that it indicates the Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) which arises just prior to them. It must, however, be remembered that the Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations is not a full-fledged knowledge yet in that it has not reached the full apperception of that particular stage of insight, but falls short of it by a few moments of impulsion consciousness (*javana*). This is so because, if it were a fully perceived insight, there is no turning back — the knowledge must necessarily develop itself into Adaptation Knowledge and the Path. Therefore what is meant by the term (proximity to *anuloma-ñāṇa*) is that the commentator is referring to three types of person, the dull one (*manda*), the acute one (*tikkha*), and the exceptionally acute one (*tikkhatara*). For with the first type he would reach just the stage of Knowledge consisting in Reflecting Contemplation; and with the third, Equanimity Knowledge, before he stays put. The term “proximity” is to be construed in this three-fold sense.”⁰⁶⁹

In the above context, a future Buddha is to be understood as belonging to the third type. The conclusion from those quotations is that a Bodhisatta never seeks insight beyond that critical stage of Equanimity Knowledge since he purposely denies himself Arahantship, having set his sights only on Perfect Enlightenment.

Those words should satisfy the possible question of whether a Bodhisatta after receiving the prediction would have any inclination to a lesser form of Enlightenment.

It should however be noted on the authority of Paccekabuddha Apadāna, that a future Paccekabuddha, after receiving the prediction, might change his will and turn to some lesser form of Enlightenment:–

“Certain wise persons, in spite of their serious efforts, fail to gain insight into the voidness (*suññata*), or into desirelessness (*appaṇihita*), or into the signlessness (*animitta*) during the time of the Buddha’s Teaching and do not become enlightened disciples or Arahants; they later discovered the Four Noble Truths by themselves and win Enlightenment as Paccekabuddhas.”⁰⁷⁰

The above text says that some of the Paccekabuddhas who came under the Buddha’s Teaching tried to win Arahantship through one of the forms of insight into release but having been unsuccessful through lack of

necessary conditions they later discover the Truth outside of the Buddha's Teaching, *i.e.*, when the Buddha's Teaching has become extinct in the world.

What the text above reveals is that some future Paccekabuddhas, when they come under the Buddha's Teaching (*sāsana*) do try to win Path Knowledge; however their efforts are vain because they have already received the prediction which is utterly infallible.

Again, in the case of the Chief Disciples and the Great Disciples, we have such instances as those of the future [Dabba Mallaputta Thera](#), [Kumāra Kassapa Thera](#), [Bāhiya Dāruciriya Thera](#), [Sabhiya Thera](#), and [King Pukkusāti](#) — all Great Disciples — who had, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, made earnest efforts for Arahantship although unsuccessfully — because they were already assured of enlightenment as great disciples.⁰⁷¹

End of the Answer to the Sixth Question.

Answer to the Seventh Question

The four classes of future Enlightened Ones, the Buddha, the Paccekabuddha, the Chief Disciple and the Great Disciple, as a rule receive the prediction as is evidenced by the requisite factors — eight, five and two respectively — for ripeness for it. Of the three basic conditions for receiving the prediction, the will (*chandata*) may be explained here:—

1. He who wills for Perfect Enlightenment is entitled to the prediction for Perfect Enlightenment;
2. He who wills for Paccekabodhi is entitled to the prediction for Paccekabodhi;
3. He who wills for Chief Discipleship is entitled to Chief Discipleship;
4. He who wills for Great Discipleship is entitled to Great Discipleship.

After having been assured by the Buddha, by virtue of their meeting the requisite qualifications, the future Enlightened Ones continue fulfilling the perfections over the respective periods fixed for the various aspirations:

1. Four, eight, or sixteen incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, or
2. Two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, or
3. One incalculable aeon and one hundred thousand great aeons, or
4. One hundred thousand great aeons, all periods to be served exactly.

As such, one who never has any particular will to gain Enlightenment of some sort throughout one's progress along the meritorious path, even though

capable of release from rebirth, will never receive any prediction just because the will for some specific form of Enlightenment is wanting. This means enlightenment under one of the four types of future Enlightened Ones needs a specific will, without which an aspirant may win emancipation only as an ordinary disciple, despite incalculable aeons of fulfilling the perfections.

N.B. An ordinary disciple may be human, deva, or brahmā who has not gone forth as a bhikkhu.

Incidentally, here is a verse that should stand the scholar in good stead in every appropriate situation:

“However much correctness of the meaning is rendered weak for want of direct textual reference (*i.e.*, Pāli or Commentary or Subcommentary), if there be some evidence that is palpably true,¹ it should be considered good authority, as unshakable as the language of the Buddha himself.”⁰⁷²

A Possible Question

QUESTION: Would a great interval of merit-building, having enriched the fulfilment of perfections, be good reason for some specific form of Enlightenment as one would choose?

ANSWER: No. The reason is this: failure to have made a firm wish at the outset for some specific Enlightenment is due to one of the following weakness, namely:—

1. One has never understood the value of Perfect Self Enlightenment or lesser specific forms of Enlightenment.
2. Even though the value is understood, there is tardiness to make the plunge for Bodhisatta-hood because it involves great sacrifices in fulfilling the perfections such as giving up one’s own life and limb and one’s wife or children or one’s cherished possessions such as kingdom, *etc.*, coupled with the incapacity to exert oneself on a super-human scale. This tardiness, of course, is due to strong selfishness which is deeply ingrained in the ordinary man.
3. The fear to go through such great lengths of time for Enlightenment, reckoned innumerable aeons — although, when compared to the incalculable past that one has already fared in *samsāra*, such seemingly great intervals are actually fleetingly short.

That being so, it is a matter of “Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

¹ *Santabhūtaṅgupatthaddhā*: lit., “Something that exists, which has the inherent quality that can stand as positive truth.”

The seed-germ of merit that lies in the heart of a weakling is weak in mindfulness (*sati*), wisdom (*paññā*), faith (*saddhā*), desire (*chanda*), and energy (*vīriya*); so much so that however much it is nurtured over great intervals of time, it does not increase sufficiently to merit any special type of Enlightenment. An all year round mist will never fill rivers, tanks, and oceans; a thousand year growth of grass, however tall or stout, can never serve as construction timber. It is the brave one, understanding the real value of special type of Enlightenment; such as Buddhahood, *etc.*, who sets his heart unwaveringly on it, and who is prepared to undergo the rigorous practice that is formidable indeed, and who awaits for his goal the countless aeons as though it were the next morning. Yes, it takes a fierce desire (*mahājjhāsaya*), a firm resolution (*daḷhasamādāna*), to make a Bodhisatta.

For a detailed discussion on this point see the Paramatthadīpanī, the Commentary on the Cariyāpiṭaka.

The resolution of such lion-hearted persons may be likened to the epochal rains that fall at the renewal cycle of the universe that fill up the trillion world-systems (*cakkavāḷa*) with water in no time; or the instant magic mango tree planted by Kaṇḍa the gardener, or the Bodhi Tree that rose in a trice to shelter the budding Buddha — for all those Bodhisattas (*i.e.*, the four specific types of future Enlightened Ones) carry through their resolve to the very goal over the requisite intervals.

From this account it is useful to note that those who have not the mental courage to wish for the higher forms of Enlightenment should do well to make the best of the present opportunity of having come under the Buddha's Teaching to work for release from rebirth here and now, without making much fuss.

As the commentator on the Puggalapaññatti puts it:—

“Who is this (sixth) type of person? This is the question. The answer is: he is a well-conducted or virtuous one with slackness. Yes, he is one who says to himself: ‘Why should I enter nibbāna under Gotama Buddha's Teaching? I will do that in the future under Metteyya Buddha.’ So, in spite of his promising grounding in purity of morality he does not cultivate insight. To such a person as well, good counsel ought to prevail. He ought to be reminded of the vagaries of one's future course. He should not forget that a worldling's destination is surrounded by utmost uncertainty so much so that there is no guarantee that he would gain the presence of Buddha Metteyya, so that it behoves him to strive for Arahantship by cultivating insight, instead of remaining heedless.”⁰⁷³

What the commentator says here is, if one has no specific form of Enlightenment in view it is best to hasten one's steps towards emancipation

from *samsāra*, for it is a great gamble to yearn for Metteyya Buddha's Teaching, missing which one's chances of Enlightenment are actually doomed. This obviously does not apply to one who stands in firm resolve to go for some specific Enlightenment.

End of the Answer to the Seventh Question.

Answer to the Eighth Question

There are certain forms of question that carry the answer in themselves: for example we have in the *Vajirattasāṅgaha*: "*Uṇhakāle kamicchantī*" — which may mean, "What do people wish for in hot weather?" Or it may also mean: "Water is wished for in hot weather."

Here we have such a question. Someone who aspires for Discipleship may change his wish and aspire for some higher form of Enlightenment in which case he stands a good chance of success. This answer is implied in the question itself. So we need to discuss here only the question of the fulfilling the perfections: whether supplemental fulfilment would suffice or not.

1. An aspirant for Ordinary Discipleship may, and should, later set his goal for any of the four specific classes of Enlightenment:
2. An aspirant for Great Discipleship may, and should, later set his goal for any of the three higher classes of Enlightenment.
3. An aspirant for Chief Discipleship may, and should, later set his goal for either Buddhahood or for Paccekabuddhahood.

An aspirant here means one who is serious and firm, not a blind and foolish one who would:—

1. On learning that to win Enlightenment as Ordinary Disciple is quite easy, wish for it; but later;
2. On learning that Enlightenment as a Great Disciple is better, would wish for it; but later;-
3. On learning that Enlightenment as a Chief Disciple is still better, would wish for it; but later,-
4. On learning that Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha is still better, wish for it; but later,
5. On learning that Perfect Enlightenment of one of the three types is what a real man should go for, wishes for it;
6. And learning that, of the three types of Buddhahood, the 'wisdom-type' is the best, would wish for it!

In this way he shifts his goal within his single existence — nay, within years, or even days. This is just so. In the Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā we are told that on the day the Blessed One descended from the Realm of the Thirty-three gods to Saṅkassa-nagara, there was not a single soul who, on seeing the glory of the Buddha, did not wish for Buddhahood: (*Taṃ divasaṃ bhagavantaṃ buddha bhāvāya pihaṃ anuppādetvā thitasattonāma natthi*). The unique gathering consisted of all beings — human, devas, and brahmās — belonging to the hundred thousand world-systems. However, out of the multitude, a mere five hundred and ten were destined to have their desire fulfilled according to the Sotattakī.

So there is not much significance in shifting or fickle desires of the multitude. As for those aspirants already assured of future Enlightenment no such shifting is possible either.

All the aforesaid particulars concerning the five classes of Enlightenment, the maturity-periods and the terminology are extant only while the Buddha's Teaching is extant. Once the Teaching fades out from the world all those things are never heard of or properly understood. The commentaries on the Brahmāyu Sutta and the Aṅguttaranikāya have this to say:—

“There is what is called the Book on the Characteristic Marks of the Great Man (*mahāpūrisa-lakkhaṇa*). It tells us about the thirty-two major marks, the eighty minor marks, the 108 signs on the sole of the Buddha's feet. It consists of twelve thousand compositions (*gantha*). Besides, there is also a Book of Prophecies called “*Buddhamanta*,” consisting of sixteen thousand verses. And it is with the help of the latter that the interpretations on the former are made. Thus you are given to understand that when such and such marks are evident fully on someone's person, he is called the Buddha; that such and such marks reveal the Paṅcēkabuddha; that such and such marks reveal the two Chief Disciples; that such and such marks reveal the eighty Great Disciples; that such and such marks reveal the Mother to the Buddha; that such and such marks reveal the Father to the Buddha; that such and such marks reveal the Chief Queen Consort to the future Buddha; and that such and such marks reveal the Universal Monarch. All those great individuals can be made known by those particular marks.

“As regards those verses, they came into existence through the Brahmās of the Pure Abodes (Suddhāvāsa brahmā). When the future Buddha was known (to them) to go forth as a recluse, they went about the human world well ahead of the time in the guise of Brahmans, armed with Vedic books where they added a chapter on the Buddha. This portion of the composition, called Buddhist Verses (*Buddhamantā*), they taught to the wise so that those

Vedic verses would serve humanity as guides by which powerful persons were to know the Tathāgata. Thus in the days preceding the passing away of the Buddha the characteristic marks of eight great individuals including the Buddha became known to the world. And after the entering into Buddha's parinibbāna, those Vedic verses gradually went into extinction, so that in our present times the Book on the Characteristic Marks of the Great Man is nowhere to be found." ⁰⁷⁴

Around a thousand years before the appearance of the Buddha in the world the news of the arrival was proclaimed (by the Brahmās) and, as narrated above, Vedic literature on the Buddha came to the knowledge of certain wise brahmins like Pokkharasāti and Brahmāyu; and even they are supposed to know only a portion thereof.

As the aforesaid Vedas were available to humanity during limited periods only, and as they were known only to a handful of wise men, the special attributes pertaining to the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and the Noble Disciples were heard of, incompletely, by the elite. When the Buddha's Teaching has fallen silent on the world, this knowledge relating to the Buddha and the great individuals is denied to the world. That is why, except for the future Buddhas, wise persons performing acts of merit such as giving or keeping the moral precepts, do not have any definite goal such as Paccekabuddhahood, or Chief Discipleship or Great Discipleship. The wisest of them would, under the circumstances, wish for emancipation from the cycle of rebirth that necessitates ageing, disease and death.

Accordingly, outside of the Buddha's Teaching, no aspirant for Discipleship, would seem likely to shift their goal of specific form of Enlightenment, except for that of Paccekabuddha. Someone who has accustomed himself over countless existences to opt for rebirth-free type of merit (*vivaṭṭa kusala*) may, at one time or the other outside of the Buddha's Teaching have seen a Paccekabuddha and, attending on him with extreme dedication (*adhikāra*), wished for such Knowledge as the Paccekabuddha knew. Likewise, while during later existences, belonging to successive aeons, whenever he has opportunity to see a Paccekabuddha, or when the Buddha's Teaching is prevalent as well, this previous aspiration might have inspired him again to wish for Paccekabuddhahood. In this way his wish for that particular type of Enlightenment would come into maturity and, receiving the prediction in due course, get emancipation as a Paccekabuddha.

Similarly, someone may have seen the nobility of the Buddha's right-hand Chief Disciple, the Foremost Disciple in Knowledge, or the left-hand

Chief Disciple, the Foremost Disciple in supernormal powers, or some Great Disciple such as Foremost Disciple in the observance of the thirteen austere practices (*dhutaṅga*), and getting inspired, may have uttered his wish that he too may some day come to possess the Knowledge that those Arahants do. Once such utterance accompanying his devoted attendance on the Noble One) has been made, the wish stands until the time of fulfilment even though not repeated at the later existences. Now, our present question concerns only such aspirants who have expressed their specific wish, accompanied by religious attendance on some inspiring Noble One), but who has not received the prediction yet.

From the foregoing, it may be noted that anyone who, having attended well, simply wishes for nibbāna through Path Knowledge, should be classed as an Ordinary Disciple.

The term “Bodhisatta,” as the Commentary to the Cariyāpiṭaka points out, is applicable only to an aspirant who has received the prediction and therefore is certain of future Enlightenment. Until the prediction has been received, even the aspirant for Buddhahood is not certain about his course, not to speak of lesser aspirants. As the Sotattakī puts it:—

“Just as this (lotus flower), an aspirant to Buddhahood, for all his vast build-up of necessary conditions for Enlightenment as Buddha, cannot be certain as to his future until and unless he receives the prediction.”⁰⁷⁵

Uncertainty also implies that any shifting in the goal by the aspirant is possible.

Now, as to the question whether the perfections already fulfilled for a certain initial goal of Enlightenment of a specific type would count as the necessary condition for the altered goal of another type of Enlightenment so that only supplemental fulfilment would be called for; or whether the aspirant has to start from the very beginning — the views are divergent.

1. According to the Venerable Dhammapāla, author of the *Silakkhandha-ṭikā*, fulfilment of perfections for one type of Enlightenment, being meant for that goal alone, cannot serve as the necessary condition for another type of Enlightenment.
2. However, the same source mentions a different opinion by other teachers that the merit, being done for the ultimate object of gaining release from *saṃsāra*, should be transferable towards an altered goal.

The Subcommentary to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*⁰⁷⁶ cites the case of King Ajātasattu the patricide. Had he not committed the grave misdeed he

could have won Path Knowledge at some lower level, but since he was prevented by his heinous act from gaining Enlightenment in that existence, he was after, his period of retribution in hell, to become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Vijitāvī. To quote from the said source:-

- (a) "Here, someone might protest: how come? If this king (Ajātasattu) had no impediment to his kamma (*kammantarāyā bhāve*) for having killed his father, on hearing the Sāmaññaphala Sutta, he would have won Stream-entry, it is said; if that is the case how and why should he win Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha in future? Again, if he is supposed to become a Paccekabuddha how could he be fit for Stream-entry on hearing the Sāmaññaphala Sutta? Are not the two statements regarding the sufficing condition for Arahantship conflicting?
- (b) "No. That he would, but for his obstructive kamma have won Stream-entry here and now; and that he would in future become a Paccekabuddha, are not contradictory statements. Why? Because in the later existences he is going to build up his store of merit to qualify for Paccekabuddhahood. That is so, for if someone ripe for discipleship does not gain Enlightenment for lack of a certain condition, he may, even outside the Buddha's Teaching, become a Paccekabuddha. Why? Because he has already applied himself well (*katābhinihāra*) for that kind of Enlightenment."
- (a) "Other teachers say that this king (Ajātasattu) applied himself (*katābhinihāra*) to becoming a Paccekabuddha only. That is so. For unless the conduct towards the fulfilment has not matured there is the possibility for him to win Enlightenment as a Disciple in the presence of the Buddha. That is why the Buddha said: "*Sacāyaṃ bhikkhave rājā*"ti.
- (b) "Now, only an 'assured' future Buddha is exempt from the consequence of grave misconduct that finds immediate retribution (*ānantariya kamma*): future Paccekabuddhas and future Disciples are not. That statement is indeed true. In spite of his having received the prediction for Paccekabuddha, Devadatta allowed himself to commit the grievous crimes of causing schism in the Saṅgha and causing bloodshed to the Buddha, thanks to his grudge against the Lord of the World (*lokanātha*), the Buddha, he had harboured over five great aeons."
- (c) "Therefore, those teachers conclude that this king (Ajātasattu) being barred by his grave crime and therefore rendered incapable of gaining insight into Stream-entry, will, in the righteousness of thing (*samatta niyāma magga*), gain the Path in the future as a Paccekabuddha. Thus should it be noted."

According to the subcommentator:—

The Buddha speaks of this king's possibility for winning Path Knowledge because the king had in previous existences wished for Discipleship only. If he had had previously worked for Paccekabuddhahood he would not attain discipleship, however much he had had worked for maturity towards Paccekabodhi. Whatever perfections he might have fulfilled towards Ordinary Discipleship would also be rendered inoperative in that existence on account of the impediment on his Kamma, for patricide. All that accumulation of merit would only serve as a remote condition for Enlightenment (*upanissaya koṭi*) as a Paccekabuddha in the very distant future. That being so, he will shift his aspiration to Paccekabodhi and start from a clean sheet again, and in due course, ripen himself for the prediction and thence forwards, after two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, attain Paccekabuddhahood. Since he had not previously aspired for Paccekabuddhahood, and the two requisite qualities of Enlightenment, *i.e.*, having made the necessary attendance or service and having willed for it, were still not there yet, the prediction was not to be expected at that time.

According to other teachers:—

Ajātasattu had previously wished for Paccekabodhi and although his fulfilments of the predictions towards that goal were not ripe they should be considered sufficient condition for ordinary Arahantship as a Disciple. If, however the perfections were ripe, then he could not have wished for an Ordinary Discipleship. When we weigh the above two divergent theories we may have to consider this:—

Sumedha, on the day of receiving his prediction said, “If I had my wish, I could today have attained Path Knowledge of Arahantship and Fruition.” Now, a Bodhisatta is not such a type as would say something irrelevant just for boasting, and, as the Commentary notes, if Sumedha were to gain Enlightenment as an Ordinary Disciple, he would do so as a bhikkhu. All these considerations would seem to support the theory of those other teachers mentioned above. However, it is a moot point for the wise to consider.

End of the Answer to the Eighth Question.

Answer to the Ninth Question

In this question too there is already the implied answer that an aspirant for Paccekabodhi before receiving the prediction, may change his mind for a different type of Enlightenment and he may succeed at that as well.

The moot point as to whether the merit directed towards fulfilment of the perfections for Paccekabodhi would in such a case go towards the sufficiency of condition for Perfect Enlightenment or not, will have to be gauged from what has been discussed under Question Eight above.

There are six future Paccekabuddhas that have been prophesied or assured under Gotama Buddha's Teaching, namely:—

1. Devadatta
2. King Ajātasattu
3. Sumana the florist
4. The watchman at the fields
5. The hawk owl at Vedisagiri
6. The donor who offered the floral head-band to the Buddha.

There are specifically mentioned in the scriptures.

As to their future:

1. Devadatta will become a Paccekabuddha named Aṭṭhissara during the hundred-thousandth aeon from our present aeon, *vide* Milinda-pañha and Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā.
2. King Ajātasattu will become a Paccekabuddha named Vijitāvī, *vide* Sāmaññaphala Sutta Aṭṭhakathā. The time for his Enlightenment is not mentioned.
3. Sumana the florist will become a Paccekabuddha named Sumanissara during the hundred-thousandth aeon from our present aeon, *vide* Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā.
4. The watchman at the fields will become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Ratanakuṭi, *vide* Theragāthā; the time for his Enlightenment is not mentioned, but is supposed to be just in our present aeon.
5. The hawk owl will become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Somanassa, during the hundred-thousandth aeon from our present aeon, *vide* Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā, *etc.*
6. The donor of the floral head-band will become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Vaṭṭasaka, *vide* Nettippakaraṇa. The time of his appearance is not mentioned; presumably it will be during the present aeon.

There is also a story about a certain executioner¹ who worked at the bloody vocation for fifty-five years, but when his death was imminent, he had the fortunate opportunity to feed the Venerable Sāriputta, and went to

¹ Tambadāhika: Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, on *verse* 100.

the Tusita deva realm after his death. After that existence he is destined to become a Paccekabuddha, so says the Sahassavatthu. In other sources, namely, the *Āṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā*, Kammavibhaṅga section of the *Āṅguttaranikāya Ṭikā*, however, reference to the same person is made, but only his rebirth in Tusita is mentioned — not his future Paccekabuddhahood.

In the *Mahāmāyā-vatthu*, Māra is said to become a Paccekabuddha, “*So pi Bodhisattaṃ thometvā teneva pasādena anāgate paccekabuddho bhavissati.*” As Buddhist lore has it, contained in such works as *Sotatattakī*. there are 500 future Buddhas who are not ripe for the prediction, and ten who are ripe for it. The latter had received their prediction and had met Gotama Buddha; they are, according to *Suñṇiya anāgatāvamsa*:-

1. Ajita Thera, son of King Ajātasattu, was in the past a Universal Monarch by the name of Saṅkha; he received the prediction from Sirīmantā Buddha; he is the future Metteyya Buddha, the fifth and last Buddha of our aeon. His life-span will be eighty-thousand years; his height, 88 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Gangaw (*mesua ferrea*).
2. King Rāma who lived in Gotama Buddha’s time was in the past a youth named Nārada who received the prediction from Kassapa Buddha. He will appear as a Buddha, named Rāma, in the following aeon which is going to have two Buddhas (*maṇḍa-kappa*). His life-span will be ninety-thousand years; his height, 80 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, the Sandalwood.
3. King Pasenadi of Kosala received the prediction from Koṇāgamana Buddha as Suddha the young man. He will appear in the same following aeon (*maṇḍa kappa*) as Dhammarāja Buddha. His life-span will be fifty-thousand years; his height, ninety cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Gangaw (*mesua ferrea*).
4. Abhibhū the king of Devas was in the past a king’s minister called Bodhi. He received the prediction from Kassapa Buddha. He will arise as Dhammasāmi Buddha in a future aeon graced by one Buddha (*sāra kappa*). His life-span will be one hundred thousand years; his height, eighty cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Ingyin (*pentacme suavis*).
5. Dīghasoṇi, King of the Asurā, was in the past a king by the name of Sirīratānā. He won the prediction from Kassapa Buddha, and he will become Nārada Buddha in the future aeon with two Buddhas. His life-span will be ten thousand years; his height, 120 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, the sandalwood.

6. Saṅki the brahmin was a youth named Māgha who received the prediction from Kakusandha Buddha. He will become Rasimuṇi Buddha in the same aeon as Nārada Buddha. His life-span will be five thousand years; his height 60 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Letpan, the silk-cotton tree (*bombax malabaricum*).
7. Subha the brahmin in some previous life was a white elephant (*Chaddanta Nāga*). He received the prediction from Koṇāgamana Buddha. He will arise as Devātideva Buddha in a future world with two Buddhas. His life-span will be eight thousand years; his height, 80 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Saga (Sanga) (*michelis champaca*).
8. Todeyya the brahmin was in the past Nanda the young man who received the prediction from a Paccekabuddha. He will become a Buddha by the name of Narasiha in the same aeon as Devāti-deva Buddha (Subha the brahmin above). His life-span will be 80 thousand years; his height 60 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Thakhut (Thakut) (*dolichandrone rheedii*).
9. Nālāgiri, the noble elephant known as Dhanapāla, was Prince Dhammasena in a former existence. He received the prediction from Koṇāgamana Buddha, and will become Tissa Buddha in a future aeon where two Buddhas will be born. His life-span will be eighty-thousand years; his height eighty cubits, his Bodhi Tree the banyan (*ficus benghalensis*).
10. Palale, king of elephants, at one time was a Universal Monarch called Mahāpanāda. He received the prediction from Kakusandha Buddha and will arise as Sumaṅgala Buddha in the same aeon as Tissa Buddha (Nālāgiri the elephant above). His life-span will be a hundred thousand years; his height, 80 cubits; his Bodhi Tree, Gangaw (*mesua ferrea*).

Of those ten (the fourth one) Abhibhū is just another name of Māra — although a certain couplet in Burmese would seem to count Māra in addition to Abhibhū. Māra, however, is a future Paccekabuddha only, *vide* Mahāmāyā-vatthu. The term 'Abhibhū' carries its own significance (and not merely one of the attributes of Māra) which is why the Anāgatavaṃsa and Sotattakī, *etc.*, list him under that particular name.

Of those ten who are already assured of Buddhahood they are listed in order of time of their appearance in future, as it has been said:

*“Dasuttarā pañcasatā Bodhisatta samūhato
dassa-anukkamāyeva pañcasatā nanukkamā.”*

Obviously, the five hundred not yet in receipt of the prediction cannot be so listed. So also the details about them such as time of appearance, Buddha-name, *etc.*, cannot be specifically foretold yet.

It may be mentioned that elaborate details about the future Metteyya Buddha, *i.e.*, the first of the ten listed above, Ajita Thera, are given in the Anāgatavaṃsa-gāthā Aṭṭhakathā entitled Samantabhaddikā.

End of the Answer to the Ninth Question.

Answer to the Tenth Question

This question also includes its answer that it is possible for an aspirant for Buddhahood to change his goal as to the type of Enlightenment. A *pañhāpāḍottara* type of question means “the question itself is the answer.”

A shift in the aspirant’s goal is possible only before one receives the prediction; this applies to future Buddhas, future Paccekabuddhas, future Chief Disciples and future Great Disciples. This is already indicated in the words, “if allowable” (*yadi labheyya*). In the question, “*uṇṇakāle*” means when he is ripe for the prediction, and “*Uṇṇa kāle*” means before maturity.

That indeed is so. Because the great resolution for Perfect Enlightenment (*pañidhāna* or *mahābhinihāra*) comes only to those who have fulfilled the perfections in such great magnitude as to be able to make such a singularly bold venture. It is not the business of lesser souls. It is not the kind of resolve that even aspirants for Paccekabodhi or Chief Discipleship or Great Discipleship or Ordinary Discipleship could dare to make, let alone the ordinary run of mankind who has never started fulfilling any perfection.

A future Buddha’s innate qualities are in a class by themselves even during the pre-assurance period. That is why the very commitment to wish for Perfect Enlightenment is a proposition that is unthinkable to aspirants of lesser Enlightenment such as future Paccekabuddhas, *etc.* The commentaries explain the eight factors that constitute the great resolve (*mahābhinihāra*), more particularly on root-condition (*hetu*), service or attendance (*adhikāra*), and will (*chandatā*).⁰⁷⁷

N.B. Explanations similar to Ref.⁰⁷⁸ may also be found in the Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā, Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, and Introduction to the Jātattakī.

Those references point out that the crucial test to gauge ripeness for making the Great Resolve is whether the aspirant is mature enough for Arahantship by that time.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: This test by itself is not singular to the future Buddha: for had not Sarada the recluse, future Sāriputta, Chief Disciple, and Nanda the recluse, future Subhūti, one of the Great Disciples, been endowed with similar qualities (*i.e.*, fitness for Arahantship at the time of making the resolve)?

ANSWER: No. That is not the only criteria for fitness or root-condition (*hetu*); there are many other conditions for Buddhahood that are quite out of the province of lesser aspirants, as pointed out in the Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā:⁰⁷⁹

(a) “Thus there are certain features (*liṅgaṃ*) that represent the ripeness of necessary conditions (*upanissaya*) for receiving the prediction with which a future Buddha is replete. This superb endowment is the result of the Bodhisatta’s superior faculties, superior practice (*paṭipatti*), superior sense of judgment (*kosalla*) that are exceptionally greater, deeper, and unmatched by those of any aspirant for Discipleship or Paccekabodhi. These various superb features are quite evident.

(b) “These features of the sufficiency of necessary conditions are quite manifest. In this world, the Great Man endowed with these sufficing conditions has such purity of faculties (*visadindriyo*), purity of intelligence (*visadañña*) as no future Paccekabuddha or future Disciple could ever possess. The future Buddha strives for the welfare of others, *i.e.*, all beings, and never for his own.”

(c) “That indeed is true. The Great Man enters upon the path of Buddhahood for the sake of the multitudes, for the happiness of the multitudes, out of compassion for the world (*lokānukampāya*), for the real profit (*atthāya*, *i.e.*, Path Knowledge) for the happiness (*sukhāya*, *i.e.*, Fruition Knowledge) of all men and gods, and for the total emancipation (*nibbāna*) — the like of which endeavour no future Paccekabuddha or future Disciple could ever attempt.”

(d) “In thus toiling for the welfare of the world, the Bodhisatta is possessed of promptitude under all circumstances (*thānuppattipaṭibhānena*) as well as skill in telling the truth from the false (*thānāthānakusalatāya*), a twofold feature of his innate proficiency (*kosallaṃ*).”

In the Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā we have:—

(a) “He is possessed of mental qualities such as absorption (*jhāna*), higher spiritual powers (*abhiññā*), and attainments (*samāpatti*), yet he has sacrificed his life to the Buddha. To such a one who has dedicated (*adhikāra*) to the task of obtaining Buddhahood, his wish is bound to be fulfilled. No

other person could dream of similar success. In addition to such extreme dedication he has to have a great will or desire for Buddhahood, great energy and exertion, and an unflagging quest for Enlightenment that together contribute to the sum total of the perfections necessary for Buddhahood, if he is to realise his wish. No other person could expect similar success.

(b) As regards his great will, it may be illustrated thus:—

1. "If, for the sake of Buddhahood, he should be required to swim across the entire world-system (*cakkavāla*) that is one million, two hundred and three thousand, four hundred and fifty leagues in length and breadth, he would have done it readily. It is such a strong will that carries him to Buddhahood.
2. "Again, if he should be required to traverse an uninterrupted bamboo grove over the surface of the world-system ... he would have done it readily. It is such a strong will that carries him to Buddhahood.
3. "Again, if he should be required to traverse the world-system ... covered with spikes firmly standing thickly all over, he would have done it readily. It is such a strong will that carries him to Buddhahood.
4. "Again, if he should be required to traverse the world-system ... covered with live coals laid out all over, he would have done it readily. It is such a strong will that carries him to Buddhahood.
5. "Supposing those were the requisite conditions, and one is prepared to meet them, not flinching in any of the four, never considering them as really hard, determined to cross over the world against those obstacles then one is said to have a great will. Added to it, one is possessed of great energy and exertion, and an untiring quest for Enlightenment: then one's wishes come to be fulfilled. No other person can expect such success.⁰⁸⁰

From the above explanation, there should be no doubt that the great resolve for Buddhahood comes to only a great man who has already stored up enormous merit befitting his aspiration, which lies beyond the range of aspirants for Paccekabodhi or for Discipleship. Hence it should be noted that even during the pre-assurance period there are actually two stages — the time when the aspirant is preparing himself to make the commitment by expressing his great wish (*mahābhinihāra*); and thereafter.

It may be mentioned here that as the wise ones of yore said,⁰⁸¹ "There are questioners who do not distinguish between what is to be doubted and what is not. For those who have any shred of reasonable doubt, any sort of

odd question might occur in their mind.” So these questions have been framed with such sceptics in mind. Therefore they apply also to future Buddhas, *etc.*, who have already received the prediction.

That is why the author of these questions has in the concluding remarks noted thus: *Mayaṃ codakānama ekadesapekkhakā nasakala pekkha kā, etc.*

A future Buddha, once having received the prediction, will never dream of shifting his goal to lesser types of Enlightenment. In this regard one may refer to such statements as contained in Kathāvattthupakaraṇa-anuṭṭikā.⁰⁸²

Before the receipt of the prediction no firmness of an aspirant’s course is mentioned in any of the scriptures: instability is what is specifically mentioned about it. So an aspirant for Buddhahood, not confirmed by the prediction yet, may change his goal to a lesser one; and if he do so he stands a good chance of success at that.

In the Sotattaki⁰⁸³ and other Buddhist literature it is said:—

“Just like this lotus flower, an aspirant to Buddhahood, for all his vast accumulation of necessary conditions for Enlightenment as a Buddha, cannot be certain as to his future until and unless he receives the prediction.

Other aspirants for various classes of Enlightenment, like Devadatta, may have considerable accumulation of necessary conditions for Enlightenment;¹ yet if, later on, they become full of misdeeds, they fall away from their original aspiration.”

An aspirant to Buddhahood may, at any time before receiving the prediction, fall away (*parihāyanti*) from his original aspiration; and the same is true of lesser aspirants. Therefore there are certain instances where the aspiration for Buddhahood later end up with Enlightenment as one of the four lesser classes. Many an aspirant to Buddhahood, owing to a long succession of existences marked by misdeeds, because of association with evil friends (*pāpamitta-saṃsagga*) or some other causes, has thus rotted away instead of ripening into the prediction stage, and they remain as blind foolish worldlings, as hopeless for growth as a tree-stump. So, it may be noted that the word “fall away” applies equally to other lesser classes of aspirants for Enlightenment. Here Devadatta is cited only as an example of one overwhelmed by misdeed, and not one who has fallen away from the original aspiration: he will certainly become a Paccekabuddha a hundred-thousand great aeons hence.

The falling away of an aspirant to Buddhahood from his original aspiration, it is to be assumed, is possible only if he has not served well to

¹ In this stanza the expression “*Sambharāpi yathābahu*” should be interpreted along the grammatical principle for the interpretation of the expression “*Tivaggo yassa saṅgaho*.” Some texts read “*Saṃbharāpi katā bahu*” in which case the meaning should be altered suitable.

qualify himself for making his great aspiration, and that, once the sufficing conditions for expressing his wish for Buddhahood is already at hand, no falling away is possible. This is the logical assumption, the justification for which may still be moot.

As to whether the perfections fulfilled with a view to Perfect Enlightenment would be a credit for some other form of Enlightenment, after the shift in goal has taken place, the question has already been discussed above, quoting the *Silakkhandha-ṭikā* (including other teacher's views).

We need to add just a little here:—

The pre-prediction stage for Buddhahood, as *Sotattakī* and other Buddhist writings claim, lasts for sixteen incalculable aeons during which an aspirant fulfils the perfections; this period is to be considered as the period of uncertainty (*aniyata kāla*).

According to certain other teachers who assume that merit directed towards a certain type of Enlightenment is transferable towards another type to which the aspirant later shifts his aim, their assertions are as follows:—

1. One who has originally acquired merit dedicated to Buddhahood may, after some one thousand great aeons or so, may, on meeting a Buddha, win Enlightenment as an ordinary disciple;
2. Such a one, after some one hundred thousand great aeons or so, on meeting a Buddha, may win Enlightenment as a Great Disciple;
3. Such a one, after one incalculable and one hundred thousand great aeons, under the same circumstance, may win Enlightenment as a Chief Disciple;
4. Such a one, after two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, when the Buddha's Teaching has become extinct, may win Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha.

Should those assertions be true, then it would necessarily imply that Paccekabuddhas, Chief Disciples and Great Disciples can attain Enlightenment without having first received the prediction. In the case, the factors required for receiving the prediction, and the requisite period for fulfilling the perfections after the prediction would become random factors (*aniyama*) instead of being certainties (*ekanta niyama*) — as is generally accepted. However, these things are not to be considered as random factors, and more particularly the question of prediction should not be treated lightly.

If that be so, all classes of aspirants, after receiving the prediction, would fulfil the perfections precisely over the respective periods and attain

their respective goals, in which case the merit accumulated towards the original aspiration cannot be transferable to the altered goal, as asserted by those other teachers.

The author's considered opinion is as follows:—

That an aspirant to Buddhahood may, if he so wishes, attain Arahantship as the four lower classes of Enlightened persons after intervals of one thousand great aeons, or one hundred thousand great aeons of one incalculable and one hundred thousand great aeons, or two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, as the case may be, are indicated by the expressions, "Cannot be certain as to his future" (*aniyama*), and "Falls away from (*parihāyanti*) the original aspiration."

At the time of receiving the prediction, a future Buddha may, if he chooses, win Arahantship as an ordinary disciple, as expressly mentioned in the text (*Ichchamāno ahaajja kileseghātāyā-mahaṃ*) and the various commentaries thereon.

This is also stated in the *Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā*⁰⁸⁴ and the *Silakkhandhavagga-ṭikā*:—

(a) "Of those three types of future Buddhas, the first type, called "A quick learner" (*ugghaṭitaññū*) who, after hearing just two lines of a four line stanza uttered by the Buddha,¹ becomes disposed towards Discipleship, and is able, by virtue of his innate qualities constituting the sufficing condition, to attain Arahantship, together with the four discriminations (*paṭisambhidā*) and the six higher spiritual powers (*chaḷhabhiññāhi*).

N.B: In the second and third stanzas above, the original authors have omitted the words, "Together with the discriminations" (*sahapaṭisambhidāhi*); however all three stanzas are clearly meant to be uniform as to this expression about the way Arahantship is gained.

Cf. the *Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā*⁰⁸⁵ in which it is stated: "Having heard a stanza of four lines he is able to analyse and discern the meaning.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: In case an aspirant to Buddhahood changes his objective to a lower class of Enlightenment, in which class does he stand?

ANSWER: From the expression, "*Yadi sāvakabodhiyaṃ adhimutto siyā,*" the possibility of becoming a Paccekabuddha is ruled out. Besides, as the text says: "*Kiṃ me aññātavasena dhammaṃ sacchikate nidha*" which the commentator explains: "*Sacāhaṃ iccheyyaṃ ...*"⁰⁸⁶ Chief Discipleship and Great Discipleship would seem to be excluded too.

¹ *Sammāsambuddhassa sammukhā*: Lit., "In the presence of a Perfectly Enlightened One."

From the references quoted above it would seem to point to a mere Ordinary Disciple who is a fresh member of the Saṅghā and an obscure one. However, this is not the case. The reason is that an aspirant to Buddhahood has already fulfilled the perfections over sixteen incalculable aeons, by far exceeding even a Paccekabuddhā's period of ripening, let alone those of Chief Disciples and Great Disciples.

The greatness of a future Buddha is expressed by the commentator on Mora Jātaka, Pakiṇṇaka Nipāta.⁰⁸⁷

As to the above-quoted passage: **Yadi sāvakabodhi adhimutto siyā**: the term **Sāvakabodhi** is used in the sense of getting Enlightenment after hearing the Buddha's teaching, and does not carry the sense of ordinariness; and the expression **Saṅghanavako hutvā**: should mean just a newcomer to the Order of bhikkhus, which does not necessarily mean a bhikkhu of insignificance.

As for the term, **Aññāta-vesena**: the Subcommentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta has explained that at the time of receiving the prediction, Sumedha, the future Gotama Buddha, was an obscure person (*aññātā*) as compared to Dīpaṅkara Buddha only. If he were to gain Enlightenment there and then, he would be called obscure because he did not discover the Truth himself but got it from another Buddha. On the strength of his perfections thus far built up, he was supreme among all beings except that his supremacy could not of course stand out in the presence of Dīpaṅkara Buddha, just like the radiance of the moon is outshone by that of the sun.⁰⁸⁸

It was precisely because the future Gotama Buddha could not settle for such an obscure role that he made this determination:—¹

“Having seen one's own potentialities as a man of such promise, why should I seek my own personal safety by crossing over this ocean of *saṃsāra* alone? I will attain Buddhahood myself and, having so attained, rescue the multitude of gods and men.”⁰⁸⁹

On the above-quoted authorities we may note that an aspirant to Buddhahood may, from a hundred or a thousand great aeons of his fulfilling the perfections originally directed towards Buddhahood, until such time as he is ripe to receive the assurance, which may extend up to sixteen incalculable aeons, shift his goal and opt for any of the four lesser classes of Enlightenment, at whichever stage of maturity he may find himself. Although that is theoretically true, in actual state of things no aspirant to Buddhahood would change his mind after he has already acquired the necessary merit that is expected of a Paccekabuddha, which is two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons.

¹ N.B. As to the paraphrasing of this stanza, refer to the grammatical rules in Maṇḍīpa.

Once the maturity period gets beyond what is required of a Paccekabuddha, *i.e.*, after three or four incalculable aeons have elapsed, no aspirant to Buddhahood would or could possibly change his goal, his cumulative merit having become so enormous. So we should understand that the possibility of an aspirant to Buddhahood gaining Enlightenment as a Disciple is hypothetically shown by way of one of the factors of maturity for receiving the prediction only; but there is no likelihood of such an eventuality. As a matter of fact, there is no room for such shifting of goal in the mind of an aspirant to Buddhahood at that stage.

Around two to three incalculable aeons, if an aspirant to Buddhahood were to attain Enlightenment, since he had not originally wished for any class of Discipleship and therefore not officially called a Chief Disciple, or a Great Disciple with foremost status in powers or in knowledge, his first aim being Buddhahood only, he would stand on the same footing as a Chief Disciple, or a Great Disciple or an Ordinary Disciple according to the amount of acquired merit; and if his service at fulfilling the perfections has reached that of Paccekabodhi, he could become a Paccekabuddha if he so desires. In none of those cases would there be any need for him to pray afresh for the new goal or to wait for the prediction. This is one assumption.

If an aspirant to Buddhahood were to shift his goal to one of the lesser Enlightenments, the perfections he has already fulfilled towards Buddhahood serve him in good stead to receive the prediction, and what those other teachers say about the specific periods for each particular type of Enlightenment such as Chief Discipleship, Great Discipleship and Paccekabodhi indicates the necessity of receiving the prediction. This is another assumption.

Considering the emancipation-oriented merit (*vivattaṅgissita kusala*) already amassed since the innumerable past existences, an aspirant to Buddhahood, after receiving the prediction of Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha or as a Disciple, according as he might later wish for, the time for further fulfilment of the perfections would seem quite flexible. It might be that after only a hundred great aeons, he may win Chief Discipleship; or after one hundred thousand great aeons only he may become a Great Disciple, or after one incalculable only, he may become a Paccekabuddha. This is another assumption.

The five factors for Paccekabuddhas and two factors for the Disciples signify the rule about making aspiration and not about receiving the prediction. That being so, as regards the Discipleship the two factors are just the doing of the service (*adhikāro*) and the will (*chandatā*) and does not include any giver of the prediction. As regards Paccekabuddhas as well, the term

“*Vigatāsava-dassanaṃ*” means an Arahant, who may range from a Buddha to an Ordinary Disciple. Hence in the case of an Ordinary Disciple who may happen to give the prediction to an aspirant to Buddhahood as to his altered goal of attaining Paccakabodhi, how could he prophesy two incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons ahead (the usual period of perfection for Paccakabodhi)? Therefore it is difficult to say for certain whether for Paccakabuddhas, Chief Disciples, and Great Disciples, receiving the prediction is an essential factor or not. This is another assumption.

Thus we have on balance a diversity of opinions expressed by various other teachers regarding the prediction for those four classes of lesser Enlightenment and regarding the fixed periods for fulfilling the perfections and their flexibility when these matters relate to original aspirant to Buddhahood. Since we have no specific authority on these matters in the scriptures we do not stand on firm ground here.

Our discussion above is based on the theory, held by Sotattakī and similar Buddhist writings, that an aspirant to Buddhahood must spend sixteen incalculable aeons before receiving the prediction — during which mental wishing alone lasts for 7 incalculable aeons, followed by expressed wishing for 9 incalculable aeons — on which various schools of thought have given diverse views. There are other sources such as the *Anāgatavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā, etc.*, whose views may also be taken into account.

The authority of Sotattakī is disputed by some in respect of the sixteen incalculable aeons rule, *i.e.*, seven under mental wishing and nine under verbal. They argue that this rule is not found in the Pāḷi texts nor in the commentaries and subcommentaries thereon. Granted that certain sources, while not on record as texts recited at the various Buddhist synods (*saṅgāyana*), have been accepted as the Buddha’s teaching and that some (*e.g.* the *Milindapañha*) come to be quoted by commentators in suitable contexts with the force of scriptural authority. No such reference is found elsewhere on this subject, hence this work (Sotattakī) is open to scepticism.

To elaborate on the above argument:-

The above claim of sixteen incalculable aeons rule is not to be found, even obliquely, in any of the following scriptures:-

1. The *Tiṭṭaka* as recorded by successive Buddhist synods;
2. Commentaries by the Venerable Buddhaghosa, namely:
 - 2.1 *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, Commentary on *Dīghanikāya* (9 books);
 - 2.2 *Papañcasudani*, Commentary on *Majjhimanikāya* (3 books);
 - 2.3 *Sāratthappakāsini*, Commentary on *Samyuttanikāya* (5 books);

- 2.4 Manorathapūraṇī, Commentary on Aṅguttaranikāya (11 books);
- 2.5 Samantapāsādikā, Commentary on the Vinaya (5 books);
- 2.6 Aṭṭhasālinī, Commentaries on the Abhidhamma (7 books);
- 2.7 Sammohavinodanī, Commentaries on the Abhidhamma (7 books);
- 2.8 Pañcapakaraṇa, Commentaries on the Abhidhamma (7 books);
- 2.9 Paramatthajotikā, Commentary on the Suttanipāta;
- 2.10 Commentary on the Dhammapada;
- 2.11 Commentary on the Jātaka.
3. Commentary by the Venerable Buddhadatta, entitled Madhuratthavilāsini, on the Buddhavaṃsa;
4. Commentary by the Venerable Mahābhiddhāna, entitled Saddhammapakāsini, on the Paṭisambhidāmagga;
5. Commentary by the Venerable Upasena, entitled Saddhammapajjotikā, on the Cūḷaniddesa and Mahāniddesa;
6. Commentary by an obscure author, entitled Visuddhajanavilāsini, on the Thera Apadāna;
7. Commentary by an obscure author, entitled Paramatthajotikā, on the Khuddakapāṭha.

In the concluding part of this last mentioned work two authorships are claimed: that of Venerable Buddhaghosa and that of Venerable Dhammapāla. The composition, exposition and style of the work, however, betray the falsity of both the authorships.

On the subject of the sufficiency of condition for an aspirant to Buddhahood for committing oneself by express wish for Buddhahood as the primary step towards receiving the prediction, we have eight sources, namely Commentaries by Venerable Dhammapāla on the Khuddakanikāya:

1. Paramatthadīpanī, the Udāna Aṭṭhakathā;
2. Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā;
3. Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā;
4. Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā;
5. Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā;
6. Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā;
7. Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā;
8. Nettippakaraṇa Aṭṭhakathā.

Of those eight works, the Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā says:—

“In that connection, what follows is the attainment of the sufficing conditions for the Great Man, the aspirant to Buddhahood. In as much as

he has an unfailing inclination towards Perfect Enlightenment, he has an equally unfailing conduct directed towards the welfare of all beings; and it is on account of this high conduct that this Great Man has, at the feet of many an earlier Buddha (*i.e.*, previous to Dīpaṅkara Buddha, such as Brahmadeva Buddha, *etc.*), made his wish, mentally as well verbally: “May I, like this Buddha, become a Perfectly Enlightened One and bring forth the welfare of all beings thoroughly.”

The three classes of Perfections (*pāramī*) are described thus:—

“Beginning from the making of the first mental wish to the last, the tenfold meritorious acts beginning from giving that he practises are called acts of ordinary perfection (*pāramī*); then from the first express wishing for Buddhahood to the last, the merit he seeks towards perfection are called acts of minor perfection (*upapāramī*); later, from the first physical acts of merit to the last directed towards the same goal, are called acts of absolute perfection (*paramattha pāramī*). Thus the other teachers say.”⁰⁹⁰

The Silakkhandha-ṭīkā also defines the perfections in the same way.

In the Apadāna however, only the mental wishing is mentioned.⁰⁹¹

In the Maṅḍisāramañjūsā, the mental, verbal, and physical acts of expressing the determination (*pañidhāna*) are mentioned in succession.⁰⁹²

On the strength of those scriptural references, the question of the three successive stages of committing oneself — mentally, verbally, and physically towards the fulfilment of the perfections — should remain settled. Then, in view of the specified intervals of four, eight, or sixteen incalculable aeons in respect of the third phase of physical expressions having been the established rule, it would seem just logical to accept that similar time-spans should also govern as a rule in respect of the preceding two phases of mental and verbal expressions. Yet the scriptures are silent on this point. No instances can be quoted to testify to the theory. In such a situation one has to look for some work that mentions it, and if such a work be at hand (here, the Sotattakī), it may be accepted without question, after weighing the general credibility of the work itself. Even if one reserves one’s judgement on the matter, there is no point in rejecting it out of hand or running it down; a neutral attitude is called for in such cases. This is one way of looking at it.

The three successive phases are accepted by two literary giants in the field of Buddhist commentarial literature, the Venerable Dhammapāla and the Venerable Ariyavaṃsa. This is another way of looking at it. The former has to his credit nine commentaries ([the eight mentioned earlier](#) and Saccasaṅkhepa Aṭṭhakathā) and twenty-one Subcommentaries (*ṭīkā*),

namely: on the above mentioned eight Aṭṭhakathā and the three volume set of Dīghanikāya, on the three volume set of Majjhimanikāya, on the five volume set of Saṃyuttanikāya, on Aṅguttaranikāya (Ones), on the seven volume set of Abhidhamma (listed under the Khuddakanikāya), on the Nettippakaraṇa and on the Visuddhimagga; an adept in the Tipiṭaka, a teacher of no mean repute, a most respected authority on religion, *i.e.*, a convincingly erudite scholar on the value of one's own opinions stand as well as on the perverseness of different sectarian views, comparable in intellectual might to Ānanda the fabulous giant fish of the great oceans, said to have a length of one thousand leagues that alone can, by his frolicking, cause great waves in all the four great oceans simultaneously. The latter, the Venerable Ariyavaṃsa, was the well-known author of the Maṇisāramañjūsā, Maṇidīpa, Anuṭikā Mahānissaya, Jātakavisodhani, and Ganthābharāṇa.

N.B. The Venerable Dhammapāla has also been credited with the authorship of Pāṭha Jātaka-ṭikā; however the treatment, the style, *etc.*, certainly prove otherwise.

On those considerations, it would seem unwarranted to throw overboard those literary works in question.

There must be reasons why the Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā and such scriptural authorities speak only of the three phases of the aspirant to Buddhahood's commitment and not the durations therefore, and we should try to find them out. One of them is that the apportionments of time does not agree with the Apadāna which says: "*Manasāyeva hutvāna dhammarājā asaṅkhyā.*" From that we note that under an infinite number of Buddhas the Bodhisatta made his wish for Buddhahood mentally only. Now, in Sotattakī and such works the mental wishing period of seven incalculable aeons is said to have elapsed during which one hundred and twenty-five Buddhas appeared. If, according to Apadāna this mental wishing period be so long as to take an infinite number of Buddhas to appear, then that interval obviously must have been far greater than that. In Yasodharā Therī Apadāna, the aspirant, the future Yasodharā, is said to have prayed for Enlightenment as a Great Disciple, in the capacity of the wife of the future Buddha, under two million million twelve thousand, one hundred and seventy-nine Buddhas, such as Brahmadeva Buddha, Porāṇa Gotama Buddha, *etc.* That figure varies greatly with what is mentioned in Sotattakī and such works, and it would be ridiculous to assume that the future Yasodharā began wishing for Discipleship even before there ever was a future Gotama Buddha. This is the incongruous.

In the Apadāna the period of praying mentally is reckoned from the time the non-rebirth-producing merit is started by the Bodhisatta whereas

Sotattakī and such writings take into account only those actions of the Bodhisatta that express the determination to become a Buddha, so that seven incalculable aeons put by them for the mental-praying period is a mere fraction of what actually had been the case, and that is probably the reason why most commentators do not mention that period.

Similar lines of thinking are open too.

The Sotattakī, in its concluding remarks, quotes the stanza, “*Imañca ...*” as part of the Buddha’s own words.⁰⁹³

It also says that the whole story of the Bodhisatta narrated therein has been expanded upon by the famous teacher Buddhaghosa Thera. Probably it is only a namesake of the great commentator.

The foregoing discussion is based on the theory of the sixteen incalculable aeons pre-prediction period maintained by the Sotattakī.

There are other ways of reckoning that may be examined, such as a pre-prediction period of one hundred thousand great aeons plus 1,600 existences, a twenty-four incalculable aeons period, a measureless period, *etc.*, and just as an aspirant to Buddhahood may later change his objective so also an aspirant for Paccekabodhi, or Chief Discipleship or Great Discipleship may change for a lesser class of Enlightenment, and if the wish arises before maturity for prediction, the altered wish is realisable too. It has been said by some that the Venerable Sāriputta at one time had wished for Buddhahood.

However, there is no hint of this in any of the texts: Sāriputta Theragāthā and its commentary, the Paramatthadīpanī; the Sāriputta Apadāna and its commentary, the Visuddhajanavilāsini; the Aṅguttaranikāya and its commentary the Manorathapūraṇī and its Subcommentary; and other commentarial literature, never mention anything about this.

The following extracts may be compared:—

In the commentary, the future Sāriputta, as Sarada the youth, on the eve of his retirement into the forest, pondered thus: “Ah, death is a certainty for all these beings. So will I seek the way of escape from death by taking up some form of homeless life.”⁰⁹⁴

This kind of reflection is typical of aspirants for Paccekabodhi and Discipleship, and not of a future Buddha. Therefore the future Sāriputta must have, before receiving the prediction, set his mind on Paccekabodhi or some form of Discipleship.

According to the author of Silakkhandha-ṭikā, the future Sāriputta started his search for Enlightenment by aspiring to an Ordinary Discipleship. This is because he was, like Nanda the recluse, the future Subhūti

Thera, already ripe for Arahantship as an Ordinary Disciple at the time of receiving the prediction for Chief Discipleship.

As the commentary puts it:-

“Sarada the recluse, being inspired by the sight of Nisabha Thera, thought to himself, “Oh, how I would like to become a Chief Disciple like this venerable under some Buddha!” It was due to this preoccupation with a different goal that he missed his chance of winning the Path on that occasion when Anomadassī Buddha taught.”⁰⁹⁵

The above passage implies that had the future Sāriputta as Sarada not been obsessed with the desire for Chief Discipleship, he would have gained the Path and its Fruition as an ordinary disciple there and then.

Incidentally, the name of the future Sāriputta is Sarada according to the Commentaries. In the Sāriputta Apadāna, he is mentioned by the name of Suruci:¹ “*Pañcābhiññābalappatto Suruci nāma tāpaso.*”

The name of the future Moggallāna, likewise, is also at variance in different sources; while the Commentary refers to him as Sirivaḍḍhana the householder, Moggallāna Thera Apadāna² describes him as Varuṇa, king of serpents, whose home was in the great oceans, and who greeted Anomadassī Buddha with music on the Buddha’s visit to Himavanta, where he received the prediction for future Chief Discipleship.⁰⁹⁶

In this connection, the commentary says that Sirivaḍḍhana the householder, on his death, went to the deva realm; and does not say that he was reborn as a serpent.

Again, with regard to the future Subhūti Thera’s name there is a discrepancy: in the commentary he is referred to as Nanda the recluse, head of forty-four thousand followers, whereas in Subhūti Thera Apadāna, he is said to be a recluse named Kosiya.⁰⁹⁷

Thus we have a few cases of discrepancies occurring in the personal identities and facts between Apadāna and the commentaries. Leave alone the discrepancies between different commentaries, there are a few of them even in one and the same work: for instance, in the Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā, in the story of the Venerable Moggallāna, he is referred to as Sirivaḍḍhana the householder when he received the prediction, and after the full events of his life have been told, the account concludes, quoting the text from Moggallāna Thera Apadāna (*tena vuttaṃ apadāne*), describing him as Varuṇa the king of serpents who received the prediction as a Chief Disciple.

¹ Ap..219, verse 174. ² Ap.i.31.

The same mix-up is to be found in Thera Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā too. At the beginning it is as Sirivaḍḍhana the householder, as in the commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya, who receives the prediction; and then it closes as the Pāli text reads (*i.e.*, as the serpent king).

The contents of Thera Apadāna and Theragāthā are not exactly the same it may be noted. The former contains 550 elders whereas the latter has only 266, out of which 235 are also found in the former and the remaining 31 are not; and of the 235 that are included in the Apadāna, the opening stanzas relating to three, namely, Kimila Thera, Vaḍḍha Thera, and Mahānāga Thera, although quoted by the commentator, are not traceable in the Apadāna Pāli texts extant now.

Similar disparity is also found between the Therī Apadāna and Therīgāthā: the former contains 40 elder nuns while the latter has 73, out of which 35 are also found in the former. Of them, the opening stanzas in respect of two, namely that of Puttā Therī and Rohiṇī Therī, although quoted by the commentator, are not found in the Therī Apadāna texts extant today. The opening stanzas relating to Uppalavaṇṇa Therī as quoted by the commentator, are also different from those as read in Uppalavaṇṇa Therī Apadāna texts extant now.

These are some of the obvious discrepancies pointed out for the benefit of scholars. One should not, on account of those discrepancies, lose faith in either of the two texts, *i.e.*, Apadāna and Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā. Rather, the reasons for such discrepancies should be probed into.

End of the Answer to the Tenth Question

Answer to the Eleventh Question

The ten basic kinds of perfections in three grades: as merit amounting to ordinary perfection (*pāramī*), minor perfection (*upapāramī*), and absolute perfection (*paramattha pāramī*) — thus constituting thirty kinds of perfection — are the province of Buddhas only to whom they belong invariably (*nippariyāya*). Paccekabuddhas and Disciples do not need all of them.⁰⁹⁸

That indeed is so. The All-knowing Wisdom (*sabbaññūtā*), the Ten Powers of Knowledge (*dasabala-ñāṇa*), *etc.*, that embody a Perfectly Enlightened One, endowed with incomparable enlightenment (*anuttara-sammāsambodhi*), are conditioned sufficiently (*upaniṣṣaya*) by the thirty immutable perfections only. As for Paccekabuddhas and Disciples the basic ten perfections, properly fulfilled, entitle them to their respective type of Enlightenment.

This is explained in Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā thus:—

- (a) Indeed this is true. Just as with the future Buddhas, so also with future Paccekabuddhas and future Disciples, the merit performed to perfection such as giving, *etc.*, gradually contributes to a strengthening (*paribrūhita*) of perfection in wisdom matures into a substantial accumulation (*gabbhaṃ*) that culminates in the Enlightenment of Paccekabodhi or Discipleship, as the case may be.
- (b) Let me elaborate: Those aspirants to Enlightenment, through continued pursuit of giving at countless previous existences, acquired an inclination to non-greed (*alobhijjhāsayā*) so that they have no attachment (*asaṅgamāmasā*) or longing (*anapekkhacittā*) for anything, *i.e.*, any living thing or any circumstances in life (*sabbatthā-sattasaṅkhāra*). Through continued pursuit of moral conduct, they acquired the proper control of the senses so that they have purity of physical and verbal actions, purity of livelihood, and in the six faculties the perceptive doors are well-guarded. Further, they know the proper limit in food, are wakeful and alert, and they strive well towards their goal. Their practice of vigilance is explained by their resort to seclusion.
- (c) To those aspirants who observe the Noble Practice, they become well-equipped with the necessary service, with the result that they attain without difficulty, to the eight attainments, the five higher spiritual powers, the six higher spiritual powers, which are the bases of insight, and thence there comes to hand to insight that precedes Path Knowledge. The eight other perfections such as energy (*virīya*) easily fall into line with the two crucial perfections of giving (*dāna*) and morality (*sīla*).
- (d) Now, as to how crucial the two perfections are:— In making the effort at giving and other meritorious actions for the sake of Enlightenment as a Paccekabuddha or as a Disciple, the aspirant is practising the merit of energy to perfection (*virīya pārami*). The endurance he exercises in the pursuit of that merit is the practice of patience to perfection (*khantī pārami*). The observance of giving, virtue and other wholesome practices sincerely without deceit or pretence (*samādānāvisaṃvādanam*) is the practice of truthfulness to perfection (*sacca pārami*). The unflinching steadiness with which he maintains under all circumstances is the practice of resolve to perfection (*adhiṭṭhāna pārami*). The desire for the welfare of others beginning with recipients of his giving is the practice of loving-kindness to perfection (*mettā pārami*). Disregarding others' faults is the practice of equanimity to perfection (*upekkhā pārami*). In this way, where giving, virtue and development of insight (*bhāvanā*) is

accomplished, or where virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) are in good store, other perfections such as the perfection of energy (*virīya pāramī*), become automatically accomplished.⁹⁹

A Possible Question

QUESTION: According to the commentary above, aspirants to Paccekabodhi and Discipleship also cannot do without giving, morality, and the development of insight, so those practices also imply the other eight perfections such as energy, *etc.*, hence it is clear that the ten ordinary perfections fall within their province. However, as to whether they need to practice to perfection the two higher degrees of minor perfections and absolute perfections still remains unclear.

ANSWER: The Cariyāpiṭaka and Silakkhandha-ṭīkā, quoting some school of thought, say that since Disciples are caused by others to cross the flood of *saṃsāra* (*tārīta puṅgala*), aspirants for Discipleship are concerned with the ten ordinary perfections; since Paccekabuddhas are the ones who can cross the flood of *saṃsāra* themselves (*tarīta puṅgala*), aspirants for Paccekabodhi are concerned with the ten minor perfections; and since the Buddhas are the ones who cause others to cross the flood of *saṃsāra* (*tārayitu puṅgala*), aspirants for Buddhahood are concerned with the ten absolute perfections.¹⁰⁰

According to that school of thought, it would seem that aspirants for Discipleship are not at all concerned with the minor perfections and the absolute perfections; that aspirants for Paccekabodhi are concerned only with the minor perfections; and that future Buddhas are not at all concerned with the ordinary perfections and the minor perfections. (This view does not accord with the text that says: “*Tiṃsapāramisaṃpuṇṇā dhammarājā asaṅkhayā.*”)

According to another school of thought (*aññe vāda*) quoted in the above mentioned sources, it has been argued that in view of their gladness or approval at, or instigation to, doing acts of merit by others or doing them themselves, all these three aspects of merit-seeking should very well be the concern of aspirants to Discipleship and aspirants to Paccekabodhi; and therefore they should also need to practice the minor perfections and the absolute perfections.¹⁰¹

A certain school (*eke vāda*) maintains that aspirants to Discipleship and aspirants to Paccekabodhi have to practice the ten ordinary perfections and the ten minor perfections and that aspirants to Buddhahood alone need to practice the whole thirty kinds of perfection.¹⁰²

Their own view (*saka vāda*) say the commentators referred to above, is that sacrificing external possessions such as wife, children, and riches is called ordinary perfection; sacrifice of one's limbs or body organs constitutes minor perfection; sacrifice of one's own life is counted as absolute perfection.¹⁰³

The Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā, however, says that sacrifice of one's limbs and body organs is ordinary perfection; sacrifice of external possessions is minor perfection; and sacrifice of one's own life is absolute perfection. These refer to the perfection in giving. The rest of the perfections are to be classified accordingly.¹⁰⁴ There is little logic in this classification, it would seem.

The commentators here express their opinion that the minor perfections and the absolute perfections may or may not have partial application to Paccekabuddhas and Disciples.

End of the Answer to the Eleventh Question

Answer to the Twelfth Question

In the Fourth Question above we have said that Ordinary Disciples have to undergo perfection periods of a hundred great aeons to a thousand great aeons. Here the question is: "Are those periods fixed, or are they flexible?"

A Possible Question

QUESTION: The periods ranging from one hundred great aeons to one thousand great great aeons are laid down as of an immutable law. How does this rigidity come about?

ANSWER: (a) The Visuddhimagga has this to say:—

- (a) Let me elaborate: certain non-Buddhist recluses, who believe in kamma, have gained absorption and have psychic attainments as a result, or Ordinary Disciples, or Great Disciples, or Chief Disciples, or Paccekabuddhas, or Buddhas — these six types of person can remember their past existences.
- (b) Of those six persons, non-Buddhists recluses, believers in kamma who attain absorption and the attainments can recollect their past up to forty great aeons, but not beyond that. Why? Because they are poor in knowledge. Indeed that is so. For they lack the knowledge that can analyse mind and matter (*nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa*).
- (c) "Ordinary Disciples can recollect their past up to one hundred aeons or one thousand great aeons. Why? Because, having possessed of the analytical knowledge about mind and matter, they have great knowledge (*balavapaññattā*). The eighty Great Disciples can recollect their past up

to one hundred thousand great aeons; the two Chief Disciples can recollect their past up to one incalculable aeon.

- (d) Paccekabuddhas can recollect their past up to two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons. Why? Because they have taken upon themselves, with their minds set on the respective goals (*abhinīhāro*), the fulfilling of the perfections for similar durations — *i.e.*, one incalculable aeon and one hundred thousand great aeons in the case of the Great Disciples and two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, in the case of Paccekabuddhas. As for the Buddhas the period of such endeavour directed towards Buddhahood is beyond reckoning.¹⁰⁵

The periods up to which Ordinary Disciples can recollect their past is said to range from one hundred to one thousand great aeons on the authority of the commentaries on the Suttanta and Vinaya; in the former it is stated thus: “*Tesu pana, etc.*”¹⁰⁶ (Which is an elaboration on the foregoing.)

A Possible Question

QUESTION: In the above commentary, with reference to the expression “*Ettako hi etesaṃ abhinīhāro,*” why are the eighty Great Disciples able to recollect their past only up to one hundred thousand great aeons?

ANSWER: Because the duration of their fulfilling the perfections lasted just so much.

QUESTION: Why are the Chief Disciples able to recollect their past only up to one incalculable and one hundred thousand great aeons?

ANSWER: Because the duration of their fulfilling the perfections was of that much.

QUESTION: Why are the Paccekabuddhas able to recollect their past only up to two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons?

ANSWER: For similar reasons as above, *i.e.*, their period of fulfilling the perfections lasted just two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons.

QUESTION: Why are the eighty Great Disciples superior in their power of recollecting the past?

ANSWER: The answer lies in the expression “great knowledge,” in paragraph (c) above, that occurs above with reference to the Ordinary Disciples. They are said to possess great knowledge because their wisdom is associated with purity of view (*diṭṭhivisuddhi*).

The same holds true with the Chief Disciples and Paccekabuddhas too.

If the expression “*Balavapaññattā*” were not properly interpreted as above, and if the expression “*Ettakohi etesaṃ abhinīhāro*” were to be wrongly construed, it would mean that non-Buddhist recluses could also go beyond 40 great aeons and recollect their past up to one hundred thousand great aeons and so on, which would obviously be absurd. For if that were so, Bodhisatta Sarabhaṅga the recluse, would have to be credited with powers to recollect his past up to four incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons since he had had by then fulfilled the perfections as long as that.

Therefore the expression “*Balavapaññattā*” is the proper indication of the Great Disciples’ power of recollecting the past beyond forty great aeons; and the expression “*Ettako hi etesaṃ abhinīhāro*” indicates the limits of one hundred thousand great aeons, *etc.*, pertaining to the Ordinary Disciples.

Thus the indicative expression in paragraph (c) governs the next paragraph, and the expression in paragraph (d) also governs the preceding paragraph. Hence we should read paragraph (c) as if it were:

“*Pakati sāvakā kappasatampi kappasahassampi yeva ettako hi etesaṃ abhinīhāro.*”

Read in that way, the perfection periods of a hundred great aeons and a thousand great aeons, the range fixed for most Ordinary Disciples, become obvious. That is why in the Fourth Question these periods are laid down as a rule.

The Subcommentary points out that the word “*Eta*” in the phrase “*Ettako hi etesaṃ*” refers only to the Eighty Great Disciples: *Etesanti asīti mahā-sāvakānaṃ*. That leaves one uncertain about the definite perfection period for the Ordinary Disciple, so complain some critics. However, the real purpose of the subcommentator here is to exclude Paccekabuddha, which appears close to that phrase; as for the term “Ordinary Disciple” (*pakati sāvakā*), it has already been covered by the word “*balavapaññattā*” so that there is no connection with or hanging on to (*paṅga*) in question. It is therefore not to take this explanation by the subcommentator as actually excluding the Ordinary Disciple from the general meaning of the phrase. Neither could one say that the explanation allows for the Ordinary Disciple: it merely disregards the Ordinary Disciple here.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: Why does the commentator indicate great knowledge as the cause in the preceding sentence when it governs the Great Disciples, *etc.*, as well, and would properly belong to the following sentence?

ANSWER: It is to juxtapose the term alongside the term “Little knowledge” (*dubbalapaññā*) that refers to those non-Buddhist recluses.

What is explained above should settle the question how and why the range of perfection period for Ordinary Disciples is up at one hundred and one thousand great aeons.

As to the question whether the said range of a hundred great aeons and a thousand great aeons, are to be rigidly treated, we have a number of instances that reveal that the upper limit of a thousand great aeons is sometimes exceeded. Here are some:

Dhammaruci Thera:

In the Dhammaruci Thera Apadāna, it is said:—

“*Tadā dīpaṅkaro buddho sumedhaṃ vyākari jino,*” etc., — relating the story of Dhammaruci Thera’s past. He was inspired by the Bodhisatta Sumedha receiving the prediction from Dīpaṅkara Buddha and turned bhikkhu from where his journey toward Enlightenment began. Since he became an Arahant, distinguished among the Ordinary Disciples, only under Gotama Buddha’s Teaching, his perfection period lasted four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons. Similarly:—

1. Nissenīdāyaka Thera: began aspiring for Enlightenment while donating a flight of stairs to Koṇḍañña Buddha and had to fulfil the perfections for three incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons.
2. Supāricariya Thera who attended reverently on Padumuttara Buddha after hearing the Buddha’s teaching, and fulfilled the perfections for one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons.
3. Sumana Thera, Abbhañjanadāyaka Thera, Pānadhidāyaka Thera, Maggadattika Thera, etc., who received the prediction from Anomadassi Buddha.
4. Vidhūpanadāyaka Thera and over a hundred elders who began their aspiration for Ordinary Discipleship under Padumuttara Buddha, some one hundred thousand great aeons in the past.

From those instances recorded in Apadāna we can note that many Ordinary Disciples fulfilled the perfections far beyond a thousand great aeons.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: What about lesser periods of perfection than the standard norm of one hundred great aeons? What is the minimum period known?

ANSWER: Some elders such as Migasira, Subhūti, Lomasakaṅgiya, Vanavaccha, Ekavihāriya, the Apadāna specifically says, began special merit-seeking (*puññavisesa*) i.e., desiring for Arahantship, since Kassapa Buddha's time. However the commentator on the Theragāthā says that those elders actually aspired to (*adhikāra*) Arahantship much earlier.¹⁰⁷ Hence we cannot determine the duration from those cases.

Similar cases are also mentioned in the Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, etc., where aspirants to Ordinary Discipleship who won their objective under Gotama Buddha began aspiring under Paccekabuddhas who appeared in the interim period between Kassapa Buddha and Gotama Buddha, such as the five hundred Paccekabuddhas born of Paduma Devī, and one other Paccekabuddha; and under Kattarasikhī Paccekabuddha who appeared about one thousand years previous to the arising of Gotama Buddha, the period of general excitement when the world awaited the oncoming Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*). However, no final decision as to any minimum duration for fulfilling the perfections is possible from those too.

What the Commentary on Theragāthā points out is that an aspirant for Ordinary Discipleship cannot be considered ripe enough for Arahantship by attending on just two or three Buddhas.

However, there are authorities who maintain that Ordinary Discipleship may be attained by serving just two or three existences. This has been shown in the Samantapāsādikā Aṭṭhakathā and Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā:—

“The Blessed One is called the Teacher even of animals because of his ability to instruct them in the Dhamma. They may hear the Buddha's Teaching and, imbibing it, become equipped with the sufficing condition for Arahantship so that by the second or the third existence they may be entitled to Path Knowledge and its Fruition. In this connection Maṇḍūka, son of a deva and similar cases may be pointed out.”¹⁰⁸

In this context the expression: “*Tāya eva upanissaya sampattiyā dutiye tatiyevā attabhāve maggaphalabhāgino honti*” by employing the word “*Eva*,” “just,” indicates that the requisite condition is fulfilled by just listening to the Buddha's teaching, without previous merit directed at release from rebirth. This is one argument.

In the Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā, commenting on the Cūlasaccaka Sutta the commentator says:

“At that time the Blessed One accepted the almsfood offered to him by Saccaka the Jain ascetic and credited the merit to Saccaka, quite apart from the latter's wish. The food was originally offered to Saccaka by the Licchavi

princes who, for some reason,¹ did not give it to the Blessed One. The significance of Saccakā's offering has been pointed out by the Blessed One in the words beginning, '*Yaṃ kho Aggivessana ...*' Furthermore, that alms giving by Saccaka will leave an indelible impression on his mental make-up (*vāsanāya bhavissati*), which will benefit him in the future, probably in the second or third existence. Thus should it be noted."¹⁰⁹

When Saccaka offered the alms-food he received from the Licchavi princes to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, he requested the Buddha that the merit fall upon the original donors, the Licchavi; but the Buddha replied that it would only fall on him. Therefore Saccakā's offering is tainted in not desiring merit; hence it left him only with an impression of a good deed that will become fruitful only in later existences.

(a) "The Buddha taught the Jain ascetic two discourses, the first consisting of two sections² and the second, one and a half sections. In spite of listening to these two and a half sections the ascetic did not attain Path Knowledge; he did not go forth into monkhood — he did not even go for refuge. Then why did the Buddha teach at such length to a Jain who never even stood within his fold?³ To this question the answer is that it was for leaving an impression in the Jain's mind for future benefit.

(b) "To expand this point: The Blessed One knew that Saccaka had no sufficing condition for Enlightenment in the present existence. However, he knew that about two hundred years after his parinibbāna, his Teaching would flourish in the Island of Tambapaṇṇī (Sri Lanka); that this Jain ascetic would be reborn into a respectable family; that he would, on attaining the right age, go forth as a bhikkhu and after learning the Piṭaka and developing insight, attain Arahantship with the four discriminations, to become a famous elder by the name of Kālabbudharakkhita. Seeing the future course of events thus, the Buddha taught him at such length to leave the impression on his mind. In such light should this be seen."¹¹⁰

What the Commentary points out here is that Saccaka who does not take refuge in the Triple Gem cannot win the Path on hearing the Buddha's teaching which can only make the wholesome impression on his mind.

The Commentary makes it clear that at the time of listening to the Buddha's sermon Saccaka had had no sufficing condition at all for Enlightenment, "*Idāni upanissayo natthi.*" Yet starting with the meritorious actions of alms offerings and listening to the Buddha's teaching, his merit

¹ *Yasmā*: the Licchavi princes were followers of Saccaka then.

² *Bhāṇavāra*: a section of the scriptures containing 8,000 words.

³ Lit., "Not having established oneself in the three refuges."

continued to multiply with the result that in just over 200 years, in his third existence, he won Arahantship and its Fruition. For, as another writer accounts for him, Saccaka went to the realm of Devas at his death. This is another argument.

Again, we have in the Milindapañha:—

“Great King, without previous efficacy of the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) there can be no Arahantship in one single existence.”¹¹¹

This statement implies the possibility that is open to one who performs the ascetic practices for two or more existences, since it rules out a single existence only.

This is yet another argument.

In the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta-ṭikā the matter is discussed as follows:—

“For a Paccabuddha, the sufficing condition for Enlightenment as such is an appropriate amount of merit as well as degree of maturity of wisdom built up (*tajjāpuññañāṇa-sambhāra sambharanam*) over a period of two incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons. As regards the sufficing condition for the Enlightenment of Disciples, the Chief Disciples have to gather merit over one incalculable, and the Great Disciples, one hundred thousand great aeons. Other Ordinary Disciples depend for their Enlightenment on the strength of merit conducive to insight (*nibbedhabhāgiyaṃ kusalaṃ*) aimed at breaking away from the cycle of rebirths (*vivattaṣaṇṇissaya*), i.e., with the firm desire for nibbāna, that has been acquired in the past existences.”¹¹²

From the expression “acquired in the past existences” (*atitāsu jātisu*) we are given to understand plainly that it may take just two or three existences to wish for, and work for, Enlightenment as an Ordinary Disciple.

This is yet another argument.

On the weight of those arguments, we may safely conclude that the minimum perfection period for Ordinary Discipleship may be two or three existences only.

That is according to those masters quoted above. Their theory has been scrutinized in the following manner:—

With reference to the first argument, the expression: “*Tāya eva upanissayasampattiyā dutiye tatiyevā attabhāve maggaphalabhāgino hontī*” — the word “*Eva*” should properly be taken to govern the kind of merit (i.e., listening to the Buddha’s teaching) that the frog (*maṇḍūka*) acquired at that time; and it does not imply that no sufficient merit had been in store in his past existences.

Otherwise, it would lead to a wrong conclusion¹ that the frog, on listening to the sermon near his habitat of Gaggara lake, got accidentally killed and became a son of deva when he returned immediately even before the sermon had ended, related his story of rebirth to the Blessed One, and after continued attention to the sermon, attained Arahantship. If that was the case, then his period of perfection would appear as short as a few hours only — which obviously is absurd.

Therefore, the sufficing condition must be understood to have been acquired previous to his existence as a frog. Being reborn an animal on account of some bad kamma, he happened to acquire the necessary merit to gain a fortunate rebirth in the realm of Devas through listening to the sermon, and taking advantage of his fresh rebirth, being endowed with the three good roots (*tihetuka*), he now became a fitting person to win the Path. Thus, with his worthiness of person (*bhabba puggala*), his attending on the Buddha as his assets, his attentive listening to the sermon sparked the past store of merit and made the necessary conditions for Arahantship complete. Therefore in the sentence: “*Tāyeva upanissayasampattiyā maggaphalabhāgino honti*,” the word ‘*Tāyeva*’ embraces all those conditions that come together for the winning of the Path and its Fruition. It does not refer only to the listening to the Buddha’s teaching as a frog, unsupported by previous merit. This is stated by the subcommentator thus: *Upanissaya sampattinti ... etc.*¹¹³

The Vimativinodanī-ṭikā explains further:—

“The frog takes in the attributes of the Blessed One’s voice”² may be understood in this light: having been familiar with listening to the true Dhamma³ under the various Buddhas that had arisen in the past, the frog, on hearing the Buddha’s voice, takes it up (*i.e.*, recognizes its attributes)⁴ “Ah! this is the Dhamma!” This indeed is so. For it is only due to the habituated practice (of listening to the Dhamma) in the previous existences⁵ that animals of such (spiritual) nature can appreciate the Dhamma when they listen to it (*pasādo uppajjati*). Just as in the case of those bats and similar cases, they felt joyous satisfaction in listening to the teaching and such meritorious actions.”¹¹⁴

“Similar cases” here refers to those of the five hundred bats⁶ that listened attentively to Abhidhamma when they heard it recited in the cave where

¹ *Aniṭṭhapaṣaṅga*: Lit., “Undesirable inclination.”

² *Sare nimittam aggaḥesīti*: lit., ‘seize upon the sign of the voice.’

³ *Saddhammassavana paricāyena*.

⁴ *Sare āhāraṃ gaṇṇhati*: “Takes it up,” *i.e.*, recognizes its attributes: “Ah, this is the Dhamma!”

⁵ *Pubbābhīyogavasena*: The habit of listening to the Dhamma in the previous existences.

⁶ “The five hundred bats.” These bats were reborn — after some intervening existences — as humans when they became bhikkhus and, on hearing the Abhidhamma from the Venerable Sāriputta, understood it well due to their having heard it in their past existence.

they lived. There is also another story, as related in Sahassa-vatthu, of five hundred bats who listened intently to a discourse on the four foundations of mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta), and after being reborn as human beings, gained Path Knowledge. Similarly, the deer that got killed by the hunter's arrow while listening to Dhammaghosika's sermon was reborn a human being and, joining the Order of bhikkhus as a novice (*sāmaṇera*) at the age of seven, became an Arahant with the six supernormal powers, as soon as the shaving of his head was finished. Many more such instances should also be cited here.

That Maṇḍūka, before he was born as a frog, must surely have had previous familiarity with the Dhamma, as pointed out by the Vimativinodanī-ṭīkā, also has been upheld by another commentator: the commentary on Vimānavatthu — entitled Maṇḍūka Devaputta Vimāna Aṭṭhakathā — describes the event thus:-

“At that time a certain frog came out of the lake and said to himself, ‘Ah! This is the sound of the Dhamma.’ Taking in the Blessed One's voice with full appreciation of its attributes (*i.e.*, the Dhamma), he prostrated himself at one end of the congregation.”¹¹⁵

The commentator here significantly observes; that this frog who could come and listen to the Dhamma, appreciative of its sublime character was not one of the common run of animals; and that his superior intelligence must have been the outcome of previous effort (*pubba yoga*) and former mental inclination (*pubba vāsanā*) to such wholesome actions.

The expression “*Dutiya-tatiyevā attabhāve*” — signifies the law of kamma that however great one's accumulation of not rebirth orientated merit might be, one can never attain to Enlightenment as an animal, *i.e.* being born with no wholesome roots (*ahetuka*); and that only at the second or third existence thereafter can one attain to it.

With reference to the second argument above:

“This man Saccaka has no sufficing condition for Enlightenment at present.” (*imassa idāni upanissayo natthi*). This sentence ought to be understood as Saccaka's inability to attain to Path Knowledge at the present existence; however, his previous merit should not be doubted. As for the present existence he has become such a past master in mundane knowledge (*lokāyatana paññā*) that his inflated ego, based on his great learning (*pañḍita-mānī*), makes him a hypocrite, a blinded fool (*atibāla*) just as incurable as an ailment arising from taking harmful medicine (*besajjasamuṭṭhita rogā*), with the result that he finds it incapable of taking refuge in the Triple-Gem.

Nevertheless, his occasional offerings of alms-food and listening to the Buddha's discourses inspired by a noble regard for the Buddha certainly benefited him. For the Buddha being the supreme recipient of offerings (*anuttara-aggā-dakkhiṇeyya*) constitutes the most important field for sowing good deeds (*khettaṅgata*) and the purest and best trained recipient (*paṭiggāhakatodakkhina-visuddhi*), the donor is bound to reap the fruit of those good deeds, more particularly, is destined for some favourable existence after his death.

N.B.: Now, should someone ask: how come that Saccaka did not even take refuge in the Triple-Gem if he had had so much sufficiently of past merit? How could benefits accrue to one who does not go to the Triple Gem for refuge and so is obviously lacking faith in the Triple Gem? — such questions are quite irrelevant here.

Moot Points:

That frog may appreciate the Buddha's mellifluous voice and feel joyous veneration, but he will not understand the meaning of the sermon. As for Saccaka, being adamant (*ādhānuggāhī*) and difficult of forsaking his own perverted view (*duppaṭinissajji*), he is unable to go for refuge in the Triple Gem; therefore his merit is not conducive to Enlightenment, and as such does not count as fulfilment of perfection. These are the moot points.

With reference to the third argument:

The expression "In past existences" (*atitāsu jātisu*) does not mean just two or three previous existences. Even in the present fortunate aeon graced by five Buddhas, someone might begin wishing for the end of rebirth and perform acts of merit to that end, and might strive for maturity under the Teaching of either Koṇāgamana Buddha, or Kassapa Buddha or during the intervals thereof, or under the Teaching of Gotama Buddha. Such aspirants cannot be said to have gained Enlightenment after a perfection period of so many great aeons, since they may well become Arahants within the same aeon. Rather, their perfection period should be reckoned in the number of existences. The phrase "In the previous existences" is purported by the subcommentator to describe such aspirants.

That indeed is so. In Apadāna stories we have instances of aspirants starting their quest for Enlightenment under Kassapa Buddha's Teaching and winning their objective under Gotama Buddha's Teaching, as stated in the Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā and Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā.¹¹⁶

With reference to the fourth argument:—

The stress here is on the austere practices and not on the number of existences, as stated in, "Only in a single existence" (*ekissāyeva jātiyā*). Hence this argument purports to say that the austere practices are the sine qua non for Enlightenment so much so that, not to speak of a single existence, let any number of existences pass, and let any number of great aeons pass, one can never attain to Enlightenment without having performed the austere practices at one time or the other.

According to this assertion in the Milindapañha, it may well be asked: when did Maṇḍūka and Saccaka perform their austere practices, seeing that on their second rebirth they became Devas and that they attained Arahantship at the third existence?

This is the counter-argument by some to the above assertion.

They quote the Mahāpadāna Sutta:-

"Just now, it is not fitting that I teach the Dhamma discovered with great trouble by me, since the Four Noble Truths (the cornerstone of the Dhamma) would be quite incomprehensible to the multitudes, overcome as they are by lust and hate."¹¹⁷

In the Commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta, *etc.*, this is expanded as follows:-

"The Dhamma, constituting the Four Noble Truths, is profound, unfathomable as the magma beneath the earth's crust that is two hundred and forty thousand leagues thick in itself; it is as hard to see as a mustard seed hidden underneath Mount Meru; it is as hard to know as a horse-hair sliced into a hundred threads or strands to have each of their ends matched up; Even with us (the Tathāgata) who have struggled to penetrate the Four Noble Truths, there is no kind of giving that I have not practiced; no kind of moral precept that I have not observed; no kind of perfection that I have not fulfilled; and in spite of that at the time of my dispelling the forces of Māra, this great earth, two-hundred and forty thousand leagues in depth, made nothing so much as a stir as though reluctant to exert itself."¹¹⁸

N.B. In the above Pāli syntax the expression "*nirussāhaṃ viya*" has been rendered as an adverbial phrase describing the attitude of the great earth. This is to suit the situation prevailing at the time of the Buddha's conquest over Māra. For here at the foot of the Bodhi Tree there are assembled myriads of Nāgā myriads of Garuḷā, myriads of devas, myriads of Sakkas (kings of Devas) and myriads of Brahmās coming from ten thousand world-systems (*cakkavāla*) who, at the onslaught of Māra's hordes, run helter-skelter, like the waters escaping from a broken earthen dam, leaving the Buddha in the

lurch. It is therefore no mean achievement that the Buddha, all by himself, routed Māra's army. It certainly is a great and most rare occasion which the great earth should show its applause by a rumbling quake. Yet, as if possessed by lethargy, it does not bestir itself.

The phrase may also be taken as an adverbial phrase describing the Buddha's coolness in quelling Māra's weird forces — that he dispelled the enemy quite effortlessly and calmly as if he were conserving his energy.

The first of these interpretations, though appropriate in sense, is not quite flawless under rules of prosody, for it suffers from *vyākṛṣṇa dosa*.

“The great earth did not shake in applause when, in the first watch of the night, I recollected my past existences (*pubbenivāsa ñāṇa*); nor did it shake in applause when, in the middle watch of the night, I perfected the divine eye (*dibbacakkhu-ñāṇa*). However, when, in the last watch of the night, I mastered Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), the whole of the ten thousand world-systems shook in applause. How could this Dhamma comprising the Four Noble Truths, won by such a man as myself, possessed of acuteness of intelligence, only through great pains be grasped by the worldlings? Thus by means of the Buddha's Reviewing Knowledge as to the profundity of the Dhamma, there occurred to the Buddha the thought of not teaching the Four Noble Truths to the world.”¹¹⁹

A Possible Question

QUESTION: On the strength of the above reasons it is now clear that any proposition suggesting that Enlightenment as an Ordinary Disciple can be worked out within just two or three existences is as absurd as suggesting that the precious gem, (one of the seven treasures) of a Universal Monarch could be had in exchange for a handful of chaff. This being so, how would the perfection period be fixed?

ANSWER: There are five obligations that every Buddha discharges in advance (*pubba kicca*), referring to which the commentary say:—

“In the third watch of the night, the Buddha, rising early, used to sit up and survey the world with the Buddha Eye (*Buddhacakkhu*) consisting of Knowledge of Adequacy of Self-control in others' mental make-up (*indriyaparopariyatti-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of Propensities and Latent Tendencies of the various kinds of sentient beings (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) — to look for those matured ones (*bodhaneyya puggala*) who, having devoted themselves to meritorious actions such as giving and morality, under the Teachings of the Buddhas that have appeared in the past, have become due

for Enlightenment (*katādhikāra puggala*). This daily survey takes place routinely and covers the whole of the ten thousand world-systems.”¹²⁰

The Mahāpadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā further explains:-

“The word *Bhavissanti* here is referred to the vast multitudes. It refers to those who have had done service to the cause of their goal, *i.e.*, Enlightenment as Ordinary Disciples, by performing the ten kinds of meritorious acts under the Teaching of previous Buddhas. Just as the fully developed Paduma lotus flower awaits the sun’s rays, so also these perfected persons await to hear the Buddha’s teaching, and the number of those who would, at the end of a stanza of four lines, attain the status of a Noble One (*ariya bhūmi*), is to be counted not in ones or twos, nor in just hundreds of thousands: they are innumerable. It is with regard to those matured myriads that the term *Bhavissanti* is being used.”¹²¹

N.B. 1) The author did not translate the above Pāḷi, it has been done by the editors. 2) In the Uruvela Sutta Aṭṭhakathā and Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā we have the same explanation as above.

As the Jinālaṅkāra-ṭīkā puts it:-

The expression *Katāsubhajanataṃ* is defined as those beings who have acquired merit to perfection under the Teaching of the previous Buddhas.¹²²

From the foregoing statements it should be clearly understood that an aspirant for Enlightenment can win his objective of gaining release from *samsāra* under any Buddha’s Teaching only if he has accumulated sufficient merit of the craving-free type (*vivaṭṭanissita-kusala*) amounting to dedication to his cause (*adhikāro*) under the preceding Buddhas’ Teaching. As such the perfection period for an Ordinary Disciple should properly be reckoned in terms of intervals of the arising of Buddhas (*Buddhantara*). As to the duration of such intervals the minimum duration should be set as of one *antara-kappa* (see footnote on page 2) for each of them. That means, for an Ordinary Disciple the perfection of his merit would take at least one intermediate aeon. This is one argument.

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā says:-

“Someone who has listened to the Dhamma, to the extent of one stanza consisting of four lines, from a Buddha or from a Paccekabuddha, and later gets the opportunity of hearing the Dhamma to the same extent from either a Buddha or one of his Disciples, may be able to attain to Arahantship at the end of the stanza.”¹²³

The Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā explains thus:-

“To explain further: Those who have performed merit by way of wholesome actions to the perfection necessary for Enlightenment as a Disciple under the Teaching of either Buddhas or Paccekabuddhas in the past are called those who have had the instruction required of a Disciple.”¹²⁴

The Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā repeats it:—

“To explain further: Those elder nuns who have performed merit by way of wholesome actions to the perfection necessary for Enlightenment as a Disciple under the Teaching of either Buddhas or Paccekabuddhas in the past are called those who have had the instruction required of a female Disciple.”¹²⁵

From those Commentaries, an aspirant for Discipleship may have some time in the past, wished for Enlightenment at the feet of a Paccekabuddha. This raises the question of the intervals between the arising of one Paccekabuddha and the arising of a Buddha subsequent to him. And since no Paccekabuddha arises within one thousand years prior to the arising of a Buddha, when the great event comes to be proclaimed in the world, thanks to the Brahmās, this interval is to be calculated as one thousand years as the lowest. Hence, the minimum period of perfection for an Ordinary Disciple may be fixed at one thousand years. This is another argument.

In any case, the Buddha interval should be the interval between one Perfectly Enlightened Buddha and another. Herein, two or three such intervals should be considered as the minimum limit.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: Why is the Buddha interval not counted from one Paccekabuddha preceding one Buddha, to that Buddha?

ANSWER: For one reason, merit is perfected only if intent upon the resultant-free nibbāna; and for another, such merit springs only from seeing the dangers of rebirth resulting from volitional action; and for another, such perception must have as its source some discourse conducive to insight that lays bare the law of decay (*khayadhammika*), the law of aging (*vayadhammika*), the frightful (*sappatibhaya*), the danger-fraught (*sādīnava*), the empty (*tuccha*), and the unsubstantial (*suñña*) nature of the cycle of rebirth in any of the three spheres of existence;¹ and for another, such a discourse is available only under the Teaching of a Buddha.

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā describes Paccekabuddhas thus:—

¹ *Tebhūmaka*: Sensuous Sphere, Fine-Material Sphere, and Immaterial Sphere, also called the Sensuous existence (*kāma-bhava*), Fine-Material existence (*rūpa-bhava*), and Immaterial existence, (*arūpa bhava*).

“Pacceka-buddhas are themselves Enlightened but they cannot enlighten others. They penetrate the nature of the bliss of nibbāna, *i.e.*, the Four Fruitions of the Path (*attharasa*) but do not have the mastery over the teaching of the Dhamma, *i.e.*, the Four Paths, (*Dhammarasa*). Indeed that is so. For they cannot express what they know. They lack the ability to teach the supramundane Dhamma because of deficiency of skill in conventional usage. Their comprehension of the Four Noble Truths may be likened to that of a dumb person unable to relate the dream he has had; or that of a forest-dwelling hunter unable to relate the delicacies he has tasted in the city.”¹²⁶

The function of conventional usage regarding the supramundane is to identify the evils of resultant phenomena (*vaṭṭa dhamma*) and to show the way to get rid of those evils. Being deficient in skill in conventional usage therefore implies that the evils of the woeful round of resultant rebirths cannot be described by the Pacceka-buddhas.

Only if the imperfection, causality, and conditionality of the round of rebirths can be explained, then the happiness due to an absence of the round of rebirths, and the taint-free, non-causal and non-conditioned nature of such happiness may be explained. Where one is unable to undertake the former, it is obvious that the latter is outside of his range. How would one not knowing the Pāli word for tiger (*byaggha*) or robber (*cora*) be able to describe a forest as being infested with robbers and tigers? Therefore how could he speak of a forest as being free from robbers and tigers?

That being so, outside of the Buddha’s Teaching, Pacceka-buddhas or wise recluses like Sarabhaṅga, the Bodhisatta, can only teach the principle of impermanence (*anicca*) and the principle of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) based on the evils of sensual pleasures and the advantages of cutting off sensuality, for that is the extent of their perception and vocabulary. As for the principle of the unsubstantial, phenomenal, or not-self (*anatta*), they cannot comprehend, nor have they the vocabulary for it. Even as regards impermanence, all they can teach is the crude and obvious concept of death, loss of relatives, loss of wealth or sickness; and as regards the unsatisfactoriness of existence, they may go no further than explaining the miserable life of animals, or other miserable realms (*apāya*).

The more subtle and profound nature of impermanence involving the three periods of past, present, and future, Dependant Origination of mind and matter under the causal factors of ignorance, volitions, *etc.*, the law of kamma, the phenomena of cause (*āhāra*), contact (*phassa*), *etc.*, the twenty-four conditional relations such as root-cause, object, *etc.*, which reveal impermanence and unsatisfactoriness occurring in the five aggregates from moment

to moment — all these are beyond the range of Paccekabuddhas and great recluses. If the momentary impermanence and the momentary unsatisfactoriness were taught and understood by the aspirants the character of impermanence and unsatisfactoriness will naturally lead to the understanding of not-self as the characteristic of existence. As such, the aspirants would, in fitting measure to their past perfections, attain to the Path and its Fruition. However, no such case of Enlightenment has been known. (For details, see the Sammohavinodanī Aṭṭhakathā, Mūlaṭīkā, Anuṭīkā, Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā and-ṭīkā.)

The above discussion focuses attention on the fact that outside of the Buddha's Teaching, no teaching by anyone on the futility and emptiness of continued existence in all the three spheres, conducive to weariness for the world, could be heard; hence no weariness for the unsatisfactoriness of rebirth could arise as Knowledge, with the result that no merit free of leading to rebirth (*vivaṭṭanissita kusala*) could be acquired.

However, this does not apply to those who have already perceived the advantages of freedom from rebirth and the ills of rebirth under the Teaching of previous Buddhas and have striven for the cause of Enlightenment. For in their case, whatever merit they acquire will be free from leading to rebirth thanks to the strong impression of habituated inclination toward that nobler type of merit acquired previously. It may be likened to all the fruit of a mango tree that grows from the seed of a sweet mango. The above argument is meant only for those who have never nurtured the habit of seeking merit not productive of rebirth under any of the previous Buddhas. For blind and foolish worldlings, fresh sowing seeds of merit free of leading to rebirth under a Paccekabuddha, with the hope of blossoming as enlightenment under a future Buddha, is a sheer impossibility.

With such beginners, their merit devoted to ending rebirth will serve as a necessary condition for fortunate rebirth at the opportune era of some later Buddha, at the opportune place where the Dhamma can be heard from the Buddha or one of the Noble Ones; getting established in the Dhamma, and conducting themselves according to the Dhamma. In this way they can expect Enlightenment by the second or third succeeding Buddha.

That such fortunate results may be expected by one inclined to ending of rebirth has already been discussed quoting the Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dhātu Saṃyutta Aṭṭhakathā, *etc.*

The Theragāthā and Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā include Paccekabuddhas as fields for acquiring merit for aspirants to Discipleship for the reason

that attending on them also has the advantage of fulfilling the necessary condition that is the foundation of sufficing condition for Enlightenment.

This explains why only Buddhas should be counted in reckoning the periods that lapse between the starting point and the goal of Arahantship, and why Paccabuddhas should not be reckoned as the starting point for one aspiring to Discipleship.

The commentaries indicate that at least two or three Buddha intervals should constitute the minimum period of perfection for Ordinary Disciples.¹²⁷

From that Pāli we are given to understand that Migasira Thera and Subhūti Thera won Arahantship under Gotama Buddha after acquiring special merit of the non-resultant type¹ under Kassapa Buddha. However, they did not start doing so only under Kassapa Buddha, but had done service under previous Buddhas such as Koṇāgamana and Kakusandha.

Incidentally, one need not argue against this statement by saying that those were two specific instances only and ought not to be extended to other Ordinary Disciples. For the answer to such argument is simply this: these of course are only two specific instances of the necessity of previous perfections, but then who could produce any specific instance to disprove it?

This is why a minimum perfection period for Ordinary Discipleship should be put as two or three Buddha-intervals. Thus it can be said that if an aspirant for Ordinary Discipleship, after attending to the task of fulfilling the perfections under two successive Buddhas, also meets the necessary conditions for the practice of the good doctrine (*sappurisa-upanissaya*) in the interval, will advance from one existence to the other spiritually; and his accumulation of perfections thus on the increase, he will possibly gain release from rebirth under the third or fourth succeeding Buddha.

This is the line of thinking by those who give counter-arguments to the assertion that two or three existences would be enough for an aspirant for Ordinary Discipleship to achieve his goal. Let the reader judge the merits of each school of thought.

However, we would give our concluding remark on this question thus:—

“Who else but the Buddha, endowed with the knowledge of the quality of kamma of all beings present, past and future, could definitely fix the perfection period for Ordinary Discipleship? Whose legitimate province is this matter, and who stands on firm ground in the matter? ¹²⁸

End of the Answer to the Twelfth Question

¹ *Puñña visesa*: an expression synonymous with *vivaṭṭanissita kusala*.

Answer to the Thirteenth Question

Discipleship (the term itself indicates this) is realisable only when a Buddha teaches the Dhamma. So an aspirant for discipleship has to await the coming of a Buddha regardless of intervals of waiting. If an aeon happens to be an empty one devoid of any Buddha (*suñña-kappa*), an aspirant has no chance whatever of realising his goal.

In the Peṭakopadesa we have:—

“There are two conditions or causes for enlightenment or the arising of Path Knowledge for a Disciple, namely: an utterance by another about the Four Noble Truths, and systematic attention.”¹²⁹

The same statement is found in the Verañjaka Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa.

In the commentary on the Verañjaka Sutta,¹³⁰ it has been explained as follows:—

(a) “The arising of right-view (*sammādiṭṭhiyā uppādāya*), means insight knowledge and Path Knowledge. For the arising of it, an utterance by another (*parato ghoso*) means listening to someone teach the Dhamma that strikes the right chord (*sappāyadhamma*). Systematic attention (*yoniso manasikāro*) means open-minded, methodical attention. Those two factors apply to every disciple, even the Venerable Sāriputta (Dhammasenāpati) is no exception.

(b) “That indeed is so. The Venerable Sāriputta, in spite of having fulfilled the perfections over one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons, was quite unable, by nature (*dhammatāya*) to shed an infinitesimal part of the moral defilements all by himself. Only on hearing the stanza beginning with the words, “*Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā*” by the Venerable Assaji did he penetrate the Truth, *i.e.*, gain Path Knowledge. In the case of Paccekabuddhas and Buddhas, however, there is no need to hear somebody utter the Truth; based on (*thatvā*) their proper attention they win enlightenment respectively.

In view of the above discussions, it is to be inferred that the perfection periods laid down for Disciples — *i.e.*, one incalculable and a hundred thousand great aeons for the Chief Disciples and one hundred thousand great aeons for ordinary disciples — have actual relevance only to those Disciples who won enlightenment under Gotama Buddha. For, if at the end of those prescribed intervals, there follows an aeon devoid of any Buddha (*suñña-kappa*), or for that matter, more than one such empty aeon were to intervene, then their chance of attaining their goal would fall into abeyance.

In the present Question, the term “*Buddha suñña kappa*” — and not just *Suñnakappe* — is significant. It stresses what an empty aeon actually mean: these terms are to be understood with reference to the arising or otherwise

of a Buddha in a certain aeon, and not to the arising of Paccekabuddhas or Universal Monarchs. As the Nāsa defines it:–

“An empty aeon may see the arising of Paccekabuddhas and Universal Monarchs, but if it is devoid of any Buddha it still is called empty (*Siddhesatyārabbho atthantarassa ñāpanāya hoti*).”

In the Apadāna, we have the words: “*Ito dutiyake, etc. ...*”¹³¹ which show that in an empty aeon where no Buddha arises Paccekabuddhas may arise and similarly, Universal Monarchs may arise.¹³² The Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā and Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā also contain passages to the same effect.

On the other hand, there are various commentators who maintain that in an empty aeon no Paccekabuddhas or Universal Monarchs appear either.

In the Dighanikāya Aṭṭhakathā, the commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta has this to say:

“However, on the other hand, whenever there is an aeon where the Buddhas arise, then only Universal Monarchs also arise, and the arising of Buddhas take place only at long intervals: it is a very rare occasion that a Buddha is to be seen. Hence the Buddha is called a ‘Treasure (*ratana*).”¹³³

The Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā states:–

“There are two types of aeon: an empty aeons and a non-empty aeon. In the former there appears no Buddha, Paccekabuddha, or Universal Monarch; it is called empty aeon since it is devoid of virtuous individuals.”¹³⁴

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā says:–

“Paccekabuddhas are inferior to Buddhas (*Buddhe apatvā*) and they arise only during those times when Buddhas arise.”¹³⁵

And according to the Sotattakī:–

- (a) “An aeon (*kappa*) is of two types: empty aeons (*suñña-kappa*) and non-empty aeons (*asuñña-kappa*). Of them, those graced by the appearance of Buddhas are called non-empty aeons.
- (b) “In empty aeons no individuals of great power such as Buddhas or Paccekabuddhas, Buddha’s Disciples, or Universal Monarchs appear.”¹³⁶

Those extracts set forth the views that in an empty aeon where no Buddhas arise, Paccekabuddhas, and Universal Monarchs do not arise either.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: Are those commentaries and writings in conflict with the text and certain other commentaries?

ANSWER: The author of the Samantacakkhu Dīpanī reconciles the views put forward by the Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā and Sotattakī with the

text by saying that a non-empty aeon is one where a Buddha arises; or even if no Buddha arises there appears a Paccekabuddha; or even if no Paccekabuddha arises there appears a Universal Monarch. Hence if any one of those three great individuals were to arise in a certain aeon that aeon is called a non-empty aeon.

The author of the *Sāratthasaṅgaha* reconciles the view taken by the *Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā* and the statement contained in the text as follows:—

“With reference to the statement: ‘Paccekabuddhas are inferior to Buddhas and they arise only during those times when Buddhas arise’¹³⁷ the term ‘Those times when Buddhas arise’ refers only to a period within the range of one hundred thousand year life-span and one hundred year life-span during which Buddhas arise. It does not refer to great aeons and incalculable aeons. This is because we have evidence of the arising of Paccekabuddhas during the second last aeon from our present aeon which is graced by five Buddhas, and hence called a fortunate aeon, in such texts as the *Upāli thera Apadāna*.”¹³⁸

The author, in quoting the extract from the *Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā*, defines the expression, “*Buddhānaṃ uppajjanakāle yeva*” as signifying the continuance of the restoration of the world order (*vivaṭṭathāyī asaṅkhyeyya kappā*), and in that period also it is limited to the period when human life-spans are between one hundred years and one hundred thousand years during which Paccekabuddhas arise. Considered in this light, there is no conflict between what the text says and what the commentators claim.

As regards the commentary on the *Mahāpadāna Sutta*, which says: “*Yasmiṃ kappe ...*”¹³⁹ no attempt at reconciliation has been made; however, the *Subcommentary* elaborates on it as follows:—

“By virtue of the absence of dark crimes such as killing *etc.*, based on a sense of shame to do wrong; and pursuit of merit based on objects of religious emotion; the period covering the life-spans of one hundred years to one hundred thousand years is the period of the acme of spiritual purity (*maṇḍabhūto*), the nature of which entitles itself to the arising of Buddhas. It is only in such opportune times comprising those particular life-spans that Universal Monarchs also appear, and that is why it has been said that, ‘Whenever there is an aeon where Buddhas arise, then only Universal Monarchs also arise.’ Further, this statement is made by way of general principle only; there may be certain cases that vary from this general rule.”

That is to say, in certain cases the general rule may apply only partially.

As such, whereas Buddhas arise only at very long intervals, the same is not true with Universal Monarchs.¹

In the above two sentences of the Subcommentary, the expression “By virtue of the absence of dark crimes (*pāpajucchanena vigatakāḷako*)” indicates human life-spans of one hundred years and upwards. The expression “Pursuit of merit inspired by the objects of religious emotion (*puñña pasutāya maṇḍabhūto*)” indicates human life-spans of one hundred thousand years and downwards. The combined sense of those expressions is that Universal Monarchs, like Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and disciples, generally arise only during the period when human life-spans range from one hundred years to one hundred thousand years. Instances of some Universal Monarchs such as Mandhātu Mahāsudassana, the great Universal Monarch who appeared during the period when human life-span was above one hundred thousand years, are exceptions.

Having regard to other repeated exceptions of this sort, as, for example, in the Cakkavatti Sutta, the subcommentator adds the words “This is by way of example or general principle only (*upamāna vasena cetam vuttam*).”

Therefore in the commentator’s expression “Whenever there is an aeon where the Buddha arises (*yasmiṃ kappe uppajjanti*),” the word “Kappa” means life-span or duration of life (*āyu-kappa*), and conforms with Sutta texts.¹⁴⁰

Accordingly, aeon here does not connote an incalculable aeon which is one-quarter of a great aeon as is used in the Sutta text (*anekepi saṃvaṭṭakappe anekepi vivaṭṭakappe*), nor does it signify a great aeon as used in the text such as: “*Cattārimāni bhikkhave kappassa asaṅkhyeyyāni*.”

Moreover, *āyu-kappa* in this context is purported to mean not a single class of life-span such as one hundred thousand years, ninety thousand years, eighty thousand years, one thousand years, one hundred years, and so on; rather, it signifies a group of certain life-spans *i.e.*, those ranging from one hundred thousand to one hundred years, during which Buddhas arise. This is how the subcommentator tries to reconcile the standpoint of those commentators with the spirit of the text.

Another interpretation:—

An aeon may also be taken to mean the period of continuance of renovation of the world-system (*vivaṭṭathāyi asaṅkhyeyya kappa*).¹⁴¹ Thus, taking together the three interpretations above, there is no conflict between the statements contained in the Thera Apadāna, Therī Apadāna, Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā, Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā, Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, on the one hand,

¹ Footnote by the author: *Athakho tādise kappe laddhokāse sati sabbakālampi uppajjauti yeva.*

and those of the Mahāpadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā, Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā, Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā and Sotattakī on the other.

Therefore, as the Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā and Sāratthadīpanī-ṭikā point out:—

“In an incalculable aeon too, when no Buddhas arise, not a single being is able to realise *parinibbāna*. However, even in those empty aeons devoid of Buddhas, the element of nibbāna cannot be said to have lost its value altogether.”¹⁴² In that passage the phrase “not a single being (*ekasattopi*)” is a reference to Ordinary Disciples only, and Paccekabuddhas and aspirants for discipleship of the two higher classes should be excepted.

End of the Answer to the Thirteenth Question

Answer to the Fourteenth Question

The Buddha, the Paccekabuddha and Disciples receive their respective predictions that have varying factors. There are eight factors required for a future Buddha to receive the prediction, namely:

“He is a human being; he is definitely a male; he is endowed with perfections so much so that, had he wished for it, he could win Arahantship there and then; he has the opportunity of seeing a Buddha in person; he is either a bhikkhu or a recluse; he is possessed of supernormal powers, having achieved absorption; he is prepared to give up his life for the sake of perfect Enlightenment; he has the steadfast will to achieve his goal even if he had to transverse the whole universe filled with live ambers, or iron spikes, or bamboo thickets or sheer water. On a combination of those eight factors is the great prayer for Buddhahood assured.”

Thus states the commentary.¹⁴³

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā puts it thus: “*Abhinīharoti ... etc.*”¹⁴⁴

The Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā says: “*Evaṃ aṭṭhaṅgasamannāgato ... etc.*”¹⁴⁵

The Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā defines the term “*Abhinīharo*” in these words: “*Abhinīhāroti ... etc.*”¹⁴⁶

The Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi further states:— “*Abhinīhāroti ... etc.*”¹⁴⁷

For Paccekabuddhas:—

“Being born as a human being; being a male; having seen a Buddha or a Paccekabuddha or an Arahant in person; having fulfilled the perfections such as giving, etc.; and an intense desire or will to become a Paccekabuddha — these five factors go to the satisfaction of the great prayer.”

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā puts it thus: *Vigatāsavadassananti ... etc.*¹⁴⁸

The two requirements for Disciples are, as contained in the above passages, the perfections and the will.

End of the Answer to the Fourteenth Question

Answer to the Fifteenth Question

Having regard to the phrase “Seeing the Buddha in person” the fourth of the eight conditions that qualify for the prediction for a future Buddha, it may be noted that a future Buddha always receives the prediction from a Buddha only. The Pāṭha Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā¹ says:

“Even if a future Buddha has sufficiently fulfilled the perfections and has qualified himself with regard to the third condition, his assurance is realisable only in the presence of a living Buddha. After the Buddha has passed away, a matured Bodhisatta cannot have his prayer answered by way of prediction before a shrine dedicated to the Buddha or before a Bodhi Tree.”¹⁴⁹

The Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā also explains thus:–

“The phrase “*Satthāradassananti*” means the presence of a living Buddha. That indeed is so. A Bodhisatta’s prayer is answered by way of prediction if he has the opportunity of seeing a Buddha in person. In case the Buddha has passed away a Bodhisatta’s prayer cannot be fulfilled either before a shrine, or at the Bodhi Tree or in front of an image of the Buddha, or before a Paccekabuddha or a disciple. This is because the service rendered for Perfect Enlightenment is too great for any other Noble One than the Buddha to make the prediction.”¹⁵⁰

Herein the expression “only before a Buddha’s presence can the prediction be obtained (*Buddhānaṃ eva pana santike samijjhati*) may be understood on the analogy of the case of a Universal Monarch who alone can confer the right and title of Universal Monarch to his heir.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: Why are the Paccekabuddha and the disciples incompetent in this matter?

ANSWER: As the Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā explains:–

Paccekabuddhas and disciples are incompetent to give their assurance to a future Buddha because they lack the wisdom to assess the real value of merit and its resultant that a Bodhisatta has amassed.¹⁵¹

Incidentally, prediction as to Paccekabodhi lies within the competency of a Paccekabuddha or even a disciple. See the Suttanipāta and Apadāna

¹ JA.i.14.

Commentaries, which say: "Assurance to a disciple obviously may be within the competency of a Paccekabuddha or a disciple."¹⁵²

End of the Answer to the Fifteenth Question

Answer to the Sixteenth Question

The Chief Disciples (Aggasāvaka)

Sāriputta and Moggallāna are the two Chief Disciples (*Aggasāvaka*).

The Great Disciples (Mahāsāvaka)

Aññāta Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma, Assaji, Nālaka, Yasa, Vimāla, Subāhu, Puṇṇaji, (10);

Gavampati, Uruvela-Kassapa, Nadi-Kassapa, Gayā-Kassapa, Mahā-Kassapa, Mahā-Kaccāna, Mahā-Koṭṭhika, Mahā-Kappina, Mahā-Cunda, Anuruddha, (10);

Kaṅkhā-Revata, Ānanda, Nanda, Bhagu, Nandiya, Kimbila, Bhaddiya, Rāhula, Sivali, Upāli, (10);

Dabba, Upasena, Khadiravaniya-Revata, Puṇṇa Mantāniputta, Puṇṇa of Sunāparanta, Soṇa Kuṭṭikaṇṇa, Soṇa Koḷivisa, Rādha, Subhūti, Aṅgulimāla, (10);

Vakkali, Kāludāyī, Mahā-Udāyī, Piṇḍavaccha, Sobhita, Kumāra-Kassapa, Raṭṭhapāla, Vaṅḡisa, Sabhiya, Sela, (10);

Upavāṇa, Meghiya, Sāgata, Nāgita, Lakunḍaka-Bhaddiya, Piṇḍola-Bhāradvāja, Mahāpanthaka, Cūlapanthaka, Bākula, Koṇḍadhāna, (10);

Bāhiya Dārucīriya, Yasoja, Ajita, Tissametteyya, Puṇṇaka, Mettagū, Dhotaka, Upasīva, Nandaka, Hemaka, (10);

Todeyya, Kappa, Jātukaṇṇika, Bhadrāvudha, Udaya, Posāla, Mogharāja, Piṅgiya, (8).

These are the Seventy-eight Great Disciples

Although there are only seventy-eight, they are usually mentioned in the Commentaries and Subcommentaries as "**Eighty Great Disciples** (*asītimahāsāvakā*)."¹⁵³ That is a common practice in Pāli literature; e.g. for 547 birth stories of the Buddha, we have the "Five hundred and fifty birth stories;" a period of six months and fifteen days is called a six-month period (*cha-māsa-kāla*) etc.

Or taking it in another light:—

As the Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā explains: "*Tathāpi, ...*"¹⁵³ the two Chief Disciples are to be counted as Great Disciples.

These counts of the Great Disciples are in accordance with what is mentioned in Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā, Aṅguttaranikāya-ṭikā, Dvādasama-

nipāta Jātaka-ṭikā. However, there is no mention of the eighty divided into forty at the right hand side and forty at the left hand side of the Buddha.

Out of those eighty, only forty-three are named as pre-eminent (*etadagga*) in the Aṅguttaranikāya, Etadagga Vagga. In the Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, the Venerable Bhāgineyya-Upāli, nephew of Venerable Upāli, is also mentioned as pre-eminent in the observance of the Vinaya discipline. Of those 120 or so elders who began wishing for discipleship since the time of Padumuttara Buddha, only a few became Great Disciples under Gotama Buddha, and of the 206 or so elders included in Theragāthā, only 58 were Great Disciples. Such prominent elders as Adhimutta who received the prediction from Padumuttara Buddha are not among the Eighty Great Disciples. This points to the fact that fulfilment of the perfections well in excess of a hundred thousand great aeons after receiving the prediction for discipleship does not guarantee a disciple to be counted as a Great Disciple or to be honoured by the Buddha as the foremost in a certain aspect or quality. In this matter one should place implicit faith in the commentators and need not look for any unique prerequisites that go to make a Great Disciple. This has been explained in the Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā thus:—

“The term ‘Great Disciple’ is assigned to those disciples of the Buddha who had dedicated themselves to the service of their aspiration as long ago as the time of Padumuttara Buddha, and were therefore of superior standing in resolve; and had superior former action (*pubbayoga*); thereby being endowed with outstanding discrimination (*paṭisambhidā*) and attainments in concentration, they were called Great Disciples. Similarly, those endowed with superb knowledge by virtue of superb fulfilment of perfections are called Chief Disciples.”¹⁵⁴

In this connection many interesting aspects concerning the Chief Disciples and Great Disciples such as the superiority in putting in their service or extreme dedication, how their numbers are fixed, their special attributes and auspicious signs, *etc.*, may be gathered from the Miscellaneous Decisions (Pakiṇṇaka Vinicchaya) of the Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā.

All male disciples other than the above Eighty Great Disciples, including bhikkhus and novices, should be noted as ordinary disciples (*pakati sāvaka*).

The Female Disciples (Sāvikā)

There are two chief female disciples: —

Therī Khemā the foremost in knowledge; and Therī Uppalavaṇṇa the foremost in psychic powers. They are called Aggasāvikā.

There are a little over ten foremost elder nuns such as Therī Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, pre-eminent in maturity of wisdom (*rattaññū*),¹ Therī Bhaddakaccānā (Bimbā Yasodharā), pre-eminent in psychic powers (*abhiññā*), Therī Dhammadinnā, pre-eminent in teaching the Dhamma, etc. They are called Mahāsāvīkā.

All female disciples other than the above Great Elder Nuns, including *bhikkhūṇī*, *sāmaṇerī*, and *sikkhamānā* (probationers) are called ordinary female disciples (*pakatisāvīkā*).

Although the Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā mentions three classes of female disciples — Aggasāvīkā, Mahāsāvīkā, and Pakatisāvīkā — only the two Aggasāvīkā are specifically named, but the number and names of the remaining two classes are not given.

Apart from the *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhūṇī*, *sāmaṇera*, *sāmaṇerī*, and *sikkhamānā* who belong to those six classes of disciples, i.e., Aggasāvaka, Mahāsāvaka, Pakatisāvaka, Aggasāvīkā, Mahāsāvīkā, Pakatisāvīkā, the Buddha's father and the Buddha's mother, who won final Path Knowledge and Fruition like all other Path-winners of the human, Deva, or Brahmā worlds, had to fulfil the perfections for their honoured status over one hundred thousand great aeons, the same duration required for Great Discipleship.

The Ten Male Lay Devotees (Upāsaka)

The brothers Tapussa and Bhallika, the two foremost devotees in taking refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma;² Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, foremost in charity; Citta the householder of Macchikāsaṇḍika, foremost in teaching the Dhamma; Hatthaka Āḷavaka the observer of the precepts, foremost in the four objects of sympathy;³ Mahānāma the Sākyan, foremost in making choice offerings; Ugga the householder, foremost in giving away lovely things and in catering to the needs of the Saṅgha; Sūrambaṭṭha, foremost in steadfastness of faith; Jīvaka the physician, foremost in personal adoration; Nakulapitā, foremost in familiarity with the Buddha.

The Ten Female Lay Devotees (Upāsikā)

Sujāta the Rich Man's daughter, foremost in taking refuge in the Triple Gem; Visākhā, foremost in charity, Khujjuttarā, foremost in

¹ *Rattaññū*: Lit., one who has known many nights, inferring a Bhikkhūṇī of long-standing and the greatest experience and wisdom.

² Taking refuge in the Buddha and Dhamma — the Saṅgha was not in existence when the brothers met the Buddha.

³ The four objects of sympathy (*saṅgahavatthūni*): generosity (*dāna*), kindly speech (*peyyavajja*), helpfulness (*atthacariyā*), and impartiality (*samānattatā*).

learning; Sāmāvati, foremost in dwelling in absorption in loving-kindness; Uttarā, foremost in proficiency in attaining absorption; Suppavāsā, foremost in making choice offerings; Suppiyā, foremost in attending to sick bhikkhus; Kātiyānī, foremost in steadfastness of faith; Nakulamātā, foremost in familiarity with the Buddha; Kālī, foremost in steadfastness of faith even by hearsay.

All those lay devotees had started aspiring, verbally, for their enlightenment since the time of Padumuttara Buddha, one hundred thousand great aeons ago from our present Kappa. Of the two brothers Tapussa and Bhallika, the latter became a bhikkhu and won Arahantship, but since he won the honour of chief place among lay devotees in taking refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma even before becoming a bhikkhu, he was listed in the ten lay devotees of prominence. Tapussa won stream-winning as a lay person.

See Bhallika Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā for details.

All beings, whether man, Deva, Brahmā or Sakka, or famous devotees such as King Bimbisāra and Visākhā, must have fulfilled the perfections in appropriate measure too.

In this connection we have to consider the Buddhavaṃsa, particularly in the section on Sumedha's receiving the prediction, where it is told as follows:-

“We who have assembled here, coming from the ten-thousand world-systems, might miss the chance of winning enlightenment under the present (Dīpaṅkara) Buddha, but we shall gain emancipation in the future *i.e.*, after four and one hundred thousand great aeons, in the presence of Gotama Buddha when this future Buddha attains Buddhahood.

“Just as in crossing a river when one misses some marked spot on the yonder bank, one may take yet another spot lower down the current as one's destination, so also we might perchance miss enlightenment under the present Buddha; however we shall, four incalculable aeons and a hundred-thousand great aeons hence, win enlightenment in the presence of (*sammukhā*) Gotama Buddha when the great recluse (Sumedha) attains Buddhahood.”¹⁵⁵

As the Pāṭha Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā in the Jātattaki Nidāna puts it:-

“On hearing the prophesy of Dīpaṅkara Buddha the multitude of men, Devas, and Brahmās rejoiced at the thought of the great recluse Sumedha as being a future Buddha, a nascent Buddha, and they were delighted at the prospect of their own enlightenment. For if a man were to cross a river he might not be able to swim to the river's far bank directly opposite him, yet it is quite possible for him to land at some point lower down the river. So also,

even if we fail to attain the Path and its Fruition under Dīpaṅkara Buddha we will be able to do so in your presence when you, Sumedha, become the Buddha in future. May we be able to do just that! So the multitude prayed."¹⁵⁶

As desired for in the above two passages, the multitude belonging to the ten thousand world-systems after passing four incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand great aeons, won release from *saṃsāra* either as a bhikkhu or as lay devotees, *i.e.*, as men, Devas and Brahmās.

The significance of the aspiration expressed by the multitude has been commented on by Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā thus:-

"Their aspiration expressed in such terms as: 'We shall win enlightenment in the presence of Gotama Buddha when the great recluse here attains Buddhahood,' arising as it did out of wholesome consciousness aimed at release from the round of rebirths, could not be said to fall short of becoming a sufficient condition for Path Knowledge even after so long a period as four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons, *i.e.*, it is a sufficient condition."¹⁵⁷

The Mahāpadāna Sutta-ṭikā further explains:-

The Buddhavaṃsa was expounded by Gotama Buddha beginning from Dīpaṅkara Buddha by way of (*vasena*) those Devas and Brahmās who, having accumulated merit by fulfilling the perfections over durations comparable to those of the Chief Disciples and the Great Disciples, had not benefited from the Buddha's great Wisdom. As for this Mahāpadāna Sutta, however, the Buddha Gotama related the story of the seven previous Buddhas beginning with Vipassī, by way of those Devas and Brahmās who had acquired merit by fulfilling the perfections over durations comparable to those of ordinary disciples."¹⁵⁸

The Buddhavaṃsa begins from the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha and ends with Kassapa Buddha, altogether 25 Buddhas; while the Mahāpadāna Sutta begins from Vipassī Buddha to Kassapa Buddha, only 7 Buddhas. The former covers a period of four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand great aeons whereas the later covers a period of 91 great aeons only. The reason for this difference is that the bulk of the audience at the discourse on the Buddhavaṃsa was made up of Devas and Brahmās who had begun their aspiration for enlightenment and fulfilled the perfections since the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha four incalculable aeons and a hundred-thousand great aeons previously, fit for enlightenment as Chief Disciples or as Great Disciples; whereas the bulk of the audience at the discourse on Mahāpadāna Sutta comprised Devas and Brahmās who had begun their aspiration for

enlightenment and fulfilled the perfections only from the time of Vipassī Buddha, 91 great aeons previously.

Considering the above statement, we can say that from those men, Devas, and Brahmās who started making their aspiration for enlightenment since the time of Dipaṅkara Buddha, there must have been many who won release from *saṃsāra* either as a bhikkhu or as lay devotees, *i.e.*, as men, Devas, or Brahmās under Gotama Buddha's Teaching.

Accordingly, it should be noted that there is practically no difference in the duration of fulfilling the perfections for one who wishes to win enlightenment as a bhikkhu or as a lay devotee. Both of the aspirants need only to fulfil the minimum duration of two or three Buddha intervals.

One significant point: There were certain disciples who became instant bhikkhus, *i.e.*, fully equipped with a bhikkhu's requisites on the calling up by the Buddha, "Come, monk!" (*ehi bhikkhu*). Now, if one wishes such happy facility one must in the past existences have offered a set of three yellow robes (*ticivara*) at least, if not the full set of eight requisites¹ for a bhikkhu, to the Buddha or to a Paccekabuddha, or to a Noble disciple, or to a virtuous worldling (*kalyāṇa puthujjana*) or to a pagoda (*cetiya*) or to a Bodhi Tree. For anyone who makes such an offering wishing for the honour of being called up by the Buddha into the Order may have his prayer satisfied.

On this point we may refer to the commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta, Mahāvagga¹⁵⁹ and the Subcommentary thereon.¹⁶⁰

That a woman can never be called to join the Order as an instant bhikkhunī has been noted in the Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā and Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā.

This statement applies only to those female aspirants who won enlightenment as female in their last existence; for them the offerings of the yellow robes resulted in some special boon in the last existence, as shown by the stories of Visākhā and Queen Mallikā who came to possess the unique set of jewelled ornaments called "The Great Creeper" (*mahālatā*).² That is the utmost resultant that may accrue from their past merit by donating robes. However, should a female aspirant give up her attachment to her own sex and wish for male existence leading to the honour of being called upon into the Order, as *ehi-bhikkhu*, she may make offerings of the eight requisites of a bhikkhu in which case her wish can be satisfied.

¹ The eight requisites: the three robes, the alms bowl, a razor, a needle, a girdle, water-strainer.

² *Mahālatā*: this parure is unique, for apart from the two ladies mentioned here, only a third lady (of Rājagaha) is said to possess it. It is made with gold and jewels of such weight that it could be worn only by a woman of extraordinary physical strength.

There are some who misquote a certain passage from the Āyatana Yamaka Mūla-ṭikā¹⁶¹ and say that female aspirants in their past existence never attain Arahantship and realise *parinibbāna*, but that they would have to change their sex then. These writers claim that such change of sex is the natural condition for all female aspirants at their last existence.

That assertion is a misquotation only. It fails to appreciate the passage: “*Yā ca itthiyo ...*”¹⁶² in the Indriya Yamaka, and the passage: “*Bhavantare hi tassa ...*”¹⁶³ in the Subcommentary connected with the quotation. What those passages purport to say is that female aspirants do not always realise *parinibbāna* as females because there is the natural law under which a male may, on account of some grave demerit in his present existence, turn female, and a female may, on account of her greatness of merit in her present existence, turn male. That being so, a female aspirant, if endowed with special merit in her last existence, must indeed turn male (implies rare cases only).

For details see the Niruttimañjūsā.

In the present Quotation the phrase: “*Buddhasāvakaṅgiya devamanussa-brahmāṇo*” indicates that whereas there are actually only five classes of Buddha’s followers who are disciples of the Buddha (Buddhasāvaka) and Noble Disciples (*ariyasāvaka*), i.e., *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhuni*, *sikkhamānā*, *sāmaṇera*, and *sāmaṇerī*, who have attained the Path, and are real Noble Ones, by extended meaning those who have not attained the Path and are just worldlings i.e., *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhuni*, *sikkhamānā*, *sāmaṇera*, *sāmaṇerī*, and lay persons, whether men or Devas or Brahmās, also go by the name “Disciples of the Buddha” and “Noble Ones.”

As the Commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya (Ones) explains:—

With regard to this term “*Ariyasāvaka*” there are those who are just Noble Ones and not disciples such as Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas; there are those who are disciples, but not Noble Ones such as those devotees established in the Triple Gem but not yet having attained the Fruition of the Path; there are those who are neither disciples nor Noble Ones such as those vast numbers of non-believers (*titthiya*); and there are those who are both disciples and Noble Ones such as those true sons of the Buddha (*Sakyaputtiyo*), who have understood the Teaching, and who have attained the Fruition of the Path. However, in the present context of this Sutta, the term “*Ariyasāvaka*” embraces all those, whether *bhikkhu* or not, who, on account of being learned in the Dhamma (*sutavā*), are to be classed as Noble Disciples.”¹⁶⁴

Lay devotees who have won the Path are also termed Noble Disciples in its extended meaning, as explained in Milindapañha:—

“O Great King! There are in the City of Sāvatti, male and female devotees who have attained to the Third Stage of Enlightenment having won the Fruition of a Non-Returner (*anāgāmi*), numbering fifty million, five hundred and fifty three thousand, all of whom are leading lay lives only; and in the City of Rājagaha there are Noble Ones, none of them bhikkhus, but just lay devotees of both sexes, amounting to five million and three hundred thousand.”¹⁶⁵

A Possible Question

QUESTION: What are the sizes of the multitudes that proved to be accessible to instruction as indicated by the twin terms used in the phrase “*Buddhasavāka viya devamanussabrahmānopi*”?

ANSWER: The Subcommentary on the Silakkhandha Vagga, explaining the Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta says:–

Since on twenty-four occasions there were an infinite number of men, Devas, and Brahmās who had the privilege of drinking the deathless elixir of the Path’s Fruition; and since there were a trillion men, Devas, and Brahmās who had the privilege of drinking the deathless elixir of the Path’s Fruition, on countless number of occasions, the Blessed One, on account of the unrivalled training he opened up to the multitudes, is called the Teacher of the multitudes who were ready to receive his instruction and therefore were ripe for enlightenment.”¹⁶⁶

From that subcommentator’s explanation, the sum total of the twenty-four myriads who won enlightenment on the twenty-four great occasions, and the countless multitudes who had the good fortune to be present at the countless number of occasions of the Buddha’s making a discourse, represent the magnitude of those who proved to be accessible to instruction.

In the Samantabuddhikā, also called the Anāgatavaṃsa, it is stated that while the Buddha was dwelling in the House of Jewels (Ratanāghara) for seven days soon after attaining Buddhahood, he foresaw that twenty-four myriads, four trillion and seven hundred tractable beings would win release from *saṃsāra*.¹⁶⁷

In the Sotattakī and Tathāgatuppatti, it is said that it is usual for all the Teaching of Buddha’s that each of them resulted in the release of twenty-four myriads, six trillion and one hundred thousand beings.¹⁶⁸

The Jinālaṅkāra, and its Subcommentary too, state that twenty-four myriads of beings gain release under every Buddha’s Teaching.¹⁶⁹

It does not matter if a certain number is slightly less or slightly more — *Appakamūnamadhikaṃ vā gaṇanūpagaṃ na hoti*. However, the term myriads (*asaṅkhyeyya*), itself needs scrutiny.

There are certain schools of thought that the term signifies the same infinite numbers as used in respect of duration of time (*kālavāsi*). Hence they consider one myriad as the same term that describes infinite intervals in the Sotattakī and Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā, which is a certain number arrived at as multiples of ten (*dasaguṇita*). This view is rejected by the Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā which says that myriad is an incalculable number and not a numerical value of special significance as certain people say.¹⁷⁰

This view of myriad as a number beyond reckoning (*gaṇanapathavitivatta*) has also been supported by the Jinālaṅkāra-ṭikā.¹⁷¹

The Udāna Aṭṭhakathā and other commentaries also describe the number attaining the Path on those great occasions as merely “Uncountable” (*gaṇanā natthi*), “Immeasurable” (*gaṇana paricchedo natthi*), “Beyond reckoning” (*gaṇanapathaṃ vitivattā*), “Beyond counting” (*gaṇanapathaṃ atikkantā*), etc.¹⁷² In the Milindapañha it is said: “Devas incalculable in numbers saw the light of the Dhamma (*gaṇanapathamatitānaṃ devatānaṃ dhammābhisamayo*).”

In the Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā the same idea of an incalculable number is expressed as infinity (*asaṅkhyeyya*),¹⁷³ as is the case with the Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā and the Khuddakapāṭha Aṭṭhakathā on the Maṅgala Sutta.¹⁷⁴ Therefore it should be noted that the terms “*Gaṇanaparicchedo natthi*,” etc., referred to above, are synonyms of *asaṅkhyeyya*. That being so, an instance of such uncountable numbers is expressed as one myriad two instances as two myriads, and so on, as the occasion arises.

A Possible Question

QUESTION: When did those occasions arise?

ANSWER: As the Milindapañha cites various commentaries and subcommentaries on this subject, we may refer to its list of the following twelve occasions when the Buddha gave the discourses mentioned therein:—

1. Mahārāhulovāda Sutta
2. Mahāmaṅgala Sutta
3. Samacitta Sutta
4. Parābhava Sutta
5. Purābheda Sutta
6. Kalahavivāda Sutta
7. Cūḷabyūha Sutta

8. Tivāṭaka Sutta
9. Sāriputta Sutta
10. Dhammacakka Sutta
11. Buddhavaṃsa-desanā
12. Mahāsamaya Sutta.

We may add the following three more as mentioned in the Aṭṭhakathā: on the occasion of:—

13. Cūḷarāhulovāda Sutta
14. Mahābyūha Sutta
15. Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta

Thus there are altogether fifteen occasions when an infinite multitude won enlightenment, *i.e.*, fifteen myriads of them.

Then there are the following six occasions where tens of millions won enlightenment:—

1. Display of the Buddha's miraculous powers at Kaṇḍa's Mango Tree: two hundred million;
2. Taming of Dhanapāla elephant: nine hundred million;
3. Pārāyana Sutta: fourteen hundred million;
4. Sakkapañha Sutta: at Indasāla Cave, eight hundred million;
5. When the Abhidhamma was taught: eight hundred million;
6. On the Buddha's descent from Tāvatiṃsa: three hundred million.

Then there are the following fifteen occasions on which eighty-four thousand hearers won enlightenment:—

1. Discourse to [Sumana the florist](#);
2. Discourse to [Garahadinna](#);
3. Discourse to [Ānanda the householder](#);
4. Discourse to [Jambuka](#);
5. Discourse to [Maṇḍūka](#), son of the Deva;
6. Discourse to [Maṭṭhakuṇḍali](#), son of the Deva;
7. Discourse to [Sulassā](#);
8. Discourse to [Sirimā](#);
9. Discourse to [the weaver's daughter](#);
10. Discourse to [Cūḷasubhaddā](#);
11. Discourse to Sāketa the Brahmin;
12. Discourse at Sunāparanta;

13. Discourse to [Sakka in reply to his questions](#);
14. Discourse to the hungry ghosts outside the walls ([Tirokuḍḍa Sutta](#)).¹
15. When [Ratana Sutta](#) (Paritta) was taught.

N.B. The numbers who won enlightenment vary slightly between what is given in the Milindapañha and what is given in the various commentaries on the Suttas.

It will be seen that all those lists do not amount to twenty-four myriads as claimed by the Silakkhandha-ṭikā and similar writings, yet their claim as to incalculable numbers winning enlightenment should not be rejected out of hand. For even in the commentaries there are suggestions that would support the claim. To wit:—

In the Mahāpadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā we have:—

- (a) “Just as there are four kinds of lotus, there are four kinds of individuals (*puggala*), namely: *ugghaṭitaññū*, *vipañcitaññū*, *neyya*, and *padaparama*.”
- (b) “Of those four, he who can grasp the Four Noble Truths on just hearing the Dhamma in essence is called “*ugghaṭitaññū*.”
- (c) “He who can grasp the Four Noble Truths on just hearing a brief exposition of the Dhamma, is called “*vipañcitaññū*.”
- (d) “He who can grasp the Four Noble Truths gradually after being taught the text or the commentary thereon; and pondering on the Dhamma with proper attention; assisted by some competent friend in the Dhamma who teaches the practice and on whom he waits day and night; is called “*neyya*.”
- (e) “He who, in spite of much learning the text and the commentaries, and the subcommentaries, much committing them to memory, much listening to expositions thereon, and much teaching and writing of them himself, cannot grasp the Four Noble Truths, is called “*padaparama*.”
- (f) “As the Buddha considers those four types, they are inhabiting the ten thousand world-systems, like the lotus flowers in a pond among which the “*ugghaṭitaññū*” are like flowers already in bloom now; the “*vipañcitaññū*,” like those that are due to bloom the next day; the “*neyya*,”

¹ **Tirokuḍḍa Sutta:** A Peta, lit., “A departed one,” is one of the four miserable existences characterized by continuous thirst and hunger. The hungry ghosts in this story, in their former existence as human beings, had obstructed others in their alms-giving operations for which they fell, at their death, into the realms of incessant torture (*niraya*). They were reborn as hungry ghosts after ninety-two aeons at the time of Kassapa Buddha. After having suffered as hungry ghosts from then up to the time of Gotama Buddha, King Bimbisāra, their kinsman in their former existence, gave alms-food to the Buddha and dedicated the good deed to them as the result of which they instantly gained excellent state.

- like those that are due to bloom the day after; and the “*padaparama*,” like those that are going to end up being devoured by fish and turtles.
- (g) “As the Buddha reviewed the multitudes thus, he knew that certain beings had only little dust of defilements that obstructed their vision of the Truth, and that certain others were thickly obstructed. He (also) saw in all possible ways (*sabbākārato*) the extent of those readily responsive to his teaching, *i.e.*, the “*ugghaṭitaññū*.”
- (h) “Amongst the multitudes, the three types, *i.e.*, the *ugghaṭitaññū*, the *vipañcitaññū*, and the *neyya*, were liable to get the benefit of the Teaching by winning the Fruition of Path Knowledge here and now; whereas for the *padaparama* type the Teaching would serve as some strong impression on their mind (*vāsanā*) so that it might lead to enlightenment in the next two or three existences: thus the Buddha saw. When he saw thus he was disposed to teach the Dhamma. Then he divided all the beings in the three realms (*bhūmi*) of human, Deva, and Brahmā into two categories: these that were going to gain enlightenment here and now, and those that were not going to do so here and now.
- (i) “Of those multitudes, after setting aside those who did not merit release from *saṃsāra* here and now, the Buddha scanned with Buddha Knowledge those ripe for enlightenment according to their moral traits (*carita*) and reckoned that so many of them had lust (*rāga*) as their outstanding nature; so many had anger (*dosa*); so many had delusion (*moha*); so many were given to discursiveness (*vitakka*); so many had faith (*saddhā*); and so many had intelligence (*buddhi*), respectively. Those six types of temperaments, the Buddha considered should form the basis for teaching the Dhamma.”¹⁷⁵

In the above quotation, the term “*Etattakā*” as contained in the phrase, “*Etaṃ parimānaṃ etesanti ettatākā*,” the Buddha foresaw the actual numbers belonging to each group or type of humanity. This reckoning by the Buddha, it should be noted, must be what the *Sīlakkhandha-ṭīkā* and similar writings depended on as their authority. Hence one need not entertain doubts as to their correctness.

End of the Answer to the Sixteenth Question

Answers to the Remaining Questions

The four questions, from the sixteenth to the twentieth, will be answered together. Regarding the place of appearance of the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and disciples, a future Buddha who has received the prediction appears only in our world-system; there are eighteen places where such a

future Buddha does not appear, according to the commentary which says: “They never arise in any world-system other than this,” (*Na aññaṃ cakkavālaṃ saṅkamanti*). That means a Bodhisatta who has received the prediction will not be reborn in any other world-system.

Before receiving the prediction, a Bodhisatta may be born in another world-system, probably in the earlier existences.

As to whether a Bodhisatta after receiving the prediction, up to his last existence, is liable to be reborn in continents other than Jambudīpa, the authorities are silent. However, on account of the power of the merit accruing from the supreme endeavour (*Mahābhinihāra*) and the steadfastness of the Bodhisatta’s purpose to fulfil the perfections — the other continents being not suitable for the purpose — it is most unlikely that he be reborn in any of those continents, even in this world-system.

The steadfastness of the Bodhisatta in fulfilling the perfection is told by the commentator with reference to the Mahāpadāna Sutta as follows:—

“Except for the penultimate existence when a Bodhisatta is reborn in the Tusita Deva realm, whenever he is reborn in Deva or Brahmā realms where life-spans are immense, he never lives to the end of the allotted life-span, but wishes to decease¹ to return to the human world. The reason is simply this: there is hardly any chance in those highly fortunate realms for him to fulfil the ten perfections. However, in the course of fulfilling the perfections, a Bodhisatta may conduct himself in such meritorious ways that there comes a time when he judges himself that the second last existence is now due to him; and accordingly, prior to the last existence as a human being when he is to become the Buddha, Bodhisatta Vipassī dwelt in the Tusita Deva realm to the full life-span there.”¹⁷⁶

The Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā further explains:—

- (a) Beginning from that existence of the Bodhisatta when he started wishing for Buddhahood up to his last existence, there is no single existence he remains totally without fulfilling the perfections beginning with giving. This is the natural law that governs every Bodhisatta who has received the sure prediction (*niyatipatitānaṃ*).
- (b) Further, for so long as the Bodhisatta has not acquired mastery over the volitional actions and their consequences, their efforts at fulfilling the perfections have deficiencies to a lesser or greater degree. When, however, they have full mastery over the volitional actions and their implications, starting from that points, their efforts at all times come

¹ A Bodhisatta who has received the prediction is endowed with the power to end his existence as a Deva merely by wishing for it.

to be marked by earnest, persevering performance with the thoroughness that enlightenment demands."¹⁷⁷

From the foregoing explanations, it may be noted that other three continents do not constitute a suitable place for a Bodhisatta's mission to acquire merit; hence they are not the kind of place where Noble Ones thrive, where Buddhas arise, where future Buddhas are born.

With reference to the Valāhaka Jātaka (Dukanipāta), the future Gotama Buddha was reborn in Sihala (Sri Lanka) which indicates that a Bodhisatta may be reborn in any part of Jambudīpa such as on a lesser island or in the Himavanta Forest, etc. The same rule should apply in the cases of future Paccekabuddhas, future Chief Disciples and future Great Disciples who have received the prediction.

This is also stated in the Mahāpadāna Sutta-ṭikā as: "*Yasmā purimabuddhānaṃ, etc.*"¹⁷⁸

A story is told, in six stanzas, such as: "*Sāmākapattodana mattameva, etc.*" in the Text, of a certain future disciple who offered a small measure of coarse rice as almsfood to a Paccekabuddha, and being inspired by the supramundane knowledge of the Paccekabuddha, he wished that he be reborn in the company of such a Noble One, and that he be free from any attachment to the three worlds. This prayer, solely directed towards release from *samsāra*, resulted in his rebirth in Uttarakuru, the northern continent for one thousand existences and also in the Tāvatisa Deva realm for one thousand existences, after which he gained release under Gotama Buddha. This story indicates that if a certain continent be the preference of a future enlightened one, such as a future disciple, rebirth there is a possibility. Furthermore, there is no authority that rules out the possibility of rebirth in other continents so long as they are quite premature, *i.e.*, before receiving the prediction.

There is a certain extract in texts such as the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta,¹⁷⁹ which describes how the Buddha sometimes visited the other world-systems to teach the Dhamma, and commentaries on the Mahāvagga Suttanta, Majjhimaṇṇāsa, and Ānguttaranikāya explain the significance of the said extract thus:

"What was the objective of the Buddha in going and teaching the Dhamma to the inhabitants of other world-systems, seeing that they did not have the slightest idea who the teacher was — whether he was a human being or a celestial being? To this question the answer is this: the Buddha did so to let those inhabitants receive at least some impression in their minds. For, even by listening to the discourse without understanding its meaning, the very

experience would, at some point in the future, *i.e.*, their future existences, stand them in good stead as a strong impression that helps in the understanding of the Dhamma. So, the Buddha taught for their future welfare.”

Having been inspired by the Buddha’s words, those inhabitants would pass away to Deva realms from where, at the following existence, they would, in due course, be reborn in Jambudīpa, and, having acquired the necessary conditions for becoming virtuous ones, they would fulfil the perfections until they win enlightenment, as Disciples, Paccekabuddhas, or Buddhas, according to their aspirations and merits.

That indeed is so. In the beginningless *saṃsāra* no sentient being could be said to belong to this or that world-system. All are just drifting along here and there as their attachment to existence (*bhavanikanti*) assigns them.

The above statement has been borne out by the story of Rohitassa who set out to find the end of the world. He flew by supernatural power and after passing through a number of world-systems his life-span ran out; after passing away he was reborn in this world-system to which he had attachment.

Commenting on the Anamatagga Saṃyutta, the commentator says: “Beings at their death are liable to go from this world-system to other world-systems, and vice versa.”¹⁸⁰

This is a critical survey of the possibility or otherwise of the three classes of aspirants (*i.e.*, for Discipleship, for Paccekabodhi and for Perfect Enlightenment) for their taking rebirth after the prediction, in places other than this world-system and this continent, more particularly, this subcontinent called Middle Country (Majjhimadesa).

There are three regions of the Buddha, namely:—

1. The *visaya-khetta* where the Buddha’s Knowledge may extend, that is an infinite world-system;
2. The *āṇā-khetta*, comprising one trillion world-systems over which the Buddha’s word has powerful effect, especially the Paritta Suttas;
3. The *jātikhetta*, the region comprising ten thousand world-systems where a Buddha may be reborn in his final existence.

Out of those three regions it is only in the last one that a Bodhisatta in his last existence may be born, and out of those ten thousand world-systems, only this Jambudīpa is the right place, and within this continent, only the Middle Country with a circumference of nine leagues is the *Ariya-bhūmi* where the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, the Chief Disciples, some of the Great Disciples and ordinary disciples may be born.

This is stated in the commentaries on the Dīghanikāya, Majjhimanikāya, Aṅguttaranikāya, and Saṃyuttanikāya thus: “*Manussaloke pi ... etc.*”¹⁸¹

There are certain Great Disciples, from among the eighty, who were born outside the Middle Country such as Puṇṇa Thera of Sunāparanta and Mahākappina Thera. As for ordinary disciples it goes without saying that some may be born outside of the Middle Country.

Now, what is meant by the so called Middle Country?

According to the Vinaya Mahāvagga¹⁸² it is that extent of land bounded:—

1. In the East by the great Sal tree growing at the outskirts of the market town of Gajaṅgala;
2. in the South-East by River Sallavati;
3. in the South by the market town of Setakaṇṇika;
4. in the West by the brahmin village of Thūṇa; and
5. in the North by Mount Usiraddhaja.

However, the commentaries call the entire Jambudīpa including Sihala and the lesser islands the Middle Country. For instance, the Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā says: “*Api ca upādāya ... etc.*”¹⁸³ and the Subcommentary thereon further explains: “*Upādāya pi ... etc.*”¹⁸⁴

The Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā, Khuddakapāṭha Aṭṭhakathā, commenting on the Maṅgala Sutta, say: “*Patirūpadesavāso nāma ... etc.*”¹⁸⁵

From the above commentaries, we may reply to this Question saying that all Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, the Chief Disciples, the Great Disciples and Ordinary Disciples are born only in the Middle Country. This is said with reference to the human plane of existence or the human world, *i.e.*, in so far as humans are concerned. For with reference to Deva and Brahmā planes the Middle Country is a term referring to the ten world-systems that constitute the Jāti-khetta. The Jāti-khetta of ten thousand world-systems has been mentioned in commentarial literature, which record the following instances. Devas and Brahmās living in the ten thousand world-systems:—

1. Assembled on the occasion of future Gotama Buddha receiving the prediction;
2. Assembled when the Bodhisatta made his aspiration for Buddhahood; and when he was conceived in the royal womb of Queen Māyā Devi;
3. During the gestation period of nine months, forty-thousand kings of Catumahārāja Devas mounted watch over the royal mother;

4. Devas and Brahmās living in the ten thousand world-systems assembled at the birth of Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, at the great renunciation, and at the attaining of Buddhahood;
5. Devas and Brahmās living in the ten thousand world-systems headed by Brahmā Sahampati came in a body before the Buddha, dwelling at the foot of the Herdsman's Banyan Tree, to plea for teaching the Dhamma to the world;
6. From the time of the first discourse, *i.e.*, the Dhammacakka Sutta, and all later discourses, up to the last moment of the existence of the Buddha's Teaching when the Buddha's relics will be dissolved by phenomenal fire element, Devas and Brahmās living in the ten thousand world-systems, are wont to assemble, and win path knowledge in great numbers on every such occasion.

End of the answers to the remaining questions

After having framed the twenty questions as above, as undertaken at the outset, the great teacher concluded his tract by exhorting the would-be answerers to delve deep into all forms of canonical literature including the Text, Commentaries, Subcommentaries, *etc.*, and to exert their utmost, putting aside all other business. In this he also explains his position in such terms as:

“It is usual with questioners ... (*Mayaṃ codakānāma ...*)” Also it is the custom of wise persons to praise the praiseworthy and to blame the blameworthy, so that the questioner extols the competent answerer in such glowing terms as “standard-bearers of the Buddha's Teaching”, *etc.*, and runs down the charlatan in such seething terms as “the tree-stump,” *etc.*

End of Explanatory Remarks on the Way of the Wise

Conclusion

1. At the present time there are elder bhikkhus, *i.e.*, of over 10 years standing, the middle status bhikkhus of 5 to 10 years standing, and new bhikkhus of less than 5 years standing, who are proficient in the Tipiṭaka, *i.e.*, Suttanta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma; and most of them owe their excellent learning (*pabhāva nibaddhā*) to the intellectual might (*byattibala*) of our great teacher the Sankyaung Sayādaw, recipient of the royal title of *Sudassanavara-dhammasāmi-mahādhamma-rājādhirājaguru*.
2. Being one of those learned bhikkhus of the three grades of seniority who had been pupils of the great teacher, who is accustomed to clearing up knotty problems contained in the text, commentaries,

subcommentaries, *etc.*, and who is imperturbable against the vicissitudes of life.

3. I, Nāṇābhivāṃsa, the most senior lecturer in the Tipiṭaka in our monastery, having served reverentially at the feet of the great teacher, have, in the foregoing pages, tackled the twenty erudite questions posed by the great teacher. For this work of mine, written in 1241 Burmese Era when I had completed 14 Rains (*vassa*) of monkhood, I have earned vast merit. On account of that merit:-
4. May all rulers, moved by genuine concern about the welfare of the people, extend their protection over the whole world in accordance with righteousness. May the multitudes at all times have mindfulness, careful about good conduct, and win, according to their deserts, their goals by way of enlightenment in any one of the three classes. This is my concluding prayer.¹⁸⁶

Here ends the Pāramī Dīpanī

Pāli Text References

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahanto Sammāsambuddhassa

001 Question One

Yo lokiya-lokuttara-sukhāni patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti. So lokiya-sukhameva vā labheyyakiṃ. Lokuttara-sukhameva vā udāhu tādubhaya-sukhampi kiṃ vā neva tadubhaya sukhaṃ.

002 Question Two

Yo vā pana lokiya-sukhamevā patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti. So lokiya sukhameva labheyyakim. Atha lokuttara-sukhampi.

003 Question Three

Yo vā pana lokuttara-sukhameva patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti. So lokuttara-sukhameva labheyyakim. Atha lokiya-sukhampi.

004 Question Four

- Ye ca sammāsambuddhā kappa-satasahassādhikāni cattāri vā asaṅkhyeyyāni aṭṭha vā asaṅkhyeyyāni soḷasavā asaṅkhyeyyāni dānādīpāramiyo puretvā sammā sambodhiṃ pāpuṇanti.*
- Ye ca paccekabuddhā kappa-satasahassādhikāni dve-asaṅkhyeyyāni dānādīpāramiyo puretvā paccekabodhiṃ pāpuṇanti.*
- Ye ca aggasāvakaḥ kappa-satasahassādhikāni ekaṃ asaṅkhyeyyaṃ dānādīpāramiyo puretvā aggasāvakabodhiṃ pāpuṇanti.*
- Ye ca mahāsāvakaḥ kappa-satasahassāni dānādīpāramiyo puretvā mahāsāvakabodhiṃ pāpuṇanti.*
- Ye ca pakatisāvakaḥ kappa-satamvā vā dānādīpāramiyo puretvā pakatisāvakabodhiṃ pāpuṇanti. Tesam taṃ taṃ kālaparicchedaṃ taṃ taṃ icchita-bodhi-paṭṭhānato paṭṭhāya gaṇanupagā kiṃ udahu laddha-vyākaraṇato.*

005 Question Five

Taṃ taṃ bodhininnā laddha-vyākaraṇāva pāramiyo puretvā bujjheyyuṃ kiṃ atha laddha-vyākaraṇāpi.

006 Question Six

Teca laddha-vyākaraṇā aññadā aññaṃaññaṃ bodhi-pattheyyuṃ kiṃ atha na pattheyyuṃ.

007 Question Seven

Yo taṃ taṃ bodhiṃ aniyametvā magga-phala-nibbānameva patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti. So katamāya bodhiyā bujjheyya. Sace sāvakabodhi-parami-puṇṇakāle bujjhitukāmo hoti so sāvakabodhiyā bujjheyya kiṃ. Sace paccekabodhi puṇṇakāle bujjhitukāmo hoti so paccekabodhiyā bujjheyya kiṃ. Sace sammāsambodhi-pārami-puṇṇakāle bujjhitukāmo hoti so sammāsambodhiyā bujjheyya kiṃ.

008 Question Eight

Yo sāvakabodhiṃ patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti so savāka-pāramiṇaṃ puṇṇā puṇṇa-kāle aññaṃbodhiṃ pattheyya kiṃ. No vā pattheyya. Yadi pattheyya so labheyya kiṃ. No vā labheyya. Yadi labheyya so apari puṇṇapāramiyova puretvā labheyya kiṃ. Athanavānavā pāramiyo puretvā labheyya.

009 Question Nine

Yo paccekabodhiṃ patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti so paccekabodhipāramiṇaṃ puṇṇāpuṇṇakāle aññaṃbodhiṃ pattheyya kiṃ. No vā pattheyya. Yadi pattheyya so labheyya kiṃ no vā labheyya. Yadi labheyya so aparipuṇṇa-paramiyova puretvā labheyya kiṃ. Atha navā navā pāramiyo puretvā labheyya.

010 **Question Ten**

Yo sammāsambodhiṃ patthetvā dānādīpāramiyo pureti so sammā sambodhi-pāramīnaṃ puṇṇāpuṇṇa-kāle aññaṃ bodhim pattheyya kiṃ na vā pattheyya. Yādi pattheyya so labheyya kiṃ. No vā labheyya. Yādi labheyya so aparipuṇṇa pāramiyo puretvā labheyya kiṃ. Atha navā navā pāramiyo puretvā labheyya.

011 **Question Eleven**

Paccekabuddha buddhasāvakaṃpi sammāsambuddhāvīya paripuṇṇā tiṃsa pāramiyo puretvāva bujjheyyuṃ kiṃ atha aparipuṇṇā ekaccā paramiyo puretvā bujjheyyuṃ.

012 **Question Twelve**

Pakatisāvakaṃ sabbantima-paricchedena kittakaṃ pāramiyo puretvāva bujjheyyuṃ. Yathā vuttakala-paricchedameva pāramiyo puretvā bujjheyyuṃ kiṃ.

013 **Question Thirteen**

Purita pāramitā sāvakaṃ bahumhi buddha-suñña-kappe uppannā sayameva bujjheyyuṃ kiṃ. Udāhu taṃ kappam atikkamitvā buddhuppāda-kappam Āgamayamānā bujjheyyuṃ.

014 **Question Fourteen**

Buddha paccekabuddha buddhasāvakaṃ samānaṅga-sampannāva vyākaraṇaṃ labheyyuṃ kiṃ. Udāhu visadisa-aṅgasampannā va vyākaraṇaṃ labheyyuṃ.

015 **Question Fifteen**

Buddhā eva vyākaraṇaṃ kittayimsu kiṃ atha paccekabuddha buddhasāvakaṃ pi.

016 **Question Sixteen**

Buddhasāvakaṃ viya deva-manussa-brahmānopi yathā vuttakāla-paricchedameva pāramiyo puretvā bujjheyyuṃ kiṃ. Atha tatūnā pāramiyo puretvā bujjeyyuṃ.

017 **Question Seventeen**

Imasmiṃ yeva cakkavāle buddha paccekabuddha buddhasāvakaṃ uppajjeyyuṃ kiṃ. Atha aññasmiṃpi cakkavāle.

018 **Question Eighteen**

Teca imasmiṃ yeva cakkavāle jāyamānā pāramiyo pūresuṃ kiṃ atha aññasmiṃpi cakkavāle.

019 **Question Nineteen**

Teca imasmiṃ cakkavāle pi jambudīpeyeva jāyamānā pāramiyo pūresuṃ kiṃ. Udāhu sesadīpesupi.

020 **Question Twenty**

Teca imasmiṃ yeva jambudīpe majjhimadesa yeva jāyamānā pāramiyo pūresuṃ kiṃ. Atha paccantadesepi.

021 **Paṇḍita-dhammatā Vākya**

- (a) *Mayaṃ codakānāma ekadesapekkhakā no sakalapekkhakā. Sace sakalapekkhakā bhaveyyāma esā pucehā na siyā. Bhavati ca etāya pucchāya diṭṭhāya taṃ vissajjanaṃ vattaritaḃbaṃ.*
- (b) *Kasmā pucchāvissajjanānaṃ aññaṃaññaṃ avinābhāvibhāvato.*
Yattha yattha paḍe sveva, diṭṭhe vissajjane sati
Tattha tatthuddharitabba, pucchā tāva vibhāvīnā ti
Etissā gāthāya ekapassadassanena nayabhāvato ca.
Yattha yattha paḍesveva diṭṭhā tu pucchānā yaḍi tattha tatthuddharitabbā visajjana vinhavīnā.
- (c) *Tasmā sāsanaḍhajupamā Jambudīpakajūpamā paṇḍitā sace tumhe nitatthe paḷi-Aṭṭhakathā-ṭikāyo āharitvā no kāṅkhaṃ vinodetuṃ sakkotha. Anaññavisayaṃ tumhākāññeva visayaṃ etaṃ visati-puccham vissajjetha.*

- (d) *No ce vuttanayena vinodetuṃ sakkotha. Khānukāvīya ca indakhīta vīya ca acalā pajjhāyantā patakkhandhā tuṃhi bhāta hotha.*
- (e) *Kasmā hi tuṃhibhūtā tumhādesehi atissayapaññavā taṃ vissajjana samattho sihanādesu kesarasīhoviya pariyattiyaṃ ativisarado bahussuta-kittisaddo purisavisesova vibhajja-vyākaraṇa-vissajjanena vissajjissati.*

022 Vissajjavaka ganthārambha

- (a) *Subuddabodhi sambhāro, bodhesi bodhimuttamaṃ bodhaneyyaṃ subuddhena, boddho so detu me jayaṃ,*
- (b) *Yā katā visatipucchā, thereva thiracetasā tassattham kathayissāmi, sampuṇṇaṃ savissajjananti.*

023 Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi:

Gānthārambhe satamatthaya-pañāmaṃ yathārabhita-ganthassa anantarāyena pariya pāpanatthaṃ evaṃ niṭṭhānampi ca buddhe katapañāmena hessatiti tinnannassati matibahumānā pacitipasada bahulattā buddhasseva namo kato.

024 Ibid. *Ratanatthayassavā tathāgata-guṇena ekatthattā buddhe katapanāmo avasesadvayassāpi katovāti taṃ dvayassa savūpato pañāmaṃ na karoti.*

025 Commentary on the Dhammacetiya Sutta:

Tisu hi ratanesu yattha katthaci cittikāre kate sabbattha katoyeva hoti. (MA.iii.355)

026 Commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya:

Desanā sīsameva cetaṃ, iminā pana aṅgena tisupi ratanesu saddhā adhippetā. Yassa hi buddhādīsu pasādo balavā, tassa padhānavīriyaṃ ijjhati. (AA.iii.257)

027 Udāna:

*“Bāhitvā pāpake dhamme, Ye caranti saddhā satā.
Khīnasamyojanā buddhā, te ve lokasmi brāhmaṇā”ti. (Ud.4)*

028 Paramatthadipani, Commentary on the Udāna:

Buddhāti catucassasammodhena buddhā te ca pana sāvakebuddhā, paccekabuddhā, sammāsambhidhāti tividhā, tesu idha sāvakabuddhā adhippetā. (UdA.58)

029 Subcommentary on the Mahavagga, Dighanikāya:

Buddharatana saṅgharatanupaṭṭhāne heva dhammaratanupaṭṭhānasiddhīti. (MT.342)

030 Paṭisambhidāmagga Gaṇṭhi:

Elaborating on the explanation in the Commentary: *Abhivādetvā ti pañcapaṭiṭṭhitena vanditvā* defines the proper act of kneeling in worship thus: *Pañcapaṭiṭṭhitena ti dvijāṇu dvihatthanalāṭeti pañcahi paṭiṭṭhaṃ katvā.*

031 Sārattadipani-ṭikā on the Bhikkhunovāda Vagga:

Antogāme vāti ādīsu yattha pañca aṅgāni bhūmiyaṃ paṭiṭṭhāpetvā vandituṃ na sakkā hoti, tattha ṭhitāya eva kāyaṃ purato nāmetvā “Vandāmi ayyā”ti añjaliṃ paggayha gantumpi vaṭṭati.

032 Vinayālaṅkāra-ṭikā, quoting the Parivāra:

Navakatārenupāli, bhikkhunā vuḍḍhatarassa bhikkhuno pāde vandantena pañca dhamme ajjhattaṃ upaṭṭhāpetvā pādā vanditabbā.

033 Commentary on the Theragāthā:

Vandissam bahukam jananti puthumahājanaṃ diṭṭhaditṭhakāle vandim sirasi añjaliṃ karonto pañāmiṃ. (ThagA.ii.264)

034 Therīgāthā:

Nihacca jāṇuṃ vanditvā sammukhā añjaliṃ akaṃ. (Thig.134)

Commentary on the above passage:

Nihacca jāṇuṃ vanditvā ti jāṇudvayaṃ pathaviyaṃ nihantvā patitṭhapetvā pañcapatitṭhitena vanditvā. Sammukhā añjaliṃ akanti satthu sammukhā dasanakhasamodhānasamujjalaṃ añjaliṃ akāsiṃ. (ThigA.107)

035 Nidāna, Commentary:

Dasanakhasamodhānasamujjalaṃ jalajamālāvikalakamala.

Maṅgala Buddhavaṃsa Commentary:

Dasanakhasamodhānasamujjalaṃ vimalaka malamakuḷasamamañjaliṃ sirasi katvā vanditvā. (BuA.146)

036 Buddhavaṃsa:

*Abhivādanaṃ thomaṇaṅca, vandanaṅca paṣaṃsanaṃ;
Namassanaṅca pūjaṅca, sabbaṃ arahaṣi tuvaṃ. (Bu.4)*

037 Commentary on the Buddhavaṃsa:

Tatha abhivādananti aññehi attano abhivādanakārāpanaṃ. Thomananti parammukhato thuti. Vandananti paṇāmanaṃ. Paṣaṃsananti sammukhato paṣaṃsanaṃ. Namassananti añjalikaraṇaṃ, manasā namassanaṃ vā. Pūjananti mālāgandhavilepanādīhi pūjanaṅca. (BuA.44)

038 Commentary on the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa:

Mahantaṃ vā lokiyasukhaṃ phalantīti mahapphalā. Mahato lokuttarasukhassa ca paccayā hontīti mahānisamsā. Silādiguṇayuttassa hi kaṭacchubhikkhāpi pañcaratanaṃattāya bhūmiyā paṇṇasālāpi katvā dinnā anekāni kappasahassāni duggatvinipātato rakkhati, pariyosāne ca amatāya parinibbāna dhātuyā paccayo hoti. (MA.i.159)

039 Bhūridatta Jātaka, Mahānipāta:

*Taṃ vimānaṃ abhijjhāya, amarānaṃ suhesinaṃ;
Uposathaṃ upavasanto, semi vammikamuddhani”ti. (JA.vi.174)*

Tattha abhijjhāyāti patthetvā.

040 Cariyāpiṭaka, Bhūridattacariya:

*Tattha passitvāhaṃ deve, ekantaṃ suhasamappite;
Taṃ saggagamanatthāya, silabbataṃ samādiyīṃ. (Cp.85)*

041 Campeyya Jātaka:

*“Na puttahetu na dhanassa hetu, na āyuno cāpi janinda hetu;
Manussayoṇiṃ abhipatthayāno, tasmā parakkamma tapo karomī”ti. (JA.iv.466)*

Campeyya Jātaka and Saṅkhaṇḍa Jātaka:

Ahaṅca laddhāna manussayoṇiṃ, kāhāmi jātimaraṇassa antaṃ. (JA.iv.467; JA.v.173)

042 Cariyāpitaka, Bhūridattacariya Commentary:

“... bodhipariṭṭhānaṃ hoti, imasmiṃ devaloke uppattikāraṇaṃ bhavissati”ti cintetvā nāgabhavaṇaṃ gantvā mātāpitāro āha: “Ammatātā, ahaṃ uposathakammaṃ karissāmi”ti. (CpA.116)

043 Jinālaṅkāra-ṭīkā:

Parāmiyoti pāraṇi nibbānaṃ ayanti gacchanti etātīti pāramiyo. Nibbūnasādhakā hi dānacetanā dayo dhammā pāramīti vuccanti.

⁰⁴⁴ **Manorathapūraṇi, Commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya:**

(a) *Appamattakaṃ tīnamuṭṭhi mattadānakusalaṃ vā hotu, mahantaṃ velāmadānādikusalaṃ vā, sace vaṭṭasampattiṃ patthetvā vaṭṭasannissitavasena micchā ṭhapitaṃ hoti, vaṭṭameva āharitum sakkoti, no vivaṭṭaṇ.* (AA.i.55)

Sāratthopakāsani, Commentary on the Saṃyuttanikāya:

(a) *“Idaṃ me dānaṃ āsavakkhayaāvahaṃ hotū”ti evaṃ pana vivaṭṭaṇ pathhanta vivaṭṭavasena sammā ṭhapitaṃ arahattampi paccekabodhiñāṇampi sabbaññutañāṇampi dātuṃ sakkoti yeva.* (SA.ii.19)

⁰⁴⁵ **Commentary on the Dhammadāyāda Sutta of the Majjhimanikāya and Itivuttaka:**

Yaṃ paṇidaṃ vivaṭṭūpanissitaṃ kusalaṃ, seyyathidaṃ, idhekacco vivaṭṭaṃ pathhento dānaṃ deti, silaṃ samādiyati, uposathakammaṃ karoti, gandhamālādihi vatthupūjaṃ karoti, dhammaṃ sunāti deseti jhānasamāpattiyo nibbatteti, evaṃ karonto anupubbena nippariyāyadhammaṃ amataṃ nibbānaṃ paṭilabhati, ayaṃ pariyāyadhammo. (MA.i.89; ItA.ii.144)

⁰⁴⁶ **Commentary on the Aṅguttaranikāya, Book of Ones:**

*Vivaṭṭavasena uppannacittameva cittaṃ. Tañhi mānusakasukhato dibbasukhaṃ, dibbasukhato jhānasukhaṃ, jhānasukhato vipassanāsukhaṃ, vipassanāsukhato maggasukhaṃ, maggasukhato phalasukhaṃ, phalasukhato nibbānasukhaṃ adhivahati āharatitī **sukhādhivahaṃ** nāma hoti.* (AA.i.53)

⁰⁴⁷ **Commentary on the Paṭṭhāna:**

(a) *Parittarammaṇattike appamāñārammaṇā cetanāti sekkhānaṃ gotrabhu cetanā paccavekkhaṇā cetanātipi vatthum vaṭṭati.*
 (b) *Vipākānaṃ parittārammaṇānanti paṭisandhiyaṃ kammaṃ ārammaṇaṃ katvā pavatte cakkhuvīññādivasena rupādīarammaṇaṃ katvā tadārammaṇavasena javanena gatita-parittārammaṇaṅca ārammaṇaṃ katvā uppannānaṃ.*

Ye pena gotrabhu cittena natthi paṭisandhīti vadanti te iminā suttana paṭisedhetabbā.

⁰⁴⁸ **Saddhanapakāsani, the Commentary on the Paṭisambhidāmagga:**

(a) *Āyatiṃ paṭisandhiyā paccayo hotitī sankhārupekkhā sampayuttakammaṃ balavattā teneva sugati paṭisandhiyā diyyamānāya abhinandana saṅkhāto lobha kilesa anāgāte kāmāvacarasugati paṭisandhiyā paccayo hoti. Yasmā kilesa sahāyaṃ kammaṃ vipākaṃ janeti tasmā kammaṃ janakapaccayo hoti kilesā upatthambhkapaccayā.*
 (b) *Sekkhassa pana uttari paṭivedhassāti sakadāgāmi maggādivasena saccappaṭivedhassa. Āyatiṃ paṭisandhiyā paccayo hotitī sekhesu sotāpannasakadāgāmināṃ anadhigatajāhānānaṃ saṅkhārupekkhākammaṃ diyyamānāya kāmāvacara sugatipaṭisandhiyā abhinandanakilesa paccayo hoti.*
 (c) *Jhānalābhinaṃ pana sotāpanna sakadāgāmināṃ anāgāmissaca brahmalokeyeva paṭisandhidānato paccyo na hoti. Anulomagotrabhūhi ca diyyamānāya paṭisandhiyā ayameva kilesa paccayo hotitī veditabbo.*

⁰⁴⁹ **Laddhagūṇasambhava Pucchā:**

Yo vā pana lokiya lokuttarasukhesu kiṇeipi apatthetvā dānsdipāramiyo pūreti. Kiṃ so lokiyasukhameva lokuttara sukhameva vā labheyya udāhu tadubhayasukhampi labheyya no vā labheyya tatubhayasukhaṃ.

⁰⁵⁰ **Commentary on the Cakkavatti Sutta:**

Mātāpitūnaṃ puttadhītāsu sinehavasena muducittaṃ pattadhītā naṃ mātāpitūsu sinehavasena muducittaṅca gāmikusalāṃ nāma. Tassa pariyosānaṃ manussaloke cakkavattino sirvibhava ppaṭilābho.

051 *Samsāravatṭadukkhato mocanattāhāya pabbajjaṃ yācāmi.
Ullumpatu maṃ, bhante, saṅgho anukampaṃ upādāyā.*

052 **Commentary on the Mūlapaṇṇasa and the Itivuttaka:**

Tattha jānanā bahuvidhā. Dabbajātiko eva hi koci bhikkhu chattaṃ kātuṃ jānāti, koci cīvarādīnaṃ aṅṅatarāṃ, tassa idīsāni kammāni vattasīse tthatvā karontassa sā jānanā “magghaphalānaṃ padaṭṭhānaṃ na hotī”ti na vattabbā. Yo pana sāsane pabbajitvā vejjakammādīni kātuṃ jānāti, tassevaṃ jānato āsavā vaḍḍhantiyeva. (ItiA. ii.150).

053 **Subcommentary on the above:**

Vattasīse tthatvāti vattaṃ uttamaṅgaṃ duraṃavā katvā parisuddhāṅṅo kātuṃ ajānantānaṃ sabrahmacāriṇaṃ attano vā vātātapādiṇaṃ nāthakaraṇadharmabhāvena upanissayabhāvato vattaṅṅhiyāni tāni sabrahmacāriṇaṃ uccāvocāni kiccakaraṇiyyāni. Yāttha dakkho hotīti ādi.

054 **Commentary on the Saṅkhārūpapatti Sutta, Uparipaṇṇāsa:**

(a) *Yāssa saddhā sīla suta cāga paṇṇā sankhātā pañcadhammā atthi, na patthanā tassa gati anibaddhā. Yāssa patthanā atthi, na pañca dhammā tassapi gati anibaddhāva. Yeṣaṃ ubhayampi atthi tesaṃ gati nibaddhā.*

(b) *Yathā hi ākāse khittadaṇḍo aggena vā khandena (vl. majjhena) vā bundenavā (vl. mūlena) nipatissatīti niyamo natthi. Evaṃ satthānaṃ paṭisandhiggaḥaṇaṃ anyataṃ. Tasmā kusalaṃ kammaṃ katvā ekasmiṃ tthāne patthanāṃ kātuṃ vaṭṭati.*

055 **Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā:**

Pubbe ca katāpuṇṇā’ti pubbe upacitakusalakatā. Idameva cettha pamāṇaṃ. Yena hi nāṇasampayuttacittena kusalakammaṃ kataṃ hoti, tadeva kusalaṃ taṃ purisaṃ patirūpedese upaneti sappurise bhajāpeti, so eva puggalo attānaṃ sammā tthapeti.

056 **Commentary on the Dhātu Saṃyuttā:**

Nāṇasampayuttacittena pana katakusalakammaṃ taṃ sattaṃ patirupadese upaneti sappurisaṃ bhajāpeti so eva puggalo attānaṃ sammā tthapeti.

057 **Commentary on the Cariyapitaka:**

Tayo pete vinā kālabhedena katābhinihārā buddhānaṃ samtike laddhavyakaraṇā ca anukkamena pāramiyo paripūrentā yathākkamaṃ yathā vuttakāle bhedenā kālena sammāsambodhiṃ pāpunaṅti.

058 **Commentaries on the Suttanipāta and Theragāthā:**

Tesaṃ hi satipi paṇṇādhikabhāve dve asaṅkhyeyyāni kappasatasahassaṅc bodhisambhāra sambharaṇaṃ icchitabbaṃ na tato oraṃ. Saddhādhika viriyādhikā pi vutta paracehedato paraṃ katipaye eve kappe atikkamitvā sambodhiṃ abhisamujjhanti na tatiyaṃ asaṅkhyeyyanti.

059 **Commentary on the Theragāthā:**

Manusaattaṃ liṅgasampatti vigaṭāsavadassanaṃ.

Adhikāro ca chandatā ete abhinihārakāraṅti.

Ime pañcadhamme samodhānetvā katābhinihārānaṃ paccekabodhisattānaṃ adhikāro chandatā ti. Dvayaṅgasamannāgatāya patthanāya vasena katapaṇidhānānaṃ sāvakabodhisattānaṅca tattha tattha vuttakala paricchedaṃ asampatvā antarāeva paccekabodhiyā yathāvutta sāvakabodhiyā ca adhiḅamo natthi. Kasmā nāṇassa aparipaccanato va.

060 **Samantabhaddikā, Commentary on the Anāgatavamsa:**

Dhammatā eso bodhisattānaṃ abhinihārato pubbeva tisso. Sampattiyo vuttaparcchedakālaṃ puretvā kappasatasahassa pārami pūreṇaṃ.

061 **Paṭisambhidāmagga, Gaṇṭhi:**

Ayampi bhagavā ati-ulārajjhāsayatāya pubbeva taṃ sambodhā hirottappāgama sampattipūraṇeṇa aṭṭhaguṇa samodhānatāya samiddhābhinihāro.

062 **Sotattaki, Tathāgatuppatti, etc.**

Cintetaṃ sattaśaṅcheyyaṃ naṇasaṅcheyya vācakaṃ kāyavācā catuchātaṃ buddhattaṃ paripūritaṃ.

063 **Subcommentary on the Mahāvagga Saṃyutta:**

Cattāri aṭṭha soḷasaṇṇā asāṅcheyyāniti idaṃ mahābodhisattānaṃ santāne bodhiparipācaka dhammānaṃ tikkhamajjhima mudubhāva siddhakāle viśesaḍḍaṇṇaṃ na ca kho mahābhiniharato paṭṭhayāti vadanti.

064 **Buddha Apādāna:**

Ahampi pubbabuddhesu sambodhimabhipatthayiṃ.

Manussāyeva hutvāna dhammarājā asankhaya.

065 **Mahantaḡaṇa:**

Khiṇāsavā asaṅkhyeyyā, paccekā catusaṭṭhi koṭṭiyo

Sammāsambuddhā doḷakkhaṃ, chanahutaṅca tisataṃ asītisattakoṭṭiyo.

066 **Commentary on the Ghaṭikāra Sutta:**

Bodhisattā hi buddhānaṃ sammukhe pabbajjanti. Pabbajjitvā ca pana ittarasattā viya patitasinṅā na honti, catupārisuddhisile pana supatiṭṭhāya tepiṭakaṃ buddhavacanaṃ uggaṇhitvā terasa dhutaṅgāni samāḍāya araṇṇaṃ pavasiṭvā gatapaccāgatavattaṃ pūrayamānā samaṇadhammaṃ karontā vipassanaṃ vadḍhetva yāva anulomañāṇaṃ āhacca tiṭṭhanti. Maggaḡhalatthaṃ vāyānaṃ na karonti.

067 **Commentaries on Pañcapakaraṇa and Puggalapañṇatti:**

Tato purinapurimesu pana bhavesu sabbaññubodhisattā buddhasāsane pabbajjitvā tiṇi piṭakāni uggaḡhetvā gatapaccāgatavattaṃ āruya kammaṭṭhānaṃ anulomaṃ gotrabhuṃ āhacca ṭhapenti.

068 **Jināḷankāra-ṭikā:**

Udayabbayānupassanā ñāṇaṃ bhaṅgānupassanā ñāṇaṃ bhyayānupassanā ñāṇaṃ āḍinavānupassanā ñāṇaṃ muccatukamyatā ñāṇaṃ paṭisankhānupassanā ñāṇaṃ saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇanti imāni aṭṭhañāṇāni pāpuni. Tāni pana aṭṭhañāṇāni tena pubba buddhānaṃ santike pabbajjitvā piṭattayaṃ uggaḡhetvā vipassanā maggaṃ ogāḡhetvā paṭiladdhāni bhavitāni kuṭṭiyabbhantare jalaṃānapaḍiḡpaṃ viya ṭṭitāni ahesuṃ appaṭṭikippameva āgatāni. Nevaṃ saccānulomikameva tasmā laddhapubbaṃ ṭṭitam.

069 **Paṭisambhidamagga, Gaṇṭhi:**

Anuloma gotrabhusamīpanti anuloma gotrabhunaṃ samīpe asanne pavattaṃ saṅkhārupekkhaṃ taṅca na sabbantima javanaṇā pariyaḡpannaṃ tampattassa anivattanato. Tena mandatikka taravasena pavattaṃ muccitukamyatādi ñāṇattayaṃ vuttaṃ hoti. Mandapañño hi tesu paṭṭhanaṃ patvā nivattati tikkhapaṇo ño dutiyaṃ tikkhatarapañño tatiyaṃ patvā ti.

070 **Paccekabuddha Apādāna:**

Suññaṃ paṇiḍaṅca yathā nimittaṃ, Āsevayitvā jinasāsanaṃhi

Ye sāvakkattaṃ na vajanti dhira, Bhavanti paccekajina sayambhū.

071 **Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā:**

Ekamante samaṇadhammaṃ katvā dukkhassantaṃ karissāmāti nisseṇiṃ banditvā uccaṃ pabbatasikharaṃ āruhitvā ... (Pe) ... samaṇadhammaṃ ārabhiṃsu.

072 **Re: Q.7:**

Kiṅcāpi dubbalā yutti nītatthāgama vajjitā

Santabhūtaṅgupatthaddhā paḷiva niccalā siyā.

073 **Commentary on the Puggalapaññatti:**

Katamo panesa puggalo ti osatthavīriyapuggalo. So hi kiṃ me imasmiṃ buddhakāle parinibbānena anāgate metteyyasammāsambuddhakāle parinibbāyissamīti visuddhisilo paṭipattiṃ na pūreti so pi kimatthaṃ āyasmā pamattho viharati puthujjanassa gatināma anibaddhā. Āyasmāhi metteyyasammāsambuddhassa sammukhibhōvaṃ labheyyasi na labheyyāsi. Arahattatthāya vipassanaṃ bhāvehiṭi ovaḍitabbo.

074 **Commentaries on the Brahmāyu Sutta and the Aṅguttaranikāya:**

Mahāpurisalakkhaṇanti mahāpurisānaṃ buddhādīnaṃ lakkhaṇadīpakaṃ lakkhaṇadīpakaṃ dvadassa-sahassa-ganthappamaṇaṃ satthaṃ. Yāttha soḷasa-sahassa-gāthā parimāṇāya buddhamantā nāma ahesuṃ. Yesaṃ vasena “Iminā lakkhaṇena samannāgatā buddhā nāma honti, iminā Paccekabuddhā nāma honti, iminā dve aggasāvaka, asītimahāsāvaka, buddhamātā, buddhapitā, aggupaṭṭhāko, aggupaṭṭhāyikā, rājā cakkavattī”ti ayaṃ viseso ñāyati.

Mantesūti vedesu. Tathāgato kira uppabbajjissatīti paṭikacceva suddhāvāsa devā vedesu lakkhaṇāni pakkhipitvā buddhamantā nāma ete”ti brahmaṇavesena vedevācenti. “Tadanusārena mahesakkhā sattā Tathāgataṃ jānissanti”ti. Tena pubbe vedesu mahāpurisalakkhaṇāni āgacchanti. Parinibbute pana Tathāgate anukkamena antaradhāyanti, tena etarahi natthi.

075 **Sotattaki:**

*Evampi bodhisattānaṃ sambharāmpi kataṃ bahuṃ
Aladdhaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ yāva niyataṃ na bhavissati.*

076 **Sāmaññaphala Sutta Tikā:**

- (a) *Ethā ha yadirañño kammantarāyā bhāve tasmīṃ yeva āsane dhammacakkhu uppajjissati kathaṃ anāyatase paccekabuddho hutvā parinibbāyissati atha paccekabuddho hutvā parinibbāyissati kathaṃ tadā dhammacakkhu uppajjissati nanuime sāvakabodhi paccekabodhi upanissayā bhinno nissayāti.*
- (b) *Nāyaṃ virodho. Ito pavato evassa paccekabodhisambhārānaṃ sambhārāṇīyato sāvakabodhiyā bujjanakasattā pi hi asati tassa samavāyekaḷantare paccekabodhiyā bujjhissanti katābhinihāra sambhavato.*
- (a) *Apare pana bhāṇanti “Paccekabodhiyā yevāyaṃ katābhinihāro. Katābhinihārāpi hi tattha niyataṃ pattā tassa ñāṇassa paripākaṃ anupagatatthā sattha sammukhibhāve sāvakabodhiṃ pāpuṇissantīti bhagavā ‘sacāyaṃ bhikkhave rājā’ti ādimāha.*
- (b) *Mahābodhisattānaṃ eva ca ānantariyaparimutti na itara bodhisattānaṃ tathāhi paccekabodhiyaṃ niyato samāno devadatto cirakālasambhutena lokanāthe āgātena garutarāni ānantariyāni pasavi.*
- (c) *Tasmā kammantarāyenāyamidāni asamavetadassanābhisamaye rājā paccekabodhiniyāmena anāgate paccekabuddho hutvā parinibbāyissatīti daṭṭhabbaṃ.*

077 **Commentary on the Suttanipāta:**

Hetūti arahattassa upanissayasampatti. Yo hi tasmīṃ attabhāve vāyanamto arahattaṃ pāpuṇitum samattho, tassa samijjhati, no itarassa, yathā sumedhapaṇḍitassa.

078 **Commentary on the Jātaka, etc.**

Purisassāpi tasmīṃ attabhāve arahattappattiyā hetusampannasseva patthanā samijjhati, no itarassa.

079 **Commentary on the Cariyāpiṭaka:**

- (a) *Evam sampannūpanissaya panassa imāni upanissayasampattiyā liṅgāni bhavanti. Ye hi samannāgatassa sāvakabodhisattehi ca paccekabodhisattehi ca mahāviseso mahantaṃ nānākaraṇaṃ paññāyati indriyato paṭipattīto kosallato ca.*
- (b) *Idha upanissayasampanno mahāpuriso yathā visadindriyo hoti visadañño na tathā itare. Parahitāya paṭipanno hoti na attahitāya.*

- (c) *Tatha hi so yathā bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ paṭipajjati na itare.*
 (d) *Tattha ca kosallaṃ āvahati ṭhanuppattipaṭibhānena ṭhānāṭṭhānakusalatāya ca.*

⁰⁸⁰ **Commentary on the Jātaka:**

(a) *Gunasaṃpannenāpi yena attano jīvitaṃ buddhānaṃ pariccattaṃ hoti, tassa iminā adhikārena adhikārasaṃpannasseva samijjhati, na itarassa. Adhikārasaṃpannasāpi yassa buddhakāradhammānaṃ atthāya mahanto chando ca ussāho ca vāyāmo ca pariyēṭṭhi ca, tasseva samijjhati, na itarassa.*

(b) *Tatridaṃ chandamahantāya opammaṃ*

1. *Sace hi evamassa yo sakalacakkavāḷagabbhaṃ ekodakibhūtaṃ attano bāhubalena uttaritvā pāraṃ gantuṃ samattho so buddhattaṃ pāpuṇāti.*
2. *Yo vā pana sakalacakkavāḷagabbhaṃ veḷuḡhumbasanchannaṃ vyūhetvā nadditvā padasā gacchanto pāraṃ gantuṃ samattho so buddhattaṃ pāpuṇāti.*
3. *Yo vā pana sakalacakkavāḷagabbhaṃ sattiyā akotetvā nirantaraṃ sattiphalaramākīṇṇaṃ padasā akkamamāno pāraṃ gantuṃ samattho so buddhattaṃ pāpuṇāti.*
4. *Yo vā pana sakalacakkavāḷagabbhaṃ vitacci taṅgarabharītaṃ pādeti maddamāno pāraṃ gantuṃ samattho so buddhattaṃ pāpuṇāti.*

Yo etesu ekasmiṃpi attano dukkaraṃ na maññati. Ahaṃ etampi taritvāvā gantvāvā pāraṃ gamissāmīti evaṃ mahantena chandena ca ussāhena ca vāyāmena ca pariyēṭṭhiyā ca samannāgato hoti. Tassa patthanā samijjhati na itarassa.

⁰⁸¹ **An old adage:**

Yaṃ vā taṃvā paramparā codako pana codeti so hi sabbaṃ na passati.

⁰⁸² **Kathāvattu, Anuṭikā:**

Mahābhinihārato paṭṭhāya hi mahāsattā niyatāti vuccanti. Yathāha “Evaṃ sabbaṅgasampannā, bodhiyā niyatā narā”ti, “Dhvaṃ buddho bhavissati”ti ca.

⁰⁸³ **Sotattaki, etc.:**

Evampi bodhisattānaṃ sambhārampi kataṃ bahum.

Aladdhaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ yāva niyataṃ nabhavissati.

Devadatto yathā aāe sambhārāpi yathā bahu.

Pacehā akusalussannā parihāyanti bodhiya.

N.B.: In the third line ‘Yathā bahu’ has sometimes appeared as ‘Katā bahu.’

⁰⁸⁴ **Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā; Silakkhandhavagga-ṭikā:**

- (a) *Tesu yo ugghaṭitaññū so sammāsambuddhassa sammukhā catuppadikaṃ gāthaṃ suṇanto gāthāya tatiyapade aparīyosite eve chahi abhiññāhi saha paṭisambhidāhi arahattaṃ adhigantuṃ samatthūpanissayo hoti. Sace sāvakabodhiyaṃ adhimutto siyā.*
- (b) *Dutiyo bhagavato sammukhā catuppadikaṃ gāthaṃ suṇanto aparīyosite eva gāthāya catutthapade chahi abhiññāhi arahattaṃ adhigantuṃ samatthūpanissayo hoti. Yāde sāvakabodhiyaṃ adhimutto siyā..*
- (c) *Itaro pana bhagavato sammukhā catuppadikaṃ gāthaṃ sutvā pariyoṣitāya gāthāya chahi abhiññāhi arahattaṃ pattuṃ samatthūpanissayo hoti. Atha sāvakabodhiyaṃ adhinutto siyā.*

⁰⁸⁵ **Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā:**

“Cātuppadikaṃ gāthaṃ sutvā tassā atthaṃ vibhajitvā pariyoṣite ...”

⁰⁸⁶ **As per the unspecified textual reference:**

Kim me aññātasasena dhammaṃ sacchikate nidha.

As per the Commentaries:

Sacāhaṃ iccheyyaṃ sabbakilese jhāpetvā samphanavako hutvā rammanagaraṃ paviseyyaṃ ahaṃ aññātavasena pana kilese jhāpatvā nibbānapattiyā kiccaṃ natthi.

087 Commentary on the Mora Jātaka:

Paccekabuddhato ti sabbaññubodhisattānaññeva upāyapariggāhe ñāṇaṃ mahantataraṃ hoti.

088 Subcommentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta:

Tattha “Aññātaveseṇā”ti sadevakaṃ lokaṃ unnādentō buddhō ahutvā kevalaṃ buddhānaṃ sāvaka bhāvūpagamanavasena aññātarūpena.

089 Kiṃ me ekena tiṭṭena purisena thāmadassinā sabbaññutaṃ pāpunivā saṃtāressaṃ sadevakaṃ.

090 Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā:

Tatrāyaṃ mahāpurisassa upanissayasampadā. Ekantenevassayathā ajjhāsayo sambodhininno hoti sambodhi poṇo sambodhi pabbhāro tathāsattānaṃ hitacariyā. Yātocānena purimabuddhānaṃ santike sammāsambodhiyā pañidhānaṃ kataṃ hoti manasā vācāya ca.

Ahampi ediso sammāsambuddhō hutvā samma deva sattānaṃ hitasukhaṃ nipphādeyyanti.

Re: The three classes of Perfection (Pārami):

Cittapañidhito yāva vacipañidhi tāva pavattā sambhārāpāramiyo. Vacipañidhito yāva kāyapañidhi tāva pavattā upapāramiyo. āyapañidhito pabhuti paramatthapāramiyo ti apare.

N.B: The Silakkhandha-tikā also states likewise.

091 Apadāna:

Ahampi pubbabuddhesu sambodhimabhipatthayiṃ.

Manasā yeva hutvāna dhammarājā asaṅkhayā.

092 Maṇisāramañjūsā:

Yaṃ yaṃ bhagavātā tiṃṇo tāreyyanti ādinā mano vaci kāya pañidhānavasena icchitaṃ attahitaṃ perahitaṃ vā. Tassa pañidhānānurūpameva nipphādana.

093 Concluding remarks in the Sotattaki:

Imanca pakaraṇaṃ nāma dhammarājena desitaṃ sotattakitīnāmanti veditabbaṃ hi viññunā.

On authorship:

Garuhi dinnāmena Buddhaghosati vissuto kato therena tenāyaṃ nidāna buddhagocaro.

094 Imesaṃ sattānaṃ maraṇaṃnāma ekantikaṃ meyā ekaṃ pabbajjaṃ upagantvā mokkhamaggo gavesitabbo.

095 Commentaries: Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā 2

Saradatāpaso pana “Aho vatāhampi ayaṃ nisabhatthero viya anāgate ekassa buddhassa aggasāvako bhaveyyan”ti satthu desanākāle uppannaparivaitakattāya aññāvihito hutvā maggaphalāni paṭivijjhitaṃ nāsakkhi.

096 Apadāna on Moggallāna Thera:

*Anomadassi bhagavā lokajēṭṭho narāsabho,
vihāsi himavantamhi devasaṅghapurakkhato
varuṇo nāma nāmena nāgarājā ahaṃ tadā.
Kāmarupi vikubbāmi mahodadhi nivāsahaṃ.*

097 Apadāna on Subhūti Thera:

*Kosiyo nāma nāmena jaṭilo uggaṭāpaso
Ekiyeva adutiyo vasami nisabhe tadā.*

⁰⁹⁸ **On the Ten Perfection, (Pārami);**

Dasa kho sārīputta buddhakārakā dhammā. Katame dasa dānaṃ kho sārīputta buddhakārako dhammo silaṃ nekkhamaṃ paññā viriyaṃ khanti saccam adhiṭṭhānaṃ mettā upekkhā buddhakārako dhammo. Ime kho dasa sārīputta buddhakārako dhammā.

⁰⁹⁹ **Commentary on the Theragāthā:**

(a) *Imesampi hi yathā mahābodhisattānaṃ dānādīpāramīhi paribyuḥitā paññāpāramī anukkamena gabbhaṃ gaṇhanti paripākaṃ gacchanti buddhañānaṃ paripūreti.*

(b) *Dānaparicayena hete tatthatattha bhve alobhajjhāsayatāya sabbattha asaṅga mānasā anapekkhacitta hutvā silapariccayana saṃvutakāyavācātāya parisuddhakāyavacikammantā parisuddhājīvo indriyesu guttadvārā bhōjanemattaññuno hutvā jāgariyanuyogena samāpadahanti svāyaṃ tesam jāgariyānuyogo gatapaccāgatikavatta vasena dipetabbo.*

(c) *Evaṃ pana paṭipajantānaṃ adhikārasampattiyā appakasireneva aṭṭhasamāpattiyō pañcābhiññā chalabhiññā adhiṭṭhānabhūtā pubbhāga vipassanā ca hatthagatāyeva honti. Viriyādayopana tadantogadhāeva.*

(d) *Yañhiy paccekabuddhiyā sāvakabodhiyā vā atthāya dānādīpuññasambharaṇe abhussahanaṃ. Idaṃ viriyaṃ yaṃ tadanuparodhassa sahanaṃ ayaṃ khanti. Yaṃ dāna sīlādisamādānāvīsaṃvādanaṃ idaṃ saccam. Sabbatthakameva acalāsamādānādhiṭṭhānaṃ idaṃ adhiṭṭhānaṃ. Yā dānasīlādīnaṃ pattiṭṭhānabhūtesu sattesu hitesita ayaṃ mettā. Yaṃ sattānaṃ katavikāresu ajjhāpekkhanaṃ ayaṃ upekkhāti evaṃ dāna sila bhāvanāsu sila samādhi paññāsu ca sījhamānāsu viriyādayo siddhāeva honti.*

¹⁰⁰ **Cariyāpīṭaka Aṭṭhakathā and Silakkhandha-ṭīkā:**

Lajjāsatinānāpassayānaṃ lokuttaradhammadhipatīnaṃ sila samādhi paññā garukānaṃ tārita tarita tārayitūnaṃ anubuddha paccekabuddha sammāsambuddhānaṃ pāramī upapāramī paramatthapāramī hi bodhittayappattito yathā vuttavibhāgoti kcci.

¹⁰¹ **Ibid:**

Aññe pana parapuññanumodana vasena pavattā sambhārā pāramīyo paresaṃ kārāpana vasena pavattā upapāramīyo sayāṃ karaṇavasena pavattā paramattha pāramīyoti vadanti.

¹⁰² **Ekevāda:**

Tāthā bhavasukhāvaho puññāññānasambhāro pāramī. Attano nibbānasukhāvaho upapāramī. Paresaṃ tadubhayasukhāvaho paramatthapāramīti eke.

¹⁰³ **Cariyāpīṭaka Aṭṭhakathā and Silakkhandha-ṭīkā:**

Puttadaradhanādi upakaraṇa pariccāgo pana dāna pāramī. Attano āṅgapariccāgo dānaupapāramī. Attano jīvitapariccāgo dānaparamatthapāramī ti.

¹⁰⁴ **Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā:**

Dānapāramīyaṃ tāva āṅgapariccāgo dānapāramī nāma. Bāhirabhaṇḍapariccāgo dānaupapāramī nāma. Jīvitapariccāgo dānaparamatthapāramī nāma. Eevaṃ nayo sesapāramīsupī.

¹⁰⁵ **Answer as per Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā:**

(a) *Imañhiy pubbenivōsaṃ cha janā anussaranti titthiyā pakatisāvākā mahāsāvākā aggasāvākā paccekabuddhā buddhāti.*

(b) *Tattha titthiyā cattālisamīyeva kappe anussaranti na tato paraṃ. Kasmā dubbala puññattā. Tesañhiy nāmarūpapariccheda virahitattā dubbalapaññoti.*

(c) *Pakatisāvākā kappasatampi kappasahassampi anussaranti yeva balavapaññattā. Asīti mahāsāvākā satasahassakappe anussaranti. Dve aggasāvākā ekaṃ asañcheyyaṃ satasahassañca.*

(d) *Paccekabuddhā dveasancheyyāni satasahassañca. Ettakohi etesaṃ abhinīharo. Buddhānaṃ pana paricchedonāma natthi.*

106 Commentaries on the Suttas:

Tesu pana mandapaññātithiyā anekajāti saḥassamattaṃ anussaranti. Majjhimaññā dasa saṃvaṭṭakappāni. Jikkhapaññā cattālisamyeva kappe anussaranti. Natato paraṃ.

107 Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

Ayampi purimabuddhesu katādhikāro. Tatthatatthabhava puññāni upacinanto kassapa dasabalassakāle.

108 Samantapasadika Aṭṭhakathā and Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā:

Bhagavā pana tiricchānagatānampi anusāsanippadānena satthāyeva tepi hi bhagavato dhammassavanena upanissaya sampattiṃ patvā tāya eva upanissaya sampattiyā dutiye tatiye evā attabhāve maggaphalabhāgino honti. Maṇḍūkadevaputtādayo hi ceththanidassanaṃ.

109 Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā on the Cūlasaccaka Sutta:

Atha bhagavā yasmā licchavihi saccakassa dinnam, na bhagavato. Saccakena pana bhagavato dinnam, tasmā tamattham dīpento yaṃ kho, aggivessanātiādīmāha. Iti bhagavā nigaṇṭhassa matena vināyeva attano dinnam dakkhiṇam nigaṇṭhassa niyyātesī, sā cassa anāgate vāsanaṃ bhavissatīti.

110 Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā on the Mahāsaccaka Sutta:

- (a) *Bhagavatā imassa nigaṇṭhassa dve suttāni kathitāni. Purimasuttaṃ eko bhāṇavāro, idaṃ diyadḍho, iti adḍhatiye bhāṇavāre sutvāpi yaṃ nigaṇṭho neva abhisamayaṃ patto, na pabbajito, na saraṇesu patiṭṭhito. Kasmā etassa bhagavā dhammam desesī? Anāgate vāsanatthāya.*
- (b) *Passati hi bhagavā, ‘imassa idāni upanissayo natthi, mayham pana parinibbānato samadhikānam dvinnam vassasatānam accayena tambapaṇṇidīpe sāsanaṃ patiṭṭhahissati. Tatrayam kulaghare nibbattivā sampatte kāle pabbajitvā tīṇi piṭakāni uggahetvā vipassanaṃ vadḍhetvā saha paṭisambhidāhi arahattaṃ patvā kālabuddharakkhito nāma mahākhiṇāsavo bhavissatī’ti. Idaṃ disvā anāgate vāsanatthāya dhammam desesi.*

111 Milindapañha:

Na mahārāja dhutangunesu pubbāsevanam vinā ekissāyeva jātiyā arahatta sacchikiriyā hoti.

112 Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta Tikā:

Pacceka bodhiyā upanissayasampadā kappānam dve asaṅcheyyāni satasahassaṅca tajjāpuññañāsamabhāra sambharanam. Sāvakabodhiyā aggasāvakānam ekaṃ asaṅcheyyam kappasatasahassaṅca mahāsāvakānam kappasatasahassaṅca. Itaresaṃ atitasu jātisu vivaṭṭasannissayavasena nibbattitaṃ nibbedhabhāgiyam kusalaṃ.

113 Tikā:

Upanissaya sampattanti tihetuka paṭisandhiādikaṃ maggaphalādhigamanassa balavakāraṇam.

114 Vimativinodami Tikā:

Sare nimittaṃ aggaḥesīti pubbabuddhuppādesu saddhammassavanaparicayena dhammo eso vuccatīti sereākāraṃ gaṇhi. Pubbābhīyogavaseneva hi idisānaṃ tiricehānānaṃ dhammassavanādisu pasādo uppajjati vaggulitādinam viya.

115 Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakatha on the Maṇḍūkadevaputta:

Tasmiṃ khaṇe eko maṇḍūko pokkharāṇiyo āgantvā dhammo eso vuccatīti dhammasaññāya sarenimittaṃ gaṇhanto parisapariyanle nippajji.

116 Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā and Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā:

Ayampi purimabuddhesu katādhikāro tatthatatthabhava puññāni upacinanto kassapadasabalakāle kulaghare nibbatta.

117 Mahāpadāna Sutta, Dighanikāya:

*Kicchena me adhigataṃ, halaṃ dāni pakāsituṃ;
Rāga dosaparetehi, nāyaṃ dhammo susambudho.*

118 Commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta:

*Ayañca dhammo pathavīsandhāraka udakkhandho viya gambhīro. Pabbatena paṭicchādetvā
ṭhapito sāsapo viya duddaso. Satadhābinnassa vālassa koṭiyā koṭiṃ paṭipādanaṃ viya duranubodho.
Nanu mayā hi imaṃ dhammaṃ paṭivijjhituṃ vāyamantena adinna danaṃ nāma natthi. Arakkhitaṃ
sīlam nāma natthi. Aparipūrītā kāci pārami nāma natthi. Tassa me nirussāhaṃ viya mārabalaṃ
vidha mantassāpi pathavi na kampittha. Pathamayāme pubbanivasam anussaarantassāpi na
kampittha, majjhimayāme dibbacakkuṃ visodhentassāpi na kampittha, pacchimayāme pana
paṭiccasamuppādaṃ paṭivijjhantasseva me dasasahassi lokadhātu kampittha.*

119 *Iti mādisenāpi tikkhañāṇena kicchenevāyaṃ dhammo paṭividdho taṃ lokiya mahājanā kathaṃ
paṭivijjhissanti”ti dhamma gambhīratā paccavekkhañānubhāvenāpi evaṃ cittaṃ namiti vedītabbaṃ.*

120 Answer per Commentary:

*Tatīyakoṭṭhāse paccuṭṭhāya nisiditvā purima buddhānaṃ santike dānasilādivasena katādhikāra
puggala dassanattaṃ buddha cakkhunā lokaṃ voloketi.*

121 Commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta:

*Bhāvissanti purimabuddhesu dasa puññakiriya vatthu vasena katādhikārā paripākagata padumāni viya
suriyasmisamphassaṃ dhammadesanaṃ yeva ākañkhamānā catuppādika gāthā vasāne ariyabhūmiṃ
okkamanārahā na eko, na dve, anekasatasahassā dhammassa aññātāro bhāvissanti dassehi*

c.f. Uruvela Sutta and Sāratthadīpani-ṭīkā.

122 Jinālañkāra-ṭīkā:

Katasubhajanatanti pubbabuddhānaṃ santike katapuññajanasamoḥaṃ.

123 Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakatha:

*Buddha paccekabuddha sammukhato cātuppādika gāthaṃ sutvā buddhānaṃ buddhasāvakanāṃ
vā sammukhā sutāya cātuppādikāyapi gāthāya pariyoṣāne arahattaṃ pāpeti.*

124 Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

*Yesañhi purimesu sammāsambuddhesu paccekabuddha buddhasāvakesu pi puññakiriye vasena
pavattitaṃ sāvaka pāramita sañkhātaṃ atthi apadānaṃ, te sāpadāna.*

125 Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

*Yesañhi purimesu sammāsambuddhesu paccekabuddhesu sāvaka buddhesu vā puññakiriya vasena
katādhikāratāsañkhātaṃ atthi apadānaṃ, tā sāpadānā.*

126 Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakatha:

*Paccekabuddhā sayameva bujjhanti, na pare bodhenti. Attharasameva paṭivijjhanti, na
dhammarasaṃ. Na hi te lokuttaradhammaṃ paññattaṃ āropetvā desetum sakkonti. Mūgena
diṭṭhasupino viya vanacarakena nagare sāyitabyañjanaraso viya ca nesaṃ dhammābhisamayo hoti.*

127 Commentaries:

*Api purimabuddhesu katādhikāro tattha tattha bhāve puññāni upacīnanto kassapadasabalassa kāle
kulaghare nibbatto.*

128 *Kesaṃ hi visayo esa paṭiṭṭhaṃ ke labhissare vinā kammamāddāna ñāṇasāmimahasinā.*

129 Peṭakopadesa:

Duve hetu duve paccayā sāvakassa sammādiṭṭhiyā uppādāya. Paratoca ghoso saccānusandhi

ajjhatañca yonisomanisikāro. cf. Verañjaka Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa:

130 Commentary on the Verañjaka Sutta, Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā:

- (a) *Sammādiṭṭhiyā uppādāyāti vipassanāsammādiṭṭhiyā ca maggasammā diṭṭhiyā ca. Paratoghoso ti sappāyadhammassavanaṃ yoniso manasikāroti attano upāya manasikāro, tatha sāvakesu dhammasenāpatino pi dve paccaṃ laddhuṃ vaṭṭantiyeva.*
- (b) *Thero hi kappasatasahassādhikaṃ ekaṃ asaṅkheyyaṃ pāramiyo pūretvāpi attano dhammatāya aṇumattampi kilesaṃ pajahituṃ nāsakkhi. “Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā”ti assajjitharato imaṃ gāthaṃ sutvāvassa paṭivedho jāto. Paccekabuddhānaṃ pana sabbaññubuddhānañca paratoghosa kammaṃ natthi, yonisomanasikārasmiṃ yeva ṭhatvā paccekabodhiñca sabbaññutaññānañca nibbattenti.*

131 Apādāna:

Ito dutiyake kappe ... devilonāma sambuddhā agiñchi purato mama.

132 *Anantare ito kappe rājā huvara dassano sattaratanasampanno sakkavatti mahapphala.*

133 Commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta of the Dighanikāya:

Yasmā capana yasmiṃ kappe buddhā uppajjanti tasmīṃ yeva cakkavattino uppajjanti buddhā ca kadāci karahaci uppajjanti, tasmā dullabhadassanaṭṭhenāpi ratanaṃ.

134 Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā:

Duvidho kappo suññakappo asuññakappo cāti. Tatha suññakappe buddhapaccekabuddhā ca cakkavattino ca na uppajjanti. Tasmā guṇavantapuggala suññattā suññakappoti vuccati.

135 Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā:

Paccekabuddhā buddhe apatvā buddhānaṃ uppajjana kūleyeva uppajjanti.

136 Sotattaki:

- (a) *Suññā asuññā dvividhā asaṅkheyyā pakāsītā. Asuññā ca asaṅkheyyā buddhuppādehi maṇḍitā.*
- (b) *Buddhā paccekabuddhāca sāvakā cakkavattino suññasmiṃ asaṅkheyye nuppajjanti mahiddhikā.*

137 Sāratthasaṅgaha:

Paccekabuddhā buddhe apatvā buddhānaṃ uppajjanakāleyeva uppajjantiti idaṃ vassasatasahassato heṭṭhimaṃ vassasatato uparimaṃ buddhānaṃ uppajjitabbakālaṃ.

Kālam:

Sandhāya vuttaṃ. Kasmā upālittherāpadanādīsu ito dutiyakappepi paccekabuddhānaṃ uppapattipaññāyanato.

138 Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā:

Sabbabuddhā saṃvaṭṭamāne kappe na uppajjanti. Vovaṭṭamāne kappe uppajjanti. Paccekabuddhā buddhānaṃ antarā uppajjanakāle yeva uppajjanti.

139 Mahāpadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā:

Yasmiṃ kappe buddhā uppajjanti tasmīṃyeva cakkavattino uppajjanti.

140 *“Saṅghaṃ samaggaṃ bhetoṇa kappam nirayamhi paccati. Saṅghaṃ samaggaṃ katvāna kappam saggamhi medati.”*

141 Subcommentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta:

Sattānaṃ pāpajigucchanena vigatakāḷako puññapasutatāya maṇḍabhūto yādiso kālo buddhuppādāraho. Tādīso eva cakkavattinasampi sambhavoti āha yasmā panātiādīṃ. Upamānavasena cetam vuttaṃ. Upamāno pameyyānañca na accantameva sadisatā. Tasmā yathā buddhā kadāci karahaci uppajjanti. Na kathā cakkavattino. Evaṃ santepe cakkavattivatpūraṇassapi dukkarabhāvato dullabhupādāyevāti imina dullabhuppādālā sāmaññena tesam dullabhadassanatā vuttāti veditabbaṃ.

142 Āṅuttara Aṭṭhakathā, Sāratthadīpani-ṭīkā:

Asaṅkhyeyyepi kappe buddhesu anuppajjentesu ekasattopi parinibbātuṃ na sakkoti. Tādāpi tucchā nibbānadhātūti na sakkā vattuṃ.

143 Re: Q.14:**Eight factors required for firm prediction as a future Buddha:**

(a) *Manussattaṃ liṅgasampatti hetu sathhāradassanaṃ pabbajjā gunasampatti adhikāro ca chandatā. Aṭṭhadhamma samodhanā abhinihāro samijjhāti.*

Five factors required for firm prediction as a future Paccekabuddha:

(b) *Manussattaṃ liṅgasampatti vīgatāsavadassanaṃ adhikāroca chandatā ete abhinihārakāraṇā.*

Two factors required for firm prediction as a future Arahant Disciple (Sāvaka):

(c) *Adhikāro ca chandatā.*

144 Suttanīpāta Aṭṭhakathā:

“Abhinihāro”ti mūla padānassettaṃ adhiṅgamaṃ.

145 Cariyāpiṭaka: Aṭṭhakathā:

Evaṃ aṭṭhaṅgasamānāgato paṇāyamaṃ abhinihāro atthato tesaṃ aṭṭhannaṃ aṅgānaṃ samodhānavasappavatto cittuppādoti veditaḅbo.

146 Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā:

“Abhinihāro”ti abhinihāro nāma buddhabhāvatthaṃ mānasaṃ banditvā vyākaraṇaṃ aladdhā na utṭhahissāmi ti vīriyaṃ adhiṭṭhaya nippajjanaṃ.

147 Paṭisambhidāmagga, Gaṇṭhi:

Abhiniharoti mūlapanīdhi paribhāvita puññupayoca.

148 Suttanīpāta Aṭṭhakathā:

Vīgatāsavadassananti buddha paccekabuddha buddhasāvakaṇaṃ yassa kassaci dassananti attho.

149 Pāṭha Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā:

Hetusampannassāpi jīvamānaka buddhasseva santike patthentassa patthanā samijjhāti, parinibbhute buddhe cetiyasantike vā bodhimūle vā patthentassa na samijjhāti.

150 Cariyāpiṭaka: Aṭṭhakathā:

Sathhāradassananti sathhusammukhibhāvo. Dharamānakabuddhasseva hi santike patthentassa patthanā samijjhāti, parinibbute pana bhagavati cetiyassa santike vā bodhimūle vā paṭimāya vā paccekabuddhabuddhasāvakaṇaṃ vā santike patthanā na samijjhāti. Kasmā? Adhikāraṇaṃ balavabhāvābhāvato. Buddhānaṃ eva pana santike patthanā samijjhāti, ajjhāsayassa ulārabhāvena tadadhikāraṇaṃ balavabhāvāpattito.

151 Buddhavaṃsa Aṭṭhakathā:

Bhābbābhābbake ṇatvā kammaṃvīpākāparicchedaṇṇena paricchinditvā vyākātuṃ asamattattā.

152 Suttanīpāta Aṭṭhakathā and Apadāna Aṭṭhakathā:

Tattha vīgatāsavadassananti buddhapaccekabuddhabuddhasāvakaṇaṃ yassa kassaci dassananti attho.

153 Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

Tathāpi dve aggasāvakaṃ mahāsāvakesu antogathā. Tehi sāvaka pāramiṇāṇassa matthaka pattiyaṃ sāvakesu aggadhammādhigamena aggaṭṭhane ṭhitāpi abhinihāramahantatā sāmāññaṇa mahāsāvakātipi vuccanti.

154 Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

Itare pana pakatisāvakehi sātisaya mahābhinihārā. Tathā hi te padumuttarassa bhagavato kāle

katapaṇḍhānā. Tato eva sātisayaṃ abhiññāsamāpattisu vasino pabhinnapaṭisambhidā ca. Kāmaṃ sabbepi arahanto silavisuddhiādike sampādetvā catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu paṭiṭṭhitaccittā satta bojjhaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvetvā maggaṭṭhāpāṭiyā anavaśesato kilese khetvā aggaphale paṭiṭṭhahanti, tathāpi yathā saddhāvimuttato diṭṭhippattassa, paññāvimuttato ca ubhatobhāgavimuttassa pubbabhāga bhāvanāvīseso addhā icchito vīseso, evaṃ abhinīhāramahantatāpubbayogamahantatāhi attasantāne sātisayaḡuṇavīsesassa nipphādītattā silādiguṇehi mahantā sāvakāti mahāsāvakā.

155 Buddhavaṃsa:

*Yadimassa lokanāthassa virijjhissāma sāsanaṃ.
Anāgatamhi addhāne hessāma sammukhā imam.
Yathā manussā nadiṃ tarantā paṭititthaṃ virajjhiya.
Heṭṭhā titthaṃ gahevāna uttaranti mahānadim.
Evameva mayaṃ sabbe yade muñcāmi maṃ jinam.
Anāgatāmhī addhāṇe hessāma sammukhā imam.*

156 Pāṭha Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Jātattaki Nidāna:

Mahājano dipaṅkaradasabalassa vacamaṃ sutvā sumedhatāpaso kira buddhabijaṃ buddhaṅkuroti haṭṭhatuṭṭho ahoṣi. Yathānāma puriso nadiṃ taranto ujukena titthena uttarituṃ asakkonti heṭṭhā titthena uttarati. Evameva mayaṃ dipaṅkaradasabalassa sāsane maggaphalaṃ alabhamānā anāgate yadā tvaṃ buddho bhavissasi. Tadā tava sammukhā maggaphalaṃ sacchikātvaṃ samatthā bhaveyyāmāti patthanaṃ patthayimsu.

157 Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā:

Evaṃ vivatta udissa uppaditakusalacittaṃ satāshassadhika catu asaṅkhyijjya kālantrepi vimokkhadhiḡamaṣṣa upanissayo na hotiti na sakkā vatthvaṃ.

158 Mahāpadāna Sutta Ṭīkā:

Yasmā ca buddhānaṃ desanā nāma desanāya bhājanabhūtānaṃ puḡgalānaṃ ñāṇabalānurūpā. Na attano ñāṇabalānurūpā. Tasmā tattha aggasāvakānaṃ mahāsāvakānaṃ tādisānaṅca devabrahmānaṃ vasena desanā vitthārītā. Idapana pakatisāvakānaṃ tādisānaṅca devatānaṃ pubbenivasaṃ kathento sattānnameva buddhānaṃ pubbenivāsaṃ katheti.

159 Commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta, Mahā Vagga:

Bhagavā kira tesam iddhimaya pattha cīvarassupanissayaṃ olokanto anekāsu jātisu cīvaradānādīni disvā etha bhikkhavoti ādimāha.

160 Subcommentary on the above:

Cīvarā dīni ticīvarādi aṭṭhaparikkhārādānaṃ sandhāyāha. Yo hi cīvarādike aṭṭhaparikkhāre patthacīvarameva vā sotāpannādiariyassa upthujjanasseva vā silasampannaṣṣa datvā idaṃ parikkhārādānaṃ anāgate ehibhikkhubhāvaya paccayo hotūti patthanaṃ patthapesi. Tassa ca sati adhikārasampattiyaṃ buddhanaṃ sammukhibhāve iddhimayaparikkhāra lābhāya samvattatiti veditabbaṃ.

161 Āyatana Yamaka, Mūlaṭīkā:

Na hi tāsam sabbāsam tasmim bhave pavatte purisindriyaṃ na uppajjissati līḡaparivattana-sambhāvā.

162 Indriya Yamaka:

Yā ca itthiyo eteneva bhāvena katicibhave dassetvā parinibbāyissanti tāsam upapajjantīnam. Tāsam itthindriyaṃ uppajjissati. No ca tāsam purisindriyaṃ uppajjissati.

163 Mūla-ṭikā referred to above:

Bhavantare tassa tassa āyatanasantānassa yo ādi uppādo paṭisandhiyaṃ pavatteca bhavissati. So anāgatuppādo tabbhāve na vuccati. Addhā paccuppannānantogadhattā.

164 Aṅguttaranikāya Ekanipāta Aṭṭhakathā:

Ariyasāvokoti atthi ariyo na sāvako. Seyyathāpi buddhā paccekabuddhā ca. Atthi sāvako na ca ariyo. Seyyathāpi gīhi anāgataphalo. Atthi neva ariyo na sāvako. Seyyathāpi puthū tittthiyā. Atthi ariyoceva sāvakoea. Seyyathāpi samaṇo sakyaputtiyo āgataphato viññātasāsano. Idha pana gīhivā hetu pabbajitovā. Yo koci sutavāti ettha vuttassa atthassa vasena sutasampanno. Ayaṃ ariyasāvokoti veditabbo.

165 Milindapañha:

Nagare mahārāja sāvattthiyā pañcakoṭimattā ariyasāvokā bhagavato upāsakaupāsikāyo sattapañṇāsadasahassāni-tīni ca sahasāni anāgāmiphale patiṭṭhitā. Te sabbe pi gīhi yeva. Na pabbajitā. Nagare rājajahe pañṇāsatasahasāni tīni ca satasahasāni ariyasāvokā bhagavato upāsakaupāsikāyo.

166 Subcommentary on the Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta, Silakkhandha-ṭikā:

Yasmā catuvisatiyā ṭhānesu asaṅcheyyā aprimeyyā devamanussā maggaphalāmatam piviṃsu. Koṭisatasahassa pamānenāpi bahūeva. Tasmā anuttarācarāsikkhāpana vasena bhagavā bahūnaṃ ācariyo.

167 Samantabuddhikā or Anāgatavaṃsa:

Catuvisati asaṅkhyeya sattacattālisa koṭisatasahasasāṅkhā paricchinne veneyya passi.

168 Sotattaki, Tathāgatuppatti:

*Catuvisati asaṅcheyyā, Saṭṭhiceva ca koṭiyo
Pāṇānisatasahasāni, eko buddho pamocati.*

169 Jinālaṅkāra:

Catuvisati asaṅcheyyappamāṇe satte mārābandanato mocetvā anupādā parinibbānapattā buddhāyeva gaṇana visesoti eke.

170 Cariyāpitaka Aṭṭhakathā:

Asaṅkhyeyyeti ettha saṅkhātuṃ na sakkoti asaṅkhyeyyā. Gaṇanaṃ atikkantāti attho. Asaṅkhyeyanti eko gaṇana visesoti eke.

171 Jinālaṅkāra-ṭikā:

Asaṅkhiyānanti gaṇanapathaṃ atitānaṃ ida saṅchāsaddho aparimeyye vattati.

172 Udāna Aṭṭhakathā:

Tassa bhagavato hi dhammasakkapavattana suttantaḍesanāya aṅṅātakoṇḍuṇṇāpamukhā aṭṭhārassa brahma koṭiyu dhammaṃ paṭivijjhimsu. Evaṃ yāva subhaddhāparibbājaka vinayanā dhammapaṭividdhasattānaṃ gaṇanā natthi. Mahāsamayasuttaṃ mangalasuttaṃ caḷarāhulovādasuttaṃ samacittasuttanti imesaṃ catunnaṃ suttānaṃ desanākāle abhisamayapatta sattānaṃ paricchedo natthi.

173 Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā:

Buddhakāle ca pana ekekasmim asaṅcheyyāpi sattā amataṃ āvādentī.

174 Sutta Nipāta Aṭṭhakathā, Khuddakapātha Aṭṭhakathā on the Maṅgala Sutta:

Evaṅca bhagavatā niṭṭhāpitāya desanāya pariyosāne koṭisatasahasadevatāyo arahattaṃ pāpuṇimsu, sotāpatti sakadāgāmi anāgāmiphala sampattānaṃ gaṇanā asaṅkhyeyyā ahoṣi.

¹⁷⁵ **Mahapadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā:**

- (a) *Yatheva hi tāni catubbidhāni pupphāni evameva ugghaṭitaññū vipaṅcitaññū neyyo padaparamoti cattāro puggalā.*
- (b) *Tattha yassa uppgalassa saha udahaṭavelāya dhammāghisamayo hoti. Ayaṃ vuccati puggalo ugghaṭitaññū*
- (c) *Yassa puggalassa saṃkittena bhāsitasā vitthārena atthe vibhājīyamāne dhammābhisamayo hoti. Ayaṃ vuccati puggalo vipaṅcitaññū*
- (d) *Yassa puggalassa uddesato paripucchato yonisomanasikaroto kalyāṇamitte sevato bhajato payirupāsato anupubbena dhammābhisamayo hoti. Ayaṃ vuccati puggalo neyyo.*
- (e) *Yassa puggalassa bahumpi bhaṇantassa bahumpi suṇato bahumpi gaṇhato bahumpi dhārayato bahumpi vācayato na tāya jātiya dhammābhisamayo hoti. Ayaṃ vuccati puggalo padaparamo.*
- (f) *Tattha bhagavā uppalavanādi sadisaṃ dasasahasalokadhātum olokeno ajjapupphanakāni viya ugghaṭitaññū. Sve pupphanakāni viya vipaṅcitaññū. Tatiyadvase pupphakāniviya neyyo. Macchakacchapa bhakkhāni viya padaparamoti addasa.*
- (g) *Passanto ca ettakā apparajakkhā. Ettakā mahārajakkhā. Tatrāpi ettakā ugghaṭitaññūti evaṃ sabbā kārato addasa.*
- (h) *Tattha tiṇṇaṃ puggalānaṃ imasmiṃyeva attabhāve bhagavato chammadesanā atthaṃ sādheti. Padaparamaṃ anāgāte vāsanaṭṭhāya hoti. Atha bhagavā imesaṃ catunnaṃ puggalānaṃ atthāvahaṃ dhammadesanaṃ disvā desetukāmataṃ uppaditvā puna sabbesupi tīsu bhavesu sabbe satte bhabbā bhavvasena dve koṭṭhāse akāsi.*
- (i) *Tattha sabbepi abhabbapuggale pahāya bhabbapuggale eva ṇāṇena parigga hetvā ettakā rāgacaritā ettakā dosa moha vitakka saddhā buddhi caritāti cha koṭṭhāse akāsi. Evaṃ katvā dhammaṃ desesāmiti cintesi.*

¹⁷⁶ **Re: Questions 17-20: Mahapadāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā:**

Aññadā pana dīghāyukadevaloke nibbattā na yāvatāyukaṃ tiṭṭhanti. Kasmā tattha pāramiṇaṃ duppuraṇiyatthā. Te adhimuttikālaṃ kariyaṃ katvā manussāpathe yeva nibbattanti. Paramiṇaṃ pūrentā pana yathā idāni ekena attabhāvena sabbaññutaṃ upanetuṃ sakkon ti. Evaṃ sabbaso pūritatthā tadāpi vipassibodhisatto tattha yavatāyukaṃ aṭṭhāsi.

¹⁷⁷ **Cariyāpiṭaka: Aṭṭhakathā:**

- (a) *Yassaṃ hi jātiyaṃ mahābodhisattena mahāpaṇidhānaṃ nibbattanti. Tato paṭṭhāya yāva carimattabhāvā na sānāma jāti upalabbhati. Yā sabbena sabbāṃ bodhisambhāra tārahitā siyā antamaso dāmapāramimattaṃ upādāya. Ayaṃpi niyatipatitānaṃ bodhisattānaṃ dhammatā.*
- (b) *Yāva ca te kammādisu vasibhavaṃ na pāpuṇanti. Tāva sappadesampi sambhāresu payoga-māppajanti. Yādā pana sabbaso kammādisu vasibhāvopattā honti. Atha tato paṭṭhāya nippadesato eva bodhisambhāresu samīhanasāttaccakiriyā sampajjati. Sakkaccakaritā pana sabbakālaṃ hoti.*

¹⁷⁸ **Mahapadāna Sutta-ṭīkā:**

Yasmā purimabuddhānaṃ mahābodhisattānaṃ paccekabuddhānaṃca nibbattiyā sāvaka bodhisattānaṃ sāvaka bodhiyā abhinīhāro sāvaka pāramiyā sambharaṇaṃ paripācanaṃca buddhakkhattabhūte imasmiṃ cakkavāle jambudīpe eva ijjhati na aññattha. Vineyyānaṃ vinayattho ca buddhuppādoti aggasāvaka mahāsāvakaṃ vineyya visesā pekkhāya etasmim jambudīpe eva buddhā nibbattanti. Na sesadīpesu.

¹⁷⁹ **Mahāparinibbāna Sutta:**

Abhijānāmi kho panāhaṃ, ānanda, anekasataṃ khattiyapariyaṃ upasaṅkamitā. Tatrapi mayā sammisinnapubbaṃ ceva sallapitapubbaṃca sākacchā ca samāpajjitapubbā. Tattha yādisako tesāṃ vaṇṇo hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ vaṇṇo hoti. Yādisako tesāṃ saro hoti, tādisako mayhaṃ saro hoti.

Dhammiyā kathāya sandassemi samādapemi samuttejemi sampahaṃsemi. Bhāsamānañca maṃ na jānanti — ‘Ko nu kho ayaṃ bhāsati devo vā manusso vā’ti? Dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā antaradhāyāmi. Antarahitañca maṃ na jānanti – ‘Ko nu kho ayaṃ antarahito devo vā manusso vā’ti?

180 Anamataggasamyuttam Aṭṭhakathā:

Imamhā cakkavālā sattā paracakkavālaṃ, paracakkavālā ca imaṃ cakkavālaṃ saṃsaranti. Tesu imasmiṃ cakkavāle

181 Commentaries on the Dīgha, Majjhima, Aṅguttara, and Saṃyuttanikāya:

Manussaloke pi na aññasmiṃ cakkavāle imasmiṃ yeva cakkavāle uppajjati. Tatrāpi na sabbaṭṭhānesu. Inrathimāyadisāya jaṅgalaṃnāma nigamo ... (Pe) ... Orato majjhe. Evaṃ paricchinnena āyāmato tileaguesate vitthārato adḍhatileaguesate parikkhepato navayojana sate majjhimadeso uppajjati. Na kevalaṃca Tathāgato. Paccekabuddhā aggasaṅgāka asitimahātherā aññepi guṇavantaṃ uppajjanti. Buddhamāta buddhapitā cakkavattirājā aññeca sārappatā brahmāṇa gahapatikā ettheva uppajjanti.

182 Vinaya Mahāvagga (Vi.197):

Tatrimē paccantimā janapadā – puratthimāya disāya gajaṅgalaṃ [kajaṅgalaṃ (si. syā.)] nāma nigamo, tassa parena mahāsālā, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe; puratthimadakkhiṇāya disāya sallavati [salalavati (si.)] nāma nadi, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe; dakkhiṇāya disāya setakaṇṭhikaṃ nāma nigamo, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe; pacchimāya disāya thūṇaṃ nāma brāhmaṇaṅgāmo, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe; uttarāya disāya usiraddhajo nāma pabbato, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe.

183 Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā:

Api ca upādāya majjhimadeso labbhati. Sakalopi hi jambudīpo majjhimadeso nāma. Sesadīpā paceantimajanapadā. Tampadīpe anurādhapuraṃ majjhimadeso nāma. Seso paccantoti veditabbo.

184 Subcommentary on the above:

Upādāyā pi majjhimadeso babbhati. Yatha gati bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhunīnaṃ upasakānaṃ upāsikānaṃ aññesampi kammavādi kiriyavādi viññujātikānaṃ. So patirūpadesavāsoti vuccati. Tenāha sakalopiti ādiṃ.

185 Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā, Khuddakapāthā Aṭṭhakathā, on the Maṅgala Sutta:

Patirūpadesavāso nāma yattha catasso parisā vicaranti. Dānādini puññakiriyavattūnica vattanti. Navaṅgasatthusāsaṇaṃ dibbati.

186 Conclusion:

1. *Sāsane dāni yaneke, dhammavinaya kovidā.
Yassa pabhāvanibaddhā, subba te pāyaso janā.*
2. *Tesa maññatare nassa, gaṇṭhipada visodhino.
Pādamūlamhi therassa, nippacca dhammagāhinā.*
3. *Mayā Nāṇābhivaṃsena, takkatāyattha nissayaṃ.
Saṅkharontena yaṃ laddhaṃ, vipulaṃ tassa tejasā.*
4. *Dhammena rājāno bhūmiṃ, rakkhantu hitacetasā.
Appamattā janā hontu, sambhodhittayabhāgino ti.*

