

The Life of the Buddha

SUMEDHA, A YOUNG MILLIONAIRE, GIVING AWAY HIS PROPERTY IN CHARITY



The Future Buddha was once born as the son of a rich man and was known as "Sumedha" in the very existence in which he was to make a solemn wish that he should become the Enlightened Buddha. His parents died while he was still young, leaving him many treasure vaults of gold and silver. When he was sixteen years of age and had finished his education, the Lord of the Treasury made over to him all the property left by his parents. Sumedha the young millionaire thought to himself thus: "My parents and grand-parents knew only how to amass wealth but did not know to take it away beyond death. I shall now give away my property in alms so that the merit of the deeds may follow me after death." He made a public announcement: "Whoever cares to take away my property may open my treasuries and help himself to his heart's content." He then left for the Himalaya forests and became a hermit.

SUMEDHA AND SUMITTA RECEIVING A PROPHETIC DECLARATION



While traveling by air he saw the townsfolk of Ramma clearing the pathway they came down to the ground, and asked to be permitted to clear a portion of the track on which the Buddha Dipankara was to travel. He was given a portion of it, and before he had cleared it, the Buddha Dipankara came along that way with a retinue of arahants. Sumedha spread himself out upon the mud with his face downwards, his body serving as a bridge so that the Buddha and the disciples following Him could tread on him. At that moment a lady by the name of "Sumitta" arrived with eight bunches of lotus flowers. She handed over to the hermit five of those bunches to be offered to the Buddha. The Buddha, with mind's eye of Buddha, saw what was in store for these two persons in future, and made this prophetic declaration: "This hermit will become Gotama Buddha, and this lady will become his help-mate to help him fulfill the Perfections (Paramitas)".

THE HIGHER AND LOWER GODS BESEECHING THE FUTURE BUDDHA TO LEAVE TUSITA HEAVEN TO BE REBORN AS A MAN



The Future Buddha fulfilled the Ten perfections in his many existences over a period of four Incalculables (asankhyeyyas) and one hundred thousand worlds. In one life before the life when he became the Buddha, he was born as one of the chief gods and known as "Setaketu" in the celestial city of the Tusita gods. When the span of his life there as a god was fast approaching its end, the higher and approached the Future Buddha saying, "Sir, it was not to enjoy the glory and sensual pleasures of a god or of man that you fulfilled the ten Perfections; but it was to become a fully enlightened Buddha in order to save the world, that you fulfilled them. Sir, the time and fit season for your Buddhahood has now arrived. Be so good as to depart

form the world of gods and take conception in the womb of a human mother in the world of men". The Great Being assented to their wish.

THE DREAM OF MAHA-MAYA WHEN SHE CONCEIVED THE FUTURE BUDDHA



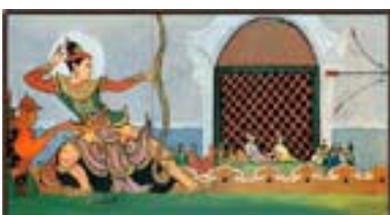
On the full moon day in the month of Wazo (July) Queen Maha-Maya rose early and dispensed huge sums of money in great charity. She then took the eight precepts and entered her elegantly furnished chamber of state. And lying down on the royal couch, she fell asleep and dreamed the following strange dream: The four guardian angels came and lifted her up, together with her couch, and took away to the Himalaya Mountains. There, in the Manosila table-land they laid her upon a huge slab of sulfurous rock under a very big sal tree. Then came the wives of these guardian angels, and conducted her to Anotatta Lake, and bathed her to remove every human stain. And after clothing her with divine garments they took her into a golden mansion which was inside a Silver Hill. There they laid her down upon a divine couch. Now the Future Buddha has become a superb white elephant and was wandering about at no great distance on the Golden Hill. Descending thence, he ascended the Silver Hill and went into the golden mansion. And splitting her on her right side, he entered her womb. Thus the conception took place.

BIRTH OF THE FUTURE BUDDHA IN THE LUMBINI GROVE



Queen Maha-Maya carried the Future Buddha in her womb for ten months; and on the full moon day in May (Vesak) she said to King Suddhodana- "I wish, O King, to go to Devadaha, the city of my family". The King approved and caused the road from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha to be made smooth and adorned, and sent her with a great retinue. Between the two cities there was a pleasure grove of sal trees, called Lumbini Grove. She entered the grove for a rest. And at this particular time, this grove was one mass of flowers presenting a very pretty scene. She went to the foot of a great sal tree and reached out her hand to seize hold of one of its branches. She was at once shaken with the pains of birth. Thereupon the people hung a curtain about her, and her delivery took place while she was standing up. At that moment came four Mahabrahmas (higher gods) with golden net; receiving the Future Buddha with it, they placed him before his mother and said, "Rejoice, O Queen! A mighty son has been born to thee".

WEDDING CEREMONY OF PRINCE SIDDHATTHA



When the Future Buddha was sixteen years of age, his father king Suddhodana sent official intimation to his relatives asking them to send their daughters to be married to his son. There arose the following discussion among his relatives, who were Rulers of their own states:-"Siddhattha is of handsome appearance but is not well trained in any manly art". They his relatives had said

about him, when the Prince agreed to show his proficiency as the best bowman of the day. Consequently the most distinguished bowmen of the city were assembled round him while he stood in the centre. He then said to them. "You must shoot your arrows at me all at the same time". When the signal to shoot was given, the four archers shot their arrows at him all at once. The Prince defended himself by shooting an arrow which flew like lightning and hit all the four arrows coming in his direction. He thus exhibited his skill, such as none other bowmen could equal. His father's relatives then sent their daughters, beautiful maidens, of whom the Prince chose Princess Yasodhara whom he married by celebrating a grand wedding.

JUST BEFORE HIS GREAT RENUNCIATION, THE FUTURE BUDDHA WENT TO THE CHAMBER OF PRINCESS YASODARA TO SEE HIS SON



When the Future Buddha was 29 years of age he went to the park and saw the Four Signs, namely, an old man, a dead man and a monk, whom the higher gods had fashioned. He was afraid to continue to live a worldly life and his mind turned ardently to retiring from the world. He said to himself, "It behooves me to go forth on the Great Renunciation this very day". At that very moment he received a message that a son had been born to him.

He then returned to the palace and lying on his couch, fell into a brief slumber. When he awoke he saw the female musicians sleeping round him in disgusting condition. The spectacle seemed like a cemetery, and filled with loathing for his worldly life, he made up his mind to renounce the world at once. He ordered his courtier Channa to saddle his horse Kanthaka. He then walked to the chamber of Yasodhara to look at his son for the first time.

MARA, THE EVIL ONE, PERSUADING THE FUTURE BUDDHA TO TURN BACK ON THE POINT OF HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE CITY



Coming away from Yasodhara's chamber, the Future Buddha descended from the palace and rode on by the mighty steed, Kanthaka, already saddled and bridled for the journey, with Channa holding on by the tail. He issued forth on the Great Renunciation and arrived at midnight at the gate of the city. At this moment came Mara, the Evil One, with the intention of persuading the Future Buddha to turn back; and standing in the

air, he said, "Sir, go not forth! On the seventh day from now the Wheel Treasure will appear to you. Sir, turn back!"

The Future Buddha replied as follows: "Mara, I know that the Wheel Treasure was on the point of appearing to me; but I do not wish for sovereignty. My sole desire is to become a Buddha and save the world of gods and men". He then departed from the city in great splendor surrounded by higher and lower deities on all sides, the divinity that guarded the city-gate having opened it for them.

THE FUTURE BUDDHA CUTTING HIS HAIR TO BECOME A MONK



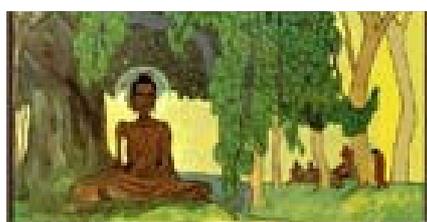
The Future Buddha who left the city at midnight on his Great Renunciation came to the bank of the Anoma (Illustrious) River at day –break. He gave the signal to his horse with his heel, and the horse sprang over the river, which had a breadth of eight *usabhas* (an *usabha* is 140 cubits 210 feet), and landed on the opposite bank. He handed over to Channa his ornaments and the horse, Kanthaka, and asked him to go back home with them. He then cut his hair with the sword on the sandy beach of the Anoma. Then the Future Buddha seized hold of his top- knot and threw it into the air, saying “If I am to become a Buddha, let it stay in the sky; but if not, let it fall to the ground”. And Sakka, the King of the gods, received it in a golden casket, and established it in the Heaven of the Thirty- three Gods as the Culamani Cet1 (Shrine of the Diadem). After that, the Future Buddha put on the robes, the symbol of asceticism, brought by the Maha- Brahma god, Ghatidara, and became an ascetic. His garments, made of Benares cloth, were taken away by Ghatikara, and established in the realm of the higher gods as the “Dussa Shrine”.

KING BIMBISARA OFFERING ALL HIS KINGLY GLORY



Now the Future Buddha, having thus retired from the world and become an ascetic for about 7 days, entered the city of Rajagaha and begged for food from house to house. By the beauty of the Future Buddha the whole city was thrown into a commotion as he was a distinct contrast to the usual type of ascetics of those days, who were old and shabby in appearance. The Future Buddha being then only 29 years of age and bearing all the signs of a Universal Monarch naturally became an object of admiration and wonder. Now the Great Being having collected some food for his sustenance went to the shade of Pandava rock and ate his meal. Thereupon, Bimbisara, the King, approached the Future Buddha, and being pleased with his princely deportment and appearance offered him all his kingly glory. “Great King”, replied the Future Buddha, “I do not seek for the gratification of my senses or my passions, but have retired from the world for the sake of the supreme and absolute enlightenment of a Buddha”. “Verily”, said the King, when his repeated offers had all been refused, “you are sure to become a Buddha; but when that happens your first journey will be my Kingdom”.

THE FUTURE BUDDHA MADE THE GREAT STRUGGLE AND HIS BODY BECAME EMACIATED



Having become a monk, the Future Buddha sought for teachers and found two renowned Brahmin teachers, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. He acquired from them the method of meditation leading only to practise it. And being desirous of attaining Enlightenment he continued his search and went to Uruvela grove. He entered Senan1 village and

begged for his food from house to house to house and ate his meal. He thought to himself that having to go on a begging round for food in itself was a hindrance to his ascetic practices and began to practise the Great Struggle. The Great Struggle is an austere practice which is beyond human endurance of an average person. He tried various plans such as, abstaining from rice meal and living on fruits which dropped from trees. Then on fruits which dropped from the tree under which he sat, then living on one fruit, one sesame seed or one grain of rice a day. By this lack of nourishment his body was reduced to skin and bones and lost its golden colour and became dry and black.

THE FUTURE BUDDHA RECEIVING THE MILK-PORRIDGE OFFERED BY SUJATA



There lived in the village of Senanl, near Uruvela forest, a girl named Sujata. She had uttered a prayer for fulfillment of her wish at a banyan tree, and vowed a yearly offering to it, if she should have a good marriage and a son as her first born child. The wish having been fulfilled, she used to make an offering every year at the banyan tree. Now the Great Being had resumed taking usual food, because he found that the austerities he practiced for full six years were not the way to enlightenment. On the full moon day of the month Visakha (April – May) the Future Buddha who had attained 35 years of age, was sitting under the banyan tree. Sujata caught sight of the Future Buddha and, supposing him to be the tree-god, her benefactor, who had come down, offered him milk –porridge in a golden bowl that was worth a hundred thousand pieces of money. He proceeded to the banks of the Neranjara and ate the food. He took the bowl to the riverbank and set it on the river saying “If today I shall be able to become a Buddha, let this bowl go up- stream”. It floated up-stream!

THE FUTURE BUDDHA BEING ATTACKED BY MARA, THE EVIL ONE, JUST BEFORE HE ATTAINED ENLIGHTENMENT



After eating the milk-porridge offered by Sujata, the Future Buddha took his noonday rest on the bank of the Neranjara, in the cool and pleasant shade of a grove of sal trees. And at nightfall he went towards the Bodhi tree. On the way he received from a grass-cutter named Sotthiya eightfuls of grass and sat down cross-legged on that grass. He made the mighty resolution: “I will not stir from this seat until I have attained the supreme and absolute wisdom”. Many higher and lower gods with Sakka came near the Future Buddha. The god Mara, the Evil One, saw the Future Buddha seated in that unconquerable position and knew that he was sure to become a Buddha. He went back to his celestial realm and brought his army drawn out for battle. He grasped a variety of weapons himself and sounded the war-cry, “Advance! Seize!” to frighten the Great Being. But the Future won a peaceful victory over Mara with the power of loving kindness, which he had practiced in his many past lives, just as a mother would tame a cruel and wicked son with her maternal love.

ATTAINMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT AS BUDDHA



Having vanquished the army of Mara, the Future Buddha sat cross-legged at the foot of the Bodhi tree with the firm resolution that he would not get up from his seat until he attained the supreme wisdom of a Buddha, and went into deep meditation. He acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of previous existences; in the middle watch of the night, the divine eye with which he could see the beings of all thirty-one planes of existence dying and being reborn; and in the last watch of the night, he gained the bliss of complete emancipation. Thus on Wednesday the full moon day of Visakha (April-May) 103 the Great Era at dawn, the Great Being attained the Supreme Enlightenment of a Buddha.

CAKES BEING OFFERED TO THE BUDDHA BY THE BROTHERS TAPUSSA AND BHALLIKA



Not long after his attainment of Supreme Buddhahood, the Blessed One sat cross-legged at the foot of the Rajayatana tree (*Buchanania latifolia*). At that time two brothers Tapussa and Bhallika, from a village Ukkala went for trade to (the middle Districts of) India where the Buddha was dwelling. A deity who was related the Supreme Buddhahood, and directed to the place where the Blessed One was then dwelling. The deity also instructed them to offer to the Buddha the cakes which they had brought with them. As directed by the deity, the two brothers approached the Buddha and offered the cakes which they had brought. They then addressed the Buddha with the words “We take our refuge, Lord, in the Blessed One and the Dhamma; may the Blessed One receive us as disciples, who from this day forth, while our life lasts, have taken their refuge in Him”. They then asked the Blessed One rubbed his head with his hand and gave to the two brothers whatever hairs came off and stuck to his hand.

THE BUDDHA PREACHING THE SERMON “THE WHEEL OF LAW” TO THE “BAND OF FIVE DISCIPLES”



Soon after the birth of the Future Buddha, eight Brahmin fortune-tellers, observed the marks and characteristics of the Future Buddha’s person. Five of these Brahmins interpreted that prince Siddhattha would unquestionably become a Buddha and with that belief, had already become ascetics. When Siddhattha retired from the world, they attended to his personal needs. Then seeing that the Future Buddha had given up extreme asceticism and gone back to the usual way of taking ordinary material food, they doubted if he would ever become a Buddha, and deserted him. Then they went and lived in the Deer Park at Isipatana near Benares. The Blessed One, having attained the Supreme Wisdom, began his life as the Great Teacher. He first thought of the person whom he should first aid with his teaching, and saw that these five ascetics had developed mature intellect. He therefore went to the Deer Park at Ksipatana near Benares, 18 yojanas (1 yojana = about 8miles) away from the Bodhi tree and preached his first sermon to this “Band of Five Disiples” before sunset on the full moon day of Wazo (June-July).

Kondanna was established in the first noble stage of the Aryan Path, along with eighteen crores of higher and lower gods.

BUDDHA SENDING OUT A MISSION OF SIXTY OF SIXTY ARAHANTS



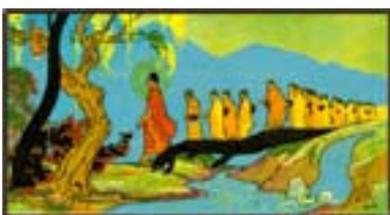
After the Buddha had kept his retreat at the Deer Park at Isipatana during the first rainy season, there were fully sixty Arahants besides the Blessed One. He called them and said. “Released am I, O Bhikkhus, from fetters both human and divine. Ye also are free from fetters both human and divine. Go ye, now O Bhikkhus, and wander for the gain of the many, for the good of the many. for the gain and welfare of gods and men. Preach, O Bhikkhus, the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, glorious at the end, in spirit and in letter. Proclaim the Hold Life altogether perfect and pure. There are beings with a little dust in their eyes, who, not hearing the Doctrine will fall away. There will be those who will understand the Doctrine”. There will be those who will understand the Doctrine”. With this exhortation the Buddha dispatched His first sixty disciples in various directions.

THE BUDDHA TAMING THE DRAGON IN THE FIRE-SHED WITH HIS SUPERNATURAL POWER



After sending forth the Arahants to preach, the Blessed One went to Uruvela to convert a thousand hermits headed by the three Kassapa brothers known as Uruvela Kassapa, Nadl Kassapa and Gaya Kassapa. The Buddha tamed the King of the Dragons in a fire-shed by using a variety of this supernatural powers. The thousand hermits became monks and with this retinue, the Blessed One proceeded to Gayaslsa. On arrival there he preached to them again and they all became arahants. The Buddha went from there to Rajagaha accompanied by those monks and dwelt in the Today Palm Grove. King Bimbisara went there with a large following of 120,000 persons to pay his respects to the Buddha. As the ascetic Kassapa knew this and placing his head upon the Buddha’s feet acknowledged the Buddha’s superiority, saying, “My teacher, Lord, is the Lord, I am the disciple” repeatedly.

THE BUDDHA VISITED KAPILAVATTHU AT THE REQUEST OF KALUDAYI THERA



King Suddhodana heard that was dwelling at the Veluvana Monastery offered by King Bimbisara of Rajagaha. He wanted to see Him. Nine courtiers, each with a large following, were sent on nine successive occasions to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. All nine attained Arahantship and no reply was received. The king finally dispatched Kaludayl. He went on condition that he would be allowed to enter the Order.

Kaludayl also became an Arahant and entered the Order. He then requested the Buddha to visit the city of Kapilavatthu. The Buddha proceeded there with a following of twenty thousand

Aragants covering a distance of 60 yojanas at the rate of one yojana a day. It took him fully two months to do the journey. Kaludaya1 Thera traveled by air everyday by superhuman power and kept the Buddha's father, Suddhodana, informed of the progress of the march, And on the day of the Buddha's arrival, a great welcome awaited Him.

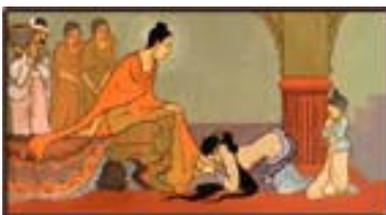
TWIN MIRACLE PERFORMED BY THE BUDDHA BEFORE HIS KINSMEN AND A SHOWER OF RAIN FELL WETTING ONLY THOSE WHO WISHED TO BE WET



Members of the Sakya clan were very proud, and when the Buddha arrived at Kapilavatthu, they let only the younger kinsmen pay their respects to the Blessed One while the older folk sat down without making obeisance to Him. The Blessed One, who saw this behaviour, rose in the air and walked over the heads of the elders. He performed the miracle of the pairs, in which flames of fire came from the lower part, Then the process was reversed.

Next fire came out from the right side of His body and water from the left, and so on. He thus showed his superhuman power and emitted six resplendent rays of light from his body, at which they marveled. Suddhodana himself was so deeply moved by the sight that he bowed his head and touched it with the feet of the Blessed One in salutation. At this, all the other members of the clan could not help paying homage to the Blessed One. The sky then became overcast with clouds and poured down a shower of rain by which only those who wished to be wet became wet and not others. They marveled at this miracle and showed greater respect towards the Buddha.

YASODHARA REVERENCING THE BUDDHA BY PLACING HER HEAD UPON HIS FEET



The day after his arrival at Kapilavatthu the Buddha went on His alms round. King Suddhodana came conducted Him to the palace and served him with food. After the meal, there was great excitement in the palace and all but Princess Yasodhara came to pay their reverence to the Buddha. Yasodhara thought, "Certainly if there is any virtue in me, the Noble Lord Himself will come to my presence. Then will I reverence Him as much as I like". The

Buddha saw that if He did not visit her, Yasodhara would break her heart with grief. So He handed His bowl to the King, and accompanied by His two chief disciples, entered the chamber of Yasodhara and sat on the prepared seat, saying, "Let the King's daughter reverence as she likes". Swiftly she came, clasped His ankles, and placing her head on His feet, revered Him as she like.

RAHULA FOLLOWING THE BUDDHA AND ASKING FOR INHERITANCE



While the Buddha was having his meal at his father's palace, Princess Yasodhara dressed up Rahula properly with ornaments and pointing to the Buddha said, "Behold, son, that great ascetic of majestic appearance in the midst of twenty thousand monks. He is your father. The vases of gold belonging to Him have disappeared since the day he retired from home to homelessness.

Go ye and ask for your inheritance so that you may become a Universal Monarch". Young Rahula, emboldened by the love of a son towards his father, came to His presence and said, "O, father, your shadow is cool and pleasant. I wish to become a Universal Monarch. Please give me my inheritance". He asked for his inheritance, uttering much else that was becoming. He followed the Buddha when he went back to the monastery asking for inheritance. But the Blessed One made him owner of an inheritance transcending this world, by ordaining him as a samanera (novice) of the Holy Order

VENERABLE ANANDA RECITING RATANA SUTTA PARITTA TO RELIEVE THE PEOPLE OF VESALI FROM ATTACKS OF FAMINE AND PESTILENCE



There was scarcity of rain at Vesali (modern Besrah) and many people died from the effects of famine which attacked it. The offensive smell from the corpses brought demons and ogres into the town and there were more deaths. To make matters worse, a disease very much like modern plague broke out, and there were still more deaths. The people discussed ways and means of relief from attacks of famine and disease. They eventually agreed to invite the Buddha for that purpose, and requested the Blessed One arrived at Vesali in the royal barge there was a heavy downpour of rain which washed away all the corpses and town had become clean. On arrival at the city gate the Venerable Ananda learnt the Ratana Sutta Paritta and recited it by walking round the city in between its three walls, and sprinkling the holy water from his bowl now and again while going round the city with the Licchavi Princes accompanying him. Thus, all the evil spirits were driven away from the city which was rendered free from.

THE BUDDHA CONVERTING SACCACA, THE ASCETIC, WHO CAME TO MATCH HIS DOCTRINE WITH OF THE BUDDHA



There was in Vesali an ascetic called Saccaka, well - versed in a variety of dogmas and philosophies. He was a teacher of the princes. As he had humiliated many heretical teachers of the day, he was planning to defeat also the Blessed One in argument. He met the Venerable Assaji one day and came to know about the doctrine of the Blessed One. He therefore came to the Buddha in order to have a debate on the doctrine. A great crowd came to watch the results of the debate.

During the debate, the Blessed One said, "Matter or form is insubstantial (that is, there is no such thing as a creative soul)". The ascetic refuted it by saying "There is a creative soul". The Blessed One then said, "If there is a creative soul, why does it not create a beautiful form?" The still kept quiet. Now Sakka, lord of the gods, came and, assuming the form of a huge demon, threatened to strike him with his celestial weapon. When he was questioned for the third time he admitted that "matter or form is insubstantial".

DEDICATION CEREMONY OF THE JETAVANA MONASTERY BY ANATHAPINDIKA, THE MILIONAIRE



The Buddha was dwelling in Rajagaha, at the end of the first rainy season. Now, Anathapindika, the Millionaire, arrived in Rajagaha in connection with business. He heard that the Blessed One had attained the Supreme Wisdom of a Buddha, and had a strong desire to go to Him that very night, but could not do so. He went to bed with thoughts fixed on the Blessed One. His faith in the Buddha was so intense that he could not sleep well and was between waking and sleeping, when a light emanated from his body. Thinking it to be daylight he went to where the Blessed One was. When he met the Buddha, he was established in the first holy stage of the Aryan Path. He came back, at once, to Savatthi and looked for a site to build a monastery, and found a park belonging to Prince Jeta, in a very quiet place, well connected with roads and neither too near nor too far from the town. He bought this park covering the whole site with gold coins and erected the famous Jetavana Monastery at great cost. He donated it to the Buddha and his many disciples after inviting them to come over from Rajagaha.

VENERABLE MOGGALLANA TAMING THE KING OF DRAGONS, NANDOOPANANDA



Nandopananda, king of the dragons, was dwelling on Mount Meru in magnificent splendor and luxury like a god. He was full of anger. One day while he was in the midst of his pleasures surrounded by dancing female dragons, the Buddha, together with a retinue of monks with supernatural powers, traveled by air to Tavatimsa heaven and passed over their heads. This made the king of the dragons very angry, and he coiled his body round Mount Meru and Tavatimsa heaven covered them. In the midst of their aerial journey, the holy monks could not see Tavatimsa heaven which was covered by the dragon – king. They knew this and asked the Blessed One to allow them to see him, but did not get the permission. Only the Venerable Moggallana got the permission when he requested the Buddha. He then turned himself into a dragon, with a body much larger than that of dragon-king, and coiling himself round the dragon-king's body, began to crush him down. By this and other means he tamed the dragon-king and taught him a good lesson. He then brought him to the Blessed One and made him take refuge in the triple gem, namely, the Doctrine and the Order of Monks.

THE BUDDHA CAUSING BAKA BRAHMA, A HIGHER GOD, TO CHANGE HIS WRONG VIEWS



Baka Brahma was the chief of the first realm of higher gods. He was of the view that his realm was the highest and that he himself and his realm were everlasting, not knowing that there were higher realms above his own. The Blessed One visited the Brahma world and in the midst of an assembly of higher gods pointed out to Baka Brahma, "There are realms of higher gods above yours. The whole Brahma world of higher gods including your realm is not permanent". Then the Blessed One continued his discourse to Baka Brahma by

saying, "I know how you have come into being and what your powers are. But there are higher gods superior to you in status and power". Finding that all his views were wrong, Baka wished to show his own powers and said, "I will make myself invisible". He made several attempts to become invisible, but without success. The Blessed One then said, "I will now show you that I can make myself invisible", and instantly the Buddha disappeared from view and preached to him a sermon while remaining invisible.

THE BEKKHA AND THE VENERABLE ANANDA, WASHING A MONK SUFFERING FROM DYSENTERY



One monk was suffering from dysentery. As he did not wait upon others, there was no one to wait upon him. The Buddha, accompanied by the Venerable Ananda, went round inspecting the buildings of the monastery and saw the ailing monk sleeping in filth. Immediately the Blessed One sent the Venerable Ananda to fetch water and Himself poured water while the Venerable Ananda scrubbed and cleaned him. The Buddha and the Venerable Ananda thus did their duty of ministering to the sick. Having washed and cleaned the monk, the Blessed One held him by the head, while the Venerable Ananda took hold of his feet and placed him on a couch. The Buddha had the monks assembled and exhorted them thus:- "You have no parents nearby to wait upon you, and if you do not wait upon one another, who will do so?" And then the Blessed One admonished them as follows:- "Whosoever, Brethren, would wait upon me, he should wait upon the sick".

CONVERSION BY THE BUDDHA OF ANGULIMALA, A ROBBER OF THE FOREST



Angulimala was the son of the King's Chaplain of the Savatthi City, and a student of the Taxila University. The teacher and his wife were very fond of him, as he was a brilliant, clever and faithful pupil. Unfortunately his associated grew jealous of him, made up a false story and succeeded in setting the teacher against him. The enraged teacher, suspecting him to have had an affair with his wife contrived to put and end to his life by ordering him to fetch a thousand fingers as a present in return for the education he received. In obedience to the teacher, he took to the forest of Savatthi and started killing people to collect fingers for the necessary offering. Later he wore a garland of these fingers to ascertain the number-hence the name Angulimala. When he had collected 999 fingers, and was ready to complete the number he chased his own mother who came out to ask him to desist from killing. The Buddha saw this in advance and appeared on the scene to prevent him from killing his mother. He chased the Buddha to kill Him, but could not overtake Him on account of His supernatural power. He was eventually converted to the noble Doctrine of the Buddha and was admitted into the Order.

CINCA-MANAVIKA, A FEMALE ASCETIC, MAKING A FALSE ACCUSATION AGAINST THE BUDDHA



There dwelt in Savatthi city, a female ascetic called Cinca-manvika, who was as pretty as a goddess. The heretical teachers, who did not get enough alms and were envious of the Buddha attempted to destroy His reputation by setting her to make a false accusation against Him. She wrapped a scarlet shawl round her and pretended to pay visits to the Buddha at Jetavana Monastery at nightfall, though, as a matter of fact, she slept at the monastery of the heretical teachers, and at day break she entered the city as if she was coming back from the Buddha at Jetavana Monastery. In this way she caused doubts to arise in the minds of devotees returning in the evening from the monastery after hearing a sermon from the Buddha, and those who were going there early in the morning to pay their respects to the Buddha. After a period of about nine months she placed a wooden knob against her stomach and tied it with an apron round her body to make it appear that she was big with child. Then she approached the Buddha who was preaching and made a false and wicked accusation thus: "Why have you not prepared my confinement room?" The gods appeared and bit loose the apron round her body, when the knob of wood fell before the audience, and she was given a sound beating and driven away.

THE BUDDHA PREACHING TO KHEMA, QUEEN OF KING BIMBISARA



The daughter of King Maddaraja of Sagala, by the name of Khema, was one of the queens of King Bimbisara. She was very pretty and being proud of her own beauty, had no wish to go to the Buddha, who was in the habit of preaching that "beauty is but skin deep". But she heard that Veluvana Park had been greatly improved and was looking so picturesque and pleasant that park where the Buddha was then in residence. King Bimbisara had told the attendants to see that the Queen should not come back without paying her respects to the Buddha. She dared not disobey the King and approached the Buddha before she left the Park. The Blessed One, with his superhuman power created a scene in which a woman, more handsome than the queen, was fanning him. The woman then becoming older and older, fell down through infirmity and began to moan. The queen was very much startled by the sight. The Buddha then preached a sermon to her, and she became an Arahant and was admitted into the Holy Order of Nuns.

THE BUDDHA PREACHING THE SERMON OF PEACE FROM THE AIR TO PREVENT WAR BETWEEN KAPILA AND KOLIYA



Rohini river lying between Kapilavastu and Koliya was the main source of water supply for these two cities to irrigate their lands for growing crops. At one time, when the crops became dry, the farmers from both cities went to draw water from the river when there was very little water and just enough left for them to take once only. A quarrel arose over it and there was an exchange

of hot words touching the fair name of the Sakya clan. The Ministers including the one in charge of agriculture became so angry that they decided to settle this matter by battle and both sides sallied forth for a fight. The Buddha saw, with the eye of a Buddha, that there would be much blood -shed if the relatives of both sides engaged in battle. He, therefore, went alone and sat cross-legged in the air midway between the armed forces of both sides, who were all kinsmen, laid down their arms and paid homage to Him. The Buddha then admonished them by preaching a sermon of peace saying, “Are you going to destroy to destroy your priceless lives for the sake of a little bit of worthless water?”

THE BUDDHA PREACHING TO KISA GOTAMI ASKING FOR MEDICINE FOR HER DEAD SON



Kisa Gotami was the wife of a wealthy man of Savatthi worth 40 crores. She had and only son who died when he was just able to run about. She had never seen any death and thinking that her son was only ill, did not cremate him. In her distress she took him in her arms and went about asking for medicine. One wise man thought that no one but the Buddha would know of any, and sent her to Him. Kisa Gotami showed her dead son and asked the Buddha to give the medicine that would cure her boy. The Buddha answered: “I shall cure your boy if you get some mustard seeds from a house where no one has died”. Carrying her dead son, she wondered from door to door. But she could not find any house where on death had occurred. At last she began to learn the truth, “No house is free from death”. She went to a wood, laid her child there and returned to the Buddha, who comforted her by preaching to her the truth. She was established in the first holy stage of the Aryan Path, and was admitted into the Order of Nuns. She eventually became an Arahant.

THE BUDDHA TAMING ALAVAKA, THE DEMON-GOD, WITH A SERMON ON LOVING-KINDNESS



There stood a giant banyan tree at a distance of a little more than three miles from Alavi city. Alavaka, the demon-god had his dwelling in that tree. One night Alavaka was attending a meeting of gods at the Himalayas, when the Buddha entered his dwelling in order to tame this cruel monster. The door-keeper of the dwelling, a deity, paying homage to the Buddha, said, “May I go and seek permission from Alavaka for you to enter his dwelling?” So saying, he went to the meeting of gods to get the permission. At that moment, Alavaka who had to keep his anger in check became furious when he heard from other gods about the arrival of the Buddha at his dwelling. He left the meeting at once and jumped on to the dizzy heights of Kelasa Mountain, and shouted out this challenge: “Alavaka am I!” Then throughout the night of he flung all sorts of weapons at the Blessed One who was not hurt at all because of his infinite power of loving-kindness. Then Alavaka approached the Buddha who tamed him peacefully with a sermon on Loving-Kindness.

THE BLESSED ONE TAMING NALAGIRI ELEPHANT WHICH WAS SENT TO CRUSH HIM



After the death of King Bimbisara, Devadatta made several attempts to kill the Buddha, but he was not successful. So he went to the elephant-keepers and said to them. “Venerable Theras like us who are recognized by the King can use our influence to get you promotion in your service. Therefore, you had better carry out my instructions. If the Venerable Gotama should pass this way, set the full grown male elephant, Nalagiri, upon Him”.

Nalagiri was a very ferocious elephant which used to gore men to death. The Blessed One, with his retinue of holy monks, was coming into the city of Rajagaha on his alms-round, when the elephant-keepers, desirous of gaining promotion in service, set the full-grown elephant in the direction of the direction to the Buddha. The Blessed One stood where he was and sent out his thought of loving-kindness towards the elephant Nalagiri, which was running towards him to crush in down. When the elephant came near the Buddha, it stood quietly before Him listening to the words of advice uttered by Him.

PARINEBBANA (DEATH) OF THE BUDDHA IN THE SALA GROVE OF KUSINARA STATE



From His 35th years, the date of His Enlightenment, the Buddha’s successful ministry lasted 45 years. When He attained His 80th years the Buddha had an attack of dysentery and lay down on a couch with its head to the north between twin sal-trees in the Sala Grove of Kusinara State. Men, higher and lower gods and monks were gathered, in large number, near the Blessed One in respectful adoration. Though he was very weak and weary, the

Buddha was still addressing those present with words of exhortation. After addressing them the whole night the Blessed One spoke His last words, when it was nearing dawn, as follows: - “Behold, O disciples, I exhort you. Subject to decay are all conditioned things. Strive on with heedfulness”. The Buddha then attained the Ecstasies and arrived at the cessation of perception and sensation, and finally the Blessed One passed away; and there was an earthquake to mark His death.