

kevattasutta  
With Kevaddha

evaṃ me sutāṃ—  
So I have heard.

ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā nālandāyaṃ viharati pāvārikambavane.  
At one time the Buddha was staying near Nālandā in Pāvārika's mango grove.

atha kho kevaṭṭo gahapatiputto yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā bhagavantam ābhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. ekamantaṃ nisinno kho kevaṭṭo gahapatiputto bhagavantam etadavoca:

*Then the householder Kevaddha went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him,*

“ayaṃ, bhante, nālandā iddhā ceva phītā ca bahujanā ākiṇṇamanussā bhagavati abhippasannā.

*“Sir, this Nālandā is successful and prosperous and full of people.*

sādhū, bhante, bhagavā ekaṃ bhikkhuṃ samādisatu, yo uttari manussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karissati;

*Sir, please direct a mendicant to perform a demonstration of superhuman psychic power.*

evāyaṃ nālandā bhiyyoso mattāya bhagavati abhippasāḍissatī”ti.

*Then Nālandā will become even more devoted to the Buddha!”*

evaṃ vutte, bhagavā kevaṭṭam gahapatiputtam etadavoca:

*When he said this, The Buddha said,*

“na kho ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhūnaṃ evaṃ dhammaṃ desemi:

*“Kevaddha, I do not teach the mendicants like this:*

‘etha tumhe, bhikkhave, gihīnaṃ odātavasanānaṃ uttari manussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karothā”’ti.

*‘Come now, mendicants, perform a demonstration of superhuman psychic power for the white-clothed laypeople.”’*

dutiyaṃpi kho kevaṭṭo gahapatiputto bhagavantam etadavoca:

*For a second time, Kevaddha made the same request,*

“nāhaṃ, bhante, bhagavantam dhamsemi;

apī ca evaṃ vadāmi:

‘ayaṃ, bhante, nālandā iddhā ceva phītā ca bahujanā ākiṇṇamanussā bhagavati abhippasannā.

sādhū, bhante, bhagavā ekaṃ bhikkhuṃ samādisatu, yo uttari manussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karissati;

evāyaṃ nālandā bhiyyoso mattāya bhagavati abhippasāḍissatī”’ti.

dutiyaṃpi kho bhagavā kevaṭṭam gahapatiputtam etadavoca:

*and the Buddha gave the same answer.*

“na kho ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhūnaṃ evaṃ dhammaṃ desemi:

‘etha tumhe, bhikkhave, gihīnaṃ odātavasanānaṃ uttari manussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karothā”’ti.

tatiyampi kho kevaṭṭo gahapatiputto bhagavantam etadavoca:

*For a third time, Kevaddha made the same request,*

“nāhaṃ, bhante, bhagavantam dhamsemi;

api ca evaṃ vadāmi:

‘ayaṃ, bhante, nālandā iddhā ceva phītā ca bahujaṇā ākiṇṇamanussā bhagavati abhippasannā.

sādhu, bhante, bhagavā ekaṃ bhikkhuṃ samādisatu, yo uttari manussadhammā iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karissati.

evāyaṃ nālandā bhiyyoso mattāya bhagavati abhippasāḍissatī”ti.

*and the Buddha said the following.*

### 1. iddhipāṭihāriya

*1. The Demonstration of Psychic Power*

“tīni kho imāni, kevaṭṭa, pāṭihāriyāni mayā sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā paveditāni.

*“Kevaddha, there are three kinds of demonstration, which I declare having realized them with my own insight.*

katamāni tīni?

*What three?*

iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ, ādesanāpāṭihāriyaṃ, anusāsanāpāṭihāriyaṃ.

*The demonstration of psychic power, the demonstration of revealing, and the demonstration of instruction.*

katamañca, kevaṭṭa, iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ?

*And what is the demonstration of psychic power?*

idha, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu anekavihitam iddhividham paccaṇubhoti—ekopi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hoti; āvibhāvaṃ tirobhāvaṃ tirokuttaṃ tiropākāraṃ tiropabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati seyyathāpi ākāse; pathaviyāpi ummujjanimujjaṃ karoti seyyathāpi udaye; udaye pi abhijjamāne gacchati seyyathāpi pathaviyaṃ; ākāse pi pallaṅkena kamati seyyathāpi pakkhī sakuno; ime pi candimasūriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve paṇinā parāmasati parimajjati; yāva brahmalokāpi kāyena vasaṃ vatteti.

*It's a mendicant who wields the many kinds of psychic power: multiplying themselves and becoming one again; going unimpeded through a wall, a rampart, or a mountain as if through space; diving in and out of the earth as if it were water; walking on water as if it were earth; flying cross-legged through the sky like a bird; touching and stroking with the hand the sun and moon, so mighty and powerful; controlling the body as far as the Brahmā realm.*

tameṇaṃ aññataro saddho pasanno passati taṃ bhikkhuṃ anekavihitam iddhividham paccaṇubhontaṃ—ekopi hutvā bahudhā hontaṃ, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hontaṃ; āvibhāvaṃ tirobhāvaṃ; tirokuttaṃ tiropākāraṃ tiropabbataṃ asajjamānaṃ gacchantam seyyathāpi ākāse; pathaviyāpi ummujjanimujjaṃ karontam seyyathāpi udaye; udaye pi abhijjamāne gacchantam seyyathāpi pathaviyaṃ; ākāse pi pallaṅkena kamantam seyyathāpi pakkhī sakuno; ime pi candimasūriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve paṇinā parāmasantaṃ parimajjantaṃ yāva brahmalokāpi kāyena vasaṃ vattentaṃ.

*Then someone with faith and confidence sees that mendicant performing those superhuman feats.*

tameṇaṃ so saddho pasanno aññatarassa assaddhassa appasannassa āroceti:

*They tell someone else who lacks faith and confidence:*

‘acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, samaṇassa mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvatā.

*‘It's incredible, it's amazing! The ascetic has such psychic power and might!*

amāhaṃ bhikkhuṃ addasaṃ anekavihiṭṭaṃ iddhiṇḍiḍḍhaṃ paccaṇubhontaṃ—ekopi hutvā bahudhā hontaṃ, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hontaṃ ... pe ... yāva brahmalokāpi kāyena vasaṃ vattentaṃ”ti.

*I saw him myself, performing all these superhuman feats!*

tameṇaṃ so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyya:

*But the one lacking faith and confidence would say to them:*

‘atthi kho, bho, gandhārī nāma vijjā.

*‘There’s a spell named Gandhārī.*

tāya so bhikkhu anekavihiṭṭaṃ iddhiṇḍiḍḍhaṃ paccaṇubhoti—ekopi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hoti ... pe ... yāva brahmalokāpi kāyena vasaṃ vatteti”ti.

*Using that a mendicant can perform such superhuman feats.’*

taṃ kiṃ maññasi, kevaṭṭa,

*What do you think, Kevaddha?*

api nu so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyyā”ti?

*Wouldn’t someone lacking faith speak like that?”*

“vadeyya, bhante”ti.

*“They would, sir.”*

“imaṃ kho ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, iddhipātihāriye ādīnavaṃ sampassamāno iddhipātihāriyena atṭhīyāmi harāyāmi jigucchāmi.

*“Seeing this drawback in psychic power, I’m horrified, repelled, and disgusted by demonstrations of psychic power.*

## 2. ādesanāpātihāriya

### 2. The Demonstration of Revealing

katamañca, kevaṭṭa, ādesanāpātihāriyaṃ?

*And what is the demonstration of revealing?*

idha, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisati, cetasikampi ādisati, vitakkitampi ādisati, vicāritampi ādisati:

*In one case, someone reveals the mind, mentality, thoughts, and reflections of other beings and individuals:*

‘evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṇ’ti.

*‘This is what you’re thinking, such is your thought, and thus is your state of mind.’*

tameṇaṃ aññataro saddho pasanno passati taṃ bhikkhuṃ parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisantaṃ, cetasikampi ādisantaṃ, vitakkitampi ādisantaṃ, vicāritampi ādisantaṃ:

*Then someone with faith and confidence sees that mendicant revealing another person’s thoughts.*

‘evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṇ’ti.

tameṇaṃ so saddho pasanno aññatarassa assaddhassa appasannassa āroceti:

*They tell someone else who lacks faith and confidence:*

‘acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho, samaṇassa mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvātā.

*‘It’s incredible, it’s amazing! The ascetic has such psychic power and might!*

amāhaṃ bhikkhuṃ addasaṃ parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisantaṃ, cetasikampi ādisantaṃ, vitakkitampi ādisantaṃ, vicāritampi ādisantaṃ:

*I saw him myself, revealing the thoughts of another person!’*

“evampi te mano, itthampi te mano, itipi te cittaṇ”ti.

tameṇaṃ so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyya:

*But the one lacking faith and confidence would say to them:*

‘atthi kho, bho, maṇikā nāma vijiā;

*‘There’s a spell named Māṇikā.*

tāya so bhikkhu parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cittampi ādisati, cetasikampi ādisati, vitakkitampi ādisati, vicāritampi ādisati:

*Using that a mendicant can reveal another person’s thoughts.’*

“evampi te mano, ithampi te mano, itipi te cittaṃ”ti.

taṃ kiṃ maññasi, kevaṭṭa,

*What do you think, Kevaddha?*

api nu so assaddho appasanno taṃ saddhaṃ pasannaṃ evaṃ vadeyyā”ti?

*Wouldn’t someone lacking faith speak like that?”*

“vadeyya, bhante”ti.

*“They would, sir.”*

“imaṃ kho ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, ādesanāpāṭihāriye ādīnavaṃ sampassamāno ādesanāpāṭihāriyena aṭṭiyāmi harāyāmi jigucchāmi.

*“Seeing this drawback in psychic power, I’m horrified, repelled, and disgusted by demonstrations of psychic power.*

### 3. anusāsanīpāṭihāriya

#### 3. The Demonstration of Instruction

katamañca, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ?

*And what is the demonstration of instruction?*

idha, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu evamanusāsati:

*It’s when a mendicant instructs others like this:*

‘evaṃ vitakketha, mā evaṃ vitakkayittha, evaṃ manasikarotha, mā evaṃ manasākattha, idaṃ pajahatha, idaṃ upasampajja viharathā”ti.

*‘Think like this, not like that. Focus your mind like this, not like that. Give up this, and live having achieved that.’*

idaṃ vuccati, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ.

*This is called the demonstration of instruction.*

puna caparaṃ, kevaṭṭa, idha tathāgato loke uppajjati araham sammāsambuddho ... pe ...

*Furthermore, a Realized One arises in the world ...*

evaṃ kho, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu sīlasampanno hoti ... pe ...

*That’s how a mendicant is accomplished in ethics. ...*

paṭhamam jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

*They enter and remain in the first absorption ...*

idampi vuccati, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ ... pe ...

*This is called the demonstration of instruction.*

dutiyam jhānaṃ ... pe ...

*They enter and remain in the second absorption ...*

tatiyam jhānaṃ ... pe ...

*third absorption ...*

catuttham jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

*fourth absorption.*

idampi vuccati, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ ... pe ...

*This too is called the demonstration of instruction.*

ñānadassanāya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti ... pe ...

*They extend and project the mind toward knowledge and vision ...*

idampi vuccati, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ ... pe ...

*This too is called the demonstration of instruction.*

nāparaṃ itthattāyāti pajānāti ... pe ...

*They understand: '... there is no return to any state of existence.'*

idampi vuccati, kevaṭṭa, anusāsanīpāṭihāriyaṃ.

*This too is called the demonstration of instruction.*

imāni kho, kevaṭṭa, tīni pāṭihāriyāni mayā sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā paveditāni.

*These, Kevaddha, are the three kinds of demonstration, which I declare having realized them with my own insight.*

#### 4. bhūtanirodhesakabhikkhuvatthu

*4. On the Mendicant In Search of the Cessation of Being*

bhūtapubbaṃ, kevaṭṭa, imasmiññeva bhikkhusaṅghe aññatarassa bhikkhuno evaṃ cetaso parivitakko uḍapādi:

*Once it so happened, Kevaddha, that a mendicant in this very Saṅgha had the following thought,*

‘kattha nu kho ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū’ti?

*‘Where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu tathārūpaṃ samādhim samāpajji, yathāsamāhite citte devayāniyo maggo pāturahosi.

*Then that mendicant attained a state of immersion such that a path to the gods appeared.*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena cātumahārājikā devā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā cātumahārājike deve etadavoca:

*Then he approached the Gods of the Four Great Kings and said,*

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū’ti?

*‘Reverends, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’*

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, cātumahārājikā devā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavocuṃ:

*When he said this, those gods said to him,*

‘mayampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāma:

*‘Mendicant, we too do not know this.*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, cattāro mahārājāno amhehi abhikkantatarā ca pañītatarā ca.

*But the Four Great Kings are our superiors.*

te kho etaṃ jāneyyumu:

*They might know.’*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū”ti.

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena cattāro mahārājāno tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā cattāro mahārāje etadavoca:

*Then he approached the Four Great Kings and asked the same question.*

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū’ti?

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, cattāro mahārājāno taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavocuṃ:

*But they also said to him,*

‘mayampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāma:

*‘Mendicant, we too do not know this.*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu, āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, tāvatimsā nāma devā amhehi abhikkantatarā ca paṇītatarā ca.

*But the gods of the Thirty-Three ...*

te kho etaṃ jāneyyūṃ:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena tāvatimsā devā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā tāvatimse deve etadavoca:

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, tāvatimsā devā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavocuṃ:

‘mayampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāma:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, sakko nāma devānamindo amhehi abhikkantataro ca paṇītararo ca.

*Sakka, lord of gods ...*

so kho etaṃ jāneyya:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena sakko devānamindo tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā sakkaṃ devānamindaṃ etadavoca:

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, sakko devānamindo taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavoca:

‘ahampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāmi:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, yāmā nāma devā ... pe ...

*the gods of Yāmā ...*

suyāmo nāma devaputto ...

*the god named Suyāma ...*

tusitā nāma devā ...  
*the Joyful gods ...*

santussito nāma devaputto ...  
*the god named Santussita ...*

nimmānaratī nāma devā ...  
*the gods who delight in creation ...*

sunimmito nāma devaputto ...  
*the god named Sunimmita ...*

paranimmitavasavattī nāma devā ...  
*the gods who control the creation of others ...*

vasavattī nāma devaputto amhehi abhikkantataro ca paṇītataro ca.  
*the god named Vasavattī ...*

so kho etaṃ jāneyya:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena vasavattī devaputto tenupasaṅkami;  
upasaṅkamitvā vasavattīṃ devaputtaṃ etadavoca:

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti,  
seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, vasavattī devaputto taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavoca:

‘ahampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāmi:

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, brahmakāyikā nāma devā amhehi abhikkantatarā ca paṇītatarā ca.  
*the gods of Brahmā’s Host.*

te kho etaṃ jāneyyumaḥ:  
*They might know.’*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu tathārūpaṃ samādhīṃ samāpajji, yathāsamaṃhite citte  
brahmayāniyo maḍḍo pāturahosi.  
*Then that mendicant attained a state of immersion such that a path to Brahmā appeared.*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena brahmakāyikā devā tenupasaṅkami;  
upasaṅkamitvā brahmakāyike deve etadavoca:  
*Then he approached those gods and said,*

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti,  
seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?  
*‘Reverends, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’*

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, brahmakāyikā devā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavocaṃ:  
*But they also said to him,*

‘mayampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāma:

*‘Mendicant, we too do not know this.*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

atthi kho, bhikkhu, brahmā mahābrahmā abhibhū anabhibhūto aññadatthudaso vasavattī issaro kattā nimmātā seṭṭho sajitā vasī pitā bhūtabhabyānaṃ amhehi abhikkantataro ca paṇītataro ca.

*But there is Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Undefeated, the Champion, the Universal Seer, the Wielder of Power, the Lord God, the Maker, the Author, the Best, the Begetter, the Controller, the Father of those who have been born and those yet to be born. He is our superior.*

so kho etaṃ jāneyya:

*He might know.’*

“yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu”ti.

‘kahaṃ panāvuso, etarahi so mahābrahmā’ti?

*‘But reverends, where is that Brahmā now?’*

‘mayampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāma, yattha vā brahmā yena vā brahmā yaṃ vā brahmā;

*‘We also don’t know where he is or what way he lies.*

api ca, bhikkhu, yathā nimittā dissanti, āloko sañjāyati, obhāso pātubhavati, brahmā pātubhavissati, brahmuno hetam pubbanimittam pātubhāvaya, yadidaṃ āloko sañjāyati, obhāso pātubhavati’ti.

*But by the signs that are seen—light arising and radiance appearing—we know that Brahmā will appear. For this is the precursor for the appearance of Brahmā, namely light arising and radiance appearing.’*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, mahābrahmā nacirasseva pāturahosi.

*Not long afterwards, the Great Brahmā appeared.*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu yena so mahābrahmā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā taṃ mahābrahmānaṃ etadavoca:

*Then that mendicant approached the Great Brahmā and said to him,*

‘kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

*‘Reverend, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’*

evaṃ vutte, kevaṭṭa, so mahābrahmā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavoca:

*The Great Brahmā said to him,*

‘ahamasmi, bhikkhu, brahmā mahābrahmā abhibhū anabhibhūto aññadatthudaso vasavattī issaro kattā nimmātā seṭṭho sajitā vasī pitā bhūtabhabyānaṃ’ti.

*‘I am Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Undefeated, the Champion, the Universal Seer, the Wielder of Power, the Lord God, the Maker, the Author, the Best, the Begetter, the Controller, the Father of those who have been born and those yet to be born.’*

dutiyaṃpi kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu taṃ mahābrahmānaṃ etadavoca:

*For a second time, that mendicant said to the Great Brahmā,*

‘na khoṃ taṃ, āvuso, evaṃ pucchāmi:

*‘Reverend, I am not asking you whether you are*

“tvamasī brahmā mahābrahmā abhibhū anabhibhūto aññadatthudaso vasavattī issaro kattā nimmātā seṭṭho sajitā vasī pitā bhūtabhabyānaṃ”ti.

*Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Undefeated, the Champion, the Universal Seer, the Wielder of Power, the Lord God, the Maker, the Author, the Best, the Begetter, the Controller, the Father of those who have been born and those yet to be born.*



evañca kho ahaṃ taṃ, āvuso, pucchāmi:

*I am asking*

“kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathaviḍhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū””ti?  
*where these four primary elements cease without anything left over.*

dutiyampi kho so, kevaṭṭa, mahābrahmā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavoca:

*For a second time, the Great Brahmā said to him,*

‘ahamasmi, bhikkhu, brahmā mahābrahmā abhibhū anabhibhūto aññadattthudaso vasavattī issaro kattā nimmātā setṭho sajītā vasī pitā bhūtabhabyānan’ti.

*‘I am Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Undefeated, the Champion, the Universal Seer, the Wielder of Power, the Lord God, the Maker, the Author, the Best, the Begetter, the Controller, the Father of those who have been born and those yet to be born.’*

tatiyampi kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu taṃ mahābrahmānaṃ etadavoca:

*For a third time, that mendicant said to the Great Brahmā,*

‘na kho ahaṃ taṃ, āvuso, evaṃ pucchāmi:

*‘Reverend, I am not asking you whether you are*

“tvamasī brahmā mahābrahmā abhibhū anabhibhūto aññadattthudaso vasavattī issaro kattā nimmātā setṭho sajītā vasī pitā bhūtabhabyānan”ti.

*Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Undefeated, the Champion, the Universal Seer, the Wielder of Power, the Lord God, the Maker, the Author, the Best, the Begetter, the Controller, the Father of those who have been born and those yet to be born.*

evañca kho ahaṃ taṃ, āvuso, pucchāmi:

*I am asking*

“kattha nu kho, āvuso, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathaviḍhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū””ti?  
*where these four primary elements cease without anything left over.*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, mahābrahmā taṃ bhikkhuṃ bāhāyaṃ gahetvā ekamantaṃ apanetvā taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavoca:

*Then the Great Brahmā took that mendicant by the arm, led him off to one side, and said to him,*

‘ime kho maṃ, bhikkhu, brahmakāyikā devā evaṃ jānanti, “natthi kiñci brahmuno aññātaṃ, natthi kiñci brahmuno aditṭhaṃ, natthi kiñci brahmuno aviditaṃ, natthi kiñci brahmuno asacchikatan”ti.

*‘Mendicant, these gods think that there is nothing at all that I don’t know and see and understand and realize.*

tasmāhaṃ tesam sammukhā na byākāsiṃ.

*That’s why I didn’t answer in front of them.*

ahampi kho, bhikkhu, na jānāmi yatthime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathaviḍhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātūti.

*But I too do not know where these four primary elements cease with nothing left over.*

tasmātiha, bhikkhu, tuyhevetam dukkaṭaṃ, tuyhevetam aparaddhaṃ, yaṃ tvam taṃ bhagavantaṃ atidhāvitvā bahiddhā pariyetṭhiṃ āpajjasi imassa pañhassa veyyākaraṇāya.

*Therefore, mendicant, the misdeed is yours alone, the mistake is yours alone, in that you passed over the Buddha and searched elsewhere for an answer to this question.*

gaccha tvam, bhikkhu, tameva bhagavantaṃ upasaṅkamitvā imaṃ pañhaṃ pucchā, yathā ca te bhagavā byākaroti, tathā naṃ dhāreyyāsī’ti.

*Mendicant, go to the Buddha and ask him this question. You should remember it in line with his answer.’*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu—seyyathāpi nāma balavā puriso samiñjitam vā bāham pasāreyya, pasāritam vā bāham samiñjeyya; evameva brahmaloke antarahito mama purato pāturahosi.

*Then that mendicant, as easily as a strong person would extend or contract their arm, vanished from the Brahmā realm and reappeared in front of me.*

atha kho so, kevaṭṭa, bhikkhu maṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi, ekamantaṃ nisinno kho, kevaṭṭa, so bhikkhu maṃ etadavoca:

*Then he bowed, sat down to one side, and said to me,*

‘kattha nu kho, bhante, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

*‘Sir, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’*

#### 4.1. tīradassisaṇupamaṃ

##### 4.1. The Simile of the Land-Spotting Bird

evaṃ vutte, ahaṃ, kevaṭṭa, taṃ bhikkhuṃ etadavocaṃ—

*When he said this, I said to him:*

bhūtapubbaṃ, bhikkhu, sāmuddikā vāṇijā tīradassiṃ saṇuṃ gahetvā nāvāya samuddaṃ ajjhogaṇanti.

*‘Once upon a time, mendicant, some sea-merchants set sail for the ocean deeps, taking with them a land-spotting bird.*

te atīradakkhiniyā nāvāya tīradassiṃ saṇuṃ muñcanti.

*When their ship was out of sight of land, they released the bird.*

so gacchateva puratthimaṃ disaṃ, gacchati dakkhiṇaṃ disaṃ, gacchati pacchimaṃ disaṃ, gacchati uttaraṃ disaṃ, gacchati uddhaṃ disaṃ, gacchati anudisaṃ.

*It flew right away to the east, the west, the north, the south, upwards, and in-between.*

sace so samantā tīraṃ passati, tathāgatakova hoti.

*If it saw land on any side, it went there and stayed.*

sace pana so samantā tīraṃ na passati, tameva nāvaṃ paccāgacchati.

*But if it saw no land on any side it returned to the ship.*

evameva kho tvam, bhikkhu, yato yāva brahmalokā pariyesaṃāno imassa pañhassa veyyākaraṇaṃ nājjhagā, atha mamaññeva santike paccāgato.

*In the same way, after failing to get an answer to this question even after searching as far as the Brahmā realm, you’ve returned to me.*

na kho eso, bhikkhu, pañho evaṃ pucchitabbo:

*Mendicant, this is not how the question should be asked:*

‘kattha nu kho, bhante, ime cattāro mahābhūtā aparisesā nirujjhanti, seyyathidaṃ—pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu’ti?

*“Sir, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?”*

evaṃ kho eso, bhikkhu, pañho pucchitabbo:

*This is how the question should be asked:*

‘kattha āpo ca pathavī,

*“Where do water and earth,*

tejo vāyo na gādhati;

*fire and air find no footing;*

kattha dīghaṇa rassaṇa,

*where do long and short,*

aṇuṃ thūlaṃ subhāsubhaṃ;

*fine and coarse, beautiful and ugly;*

kattha nāmañca rūpañca,  
*where do name and form*

asesaṃ uparujjhatī'ti.  
*cease with nothing left over?"*

tatra veyyākaraṇaṃ bhavati:  
*And the answer to that is:*

‘viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ,  
*"Consciousness that's invisible,*

anantaṃ sabbatopabhaṃ;  
*infinite, radiant all round.*

ettha āpo ca pathavī,  
*Here's where water and earth,*

tejo vāyo na gādhati.  
*fire and air find no footing;*

ettha dīghañca rassañca,  
*here's where long and short,*

aṇuṃ thūlaṃ subhāsubhaṃ;  
*fine and coarse, beautiful and ugly;*

ettha nāmañca rūpañca,  
*here's where name and form*

asesaṃ uparujjhati;  
*cease with nothing left over—*

viññāṇassa nirodhena,  
*with the cessation of consciousness,*

etthetaṃ uparujjhatī'ti.  
*that's where this ceases."'"*

idamavoca bhagavā.  
*That is what the Buddha said.*

attamano kevaṭṭo gahapatiputto bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandīti.  
*Satisfied, the householder Kevaddha was happy with what the Buddha said.*

kevaṭṭasuttaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ ekādasamaṃ.