

# Thiṃsa Buddhadhammatā

## Thirty Things that Invariably Happen with the Buddhas

(from the end of the *Buddhavaṃsa* commentary)<sup>1</sup>

**Sabbabuddhānaṃ samattimsavidhā dhammatā, seyyathidaṃ:**

The thirty things that invariably happen with all Buddhas, are as follows:

**Pacchimabhavikabodhisattassa sampajānassa mātukucchi-okkamaṇaṃ**

At the moment of descent into his mother's womb the Buddha-to-be has full awareness that this is his final rebirth [1]

**Mātukucchiyaṃ pallaṅkena nisīditvā, bahimukholokanaṃ**

After sitting cross legged in his Mother's womb, looking towards the front [2]

**Thitāya Bodhisattamātuyā vijāyanaṃ**

The delivery of the Buddha-to-be's Mother while standing [3]

**Araññe yeva Mātukucchito nikkhamaṇaṃ**

Exiting his Mother's womb only in a forest wilderness [4]

**Kañcanaṇṇesu paṭiṭṭhitapādānaṃ, uttarābhimukhānaṃ, sattapadavīhārānaṃ gantvā, catuddisaṃ oloketvā, sīhanādanadanaṃ**

With his feet placed on golden cloth, while facing the north, after taking seven strides, and looking to the four directions, the roaring of a lion's roar<sup>2</sup> [5]

**Cattāri nimittāni disvā, jātamattaputtānaṃ, Mahāsattānaṃ mahābhinnikkhamaṇaṃ**

After seeing the four signs,<sup>3</sup> and as soon as a son is born,<sup>4</sup> the great renunciation of the Great Brings [6]

**Arahaddhajaṃ-ādāya pabbajitvā, sabbaheṭṭhimena paricchedena, sattāhaṃ padhānacariyā**

After going forth wearing the flag of the Worthy Ones<sup>5</sup> and so forth, with the cutting off of all low (states), striving for seven days (at least)<sup>6</sup> [7]

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<sup>1</sup> From BvA 28, *Buddhapakiṇṇakakathā, A Miscellany about the Buddhas*. The text follows the Burmese Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana edition, as found on the CSCD, Igatpuri (1999). PTS has some small variations, which are unimportant, except in one instance noted below.

<sup>2</sup> The lion's roar are the verses he spoke just after birth: *I am the greatest in the world, I am the elder in the world, I am the best in the world. This is my last birth, there is no more rebirth for me* (DN 14).

<sup>3</sup> That is, the sign of sickness, old-age, death and a renunciant at peace. They are sometimes referred to as the *devadūta*, *the messenger's from the gods*, as they were made by the gods so that the Awakening Being would make his renunciation.

<sup>4</sup> Gotama Buddha renounced the world the day his son Rāhula was born.

<sup>5</sup> This means the yellow robe, traditionally worn by ascetics, in their quest for Awakening.

<sup>6</sup> Siddhattha practiced for six years, but that is because of an unwholesome deed he did in the past (see Why the Buddha Suffered elsewhere on this website). The minimum time an Awakening Being must practice, as stated here, is seven days.

**Sambodhiṃ pāpuṇanadvase pāyāsabhojanam**

The eating of milk-rice meal on the day he attains Complete Awakening<sup>7</sup> [8]

**Tiṇasanthāre nisīditvā sabbaññutañāṇādhigamo**

Reaching omniscience<sup>8</sup> after sitting on a spread of grass, [9]

**Ānāpānassatikammaṭṭhānaparikammaṃ**

The preparation of his meditation using the subject of in-breathing and out-breathing [10]

**Mārabalaviddhamsanam**

The crushing of Māra's army<sup>9</sup> [11]

**Bodhipallaṅke yeva tisso vijjā ādim katvā, asādhāraṇañāṇādiguṇapaṭilābho**

After gaining the three knowledges and so on while sitting cross-legged at the Bodhi (Tree), acquiring the virtue of the knowledges not shared (with others)<sup>10</sup> and so on [12]

**Sattasattāham Bodhisamīpe yeva vītināmanam**

Spending seven times seven days in the vicinity of the Bodhi Tree<sup>11</sup> [13]

**Mahābrahmuno Dhammadesanattāyā āyācanam**

The request for him to preach the Dhamma being made by Mahā Brahmā<sup>12</sup> [14]

**Isipatane Migadāye Dhammacakkapavattanam**

The Rolling of the Dhamma-Wheel in the Deer Park at Isipatana<sup>13</sup> [15]

**Māghapuṇṇamāya caturaṅgikasannipāte Pātimokkhuḍdeso**

The recitation of the (Ovāda) Pātimokkha to the assembly endowed with four qualities<sup>14</sup> on the full moon day of Māgha<sup>15</sup> [16]

**Jetavanaṭṭhāne nibaddhavāso**

Regularly residing in Jeta's Wood<sup>16</sup> [17]

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<sup>7</sup> The meal was given to Siddhattha by Sujāta, traditionally held to be the Mother of Yasa. She later became one of his first lay women disciples (*upāsikā*), and along with Yasa's former wife, her daughter-in-law, she was one of the first women to attain Stream-Entry.

<sup>8</sup> That is, attained Awakening; the grass was given to Siddhattha by Sotthiya.

<sup>9</sup> At the foot of the Bodhi Tree, following which he develops his concentration and insight.

<sup>10</sup> This goes further than simply attaining Awakening, and implies the six special knowledges available only to a Sammāsambuddha: knowledge of others' faculties, underlying tendencies, the double-miracle, the great compassion, omniscience and unobstructed knowledge (see Paṭisambhidāmagga 68 ff).

<sup>11</sup> Immediately after the Awakening. The Buddha spent seven days looking gratefully at the Bodhi Tree (this is known as *the unblinking worship, animisapūjā*), and seven weeks in the broad vicinity of the Bodhi Tree, before walking to Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī.

<sup>12</sup> At the end of the seventh week.

<sup>13</sup> Taught to the five ascetics, and a large assembly of gods. This is the preaching of the Dhammacakkapavattanasuttaṃ, the Discourse which set the Dhamma-Wheel Rolling, seventeen versions of which still survive.

<sup>14</sup> This was in the first year of the Awakening. The qualities are: they all had the same preceptor, the Buddha himself; they were all Worthy Ones (*Arahanta*); they arrived spontaneously at the gathering; and the Buddha gave the Ovādapātimokkha: *Not doing any bad deeds, undertaking wholesome deeds, and purifying one's mind - this is the teaching of the Buddhas.*

<sup>15</sup> Normally falling in January.

<sup>16</sup> The Buddha eventually made Sāvattī, and particularly Jeta's Wood his base.

**Sāvattinagaradvāre yamakapāṭihāriyakaraṇaṃ,**

The performance of the twin miracle<sup>17</sup> at the gate of the city of Sāvatti<sup>18</sup> [18]

**Tāvatiṃsabhavane Abhidhammadesanā**

The preaching of the Abhidhamma in the Realm of the Thirty-Three<sup>19</sup> [19]

**Saṅkassanagaradvāre devalokato otaraṇaṃ**

The descent from the world of the gods<sup>20</sup> to the gate of city of Saṅkassa<sup>21</sup> [20]

**Satataṃ phalasaṃpattisaṃpajjanaṃ**

The entering into fruition-attainment<sup>22</sup> regularly [21]

**Dvīsu vāresu veneyyajanāvalokaṇaṃ**

The looking for the people who are capable of being led (to Awakening) on two occasions<sup>23</sup> [22]

**Uppanne vatthumhi sikkhāpadapaññāpanaṃ**

The declaration of the precepts only when an occasion arises<sup>24</sup> [23]

**Uppannāya aṭṭhuppattiyā Jātakakathaṇaṃ**

The narration of the Birth-Stories when an occasion for relating their meaning has arisen [24]

**Ñāṭisaṃgāme Buddhavaṃsakathaṇaṃ**

The narration of the Lineage of the Buddhas in an assembly of his relatives<sup>25</sup> [25]

**Āgantukehi bhikkhūhi paṭisaṅghāraṇaṃ**

The giving of a kind reception to incoming monks [26]

**Nimantitānaṃ Vuṭṭhavassānaṃ anāpucchā agamaṇaṃ**

Not departing at the end of the Rains Retreat without asking those who invited him [27]

**Divase divase purebhattapacchābhattapaṭhamamajjhimapacchimayāmakiccakaraṇaṃ**

Day by day performing his duties before the meal, after the meal, and in the first, middle and last watch of the night [28]

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<sup>17</sup> Performed to confute the heretics, it consisted of emitting fire and water from his body.

<sup>18</sup> Which was the capital of Kosala.

<sup>19</sup> Traditionally said to have been in the seventh Rains Retreat. Tāvatiṃsa is held to be two worlds above our own.

<sup>20</sup> This means at the end of the Rains Retreat teaching the Abhidhamma.

<sup>21</sup> One of the more westerly cities in the Middle Country.

<sup>22</sup> This is the ability to produce the supermundane consciousness that arises when attaining awakening.

<sup>23</sup> In the PTS edition this reads: *Dvīsu jhānesu, in two absorptions*; if that reading is correct I do not understand the reference at all; if the adopted reading is correct, then it possibly means, the occasion after Mahā Brahmā had requested him to teach, when he looked for someone to give the first teaching to; and in the mornings, when he would look around the world to see who could be brought to Awakening that day.

<sup>24</sup> That is, he doesn't produce a disciplinary code in the abstract, like a constitution, but through precedent, as in English common law.

<sup>25</sup> The book that this is a commentary on. This was directly after performing the double-miracle, and at the urging of Ven. Sāriputta, at the head of five-hundred Worthy Ones.

**Parinibbānadvase maṃsarasabhojanāṃ**

The eating of a meal consisting of flesh on the day he attains Final Emancipation [29]

**Catuvīsatiakoṭṭisatasahasasamāpattiyo samāpajjitvā, parinibbānan-ti**

After attaining the twenty-four hundred thousand thousand million (2,400,000,000,000) attainments, the attainment of Final Emancipation [30]

**Imā samattīṃsa Sabbabuddhānaṃ dhammatā ti.**

Altogether these are the thirty things that invariably happen with all Buddhas.