

dīgha nikāya 27
Long Discourses 27

aggaññasutta
The Origin of the World

evam me sutam—
So I have heard.

ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā sāvatthiyaṃ viharati pubbārāme migāramātupāsāde.
At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattī in the Eastern Monastery, in the stilt longhouse of Migāra's mother.

tena kho pana samayena vāsetṭhabhāradvājā bhikkhūsu parivasanti bhikkhubhāvaṃ ākaṅkhamānā.
Now at that time Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja were living on probation among the mendicants in hopes of being ordained.

atha kho bhagavā sāyanhasamayaṃ paṭisallānā vuṭṭhito pāsādā orohitvā pāsādapacchāyāyaṃ abbhokāse caṅkamati.
Then in the late afternoon, the Buddha came downstairs from the longhouse and was walking meditation in the open air, beneath the shade of the longhouse.

addasā kho vāsetṭho bhagavantam sāyanhasamayaṃ paṭisallānā vuṭṭhitam pāsādā orohitvā pāsādapacchāyāyaṃ abbhokāse caṅkamantaṃ.
Vāsetṭha saw him

disvāna bhāradvājaṃ āmantesi:
and said to Bhāradvāja,

“ayaṃ, āvuso bhāradvāja, bhagavā sāyanhasamayaṃ paṭisallānā vuṭṭhito pāsādā orohitvā pāsādapacchāyāyaṃ abbhokāse caṅkamati.
“Reverend Bhāradvāja, the Buddha is walking meditation in the open air, beneath the shade of the longhouse.

āyāmāvuso bhāradvāja, yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkamissāma;
Come, reverend, let's go to the Buddha.

appeva nāma labheyyāma bhagavato santikā dhammiṃ katham savanāyā”ti.
Hopefully we'll get to hear a Dhamma talk from him.”

“evamāvuso”ti kho bhāradvājo vāsetṭhassa paccassosi.
“Yes, reverend,” replied Bhāradvāja.

atha kho vāsetṭhabhāradvājā yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkamimsu; upasaṅkamitvā bhagavantam ābhivādetvā bhagavantam caṅkamantaṃ anucaṅkamimsu.
So they went to the Buddha, bowed, and walked beside him.

atha kho bhagavā vāsetṭham āmantesi:
Then the Buddha said to Vāsetṭha,

“tumhe khvattha, vāsetṭha, brāhmaṇajaccā brāhmaṇakulīnā brāhmaṇakulā agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitā, kacci vo, vāsetṭha, brāhmaṇā na akkosanti na paribhāsanti”ti?
“Vāsetṭha, you are both brahmins by birth and clan, and have gone forth from the lay life to homelessness from a brahmin family. I hope you don't have to suffer abuse and insults from the brahmins.”

“taggha no, bhante, brāhmaṇā akkosanti paribhāsanti attarūpāya paribhāsāya paripuñṇāya, no aparipuñṇāya”ti.
“Actually, sir, the brahmins do insult and abuse us with their typical insults to the fullest extent.”

“yathā katham pana vo, vāsetṭha, brāhmaṇā akkosanti paribhāsanti attarūpāya paribhāsāya paripuñṇāya, no aparipuñṇāya”ti?
“But how do the brahmins insult you?”

“brāhmaṇā, bhante, evamāhaṃsu:
“Sir, the brahmins say:

‘brāhmaṇova seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīnā aññe vaṇṇā.
‘Only brahmins are the highest caste; other castes are inferior.

brāhmaṇova sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā.
Only brahmins are the light caste; other castes are dark.

brāhmaṇāva sujjhanti, no abrāhmaṇā.
Only brahmins are purified, not others.

brāhmaṇāva brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā brahmajā brahmanimmitā
brahmadāyādā.
Only brahmins are Brahmā’s rightful sons, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.

te tumhe seṭṭhaṃ vaṇṇaṃ hitvā hīnamattha vaṇṇaṃ ajjhupagatā, yadidaṃ muṇḍake
samaṇake ibbhē kaṇhe bandhupādāpacce.
You’ve both abandoned the best caste to join an inferior caste, namely these shavelings, fake ascetics, riffraff, black spawn from the feet of our Kinsman.

tayidaṃ na sādhu, tayidaṃ nappatirūpaṃ, yaṃ tumhe seṭṭhaṃ vaṇṇaṃ hitvā
hīnamattha vaṇṇaṃ ajjhupagatā yadidaṃ muṇḍake samaṇake ibbhē kaṇhe
bandhupādāpacce’ti.
This is not right, it’s not proper!’

evaṃ kho no, bhante, brāhmaṇā akkosanti paribhāsanti attarūpāya paribhāsāya
paripunnāya, no aparipunnāyā’ti.
That’s how the brahmins insult us.”

“taggha vo, vāsetṭha, brāhmaṇā porāṇaṃ assarantā evamāhaṃsu:
‘Actually, Vāsetṭhā, the brahmins are forgetting their tradition when they say this to you.

‘brāhmaṇova seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīnā aññe vaṇṇā;

brāhmaṇova sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā;

brāhmaṇāva sujjhanti, no abrāhmaṇā;

brāhmaṇāva brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā brahmajā brahmanimmitā
brahmadāyādā’ti.

dissanti kho pana, vāsetṭha, brāhmaṇānaṃ brāhmaṇiyo utuniyopi gabbhiniyopi
vijāyamānāpi pāyamānāpi.
For brahmin women are seen menstruating, being pregnant, giving birth, and breast-feeding.

te ca brāhmaṇā yonijāva samānā evamāhaṃsu:
Yet even though they’re born from a brahmin womb they say:

‘brāhmaṇova seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīnā aññe vaṇṇā;
‘Only brahmins are the highest caste; other castes are inferior.

brāhmaṇova sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā;
Only brahmins are the light caste; other castes are dark.

brāhmaṇāva sujjhanti, no abrāhmaṇā;
Only brahmins are purified, not others.

brāhmaṇāva brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā brahmajā brahmanimmitā
brahmadāyādā’ti.
Only brahmins are Brahmā’s rightful sons, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.’

te brahmānañceva abbhācikkhanti, musā ca bhāsanti, bahuñca apuññaṃ pasavanti.
They misrepresent the brahmins, speak falsely, and make much bad karma.

1. catuvannaṣuddhi

1. Purification in the Four Castes

cattārome, vāseṭṭha, vanna—

Vāseṭṭha, there are these four castes:

khattiyā, brāhmaṇā, vessā, suddā.

aristocrats, brahmins, merchants, and workers.

khattiyopi kho, vāseṭṭha, idhekacco pāṇātipatī hoti adinnādāyī kamesumicchācārī
musāvādī piṣuṇavāco pharusavāco samphappalāpī abhijjhālu byāpannacitto
micchādītthī.

Some aristocrats kill living creatures, steal, and commit sexual misconduct. They use speech that's false, divisive, harsh, and nonsensical. And they're covetous, malicious, with wrong view.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, yeme dhammā akusalā akusalasaṅkhātā sāvajjā sāvajjasāṅkhātā
asevitabbā asevitabbasaṅkhātā naalamariyā naalamariyasaṅkhātā kaṇhā
kaṇhāvīpākā viññugarahitā, khattiyepi te idhekacce sandissanti.

These things are unskillful, blameworthy, not to be cultivated, unworthy of the noble ones—and are reckoned as such. They are dark deeds with dark results, criticized by sensible people. Such things are seen in some aristocrats.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

And they are also seen among some brahmins,

vessopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

merchants,

suddopi kho, vāseṭṭha, idhekacco pāṇātipatī hoti adinnādāyī kamesumicchācārī
musāvādī piṣuṇavāco pharusavāco samphappalāpī abhijjhālu byāpannacitto
micchādītthī.

and workers.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, yeme dhammā akusalā akusalasaṅkhātā ... pe ...

kaṇhā kaṇhāvīpākā viññugarahitā;

suddepi te idhekacce sandissanti.

khattiyopi kho, vāseṭṭha, idhekacco pāṇātipatā paṭivirato hoti, adinnādānā
paṭivirato, kamesumicchācārā paṭivirato, musāvādā paṭivirato, piṣuṇāya vācāya
paṭivirato, pharusāya vācāya paṭivirato, samphappalāpā paṭivirato, anabhijjhālu
abyāpannacitto, sammādītthī.

But some aristocrats refrain from killing living creatures, stealing, and committing sexual misconduct. They refrain from speech that's false, divisive, harsh, and nonsensical. And they're content, kind-hearted, with right view.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, yeme dhammā kusalā kusalasaṅkhātā anavajjā anavajjasāṅkhātā
sevitabbā sevitabbasaṅkhātā alamariyā alamariyasaṅkhātā sukkā sukkavīpākā
viññuppasatthā, khattiyepi te idhekacce sandissanti.

These things are skillful, blameless, to be cultivated, worthy of the noble ones—and are reckoned as such. They are bright deeds with bright results, praised by sensible people. Such things are seen in some aristocrats.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

And they are also seen among some brahmins,

vessopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

merchants,

suddopi kho, vāseṭṭha, idhekacco pāṇātipatā paṭivirato hoti ... pe ...

and workers.

anabhijjhālu, abyāpannacitto, sammādītthī.

iti kho, vāsetṭha, yeme dhammā kusalā kusalasaṅkhātā anavajjā anavajjasāṅkhātā sevītabbā sevītabbasāṅkhātā alamariyā alamariyasāṅkhātā sukkā sukkavipākā viññūppasatthā;

suddepi te idhekacce sandissanti.

imesu kho, vāsetṭha, catūsu vaṇṇesu evaṃ ubhayavokiṇṇesu vattamānesu kanhasukkesu dhammesu viññūgarahitesu ceva viññūppasatthesu ca yadetṭha brāhmaṇā evamāhaṃsu:

Both these things occur like this, mixed up in these four castes—the dark and the bright, that which is praised and that which is criticized by sensible people. Yet of this the brahmins say:

‘brāhmaṇova seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīnā aññe vaṇṇā;

‘Only brahmins are the highest caste; other castes are inferior.

brāhmaṇova sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā;

Only brahmins are the light caste; other castes are dark.

brāhmaṇāva sujjhanti, no abrahmaṇā;

Only brahmins are purified, not others.

brāhmaṇāva brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā brahmajā brahmanimmitā brahmadāyādā’ti.

Only brahmins are Brahmā’s rightful sons, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.’

taṃ tesam viññū nānujānanti.

Sensible people don’t acknowledge this.

taṃ kissa hetu?

Why is that?

imesañhi, vāsetṭha, catunnaṃ vaṇṇānaṃ yo hoti bhikkhu arahaṃ khīṇāsavo vusitavā katakaraṇīyo ohītabhāro anuppattasadattho parikkhīṇabhavasamyojano sammadaññāvimutto, so nesaṃ aggamakkhāyati dhammeneva, no adhammena.

Because any mendicant from these four castes who is perfected—with defilements ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their own true goal, utterly ended the fetters of rebirth, and is rightly freed through enlightenment—is said to be the best by virtue of principle, not without principle.

dhammo hi, vāsetṭha, seṭṭho janetasmim, diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

For principle, Vāsetṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

tadamināpetam, vāsetṭha, pariyāyena veditabbaṃ, yathā dhammova seṭṭho janetasmim, diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

And here’s a way to understand how this is so.

jānāti kho, vāsetṭha, rājā pasenadi kosalo:

King Pasenadi of Kosala knows that

‘samaṇo gotamo anantarā sakyakulā pabbajito’ti.

the ascetic Gotama has gone forth from the neighboring clan of the Sakyans.

sakyā kho pana, vāsetṭha, rañño pasenadissa kosalassa anuyuttā bhavanti.

And the Sakyans are his vassals.

karonti kho, vāsetṭha, sakyā raññe pasenadimhi kosale nipaccakāraṃ abhivādanaṃ paccutṭhānaṃ añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikkammaṃ.

The Sakyans show deference to King Pasenadi by bowing down, rising up, greeting him with joined palms, and observing proper etiquette for him.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, yaṃ karonti sakyā raññe pasenadimhi kosale nipaccakāraṃ abhivādanaṃ paccuṭṭhānaṃ añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikkammaṃ, karoti taṃ rājā pasenadi kosalo tathāgate nipaccakāraṃ abhivādanaṃ paccuṭṭhānaṃ añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikkammaṃ, na naṃ ‘sujāto samaṇo gotamo, dujjātohamasmi.

Now, King Pasenadi shows the same kind of deference to the Realized One. But he doesn't think: 'The ascetic Gotama is well-born, I am ill-born.'

balavā samaṇo gotamo, dubbalohamasmi.

He is powerful, I am weak.

pāsādiko samaṇo gotamo, dubbaṇṇohamasmi.

He is handsome, I am ugly.

mahesakkho samaṇo gotamo, appesakkhohamasmi'ti.

He is influential, I am insignificant.'

atha kho naṃ dhammaṃyeva sakkaronto dhammaṃ garuṃ karonto dhammaṃ mānento dhammaṃ pūjento dhammaṃ apacāyamāno evaṃ rājā pasenadi kosalo tathāgate nipaccakāraṃ karoti, abhivādanaṃ paccuṭṭhānaṃ añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikkammaṃ.

Rather, in showing such deference to the Realized One he is only honoring, respecting, and venerating principle.

imināpi kho etaṃ, vāseṭṭha, pariyāyena veditabbaṃ, yathā dhammova seṭṭho janetasmim, ditṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

And here's another way to understand how principle is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

tumhe khvattha, vāseṭṭha, nānājaccā nānānāmā nānāgottā nānākulā agārasmā anāgariyaṃ pabbajitā.

Vāseṭṭha, you have different births, names, and clans, and have gone forth from the lay life to homelessness from different families.

'ke tumhe'ti—puṭṭhā samānā 'samaṇā sakyaputtiyaṃhā'ti—paṭijānātha.

When they ask you what you are, you claim to be ascetics, followers of the Śakyan.

yassa kho panassa, vāseṭṭha, tathāgate saddhā nivittā mūlajātā paṭiṭṭhitā dalhā asaṃhāriyā samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā mārena vā brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmim, tassettaṃ kallaṃ vacanāya:

But only when someone has faith in the Realized One—settled, rooted, and planted deep, strong, not to be shifted by any ascetic or brahmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world—is it appropriate for them to say:

'bhagavatomhi putto oraso mukhato jāto dhammajo dhammanimmitto dhammadāyādo'ti.

'I am the Buddha's true-born child, born from his mouth, born of principle, created by principle, heir to principle.'

taṃ kissa hetu?

Why is that?

tathāgatassa hetam, vāseṭṭha, adhivacanaṃ 'dhammakāyo' itipi, 'brahmakāyo' itipi, 'dhammabhūto' itipi, 'brahmabhūto' itipi.

For these are terms for the Realized One: 'the embodiment of truth', and 'the embodiment of holiness', and 'the one who has become the truth', and 'the one who has become holy'.

hoti kho so, vāseṭṭha, samayo yaṃ kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena ayaṃ loko saṃvaṭṭati.

There comes a time when, Vāseṭṭha, after a very long period has passed, this cosmos contracts.

saṃvaṭṭamāne loke yebhuyyena sattā ābhassarasamvattanikā honti.

As the cosmos contracts, sentient beings are mostly headed for the realm of streaming radiance.

te tattha honti manomayā pūtibhakkhā sayampabhā antalikkhacarā subhaṭṭhāyino ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ tiṭṭhanti.

There they are mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the sky, steadily glorious, and they remain like that for a very long time.

hoti kho so, vāseṭṭha, samayo yaṃ kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena ayaṃ loko vivatṭati.

There comes a time when, after a very long period has passed, this cosmos expands.

vivatṭamāne loke yebhuyyena sattā ābhassarakāyā cavitvā itthattaṃ āgacchanti.

As the cosmos expands, sentient beings mostly pass away from that host of radiant deities and come back to this realm.

tedha honti manomayā pītibhakkhā sayampabhā antalikkhacarā subhaṭṭhāyino ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ tiṭṭhanti.

Here they are mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the sky, steadily glorious, and they remain like that for a very long time.

2. rasapathavipātubhāva

2. Solid Nectar Appears

ekodakībhūtaṃ kho pana, vāseṭṭha, tena samayena hoti andhakāro andhakāratimisā.

But the single mass of water at that time was utterly dark.

na candimasūriyā paññāyanti, na nakkhattāni tāraakārūpāni paññāyanti, na rattindivā paññāyanti, na māsaddhamāsā paññāyanti, na utusaṃvaccharā paññāyanti, na itthipumā paññāyanti, sattā sattātveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchanti.

The moon and sun were not found, nor were stars and constellations, day and night, months and fortnights, years and seasons, or male and female. Beings were simply known as 'beings'.

atha kho tesam, vāseṭṭha, sattānaṃ kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena rasapathavī udakasmim̐ samatani;

After a very long period had passed, solid nectar curdled in the water.

seyyathāpi nāma payaso tattassa nibbāyamānassa upari santānakaṃ hoti;

It appeared just like the curd on top of hot milk as it cools.

evameva pāturahosi.

sā ahosi vaṇṇasampannā gandhasampannā rasasampannā, seyyathāpi nāma sampannaṃ vā sappi sampannaṃ vā navaṇitaṃ evaṃvaṇṇā ahosi.

It was beautiful, fragrant, and delicious, like ghee or butter.

seyyathāpi nāma khuddamadhuṃ aneḷakaṃ;

And it was as sweet as pure manuka honey.

evamassādā ahosi.

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññataro satto lolajātiko:

Now, one of those beings was reckless.

‘ambho, kimevidaṃ bhavissatī’ti rasapathaviṃ aṅguliyā sāyi.

Thinking, ‘Oh my, what might this be?’ they tasted the solid nectar with their finger.

tassa rasapathaviṃ aṅguliyā sāyato acchādesi, taṇhā cassa okkami.

They enjoyed it, and craving was born in them.

aññepi kho, vāseṭṭha, sattā tassa sattassa diṭṭhānugatiṃ āpajjamānā rasapathaviṃ aṅguliyā sāyimsu.

And other beings, following that being’s example, tasted solid nectar with their fingers.

tesaṃ rasapathaviṃ aṅguliyā sāyataṃ acchādesi, taṇhā ca tesaṃ okkami.

They too enjoyed it, and craving was born in them.

3. candimasūriyādipātubhāva

3. The Moon and Sun Appear

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā rasapathaviṃ hatthehi āluppakāraṃ upakkamimsu paribhuñjitum.

Then those beings started to eat the solid nectar, breaking it into lumps.

yato kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā rasapathaviṃ hatthehi āluppakāraṃ upakkamiṃsu
paribhuñjitum.

But when they did this

atha tesam sattānaṃ sayampabhā antaradhāyi.

their luminosity vanished.

sayampabhāya antarahitāya candimasūriyā pāturaheṣum.

And with the vanishing of their luminosity the moon and sun appeared,

candimasūriyesu pātubhūtesu nakkhattāni tāraṅkarūpāni pāturaheṣum.

stars and constellations appeared,

nakkhatteṣu tāraṅkarūpeṣu pātubhūtesu rattindivā paññāyimsu.

days and nights were distinguished,

rattindivesu paññāyamānesu māsaddhamāsā paññāyimsu.

and so were months and fortnights,

māsaddhamāsesu paññāyamānesu utusamvaccharā paññāyimsu.

and years and seasons.

ettāvatā kho, vāseṭṭha, ayaṃ loko puna vivaṭṭo hoti.

To this extent the world had evolved once more.

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā rasapathaviṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ
dīghamaddhānaṃ atthamsu.

*Then those beings eating the solid nectar, with that as their food and nourishment, remained
for a very long time.*

yathā yathā kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā rasapathaviṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā
ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthamsu tathā tathā tesam sattānaṃ rasapathaviṃ
paribhuñjantānaṃ kharattañceva kāyasmim okkami, vaṇṇavevaṇṇatā ca paññāyittha.

*But so long as they ate that solid nectar, their bodies became more solid and they diverged in
appearance;*

ekidaṃ sattā vaṇṇavanto honti, ekidaṃ sattā dubbaṇṇā.

some beautiful, some ugly.

tattha ye te sattā vaṇṇavanto, te dubbaṇṇe satte atimaññanti:

And the beautiful beings looked down on the ugly ones:

‘mayameteḥi vaṇṇavantatārā, amhehete dubbaṇṇatārā’ti.

‘We’re more beautiful, they’re the ugly ones!’

tesam vaṇṇātimānapaccayā mānātimānajātikānaṃ rasapathavī antaradhāyi.

And the vanity of the beautiful ones made the solid nectar vanish.

rasāya pathaviyā antarahitāya sannipatiṃsu.

They gathered together and bemoaned,

sannipatitvā anutthuniṃsu:

‘aho rasaṃ, aho rasan’ti.

‘Oh, what a taste! Oh, what a taste!’

tadetarahipi manussā kañcideva surasaṃ labhitvā evamāhaṃsu:

And even today when people get something tasty they say:

‘aho rasaṃ, aho rasan’ti.

‘Oh, what a taste! Oh, what a taste!’

tadeva porānaṃ aggaññaṃ akkharaṃ anusaranti, na tvevassa atthaṃ ājānanti.

*They’re just remembering an ancient traditional saying, but they don’t understand what it
means.*

4. bhūmipappaṭakapātubhāva

4. Ground-Sprouts

atha kho tesam, vāsetṭha, sattānaṃ rasāya pathaviyā antarahitāya bhūmipappaṭako pāturahosi.

When the solid nectar had vanished, ground-sprouts appeared to those beings.

seyyathāpi nāma ahicchattako; evameva pāturahosi.

They appeared just like mushrooms.

so ahosi vaṇṇasampanno gandhasampanno rasasampanno, seyyathāpi nāma sampannaṃ vā sappi sampannaṃ vā navaṇītaṃ evaṃvaṇṇo ahosi.

They were beautiful, fragrant, and delicious, like ghee or butter.

seyyathāpi nāma khuddamadhuṃ anelakaṃ; evamassādo ahosi.

And they were as sweet as pure manuka honey.

atha kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā bhūmipappaṭakaṃ upakkamiṃsu paribhuñjitum.

Then those beings started to eat the ground-sprouts.

te taṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu.

With that as their food and nourishment, they remained for a very long time.

yathā yathā kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā bhūmipappaṭakaṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu tathā tathā tesam sattānaṃ bhiyyoso mattāya kharattañceva kāyasmim ōkkami, vaṇṇavevaṇṇatā ca paññāyittha.

But so long as they ate those ground-sprouts, their bodies became more solid and they diverged in appearance;

ekidaṃ sattā vaṇṇavanto honti, ekidaṃ sattā dubbaṇṇā.

some beautiful, some ugly.

tattha ye te sattā vaṇṇavanto, te dubbaṇṇe satte atimaññanti:

And the beautiful beings looked down on the ugly ones:

‘mayameteḥi vaṇṇavantatarā, amhehete dubbaṇṇatarā’ ti.

‘We’re more beautiful, they’re the ugly ones!’

tesam vaṇṇatimānapaccayā mānātimānajātikānaṃ bhūmipappaṭako antaradhāyi.

And the vanity of the beautiful ones made the ground-sprouts vanish.

5. padālatāpātubhāva

5. Bursting Pods

bhūmipappaṭake antarahite padālatā pāturahosi, seyyathāpi nāma kalambukā; evameva pāturahosi.

When the ground-sprouts had vanished, bursting pods appeared, like the fruit of the kadam tree.

sā ahosi vaṇṇasampannā gandhasampannā rasasampannā, seyyathāpi nāma sampannaṃ vā sappi sampannaṃ vā navaṇītaṃ evaṃvaṇṇā ahosi.

They were beautiful, fragrant, and delicious, like ghee or butter.

seyyathāpi nāma khuddamadhuṃ anelakaṃ; evamassādā ahosi.

And they were as sweet as pure manuka honey.

atha kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā padālatāṃ upakkamiṃsu paribhuñjitum.

Then those beings started to eat the bursting pods.

te taṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu.

With that as their food and nourishment, they remained for a very long time.

yathā yathā kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā padālatāṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu tathā tathā tesam sattānaṃ bhiyyoso mattāya kharattañceva kāyasmim ōkkami, vaṇṇavevaṇṇatā ca paññāyittha.

But so long as they ate those bursting pods, their bodies became more solid and they diverged in appearance;

ekidaṃ sattā vaṇṇavanto honti, ekidaṃ sattā dubbaṇṇā.

some beautiful, some ugly.

tattha ye te sattā vaṇṇavanto, te dubbaṇṇe satte atimaññanti:

And the beautiful beings looked down on the ugly ones:

‘mayameteḥi vaṇṇavantatarā, amhehete dubbaṇṇatarā’ti.

‘We’re more beautiful, they’re the ugly ones!’

tesaṃ vaṇṇātimānapaccayā mānātimānajātikānaṃ padālatā antaradhāyi.

And the vanity of the beautiful ones made the bursting pods vanish.

padālatāya antarahitāya sannipatiṃsu. sannipatitvā anutthuniṃsu:

They gathered together and bemoaned,

‘ahu vata no, ahāyi vata no padālatā’ti.

‘Oh, what we’ve lost! Oh, what we’ve lost—those bursting pods!’

tadetarahipi manussā kenaci dukkhadhammena phutṭhā evamāhaṃsu:

And even today when people experience suffering they say:

‘ahu vata no, ahāyi vata no’ti.

‘Oh, what we’ve lost! Oh, what we’ve lost!’

tadeva porānaṃ aggaññaṃ akkharaṃ anusaranti, na tvevassa atthaṃ ājānanti.

They’re just remembering an ancient traditional saying, but they don’t understand what it means.

6. akatṭhapākasālīpātubhāva

6. Ripe Untilled Rice

atha kho tesaṃ, vāsetṭha, sattānaṃ padālatāya antarahitāya akatṭhapāko sāli pāturahosi akaṇo athuso suddho sugandho taṇḍulapphalo.

When the bursting pods had vanished, ripe untilled rice appeared to those beings. It had no powder or husk, pure and fragrant, with only the rice-grain.

yaṃ taṃ sāyaṃ sāyamāsāya āharanti, pāto taṃ hoti pakkam paṭivirūlhaṃ.

What they took for supper in the evening, by the morning had grown back and ripened.

yaṃ taṃ pāto pātarāsāya āharanti, sāyaṃ taṃ hoti pakkam paṭivirūlhaṃ;

And what they took for breakfast in the morning had grown back and ripened by the evening.

nāpadānaṃ paññāyati.

so the cutting didn’t show.

atha kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā akatṭhapākaṃ sāliṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu.

Then those beings eating the ripe untilled rice, with that as their food and nourishment, remained for a very long time.

7. itthipurisaliṅgapātubhāva

7. Gender Appears

yathā yathā kho te, vāsetṭha, sattā akatṭhapākaṃ sāliṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ atthaṃsu tathā tathā tesaṃ sattānaṃ bhiyyoso mattāya kharattaṇṇeva kāyasmiṃ okkami, vaṇṇavevaṇṇatā ca paññāyittha, itthiā ca itthiliṅgaṃ pāturahosi purisassa ca purisaliṅgaṃ.

But so long as they ate that ripe untilled rice, their bodies became more solid and they diverged in appearance. And female characteristics appeared on women, while male characteristics appeared on men.

itthī ca purisaṃ ativelaṃ upanijjhāyati puriso ca itthiṃ.

Women spent too much time gazing at men, and men at women.

tesaṃ ativelaṃ aññamaññaṃ upanijjhāyataṃ sārāgo udapādi, pariḷāho kāyasmiṃ okkami.

They became lustful, and their bodies burned with fever.

te pariḷāhapaccayā methunaṃ dhammaṃ paṭiseviṃsu.

Due to this fever they had sex with each other.

ye kho pana te, vāseṭṭha, tena samayena sattā passanti methunaṃ dhammaṃ paṭisevante, aññe paṃsuṃ khipanti, aññe seṭṭhiṃ khipanti, aññe gomayaṃ khipanti:
Those who saw them having sex pelted them with dirt, ashes, or cow-dung, saying,

‘nassa asuci, nassa asucī’ti.
‘Get lost, filth! Get lost, filth!’

‘kathañhi nāma satto sattassa evarūpaṃ karissatī’ti.
How on earth can one being do that to another?’

tadetarhipi manussā ekaccesu janapadesu vadhuyā nibbuyhamānāya aññe paṃsuṃ khipanti, aññe seṭṭhiṃ khipanti, aññe gomayaṃ khipanti.
And even today people in some countries, when a bride is carried off, pelt her with dirt, ashes, or cow-dung.

tadeva porāṇaṃ aggaññaṃ akkharaṃ anusaranti, na tvevassa atthaṃ ājānanti.
They’re just remembering an ancient traditional saying, but they don’t understand what it means.

8. methunadhammasamācāra 8. Sexual Intercourse

adhammasammatam kho pana, vāseṭṭha, tena samayena hoti, tadetarahi dhammasammatam.
What was reckoned as immoral at that time, these days is reckoned as moral.

ye kho pana, vāseṭṭha, tena samayena sattā methunaṃ dhammaṃ paṭisevanti, te māsampi dvemāsampi na labhanti gāmaṃ vā nigamaṃ vā pavisitum.
The beings who had sex together weren’t allowed to enter a village or town for one or two months.

yato kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā tasmim asaddhamme ativeḷaṃ pātabyataṃ āpajjimsu.
Ever since they excessively threw themselves into immorality,

atha agārāni upakkamimsu kātuṃ tasseva asaddhammassa paṭicchādanatthaṃ.
they started to make buildings to hide their immoral deeds.

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññatarassa sattassa alasajātikassa etadahosi:
Then one of those beings of idle disposition thought,

‘ambho, kimevāhaṃ vihaññāmi sāliṃ āharanto sāyaṃ sāyamāsāya pāto pātarāsāya.
‘Hey now, why should I be bothered to gather rice in the evening for supper, and in the morning for breakfast?’

yannūnāhaṃ sāliṃ āhareyyaṃ sakideva sāyapātarāsāyā’ti.
Why don’t I gather rice for supper and breakfast all at once?’

atha kho so, vāseṭṭha, satto sāliṃ āhāsi sakideva sāyapātarāsāya.
So that’s what he did.

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññataro satto yena so satto tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtivā taṃ sattaṃ etadavoca:
Then one of the other beings approached that being and said,

‘ehi, bho satta, sālāhāraṃ gamissāmā’ti.
‘Come, good being, we shall go to gather rice.’

‘alam, bho satta, āhato me sāli sakideva sāyapātarāsāyā’ti.
‘There’s no need, good being! I gathered rice for supper and breakfast all at once.’

atha kho so, vāseṭṭha, satto tassa sattassa diṭṭhānugatiṃ āpajjamāno sāliṃ āhāsi sakideva dvihāya. ‘evampi kira, bho, sādhu’ti.
So that being, following their example, gathered rice for two days all at once, thinking: ‘This seems fine.’

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññataro satto yena so satto tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtivā taṃ sattaṃ etadavoca:
Then one of the other beings approached that being and said,

‘ehi, bho satta, sālāhāraṃ gamissāmā’ti.

‘Come, good being, we shall go to gather rice.’

‘alam, bho satta, āhato me sāli sakideva dvīhāyā’ti.

‘There’s no need, good being! I gathered rice for two days all at once.’

atha kho so, vāseṭṭha, satto tassa sattassa dīṭhānugatiṃ āpajjamāno sāliṃ āhāsi sakideva catūhāyā, ‘evampi kira, bho, sādhu’ti.

So that being, following their example, gathered rice for four days all at once, thinking: ‘This seems fine.’

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññataro satto yena so satto tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamitvā taṃ sattam etadavoca:

Then one of the other beings approached that being and said,

‘ehi, bho satta, sālāhāraṃ gamissāmā’ti.

‘Come, good being, we shall go to gather rice.’

‘alam, bho satta, āhato me sāli sakideva catūhāyā’ti.

‘There’s no need, good being! I gathered rice for four days all at once.’

atha kho so, vāseṭṭha, satto tassa sattassa dīṭhānugatiṃ āpajjamāno sāliṃ āhāsi sakideva aṭṭhāhāyā, ‘evampi kira, bho, sādhu’ti.

So that being, following their example, gathered rice for eight days all at once, thinking: ‘This seems fine.’

yato kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā sannidhikāraṃ sāliṃ upakkamiṃsu paribhuñjitum.

But when they started to store up rice to eat,

atha kaṇopi taṇḍulaṃ pariyonandhi, thusopi taṇḍulaṃ pariyonandhi;

the rice grains became wrapped in powder and husk,

lūnampi nappativirūḷhaṃ, apadānaṃ paññāyittha, saṇḍasaṇḍā sālayo aṭṭhamsu.

it didn’t grow back after reaping, the cutting showed, and the rice stood in clumps.

9. sālīvibhāga

9. Dividing the Fields

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā sannipatiṃsu, sannipatitvā anutthuniṃsu:

Then those beings gathered together and bemoaned,

‘pāpakā vata, bho, dhammā sattesu pātubhūtā.

‘Oh, how wicked things have appeared among beings!’

mayañhi pubbe manomayā ahumhā pītibhakkhā sayampabhā antalikkhacarā subhatṭhāyino, ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ aṭṭhamhā.

For we used to be mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the sky, steadily glorious, and we remained like that for a very long time.

tesaṃ no amhākaṃ kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena rasapathavī udakasmīṃ samatani.

After a very long period had passed, solid nectar curdled in the water.

sā ahosi vaṇṇasampannā gandhasampannā rasasampannā.

te mayaṃ rasapathaviṃ hatthehi āluppakāraṃ upakkamimha paribhuñjitum, tesaṃ no rasapathaviṃ hatthehi āluppakāraṃ upakkamataṃ paribhuñjitum sayampabhā antaradhāyi.

sayampabhāya antarahitāya candimasūriyā pāturaheṣuṃ, candimasūriyesu pātubhūtesu nakkhattāni tārakarūpāni pāturaheṣuṃ, nakkhattesu tārakarūpesu pātubhūtesu rattindivā paññāyiṃsu, rattindivesu paññāyamānesu māsaḍḍhamāsā paññāyiṃsu.

māsaḍḍhamāsesu paññāyamānesu utusaṃvaccharā paññāyiṃsu.

te mayam rasapathaviṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ
dīghamaddhānaṃ aṭṭhamhā.

tesaṃ no pāpakānaṃyeva akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pātubhāvā rasapathavi
antaradhāyi.

But due to bad, unskillful things among us, the savory nectar vanished,

rasapathaviyā antarahitāya bhūmipappaṭako pāturahosi.

so ahosi vaṇṇasampanno gandhasampanno rasantampanno.

te mayam bhūmipappaṭakaṃ upakkamimha paribhuñjitum.

te mayam taṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ
aṭṭhamhā.

tesaṃ no pāpakānaṃyeva akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pātubhāvā bhūmipappaṭako
antaradhāyi.

the ground-sprouts vanished,

bhūmipappaṭake antarahite padālatā pāturahosi.

sā ahosi vaṇṇasampannā gandhasampannā rasantampannā.

te mayam padālatam upakkamimha paribhuñjitum.

te mayam taṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ dīghamaddhānaṃ
aṭṭhamhā.

tesaṃ no pāpakānaṃyeva akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pātubhāvā padālatā antaradhāyi.
the bursting pods vanished,

padālatāya antarahitāya akatṭhapāko sāli pāturahosi akaṇo athuso suddho sugandho
taṇḍulapphalo.

yaṃ taṃ sāyaṃ sāyamāsāya āharāma, pāto taṃ hoti pakkaṃ paṭivirūḷhaṃ.

yaṃ taṃ pāto pātārāsāya āharāma, sāyaṃ taṃ hoti pakkaṃ paṭivirūḷhaṃ.

nāpadānaṃ paññāyittha.

te mayam akatṭhapākaṃ sāliṃ paribhuñjantā tambhakkhā tadāhārā ciraṃ
dīghamaddhānaṃ aṭṭhamhā.

tesaṃ no pāpakānaṃyeva akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pātubhāvā kaṇopi taṇḍulam
pariyonandhi, thusopi taṇḍulam pariyonandhi, lūnampi nappaṭivirūḷhaṃ, apadānaṃ
paññāyittha, saṇḍasaṇḍā sālayo ṭhitā.

*and now the rice grains have become wrapped in powder and husk, it doesn't grow back after
reaping, the cutting shows, and the rice stands in clumps.*

yannūna mayam sāliṃ vibhajeyyāma, mariyādaṃ ṭhapeyyāma'ti.

We'd better divide up the rice and set boundaries.'

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā sāliṃ vibhajimsu, mariyādaṃ ṭhapesuṃ.

So that's what they did.

atha kho, vāseṭṭha, aññataro satto lolajātiko sakam bhāgaṃ parirakkhanto aññataram bhāgaṃ adinnaṃ ādiyitvā paribhuñji.

Now, one of those beings was reckless. While guarding their own share they took another's share without it being given, and ate it.

tamenam aggahesum, gahetvā etadavocum:

They grabbed the one who had done this and said,

‘pāpakam vata, bho satta, karosi, yatra hi nāma sakam bhāgaṃ parirakkhanto aññataram bhāgaṃ adinnaṃ ādiyitvā paribhuñjasi.

‘You have done a bad thing, good being, in that while guarding your own share you took another's share without it being given, and ate it.

māssu, bho satta, punapi evarūpamakāsi’ti.

Do not do such a thing again.’

‘evam, bho’ti kho, vāseṭṭha, so satto tesam sattānam paccassosi.

‘Yes, sirs,’ replied that being.

dutiyaampi kho, vāseṭṭha, so satto ... pe ...

But for a second time,

tatiyaampi kho, vāseṭṭha, so satto sakam bhāgaṃ parirakkhanto aññataram bhāgaṃ adinnaṃ ādiyitvā paribhuñji.

and a third time they did the same thing, and were told not to continue.

tamenam aggahesum, gahetvā etadavocum:

‘pāpakam vata, bho satta, karosi, yatra hi nāma sakam bhāgaṃ parirakkhanto aññataram bhāgaṃ adinnaṃ ādiyitvā paribhuñjasi.

māssu, bho satta, punapi evarūpamakāsi’ti.

aññe pañinā pahariṃsu, aññe leḍḍunā pahariṃsu, aññe daṇḍena pahariṃsu.

And then they struck that being, some with fists, others with stones, and still others with rods.

tadagge kho, vāseṭṭha, adinnādānam paññāyati, garahā paññāyati, musāvādo paññāyati, daṇḍādānam paññāyati.

From that day on stealing was found, and blaming and lying and the taking up of rods.

10. mahāsammatarājā

10. The Elected King

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā sannipatiṃsu, sannipatitvā anutthuniṃsu:

Then those beings gathered together and bemoaned,

‘pāpakā vata bho dhammā sattesu pātubhūtā, yatra hi nāma adinnādānam paññāyissati, garahā paññāyissati, musāvādo paññāyissati, daṇḍādānam paññāyissati.

‘Oh, how wicked things have appeared among beings, in that stealing is found, and blaming and lying and the taking up of rods!

yannūna mayam ekam sattam sammanneyyāma, yo no sammā khīyitabbam khīyeyya, sammā garahitabbam garaheyya, sammā pabbājetabbam pabbājeyya.

Why don't we elect one being who would rightly accuse those who deserve it, blame those who deserve it, and expel those who deserve it?

mayam panassa sālinam bhāgaṃ anuppadassamā’ti.

We shall pay them with a share of rice.’

atha kho te, vāseṭṭha, sattā yo nesam satto abhirūpataro ca dassanīyataro ca pāsādikataro ca mahesakkhataro ca tam sattam upasaṅkamitvā etadavocum:

Then those beings approached the being among them who was most attractive, good-looking, lovely, and illustrious, and said,

‘ehi, bho satta, sammā khīyitabbaṃ khīya, sammā garahitabbaṃ garaha, sammā pabbājetabbaṃ pabbājehi.

‘Come, good being, rightly accuse those who deserve it, blame those who deserve it, and banish those who deserve it.

mayam pana te sālīnaṃ bhāgaṃ anuppadassāma’ti.

We shall pay you with a share of rice.’

‘evaṃ, bho’ti kho, vāseṭṭha, so satto tesam sattānaṃ paṭissunitvā sammā khīyitabbaṃ khīyi, sammā garahitabbaṃ garahi, sammā pabbājetabbaṃ pabbājesi.

‘Yes, sirs,’ replied that being. They acted accordingly,

te panassa sālīnaṃ bhāgaṃ anuppadamsu.

and were paid with a share of rice.

mahājanasammatoti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘mahāsammato, mahāsammato’ tveva paṭhamam akkharam upanibbattaṃ.

‘Elected by the people’, Vāseṭṭha, is the meaning of ‘elected one’, the first term to be specifically invented for them.

khettānaṃ adhipatīti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘khattiyo, khattiyo’ tveva dutiyam akkharam upanibbattaṃ.

‘Lord of the fields’ is the meaning of ‘aristocrat’, the second term to be specifically invented.

dhammena pare rañjetīti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘rājā, rājā’ tveva tatiyam akkharam upanibbattaṃ.

‘They please others with principle’ is the meaning of ‘king’, the third term to be specifically invented.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, evametassa khattiyamaṇḍalassa porāṇena aggaññena akkharena abhinibbatti āhosi tesameva sattānaṃ, anaññesaṃ. sadisānaṃyeva, no asadisānaṃ. dhammeneva, no adhammena.

And that, Vāseṭṭha, is how the ancient traditional terms for the circle of aristocrats were created; for those very beings, not others; for those like them, not unlike; legitimately, not illegitimately.

dhammo hi, vāseṭṭha, seṭṭho janetasmiṃ diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

For principle, Vāseṭṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

11. brāhmaṇamaṇḍala

11. The Circle of Brahmins

atha kho tesam, vāseṭṭha, sattānaṃyeva ekaccānaṃ etadahosi:

Then some of those same beings thought,

‘pāpakā vata, bho, dhammā sattesu pātubhūtā, yatra hi nāma adinnādānaṃ paññāyissati, garahā paññāyissati, musāvādo paññāyissati, daṇḍādānaṃ paññāyissati, pabbājanaṃ paññāyissati.

‘Oh, how wicked things have appeared among beings, in that stealing is found, and blaming and lying and the taking up of rods and banishment!’

yannūna mayam pāpake akusale dhamme vāheyyāma’ti.

Why don’t we set aside bad, unskillful things?’

te pāpake akusale dhamme vāhesuṃ.

So that’s what they did.

pāpake akusale dhamme vāhentīti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘brāhmaṇā, brāhmaṇā’ tveva paṭhamam akkharam upanibbattaṃ.

‘They set aside bad, unskillful things’ is the meaning of ‘brahmin’, the first term to be specifically invented for them.

te araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiyo karitvā paṇṇakuṭiṣu jhāyanti vītaṅgārā vītadhūmā pannamusalā sāyaṃ sāyamāsāya pāto pātārāsāya gāmanigamarājadhāniyo osaranti ghāsamesamānā.

They built leaf huts in a wilderness region where they meditated pure and bright, without lighting cooking fires or digging the soil. They came down in the morning for breakfast and in the evening for supper to the village, town, or royal capital seeking a meal.

te ghāsaṃ paṭilabhitvā punadeva araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiṣu jhāyanti.

When they had obtained food they continued to meditate in the leaf huts.

tameṇaṃ manussā disvā evamāhaṃsu:

When people noticed this they said,

‘ime kho, bho, sattā araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiyo karitvā paṇṇakuṭiṣu jhāyanti, vītaṅgārā vītadhūmā pannamusalā sāyaṃ sāyamāsāya pāto pātārāsāya gāmanigamarājadhāniyo osaranti ghāsamesamānā.

‘These beings build leaf huts in a wilderness region where they meditate pure and bright, without lighting cooking fires or digging the soil. They come down in the morning for breakfast and in the evening for supper to the village, town, or royal capital seeking a meal.

te ghāsaṃ paṭilabhitvā punadeva araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiṣu jhāyanti’ti,

When they have obtained food they continue to meditate in the leaf huts.’

jhāyanti’ti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘jhāyakā, jhāyakā’ tveva dutiyaṃ akkharaṃ upanibbattaṃ.

‘They meditate’ is the meaning of ‘meditator’, the second term to be specifically invented for them.

tesaṃyeva kho, vāseṭṭha, sattānaṃ ekacce sattā araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiṣu taṃ jhānaṃ anabhisambhuṇamānā gāmasāmantāṃ nigamasāmantāṃ osaritvā ganthe karontā acchanti.

But some of those beings were unable to keep up with their meditation in the leaf huts in the wilderness. They came down to the neighborhood of a village or town where they dwell compiling texts.

tameṇaṃ manussā disvā evamāhaṃsu:

When people noticed this they said,

‘ime kho, bho, sattā araṇṇāyatane paṇṇakuṭiṣu taṃ jhānaṃ anabhisambhuṇamānā gāmasāmantāṃ nigamasāmantāṃ osaritvā ganthe karontā acchanti, na dānime jhāyanti’ti.

‘These beings were unable to keep up with their meditation in the leaf huts in the wilderness. They came down to the neighborhood of a village or town where they dwell compiling texts. Now they don’t meditate.’

na dānime jhāyanti’ti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘ajjhāyakā, ajjhāyakā’ tveva tatiyaṃ akkharaṃ upanibbattaṃ.

‘Now they don’t meditate’ is the meaning of ‘reciter’, the third term to be specifically invented for them.

hīnasammatāṃ kho pana, vāseṭṭha, tena samayena hoti, tadetarahi seṭṭhasammatāṃ.

What was reckoned as lesser at that time, these days is reckoned as better.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, evametassa brāhmaṇamaṇḍalassa porāṇena aggañṇena akkharena abhinibbatti ahoṣi tesaṃyeva sattānaṃ, anañṇesaṃ sadisānaṃyeva no asadisānaṃ dhammeneva, no adhammena.

And that, Vāseṭṭha, is how the ancient traditional terms for the circle of brahmins were created; for those very beings, not others; for those like them, not unlike; legitimately, not illegitimately.

dhammo hi, vāseṭṭha, seṭṭho janetasmim diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇca.

For principle, Vāseṭṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

12. vessamaṇḍala

12. The Circle of Merchants

tesaṃyeva kho, vāseṭṭha, sattānaṃ ekacce sattā methunaṃ dhammaṃ samādāya visukammante payojesuṃ.

Some of those same beings, taking up an active sex life, applied themselves to various jobs.

methunaṃ dhammaṃ samādāya visukammante payojentīti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘vessā, vessā’ tveva akkharaṃ upanibbattaṃ.

‘Having taken up an active sex life, they apply themselves to various jobs’ is the meaning of ‘merchant’, the term specifically invented for them.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, evametassa vessamaṇḍalassa porāṇena aggaññena akkharena abhinibbatti āhosi tesaññeva sattānaṃ anaññesaṃ sadisānaṃyeva, no asadisānaṃ, dhammeneva no adhammena.

And that, Vāseṭṭha, is how the ancient traditional term for the circle of merchants was created; for those very beings, not others; for those like them, not unlike; legitimately, not illegitimately.

dhammo hi, vāseṭṭha, settho janetasmiṃ diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

For principle, Vāseṭṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

13. suddamaṇḍala

13. The Circle of Workers

tesaññeva kho, vāseṭṭha, sattānaṃ ye te sattā avasesā te luddācārā khuddācārā ahesuṃ.

The remaining beings lived by hunting and menial tasks.

luddācārā khuddācārāti kho, vāseṭṭha, ‘suddā, suddā’ tveva akkharaṃ upanibbattaṃ.

‘They live by hunting and menial tasks’ is the meaning of ‘worker’, the term specifically invented for them.

iti kho, vāseṭṭha, evametassa suddamaṇḍalassa porāṇena aggaññena akkharena abhinibbatti āhosi tesaṃyeva sattānaṃ anaññesaṃ, sadisānaṃyeva no asadisānaṃ, dhammeneva, no adhammena.

And that, Vāseṭṭha, is how the ancient traditional term for the circle of workers was created; for those very beings, not others; for those like them, not unlike; legitimately, not illegitimately.

dhammo hi, vāseṭṭha, settho janetasmiṃ diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

For principle, Vāseṭṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

ahu kho so, vāseṭṭha, samayo, yaṃ khattiyopi sakaṃ dhammaṃ garahamāno agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajati:

There came a time when an aristocrat, brahmin, merchant, or worker, deprecating their own vocation, went forth from the lay life to homelessness, thinking,

‘samaṇo bhavissāmī’ti.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

vessopi kho, vāseṭṭha ... pe ...

suddopi kho, vāseṭṭha, sakaṃ dhammaṃ garahamāno agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajati:

‘samaṇo bhavissāmī’ti.

‘I will be an ascetic.’

imehi kho, vāseṭṭha, catūhi maṇḍalehi samaṇamaṇḍalassa abhinibbatti āhosi, tesaṃyeva sattānaṃ anaññesaṃ, sadisānaṃyeva no asadisānaṃ, dhammeneva no adhammena.

And that, Vāseṭṭha, is how these four circles were created; for those very beings, not others; for those like them, not unlike; legitimately, not illegitimately.

dhammo hi, vāseṭṭha, settho janetasmiṃ diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇa.

For principle, Vāseṭṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

14. duccaritādikathā

14. On Bad Conduct

khattiyopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena duccharitaṃ caritvā vācāya duccharitaṃ caritvā manasā duccharitaṃ caritvā micchādītṭhiko micchādītṭhikammasamādāno micchādītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ apāyaṃ duggatīṃ vinipātaṃ nirayaṃ upapajjati.

An aristocrat, brahmin, merchant, worker, or ascetic may do bad things by way of body, speech, and mind. They have wrong view, and they act out of that wrong view. And because of that, when their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a place of loss, a bad place, the underworld, hell.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha ... pe ...

vessopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

suddopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

samaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena duccharitaṃ caritvā vācāya duccharitaṃ caritvā manasā duccharitaṃ caritvā micchādītṭhiko micchādītṭhikammasamādāno micchādītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ apāyaṃ duggatīṃ vinipātaṃ nirayaṃ upapajjati.

khattiyopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena sucaritaṃ caritvā vācāya sucaritaṃ caritvā manasā sucaritaṃ caritvā sammādītṭhiko sammādītṭhikammasamādāno sammādītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ sugatīṃ saggamaṃ lokamaṃ upapajjati.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha ... pe ...

vessopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

suddopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

samaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena sucaritaṃ caritvā vācāya sucaritaṃ caritvā manasā sucaritaṃ caritvā sammādītṭhiko sammādītṭhikammasamādāno sammādītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ sugatīṃ saggamaṃ lokamaṃ upapajjati.

An aristocrat, brahmin, merchant, worker, or ascetic may do good things by way of body, speech, and mind. They have right view, and they act out of that right view. And because of that, when their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a good place, a heavenly realm.

khattiyopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena dvayakārī, vācāya dvayakārī, manasā dvayakārī, vimissadītṭhiko vimissadītṭhikammasamādāno vimissadītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ sukhadukkhappaṭisaṃvedī hoti.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha ... pe ...

vessopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

suddopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

samaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena dvayakārī, vācāya dvayakārī, manasā dvayakārī, vimissadītṭhiko vimissadītṭhikammasamādāno vimissadītṭhikammasamādānahetu kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇaṃ sukhadukkhappaṭisaṃvedī hoti.

15. bodhipakkhiyabhāvanā

15. The Qualities That Lead to Awakening

khattiyopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena saṃvuto vācāya saṃvuto manasā saṃvuto
sattannaṃ bodhipakkhiyānaṃ dhammānaṃ bhāvanamanvāya diṭṭheva dhamme
parinibbāyati.

An aristocrat, brahmin, merchant, worker, or ascetic who is restrained in body, speech, and mind, and develops the seven qualities that lead to awakening, becomes extinguished in this very life.

brāhmaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha ... pe ...

vessopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

suddopi kho, vāsetṭha ...

samaṇopi kho, vāsetṭha, kāyena saṃvuto vācāya saṃvuto manasā saṃvuto
sattannaṃ bodhipakkhiyānaṃ dhammānaṃ bhāvanamanvāya diṭṭheva dhamme
parinibbāyati.

imesaṇhi, vāsetṭha, catunnaṃ vaṇṇānaṃ yo hoti bhikkhu araham khīṇāsavo vusitavā
katakaraṇīyo ohitabhāro anuppattāsadattho parikkhīṇabhavasamyojaṇo
sammadaññāvimutto, so nesaṃ aggamakkhāyati dhammeneva, no adhammena.

Any mendicant from these four castes who is perfected—with defilements ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their own true goal, utterly ended the fetters of rebirth, and is rightly freed through enlightenment—is said to be the best by virtue of principle, not without principle.

dhammo hi, vāsetṭha, setṭho janetasmiṃ diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇca.

For principle, Vāsetṭha, is the best thing about people in both this life and the next.

brahmunā pesā, vāsetṭha, sanaṅkumārena gāthā bhāsītā:

Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra also spoke this verse:

‘khattiyo setṭho janetasmiṃ,

‘The aristocrat is best of those people

ye gottapaṭisārino;

who take clan as the standard.

vijjācaraṇasampanno,

But one accomplished in knowledge and conduct

so setṭho devamānuse’ti.

is best of gods and humans.’

sā kho panesā, vāsetṭha, brahmunā sanaṅkumārena gāthā sugītā, no duggītā.

subhāsītā, no dubbhāsītā. atthasaṃhitā, no anattasaṃhitā. anumatā mayā.

That verse was well sung by Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra, not poorly sung; well spoken, not poorly spoken; beneficial, not harmful, and I agree with it.

ahampi, vāsetṭha, evaṃ vadāmi—

I also say:

khattiyo setṭho janetasmiṃ,

The aristocrat is best of those people

ye gottapaṭisārino;

who take clan as the standard.

vijjācaraṇasampanno,

But one accomplished in knowledge and conduct

so setṭho devamānuse’”ti.

is best of gods and humans.”

idamavoca bhagavā.

That is what the Buddha said.

attamanā vāseṭṭhabhāradvājā bhagavato bhāsitam abhinanduntī.

Satisfied, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were happy with what the Buddha said.

aggaññasuttam niṭṭhitam catuttham.