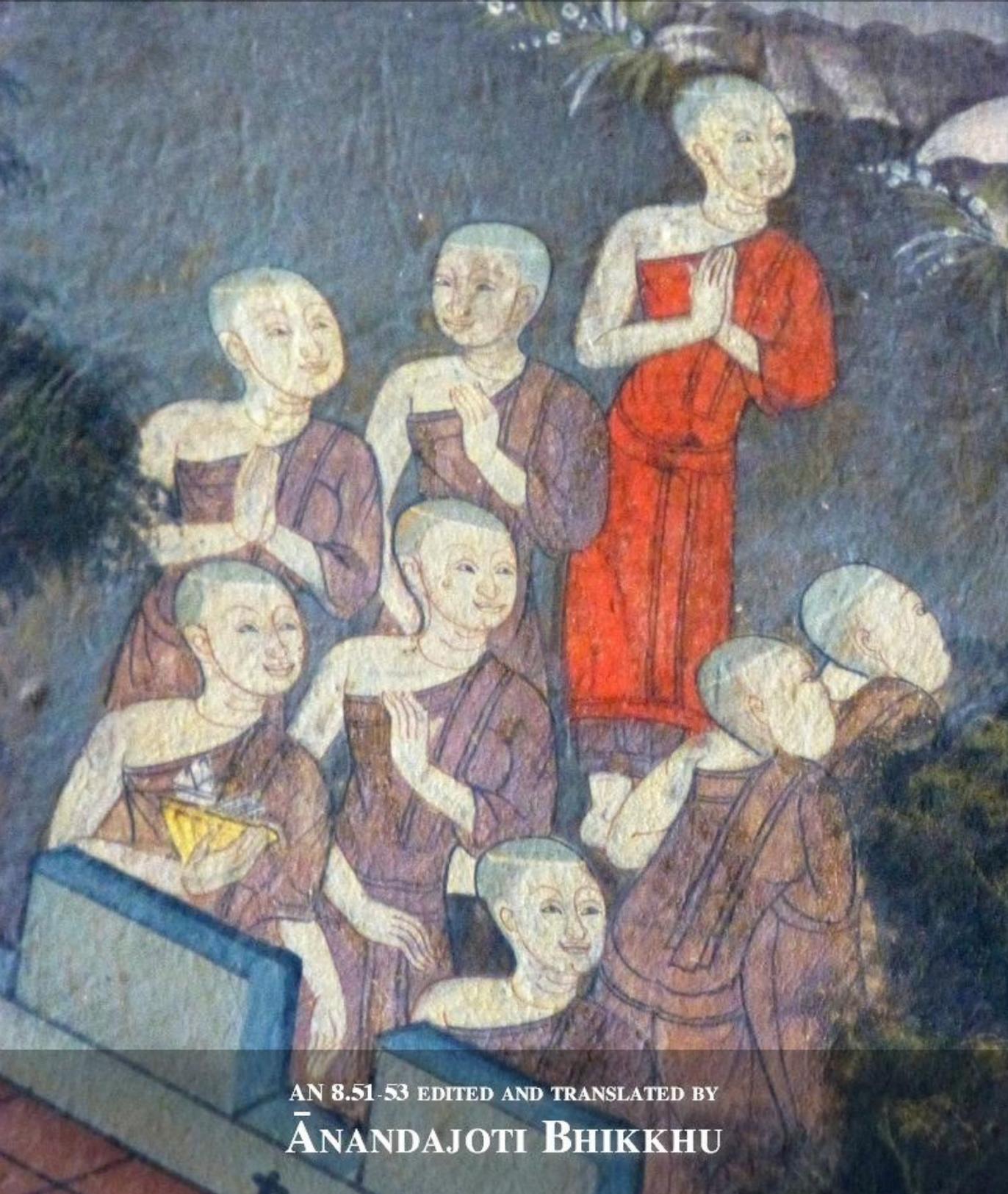


MAHĀPAJĀPATIGOTAMĪ-TISUTTĀNI
THREE DISCOURSES CONCERNING
MAHĀPAJĀPATĪ GOTAMĪ



AN 8.51-53 EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

ĀNANDAJOTI BHIKKHU

Mahāpajāpatigotamī-tisuttāni
Three Discourses concerning Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī
(AN 8.51-53)

edited and translated by
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(Oct, 2014)

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Texts and Presentation

BJT (for the Tipiṭaka): Śrī Lamkan edition, from the Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka series, Vol 22 (Colombo 1977, reprinted 2007).

SHB (for the Aṭṭhakathā): Śrī Lamkan edition, from the Simon Hewavitarne Bequest series, Vol. XXXIII (Colombo, 1931, reprinted Colombo, 2006).

PTS (for the Tipiṭaka): European edition, The Aṅguttara-Nikāya, Part IV, edited by Prof. E. Hardy (London 1899, reprinted London, 1958); (for the Aṭṭhakathā): Manorathapūraṇī, Vol. IV, (London 1940, reprinted London, 1979).

RTE: Royal Thai edition and commentary, as found on Budsir for Windows CD-ROM (version 2.0, Bangkok, 1996).

ChS: Burmese edition and commentary as found on the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana CD-ROM (version 3, Igatpuri, no date but = 1999).

Translation of Tipiṭaka Text: Bhikkhu Bodhi, The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha (Wisdom Publications, Somerville, 2012).

Article by Ven. Analayo: Mahāpajāpati's Going Forth in the Madhyama-āgama, Journal for Buddhist Ethics, Vol 18, 2011 (<http://goo.gl/7WUTvf>).

It what follows the Tipiṭaka text and translation are marked up in blue and red:

Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā...

At one time the Fortunate One....

The Commentarial text and translation are in purple and green:

Chaṭṭhassa paṭhame...

In the first (discourse)...

Repetition (*peyyāla*) text in either is marked up in black:

Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātuḡāmo...

It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive...

The latter is not written in the manuscripts or the printed editions of the texts and has to be inferred either from sections that occur earlier in the text, or earlier in the compilation of texts, and occasionally from an earlier book in the series of texts.

It seems to me, however, that a recitor (*bhāṇaka*) would have used the written text as simply an *aide-de-memoir*, and would have filled in the text during recital. But besides this when presenting texts extracted from their original collection, it is clearly better practice to fill in the text, and to then mark it so that its status is indicated.

Introduction

What follows is a text and translation of three discourses that follow each other in the Book of the Eights of the *Ānguttaranikāya* (8.51-3), together with their commentaries. The first concerns the establishment of the Community of nuns;¹ the second the qualities required by a monk to be fit to teach the nuns; and the third the discourse that led to Ven. Gotamī's liberation.

The first discourse, that on the establishment of the Community of nuns, is one of the most controversial matters in the Canon. There are a number of issues concerning the discourse when taken alone, but when taken with the commentary it becomes even more contentious, as instead of easing the problems, the commentary multiplies them.

The basic story outlined in the discourse is this: The Buddha's step-mother and aunt, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Buddha and requested ordination three times. She was turned down. Some time later, having shaved her head and donned monastic robes, together with five hundred other Sakiyan women, she again approached the Buddha with the request, and is again turned down.

Ven. Ānanda saw her crying and asked what the problem was, she explained and Ven. Ānanda suggested that he should speak to the Buddha, which he subsequently did. He also was turned down. But then he tried another approach, and asked whether women can attain liberation, to which the Buddha readily agreed. He then reminded the Buddha how kind Gotamī had been to him, and made the request yet again.

This time the Buddha agreed, providing Gotamī agreed to eight serious rules. These were related to her by Ven. Ānanda, and she agreed to them and the Buddha announced that that constituted her higher ordination, and so the order of nuns was established.

That is an outline of the story in the discourse, and the first problem that emerges is right at the beginning. The discourse opens with two simple sentences: *At one time the Fortunate One was dwelling amongst the Sakiyans, near to Kapilavatthu, in Nigrodha's Monastery. Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Fortunate One...*

A natural reading of this would give the impression that they are connected: the Fortunate One was in Kapilavatthu, and Gotamī approaches him. The commentary however, first states that *the Fortunate One was in Kapilavatthu* refers to the first journey back to Kapilavatthu, which took place in the first year after the Awakening, but that *Gotamī approaches him* took place four years later, after the death of her husband the King.

It is difficult to understand why it should have been stated in such a way. One reason might be that the commentator is trying to reconcile different traditions in his sources. It may be that there were different ideas about the timing of Gotamī's request that had come down, and the commentator had the difficulty of reconciling them. A second possibility is

¹ This discourse is parallel to the opening story of the Bhikkhunikkhandhaka of the Vinaya, (Cullavagga, 10), Cv 10.

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that the story contains a remembrance of a different sequence of events, some of which have fallen out from the textual sources in the Pāḷi.

Ven. Analayo,² after examining all the extant versions of this passage, has suggested a reconstruction whereby Gotamī first requested ordination, and was eventually told to shave her hair, wear monastic-style robes and take up the celibate life – but in her home, and not as a homeless wanderer. Then later when the King died, she again decided to approach the Buddha to request full ordination, equivalent to the monk's, which was eventually given.

If this was so it would explain why the commentary remembers the events opening on the first journey back, but still places the other part of the story four years later. We could then understand that in the years in between Gotamī would have been living a monastic-style of life in the home, which was more secure, and also less demanding.

It would also explain why, when Ven. Ānanda first enters the story and meets with Gotamī, he remarks on her appearance asking: *Why are you, Gotamī, with swollen feet, and dust on your limbs, pained and depressed, crying, with tears on your face, standing outside the doorway?* but says nothing at all about her having a shaved head and wearing monastic-type robes, which must have been much more striking than the condition of her feet had it been novel.

* * *

The second problem that arises in the discourse is the question of the eight serious rules. There has probably been more ink spilt discussing this issue than any other in regard to the nuns' ordination, but without reviewing all the work that has been done, it is safe to say that the rules as they stand are certainly anachronistic, and couldn't have been promulgated at the beginning of the foundation of the Community.

This is shown by numbers of them being found in the confession (*pācittiya*) rules of the nuns' Pātimokkha, along with different establishment stories, which would not have been necessary had the rules already been in place.

The only rule which doesn't have an analogue in the Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha is the first, which insists that a senior nun should show respect to any monk, even one ordained that day.

In the Vinaya³ (but not in this collection) there is another story of Ven Gotamī approaching the Buddha and asking that the monks and the nuns pay respect according to seniority, something which the Buddha does not allow. Of course, if Gotamī had already agreed to this rule at the outset as an integral part of her ordination, then there would be no reason at all to go and request the Buddha on the matter.

* * *

² See Ven. Analayo: Mahāpajāpatī's Going Forth in the Madhyama-āgama, Journal for Buddhist Ethics, Vol 18, 2011.

³ See Cv 10, just after the foundation story parallel to the first discourse here.

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The sixth of the eight serious rules ordains that before seeking higher ordination a nun should train in six rules for two years. The nuns who accompanied Ven. Gotamī however, do not seem to have done so, and although the *sikkhamāna* training is mentioned in rules and formal lists in the Vinaya, it never seems to occur in any other context, not even in the commentarial stories about the nuns' careers.

These six rules could quite easily have been the rules that the Queen had been given while still living in a home environment. They are the five lay precepts (no killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and alcohol), with the third redefined as strict celibacy, plus the rule about eating after midday.

Another supporting factor for this is that, according to tradition, the Bodhisatta's wife, Rāhulamātā (a.k.a. Yasodharā), had lived a life very much along these lines after the Bodhisatta renounced the world and went off to seek Awakening, so the idea of a Royal Lady living a renunciate life at home was already established in the household.

In any case it is really impossible that this rule was in force from the beginning as we find cases of nuns who were pregnant recorded in the Bhikkhunī Vinaya, something that could not have happened of course if they were maintaining strict celibacy for two years prior to their higher ordination.

* * *

A final issue which requires notice is that the Buddha, according to the discourse as recorded here, is supposed to have said that giving ordination to the nuns would seriously affect the life of the Dispensation, effectively cutting it in half, from one thousand years to only five hundred.

It is questionable in the extreme that the Buddha would have done anything that would see to the halving of the life of the Dispensation, and elsewhere it is clear that a strong presence of nuns was one of the factors leading to the *increase* in the length of the Sāsana.

But also, as is obvious to anyone, the prediction has not come true, and if the record was rightly attributed to the Buddha, then he was wrong in making it. This, of course, is not impossible, but it surely goes against all that the tradition holds dear.

The commentator, who collated the material around one thousand years after the Buddha's passing, was also aware of the discrepancy between the recorded prediction and the reality he could see around him, with the Buddhasāsana flourishing throughout India and spreading all over Asia.

His solution to the problem is not at all convincing, and requires us to reinterpret what was actually said to mean something quite different. The Buddha, as reported here, says: *the Good Dhamma would have endured for a thousand years ... (but it) ... will now (after the establishment of the Community of nuns) endure for (only) five hundred years.*

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The commentary, at a place rather remote from where this plain statement is made, says: *One thousand years, this was said in regard to those who have attained destruction of the pollutants together with the analytic knowledges, but a further thousand years beyond that for those who have attained destruction of the pollutants through dry insight, a thousand years in regard to those who are Non-Returners ... Once-Returners ... Stream Enterers, thus the Good Dhamma of penetration (to Awakening) will endure for five thousand years (in all). Then there will be only the Dhamma of learning ... But the signs of the disappearance of learning will last for a long time.*

That makes for quite a large adjustment against the plain sense of the text, and seems to be made on the settled idea in the tradition that the Dispensation would last for 5,000 years. We are now about half way through that time span, and presumably should start expecting the decline to start imminently, although it actually appears to be a stronger point now that it was during many hundreds of years of stagnation.

* * *

The second discourse in this group concerns the qualities that are required for a monk to be appointed as one who advises the nuns. This discourse is a lot less problematic, but it does reflect on the previous discourse some more, as one of the eight serious rules is that the nuns should seek advice from the monks before holding the Uposatha ceremony twice a month.⁴

One of the qualifications for a monk to be appointed to this position is stated to be that the monk should have twenty years since his higher ordination. Obviously this was not possible when these serious rules were laid down, which, according to tradition happened after the fifth Rains retreat, at which point the most senior monk would have been fifteen years short of meeting the qualification.

The qualities enumerated seem quite reasonable: the monk should be virtuous, learned, understand both sets of Pātimokkha rules, be a clear speaker, able to inspire the nuns, and is dear and pleasing to them. He should not be guilty of a Saṅghādisesa offence and should have, as mentioned, twenty years seniority.

All of these qualities would seem to be aimed at protecting and indeed being of benefit to the nuns, making sure that the monk giving the instruction is virtuous, learned and experienced.

* * *

The third discourse is recorded in the commentary as having led to Ven. Gotamī's liberation. The discourse is quite general in nature, just stating basically that she should bear in mind that the true teaching leads to dispassion, unfettering, decrease (of rebirths), little desire, contentment, solitude, energy and ease in support.

⁴ Yet another anachronism, as the Vinaya records the gradual development of the Pātimokkha recital amongst the nuns.

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All of these things are indeed characteristic of the Teaching of the Lord Buddha, but it is hard to see how stating the general principles in themselves would lead to liberation. Of course knowing them in more detail and acting upon them might do so.

The teaching here contrasts however with another teaching in the Aṅguttara Commentary on the Elder Nandaka, who was named by the Buddha as the foremost of his monk disciples in teaching the nuns. In the commentary on that placement it says that after he had taught what became known as the Nandakovādasuttaṃ (MN 146), all the nuns, which would have included Ven. Gotamī, attained liberation.

I previously noted, in my translation of that text that this does not agree with the text itself, which states only that the nuns attained at least a level of Stream Entry. So it seems that the commentary itself here is also in disagreement with what it has stated elsewhere.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Ayyā Tathālokā Bhikkhunī, who reviewed this work a couple of times, made a number of corrections, and who informed my understanding of the background and meaning of the text in many places. A number of her comments have been worked into the notes and Introduction.

I also owe a great debt to Dr. Junko Matsumura, who has excellent knowledge of both Canonical and Commentarial Pāli, and reviewed the work and made a number of corrections and improvements to the translation.

Without the help of these two generous scholars the work would have been much poorer, but I am responsible, of course, for any mistakes or shortcomings that remain.

Anandajoti Bhikkhu
December 2014

Gotamīsuttam⁵
The Discourse concerning Gotamī
 (AN 8.51)

Requesting the Going-Forth

Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Sakkesu viharati Kapilavatthusmiṃ Nigrodhārāme.

At one time the Fortunate One was dwelling amongst the Sakiyans, near to Kapilavatthu, in Nigrodha's Monastery.⁶

Chaṭṭhassa paṭhame, 'Sakkesu viharatī' ti

In the first (discourse) of the sixth (chapter), 'Was dwelling amongst the Sakiyans' means

paṭhamagamanena gantvā, viharati.

was dwelling, after going (there) on the first journey.⁷

Atha kho Mahāpajāpatī⁸ Gotamī yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami,

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Fortunate One,

'Mahāpajāpatī' ti puttapaṅjāya ceva dhītupaṅjāya ca mahantattā evaṃladdhanāmā.

'Mahāpajāpatī' means (hoping she would be) having many male and female progeny, this was the name that was given.⁹

'Yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamī' ti Bhagavā Kapilapuram gantvā,

'Approached the Fortunate One' means the Fortunate One, having gone to Kapila's city,

paṭhamam-eva Nandaṃ pabbājesi, sattame divase Rāhulakumārāṃ.

first of all gave the going forth to Nanda,¹⁰ and after seven days to prince Rāhula.¹¹

* * *

⁵ PTS, RTE lack any title or end-title on any of the discourses.

⁶ Kapilavatthu was the Buddha's home town. Nigrodha was a Sakyan who donated this park to the Saṅgha. For more information on this monastery see the long entry in DPPN.

⁷ The first journey back to his home city in the first year after his Awakening, see the Introduction for a discussion of the chronology.

⁸ RTE: *Mahāpajāpati*; similarly below.

⁹ The name means: *rich in progeny*, although it appears she had just one daughter (the eldest), Nandā, and one son, Nanda.

¹⁰ Mahāpajāpatī's son, and the Buddha's half-brother. Nanda's story is told in the Exalted Utterances (3.2), see elsewhere on this website.

¹¹ His son through Yasodharā. Rāhula's ordination is related at the beginning of the 9th section (*bhāṇavāra*) of the Great Chapter (*Mahākhandhaka*), Vin 3.1.

Cumbaṭakakalahe,¹² pana¹³ ubhayanagaravāsīsu¹⁴ yuddhatthāya nikkhantesu,
In the dispute about the head-roll,¹⁵ residents from both cities came out in order to fight,

Satthā gantvā, te Rājāno saññāpetvā, Attadaṇḍasuttam̃ kathesi.
and the Teacher went (there), convinced those Kings, and taught the Discourse on Taking up a Stick.¹⁶

Rājāno pasīditvā¹⁷ aḍḍhatiyasate aḍḍhatiyasate kumāre adamsu,
The Kings were pleased and each gave two hundred and fifty princes,

tāni pañca kumārasatāni Satthu santike pabbajimsu.
and those five hundred princes went forth in the presence of the Teacher.

Atha nesam̃ pajāpatiyo sāsanaṃ pesetvā anabhiratiṃ uppādayimsu.
Then their wives sent them messages and that made discontent arise (in their husbands).

Satthā tesam̃ anabhiratiyā uppanabhāvaṃ ñatvā,
The Teacher, knowing a state of discontent had arisen,

te pañcasate daharabhikkhū Kuṇāladahaṃ netvā,
led those five hundred young monks to the Kuṇāla Lake,¹⁸

attano kuṇālakāle nisinnapubbe pāsāṇatale nisīditvā,
having sat on the stone slab, where formerly he himself had sat at the time of the cuckoo (story),

Kuṇālaajātakakathāya tesam̃ anabhiratiṃ vinodetvā,
and having driven out their discontent with the Kuṇāla Birth Story,¹⁹

¹² SHB, PTS: *Cumbaṭakakalahe*.

¹³ RTE omits: *pana*.

¹⁴ ChS: *ubhayanagaravāsīkesu*.

¹⁵ According to the commentaries this took place four years after the first return to Kapilavatthu. There are two stories which came down in the commentaries about the origin of this dispute, one of them records there was a dispute about head-rolls (*cumbaṭaka*) left by slaves on the bank of the river Rohiṇī, although this explanation is rejected by the commentator there. See my text and translation of a section from The Introduction to the Story of the Cuckoo (*Kuṇālaajātakanidānaṃ*) elsewhere on this website.

¹⁶ *Attadaṇḍasuttam̃*, now found in the Discourse Collection (*Suttanipāta*), Sn 4.15.

¹⁷ SHB, PTS: *pasīditvā va*.

¹⁸ In the Himālayas.

¹⁹ This is a misogynist story about the wiles of women, which has been attributed to the Buddha, but which appears to have been a folk story incorporated into the wider Buddhist tradition.

sabbe pi te Sotāpattiphale²⁰ patiṭṭhāpesi,
he established them all in the fruit of Stream-Entry,²¹

puna Mahāvanam ānetvā, Arahattaphale ti.
and after bringing them to the Great Wood, in the fruit of Liberation.²²

Tesam cittajānanattham²³ puna pi pajāpatiyo sāsanaṃ paḥiṇimsu,
In order to know their minds their wives again sent messages,

te: “Abhabbā mayam gharāvāsassā,” ti paṭisāsanaṃ paḥiṇimsu.
and they sent a reply back, saying: “It is impossible for us to dwell in the home.”²⁴

Tā: “Na dāni amhākaṃ gharaṃ gantum yuttam.
(The wives) said: “Now it is not suitable (for us) to go (back) to our homes.

Mahāpajāpatiyā santikaṃ gantvā,
Having gone into the presence of Mahāpajāpatī,

pabbajjam anujānāpetvā pabbajissāmā.” ti
and having received allowance for the going forth, we will go forth.”

Pañcasatā pi Mahāpajāpatim²⁵ upasaṅkamtivā,
The five hundred (wives) approached Mahāpajāpatī,

“Ayye, amhākaṃ pabbajjam anujānāpethā,” ti āhaṃsu.
and said: “Noble Lady, you should get the allowance for us to go forth.”

Mahāpajāpatī tā itthiyo gahetvā, yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami.
Having taken those women, Mahāpajāpatī approached the Fortunate One.

Setacchattassa heṭṭhā Rañño parinibbutakāle upasaṅkamī, ti pi vadanti yeva.
They say: after the King (Suddhodana) had attained Complete Emancipation under the white umbrella²⁶ (Mahāpajāpatī) approached (the Buddha).

upasaṅkamtivā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā, ekam-antam aṭṭhāsi.
and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, she stood on one side.

²⁰ SHB, PTS: *te sabbe Sotāpattiphale*.

²¹ The first of four stages on the path to Awakening.

²² The final stage on the path. According to the traditional chronology, this took place just before the beginning of the fifth Rains Retreat at Vesālī.

²³ SHB, PTS: *cittam jānanattham*; similarly elsewhere.

²⁴ Having attained liberation all that was attractive about the home life had lost its attraction, and they were unable to live in that way any more.

²⁵ SHB, PTS: *Pajāpatim*.

²⁶ The implication is that King Suddhodana was still reigning as King when he died. He was one of the only people who attained Liberation and never ordained, having died on the same day.

Ekam-antaṃ ʘhitā kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī Bhagavantaṃ etad-avoca:

While standing on one side Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātuḡāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.”-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Alaṃ, Gotamī!”²⁷

“Enough, Gotamī!

Mā te rucci mātuḡāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

‘Alaṃ, Gotamī! Mā te rucci.’ ti

‘Enough, Gotamī! Please do not wish,’ is said.

Kasmā paṭikkhipi?

Why did he refuse?

Na nu sabbesam-pi Buddhānaṃ catasso parisā hontī ti?

Do not all the Buddhas have four assemblies?

Kāmaṃ hontī.

Certainly they do.

Kilamtvā pana anekavāraṃ yācite²⁸ anuññātaṃ pabbajjaṃ,

But he allowed the going forth (only) after making many requests,

dukkhena laddhā. ti

and it was received with (much) trouble.

‘Sammā paripālessantī,’ ti garuṃ katvā, anuññātukāmo paṭikkhipi.

He thought: ‘(Later) they will guard it well,’ and have respect, and wishing to grant the allowance (later), he refused (at this time).²⁹

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjā.” ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

²⁷ Thai, ChS: *Gotami*; similarly below.

²⁸ RTE: *yācītena*.

²⁹ The sentence is convoluted in the Pāḷi, and I am unsure whether the interpretation is correct here.

Dutiyam-pi kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī Bhagavantam etad-avoca:

For a second time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjan.”-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Alam, Gotamī!

“Enough, Gotamī!

Mā te rucci mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjā.” ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Tatīyam-pi kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī Bhagavantam etad-avoca:

For a third time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjan.”-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Alam, Gotamī!

“Enough, Gotamī!

Mā te rucci mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjā.” ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Atha kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī:

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī,

‘Na Bhagavā anujānāti mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

thinking: ‘The Fortunate One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agāasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan,²-ti
the going forth from the home to the homeless life,²

dukkhī dummanā, assumukhī, rudamānā,
pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face,

Bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇaṃ katvā, pakkāmi.
having worshipped and circumambulated the Fortunate One, went away.

‘Pakkāmi’ ti puna Kapilapuram-eva pāvisi.
‘Went away’ means she entered Kapila’s city again.

Atha kho Bhagavā Kapilavatthusmiṃ yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā,
Then the Fortunate One, having dwelt in Kapilavatthu for as long as he liked,

‘Yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā’ ti
‘Dwelt for as long as he liked’ means

bodhaneyyasattānaṃ³⁰ upanissayaṃ olokeno, yathājjhāsayane viharitvā.
looking around at those beings that have the right conditions for being led to
Awakening, he dwelt for as long as he had the intention to.

yena Vesālī tena cārikaṃ pakkāmi,
went on walking tour towards Vesālī,

‘Cārikaṃ pakkāmi’ ti mahājanasaṅgahaṃ karonto
‘Went on walking tour’ means favouring the populace

uttamāya³¹ Buddhasiriyā anopamena Buddhavilāsena aturita-cārikaṃ pakkāmi.
he went on an unhurried walking tour, with his supreme Buddha glory and his
matchless Buddha beauty (shining forth).

anupubbena cārikaṃ caramāno yena Vesālī tad-avasari.
and while walking gradually on walking tour he arrived at Vesālī.

Tatra sudam³² Bhagavā Vesāliyaṃ viharati,
There the Fortunate One dwelt near Vesālī,

Mahāvane Kūṭṭāgārasālāyaṃ.
in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

³⁰ SHB, PTS: *sattānaṃ*.

³¹ SHB, PTS: *anupamāya*.

³² RTE: *suradam*; probably transcription mistake.

Atha kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī,

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī,

kese chedāpetvā, kāsāyāni vatthāni acchādetvā,

after having her hair cut off, and donning ochre clothes,

sambahulāhi Sākiyānīhi³³ saddhim yena Vesālī tena pakkāmi,

together with a great many Sakiyan ladies, went towards Vesālī,

‘Sambahulāhi Sākiyānīhi saddhin’-ti

‘Together with a great many Sakiyan ladies’ means

antonivesanamhi³⁴ yeva Dasabalam uddissa pabbajjāvesam gahetvā,

having taken the appearance of one gone forth in the inner chambers based on that (worn by the) One of Ten Powers,

pañcasatā³⁵ Sākiyāniyo³⁶ pabbajjāvesam yeva³⁷ gāhāpetvā,

and having the five hundred Sakiyan ladies (also) take the appearance of those gone forth,

sabbāhi pi tāhi sambahulāhi Sākiyānīhi saddhim.

together with a great many Sakiyan ladies, (she went towards Vesālī).

‘Cārikam³⁸ pakkāmī’ ti gamanam abhinīhari.

‘Went on walking tour’ means she left on her journey.

Gamanābhiniharaṇakāle³⁹ pana

But at the time of leaving on the journey

‘Tā⁴⁰ sukhumālā Rājittthiyo padasā gantum na sakkhissantī,’ ti

thinking: ‘Those delicate princesses will not be able to go by foot,’

Sākiya-Koliyarājāno⁴¹ sovaṇṇasivikāyo⁴² upaṭṭhāpayimsu,⁴³

the Sakiyan and Koliyan kings arranged golden palanquins,

³³ RTE: *Sākiyāhi*; similarly below.

³⁴ RTE: *antonivesanamhi*.

³⁵ RTE: *tā pi pañcasatā*.

³⁶ PTS: *pañcasata-Sākiyāniyo*.

³⁷ PTS omits: *yeva*.

³⁸ RTE omits: *Cārikam*.

³⁹ SHB, PTS: *Gamanābhiniharaṇakāle*.

⁴⁰ SHB, PTS omits: *Tā*.

⁴¹ SHB: *Koḷiya-*.

⁴² SHB, PTS: *sovaṇṇa-*.

⁴³ RTE: *uṭṭhāpayimsu*.

‘Tā pana yāne āruyha gacchantī,’ ti⁴⁴

thinking: ‘Having mounted the vehicles they will go,’

‘Satthari agāravo kato hotī,’ ti

(But the women thought): ‘That is disrespectful to the Teacher,’

ekapaṇṇāsayojanikam⁴⁵ padasā va paṭipajjimsu.

and they followed the path on foot for fifty-one leagues.⁴⁶

Rājāno pi purato ca pacchato ca ārakkham samvidahāpetvā,

The Kings, after arranging protection at the front and the rear,

taṇḍulasappitelādīnam sakaṭāni pūrāpetvā:⁴⁷

and filling carts with the finest rice, ghee, oil and so forth,

“Gataṭṭhāne gataṭṭhāne,⁴⁸ āhāram paṭiyādehā,” ti purise pesayimsu.

sent men, saying: “Whatever place they go to, prepare the food.”

anupubbena yena Vesālī Mahāvanam⁴⁹ Kūṭāgārasālā tenupasaṅkami.

and gradually approached the Great Wood, and the Gabled Hall at Vesālī.

Atha kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī sūnehi⁵⁰ pādehi rajokiṇṇena gattena,

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs,

‘Sūnehi pādehī’ ti

‘With swollen feet’ means

tāsañ-hi sukhumālattā pādesu: eko phoṭo uṭṭheti,⁵¹ eko bhijjati.

for those with delicate feet: some had blisters arise, some had split open.

Ubho pādā katakaṭṭhiparikiṇṇā⁵² viya hutvā, uddhumātā jātā.⁵³

Both feet having become as though covered all round with the clearing nut seed,⁵⁴ became swollen.

⁴⁴ RTE: *gacchantīhi*.

⁴⁵ RTE adds: *maggam*.

⁴⁶ It appears that one of the things the ladies were trying to prove to the Buddha is that they were capable of living an ascetic life, traveling large distances by foot as the monks regularly did.

⁴⁷ RTE: *pūretvā*.

⁴⁸ RTE: *gataṭṭhāne* PTS omits second: *gataṭṭhāne*.

⁴⁹ BJT: *Mahāvane*.

⁵⁰ PTS: *sūnehi*; similarly below.

⁵¹ SHB, PTS: *udeti*.

⁵² RTE: *kaṭaka-*; ChS: *katakaṭṭhisamparikiṇṇā*.

⁵³ SHB, PTS omits: *jātā*.

⁵⁴ *Strychnos Potatorum*, presumably the seed is dry and hardened.

Tena vuttam: ‘Sūnehi pādehi.’ ti

Therefore it was said: ‘With swollen feet.’

dukkhī dummanā, assumukhī, rudamānā, bahidvārakoṭṭhake aṭṭhāsi.

pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, stood outside the doorway.

Addasā kho āyasmā Ānando Mahāpajāpatiṃ Gotamiṃ

Venerable Ānanda saw Mahāpajāpati Gotamī,

sūnehi pādehi rajokiṇṇena gattena,

with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs,

dukkhiṃ dummanam, assumukhiṃ, rudamānam, bahidvārakoṭṭhake ṭhitam.

pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, stood outside the doorway.

‘Bahidvārakoṭṭhake’ ti dvārakoṭṭhakato bahi.

‘Outside the doorway’ means outside the doorway.⁵⁵

Kasmā panevam ṭhitā ti?⁵⁶

But why stand there?

Evaṃ kirassā ahoṣi:

This occurred to her:

‘Aham Tathāgatena ananuññātā sayam-eva pabbajjāvesam aggahesiṃ,

‘Without the permission of the Realised One, I took the appearance of one gone forth,

evam gahitabhāvo ca pana me sakala-Jambudīpe pākaṭo jāto.

but the fact that (the appearance) was taken by me has become famous throughout the whole of the Rose-Apple Isle.

Sace Sattā pabbajjam anujānāti, iccetam kusalam,

If the Teacher allows the going forth, that is good,

sace pana nānujānissati, mahatī garahā bhavissati.’ ti

but if he does not allow, there will be great reproach (for me),’

vihāram pavisitum asakkontī rodamānā va⁵⁷ **aṭṭhāsi.**

and being unable to enter the monastery she stood there crying.

⁵⁵ The commentator is parsing the compound.

⁵⁶ RTE: *sanṭhitā ti*.

⁵⁷ SHB, PTS omits: *va*.

Disvāna,⁵⁸ **Mahāpajāpatiṃ Gotamiṃ etad-avoca:**

And after seeing (her), he said this to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī:

“Kiṃ nu tvaṃ, Gotamī,⁵⁹ **sūnehi pādehi rajokiṇṇena gattena,**
“Why are you, Gotamī, with swollen feet, and dust on your limbs,

‘Kiṃ nu tvaṃ Gotamī?’ ti

‘Why are you, Gotamī?’ means (he was asking):

kiṃ nu Rājakulānaṃ vipatti uppannā,
has any misfortune arisen in the families of Kings,

kena tvaṃ⁶⁰ **kāraṇena, evaṃ vivaṇṇabhāvaṃ pattā,**
(or) for what reason are you, having become weakened like this,

sūnehi pādehi, ṭhitā? ti⁶¹
with swollen feet, standing (there)?

dukkhī dummanā, assumukhī, rudamānā, bahidvārakoṭṭhake ṭhitā?” ti
pained and depressed, crying, with tears on your face, standing outside the doorway?”

“Tathā hi pana, bhante Ānanda, na Bhagavā anujānāti⁶²
“Because, venerable Ānanda, the Fortunate One does not allow

mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan”-ti.
the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Tena hi, Gotamī,⁶³ **idheva tāva hohi, yāvāhaṃ Bhagavantaṃ yācāmi**
“Then, Gotamī, just wait here, while I request the Fortunate One

mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.”-ti
the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

⁵⁸ PTS: *Disvā*.

⁵⁹ ChS: *Gotamī*; similarly below.

⁶⁰ RTE: *kena nu tvaṃ*.

⁶¹ RTE, ChS: *sūnehi pādehi .pe. ṭhitā ti*.

⁶² PTS: *Bhagavā na anujānāti*.

⁶³ ChS: *Tena hi tvaṃ, Gotamī, muhuttaṃ*.

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami,

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Fortunate One,

upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekam-antaṃ nisīdi.

and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, he sat down on one side.

Ekam-antaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etad-avoca:

While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Esā, Bhante, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī sūnehi pādehi rajokiṇṇena gattena,

“This Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, reverend Sir, with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs,

dukkhī dummanā, assumukhī, rudamānā, bahidvārakoṭṭhake ṭhitā:

pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, is standing outside the doorway,

‘Na Bhagavā anujānāti mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

thinking: ‘The Fortunate One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.’-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.’

Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.’-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.’

“Alaṃ, Ānanda!

“Enough, Ānanda!

Mā te rucci mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjā.’ ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.’

Dutiyam-pi kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etad-avoca:

For a second time venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.’-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.’

“Alaṃ, Ānanda!

“Enough, Ānanda!

Mā te rucci mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjā.” ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Tatīyam-pi kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etad-avoca:

For a third time venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.”-ti

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Alaṃ, Ānanda!

“Enough, Ānanda!

Mā te rucci mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjā.” ti⁶⁴

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Atha kho āyasmato Ānandassa etad-ahosi:

Then it occurred to venerable Ānanda:

‘Na Bhagavā anujānāti mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,

‘The Fortunate One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan.

the going forth from the home to the homeless life.

Yaṃ nūnāhaṃ aññena pi pariyāyena Bhagavantaṃ yāceyyaṃ

What if I were to ask the Fortunate One in a different way

‘Aññena pi pariyāyenā’ ti aññena pi kāraṇena.

‘In a different way’ means with a different reason.

⁶⁴ BJT: *pabbajjan-ti*, but *pabbajjā ti* above.

mātugāmassa Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan’?-ti
the going forth from the home to the homeless life?’

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etad-avoca:
Then venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Bhabbo nu kho, Bhante, mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
“Is it possible, reverend Sir, for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitvā,
having gone forth from the home to the homeless life,

Sotāpattiphalaṃ vā, Sakadāgāmiphalaṃ vā,
° to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, or the fruit of Once-Returning,

Anāgāmiphalaṃ vā Arahattaphalaṃ vā sacchikātun?’-ti
or the fruit of Non-Returning, or the fruit of Liberation?’”

“Bhabbo, Ānanda, mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
“It is possible, Ānanda, that women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitvā,
having gone forth from the home to the homeless life,

Sotāpattiphalam-pi Sakadāgāmiphalam-pi
° to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, and the fruit of Once-Returning,

Anāgāmiphalam-pi Arahattaphalam-pi sacchikātun.’-ti
and the fruit of Non-Returning, and the fruit of Liberation.”

“Sace, Bhante, bhabbo mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
“If it is possible, reverend Sir, for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitvā,
having gone forth from the home to the homeless life,

Sotāpattiphalam-pi Sakadāgāmiphalam-pi
° to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, and the fruit of Once-Returning,

Anāgāmiphalam-pi Arahattaphalam-pi sacchikātun,-ti
and the fruit of Non-Returning, and the fruit of Liberation,

bahukārā,⁶⁵ **Bhante, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī,**
and Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī was a great help, reverend Sir,

‘Bahukārā, Bhante’ ti-ādinā,
‘A great help, reverend Sir,’ and so forth,

tassā guṇam kathetvā, puna pabbajjam yācanto evam-āha.
after speaking about her virtue, again he spoke requesting the going forth.

Bhagavato mātucchā āpādikā posikā khīrassa dāyikā,⁶⁶
she is the Fortunate One’s maternal aunt, his wet-nurse, who looked after him and gave him milk,

Bhagavantam janettiyā kālaṅkatāya, thaññam pāyesi.
and after the Fortunate One’s Mother had died, she gave him suck at the breast.

Sādhu, Bhante, labheyya mātugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
It would be good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjan”-ti.
the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

The Eight Serious Rules

“Sace, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī aṭṭha garudhamme paṭigaṇhātī,⁶⁷
“If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī accepts these eight serious rules,

sā vassā hotu upasampadā:
this will be the higher ordination for her:

Satthā pi: ‘Itthiyo nāma parittapaññā,
The Teacher also thought: ‘Women are known to have little wisdom,⁶⁸

ekayācitamattena⁶⁹ **pabbajjāya anuññātāya,**
by gaining permission for the going forth through one request only,

na mama⁷⁰ **Sāsanam garuṃ katvā gaṇhissantī,’ ti**⁷¹
they will not accept my Dispensation with respect,’

⁶⁵ PTS: *bahupakārā*.

⁶⁶ BJT, PTS omit: *khīrassa dāyikā*.

⁶⁷ BJT: *pati-*; RTE, ChS: *-gg-*; similarly elsewhere.

⁶⁸ Remember this is the Commentator fostering thoughts on the Buddha.

⁶⁹ RTE: *ekāyācitamatteneva*.

⁷⁰ SHB, PTS: *me*.

⁷¹ SHB, PTS: *gaṇhantī ti*.

tikkhattum paṭikkhipitvā, idāni garum katvā, gāhāpetukāmatāya:

now, after being refused three times, they have respect, and have a (deep) desire to take (ordination, and so),⁷²

‘Sace, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī aṭṭha garudhamme paṭigaṇhāti,’⁷³

‘If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī accepts these eight serious rules,

sā vassā hotu upasampadā’ ti-ādim-āha.

this will be the higher ordination for her,’ and so forth was said.

Tattha ‘Sā vassā’ ti sā eva⁷⁴ assā pabbajjā pi upasampadā pi hotu.

Herein ‘Sā vassā’ is parsed as *sā eva assā*,⁷⁵ for her this is the going forth and the higher ordination.

Vassasatūpasampannāya bhikkhuniyā, tad-ahūpasampannassa⁷⁶ bhikkhuno,
A nun having a hundred years (seniority), in regard to a monk ordained that day,

‘Tad-ahūpasampannassa’⁷⁷ ti tam divasam⁷⁸ upasampannassa.

‘In regard to a monk ordained that day’ means to one ordained on that day.⁷⁹

abhivādanam paccuṭṭhānam añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikammaṃ⁸⁰ kattabbanṃ. [1]
should worship, rise from the seat, salute and pay homage.⁸¹

‘Abhivādanam paccuṭṭhānam añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikammaṃ kattabban’-ti⁸²

‘Should worship, rise from the seat, salute and pay homage’ means

⁷² Earlier and again here it is stated that the Buddha only refused women ordination to make them try and try again, so they would eventually have great respect for the ordination. If that were so though, it is difficult to understand why the Buddha would also initially refuse Ānanda’s request three times, and only (apparently) change his mind when further arguments about their abilities, which he must surely have known without needing prompting, had been adduced.

⁷³ RTE: -gg-.

⁷⁴ SHB, PTS: *ev*’.

⁷⁵ This is incorrect, as according to the rules of Pāli grammar, it would parse as *sā va assā*, not *eva*, which would give *sevassā*.

⁷⁶ RTE: *ahu*-; similarly elsewhere.

⁷⁷ RTE: *ahu*-.

⁷⁸ RTE: *divasam-pi*.

⁷⁹ The commentator is clarifying what was said by paraphrasing.

⁸⁰ BJT: *Abhivādana-paccuṭṭhāna-añjalikamma-sāmīcikammaṃ-ti*.

⁸¹ Ayyā Tathālokā, in a private communication, points out that this is the only one of the serious rules that doesn’t appear in the Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha. It is found in the Cullavagga, directly after this story, raising the likelihood that it was instituted after the Vibhaṅga texts were closed, but while the Cullavagga was still open to modification.

⁸² SHB, PTS: *Abhivādana-paccuṭṭhāna-añjalikamma-sāmīcikammaṃ-ti*.

māne⁸³ akatvā, pañcapatiṭṭhitena abhivādanam,
after putting aside conceit, worshipping with the prostration touching in five places,⁸⁴

āsanā paccuṭṭhāya,⁸⁵ paccuggamanavasena paccuṭṭhānam,
rising from the sitting place, rising from the seat in order to go and greet (the monk),

dasanakham⁸⁶ samodhānetvā, añjalikammaṃ,
having placed the ten fingernails together, saluting,⁸⁷

āsanapaññāpanabījanādikaṃ anucchavikakammasaṅkhātam,
and everything agreed upon as duties that are suitable, such as preparing the seat, fan and so on,

sāmīcikkammañ-ca kātabbam.⁸⁸
(in this way) she should pay homage.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā⁸⁹ mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Na bhikkhuniyā abhikkhuke āvāse vassam upagantabbam. [2]

A nun should not enter the Rains Retreat in a dwelling place without monks.⁹⁰

‘Abhikkhuke āvāse’ ti
‘A dwelling place without monks’ means

yattha vasantiyā anantarāyena,
wherever (nuns) are dwelling must be without danger,

⁸³ RTE, ChS: *omānātimāne*.

⁸⁴ The five places are the two feet, the two forearms and the forehead, all of which would be touching the floor at the same time.

⁸⁵ SHB, PTS: *uṭṭhāya*.

⁸⁶ RTE, ChS: *dasanakhe*.

⁸⁷ This is the common greeting of holding the palms together and raised, which is still often seen to this day in Eastern countries.

⁸⁸ RTE: *kattabbam*; ChS: *katabbam*.

⁸⁹ ChS: *garuṃ katvā*; similarly elsewhere.

⁹⁰ This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 56. Three other rules (3, 4, and 7) also correspond to *pācittiya* (confession) rules in the Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha, and have their own origin stories, which portray the Bhikkhunīsaṅgha as already established. This surely indicates either that they were not established at the beginning, or that the eight serious rules are anachronistic.

ovādatthāya upasaṅkamaṇaṭṭhāne⁹¹ ovādadāyako ācariyo natthi,
(but if) after approaching that place in order to get advice, (it is found) there is no teacher (monk) to give the advice,

ayam abhikkhuko āvāso nāma.
this is called a dwelling place without monks.⁹²

Evarūpe āvāse Vassaṃ na upagantabbam.
In such a dwelling place they should not undertake the Rains Retreat.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Anvaḍḍhamāsam⁹³ bhikkhuniyā Bhikkhusaṅghato dve dhammā paccāsīsitabbā:⁹⁴
Every fortnight the nuns are to expect two things from the Community of monks:

‘Anvaḍḍhamāsan’-ti⁹⁵ Anuposathikam.
‘Every fortnight’ means every Observance day.

Uposathapucchakaṅ-ca, ovādūpasaṅkamaṇaṅ-ca.⁹⁶ [3]
asking about the Observance day, and approaching (the monks) for (getting) advice.⁹⁷

‘Ovādūpasaṅkamaṇan’-ti ovādatthāya upasaṅkamaṇam.
‘Approaching (the monks) for (getting) advice’ means approaching (the monks) in order to (get) advice.⁹⁸

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

⁹¹ RTE: *upasaṅkamaṇārahe ṭhāne*.

⁹² See the following discourse for the requirements a monk must fulfil before he can qualify as being fit to teach the nuns, including having at least twenty years seniority. As these rules were apparently given to Gotamī in the fifth year of the Dispensation it would have been impossible for any monk to fulfil that requirement.

⁹³ SHB: *Anvaddha-*.

⁹⁴ BJT, RTE: *paccāsīmsitabbā*; PTS omits: *dve dhammā paccāsīsitabbā*.

⁹⁵ SHB: *Anvaddha-*.

⁹⁶ BJT: *ovad-*; printer’s error; PTS adds: *pariyesitabbam*.

⁹⁷ This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 59.

⁹⁸ Parsing the compound to make it clear what is said.

Vassaṃ vuṭṭhāya⁹⁹ bhikkhuniyā ubhato Saṅhe tīhi ṭhānehi pavāretabbam:

A nun emerging from the Rains Retreat should invite both Communities in regard to three reasons:

diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisāṅkāya vā.¹⁰⁰ [4]

with what was seen, or what was heard or what was suspected.¹⁰¹

‘Diṭṭhenā’ ti cakkhunā diṭṭhena.

‘With what was seen’ means with what was seen by the eye.

‘Sutenā’ ti sotena sutena.

‘What was heard’ means what was heard by the ear.

‘Parisāṅkāyā’ ti diṭṭhasutavasena¹⁰² parisāṅkitena.

‘What was suspected’ means what was suspected on account of seeing or hearing.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Garudhammaṃ ajjhāpannāya bhikkhuniyā

A nun who is guilty of a serious offence¹⁰³

‘Garudhamma’-ti garukaṃ saṅghādisesāpattim.¹⁰⁴

‘Serious offence’ means a serious offence entailing the Community at the beginning and for the rest (of the procedure).

ubhato Saṅhe pakkhamānattaṃ caritabbam. [5]

should observe reparation for a fortnight before both Communities.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ BJT: *vuṭṭhāya*.

¹⁰⁰ BJT, PTS: *diṭṭhena sutena parisāṅkāya*.

¹⁰¹ This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 57, and refers to the invitation (*pavāraṇa*) for correction held at the end of the Rains, when the monastics have been living together long enough to make a balanced appraisal of someone’s behaviour. The monks also invite correction, but only from the Community of monks.

¹⁰² BJT, PTS: *diṭṭhasutamutavasena; on account of seeing, hearing or cognising*.

¹⁰³ Here we see the word *garudhamma* used as a synonym for a Saṅghādisesa offence, the most serious class of offenses that can be repaired. The same word is used with the same meaning in the next discourse too. It is curious that the same term should be used for these rules for the nuns, when none of the rules are, in fact, Saṅghādisesa, and a number are rather confession (*pācittiya*) offenses in the bhikkhunī Pātimokkha.

¹⁰⁴ BJT, PTS: *garukasaṅghādisesāpattim*.

¹⁰⁵ The monks only do reparation for one week, and only before their own Community.

‘Pakkhamānattan’-ti anūnāni pannarasa divasāni mānattam.

‘Reparation for a fortnight’ means reparation for not less than fifteen days.¹⁰⁶

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Dve vassāni chasu dhammesu sikkhitasikkhāya sikkhamānāya

(Only) a trainee who has trained in the six training rules for two years

‘Chasu dhammesū’ ti vikālabhojanacchaṭṭhesu sikkhāpadesu.

‘In six rules’ means in the training rules including the sixth one of the wrong time for food.¹⁰⁷

‘Sikkhitasikkhāyā’ ti ekasikkham-pi akhaṇḍam katvā pūritasikkhāya.¹⁰⁸

‘Trained in’ means not having broken even one training rule the training is fulfilled.¹⁰⁹

ubhato Saṅghe upasampadā pariyesitabbā. [6]

should seek for higher ordination before both Communities.¹¹⁰

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Na kenaci pariyāyena bhikkhuniyā bhikkhu¹¹¹ akkositabbo paribhāsitaḥ. [7]

A nun should not abuse or censure a monk by any means.¹¹²

‘Akkositabbo paribhāsitaḥ’ ti

‘Should not abuse or censure’ means

¹⁰⁶ A fortnight means fourteen nights, and therefore fifteen days.

¹⁰⁷ The wrong time for food is after the sun has passed the meridian, and before dawnrise in the morning; the other five rules are: not to kill, steal, break celibacy, lie or take intoxicants.

¹⁰⁸ PTS: *akhaṇḍam katvā tāya sikkhitasikkhāya.*

¹⁰⁹ If a rule has been broken, she would need to request the training rules again, and start back at the beginning of the two year period.

¹¹⁰ Another anachronism, as the original ordination procedure entailed being ordained by the monks only.

¹¹¹ RTE: *Na bhikkhuniyā kenaci pariyāyena bhikkhu.*

¹¹² This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 52.

dasannaṃ akkosavatthūnaṃ aññatarena akkosavatthunā na akkositabbo,
should not abuse with any of the ten types of abuse¹¹³ or any other type of abuse,

bhayūpadaṃsanāya¹¹⁴ yāya kāyaci paribhāsāya na paribhāsitabbo.
should not censure with any kind of censure which brings on fear.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkaṃaṇīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Ajjatagge¹¹⁵ ovaṭo bhikkhunīnaṃ bhikkhūsu vacanapatho,
From today forward nuns are prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to monks,

‘Ovaṭo bhikkhunīnaṃ bhikkhūsu vacanapatho’ ti
‘Nuns are prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to monks’ means

ovādānusāsanaḍḍhammakathāsaṅkhāto,¹¹⁶
(anything) reckoned as advice, instruction or talk about ethics,

vacanapatho bhikkhunīnaṃ bhikkhūsu ovarito¹¹⁷ pihito,
the nuns are barred and prevented from speaking to monks,

na bhikkhuniyā koci bhikkhu ovaditabbo¹¹⁸ anusāsitabbo vā:¹¹⁹
or, no nun should advise or instruct any monk,

“Bhante, Porāṇakattherā idaṃ cīvaravattaṃ¹²⁰ pūrayiṃsū,” ti
saying: “Reverend Sir, former Elders fulfilled the robe duties thus,”

evaṃ pana paveṇivasena kathetuṃ vaṭṭati.
even though it is suitable to speak regarding tradition.¹²¹

¹¹³ Named in Vis. as contempt, reproof, sneering, jeering, mocking, slandering, censuring, castigating, blaming and backbiting.

¹¹⁴ SHB: *bhayaparamparāya*.

¹¹⁵ BJT, PTS adds: *Ānanda*.

¹¹⁶ RTE: *ovādānusāsana-*.

¹¹⁷ RTE: *vārito*.

¹¹⁸ RTE: *ovaditabbo vā*.

¹¹⁹ PTS: *nānusāsitabbo*.

¹²⁰ RTE: *idaṅ-cidaṅ-ca vattaṃ*.

¹²¹ An important caveat, as it appears to allow for the nuns to advise the monks on matters of Dhamma, even if not on matters on Vinaya.

anovaṭo bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhunīsu vacanapatho. [8]

(but) monks are not prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to nuns.

‘Anovaṭo bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhunīsu vacanapatho’ ti

‘Monks are not prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to nuns’ means

bhikkhūnaṃ pana bhikkhunīsu vacanapatho anivārito

monks are not barred from speaking to nuns

yathāruci¹²² ovaditum anusāsitum Dhammakathaṃ kathetun.-ti

and to advise, instruct and talk on ethics (to them) as they wish.

Ayam-ettha saṅkhepo, vitthārato panesā garu-Dhammakathā,

This here is in brief, but the detailed, serious talk about ethics,

Samantapāsādikāya Vinayasamvaṇṇanāya vuttanayeneva veditabbā.

should be understood as in the method explained in the Commentary on the Discipline, Pleasing on all Sides.¹²³

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Sace, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī ime aṭṭha garudhamme paṭiṅghāti,

If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī accepts these eight serious rules,

sāvassā hotu upasampadā.” ti

that will be her higher ordination.”

Accepting the Rules

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato santike ime aṭṭha garudhamme uggahetvā,

Then venerable Ānanda, having learned these eight serious rules in the presence of the Fortunate One,

yena Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī tenupasaṅkami,

approached Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī,

upasaṅkamitvā Mahāpajāpatim Gotamim etad-avoca:

and after approaching he said this to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī:

¹²² RTE: *yathārucim*.

¹²³ Samantapāsādika is the name of the commentary on the canonical Vinaya texts.

“Sace kho tvaṃ, Gotamī, aṭṭha garudhamme paṭigaṇḥeyyāsi,
“If you, Gotamī, could accept these eight serious rules,

sā va te bhavissati upasampadā:
this will be for you your higher ordination:

Vassasatūpasampannāya bhikkhuniyā, tad-ahūpasampannassa bhikkhuno,
A nun having a hundred years (seniority), in regard to a monk ordained that day,

abhivādanam paccuṭṭhānam añjalikammaṃ sāmīcikkammaṃ kattabbam. [1]
should worship, rise from the seat, salute and pay homage.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Na bhikkhuniyā abhikkhuke āvāse vassam upagantabbam. [2]
A nun should not enter the Rains Retreat in a dwelling place without monks.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Anvaḍḍhamāsam bhikkhuniyā Bhikkhusaṅghato dve dhammā paccāsīsitabbā:
Every fortnight the nuns are to expect two things from the Community of monks:

Uposathapucchakañ-ca, ovādūpasaṅkamañ-ca. [3]
asking about the Observance day, and approaching for (giving) advice.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,
This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvam anatikkamanīyo.
and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Vassam vuṭṭhāya bhikkhuniyā ubhato Saṅghe tīhi ṭhānehi pavāretabbam:
A nun emerging from the Rains Retreat should invite both Communities in regard to three reasons:

diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisāṅkāya vā. [4]
with what was seen, or what was heard or what was suspected.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Garudhammaṃ ajjhāpannāya bhikkhuniyā

A nun who is guilty of a serious offence

ubhato Saṅghe pakkhamānattaṃ caritabbaṃ. [5]

should observe reparation for a fortnight before both Communities.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Dve vassāni chasu dhammesu sikkhitasikkhāya sikkhamānāya

(Only) a trainee who has trained in the six training rules for two years

ubhato Saṅghe upasampadā pariyesitabbā. [6]

should seek for higher ordination before both Communities.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Na kenaci pariyāyena bhikkhuniyā bhikkhu akkositabbo paribhāsitabbo. [7]

A nun should not abuse or censure a monk by any means.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Ajjatagge ovaṭo bhikkhunīnaṃ bhikkhūsu vacanapatho,

From today forward nuns are prohibited from speaking (advice) to monks,

anovaṭo bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhunīsu vacanapatho.¹²⁴ [8]

(but) monks are not prohibited from speaking (advice) to nuns.

Ayam-pi dhammo sakkatvā garukatvā mānetvā pūjetvā,

This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped,

yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamaṇīyo.

and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Sace kho tvaṃ, Gotamī, ime aṭṭha garudhamme paṭigaṇḥeyyāsi,

If you, Gotamī, could accept these eight serious rules,

sā va te bhavissati upasampadā.” ti

that will be for you your higher ordination.”

Ime pana aṭṭha garudhamme Satthu santike uggahetvā,

Having learned these eight serious rules in the Teacher’s presence,

Therena attano ārociyamāne sutvā va,

having heard for herself the Elder (Ānanda)’s announcement,

Mahāpajāpatiyā tāva mahantaṃ domanassaṃ khaṇena paṭippassambhi,

Mahāpajāpatī in a moment was eased of her great sorrow,

Anotattadahato ābhatena sītūdakassa¹²⁵ **ghaṭasatena matthake parisittā viya,**

and it was like being sprinkled on the head with a hundred pots of cool water brought from lake Anotatta,¹²⁶

vigataparīlāhā attamanā hutvā,

and being free from fever, she was delighted,

garudhammapaṭiggahaṇena uppannapītipāmojjaṃ¹²⁷ **āvikarontī**

and explaining the joy and gladness that had arisen because of the acceptance of these serious rules

‘Seyyathā pi, Bhante,’ ti-ādikaṃ udānaṃ udānesi.

she uttered this exalted utterance: ‘It is as though,’ and so on.

“Seyyathā pi, bhante Ānanda,

“It is as though, venerable Ānanda,

¹²⁴ BJT: *vacanatho*; printer’s error.

¹²⁵ ChS: *sītūdakassa*.

¹²⁶ Anottata is situated in the Himālaya, and was later identified with Lake Manasarovar, which is found at the foot of Mount Kailash.

¹²⁷ RTE: *uppannaṃ pītipāmujjam*; PTS: *-pāmujjam*.

itthī vā puriso vā daharo yuvā maṇḍanakajāṭiko sīsaṃ nhāto,¹²⁸
a woman or a man, young, youthful, having ornaments, with head washed,

uppalamālaṃ vā vassikamālaṃ vā atimuttakamālaṃ¹²⁹ **vā labhitvā,**
had been given a garland of waterlilies, or a garland of jasmine, or a garland of
whirlybird flowers,

ubhoḥi hatthehi paṭiggahetvā uttamaṅge sirasmiṃ paṭiṭṭhāpeyya,
and having accepted it with both hands, were to place it on top of the most important
limb, on the head,

evam-evam kho ahaṃ, bhante Ānanda,¹³⁰
just so, venerable Ānanda,

ime aṭṭha garudhamme paṭigaṇhāmi¹³¹ **yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīye.” ti**
I accept these eight serious rules which should not be transgressed for as long as life
lasts.”

The Warnings

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami,
Then venerable Ānanda approached the Fortunate One,

upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekam-antaṃ nisīdi.
and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, he sat down on one side.

Ekam-antaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etad-avoca:
While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Paṭiggahitā, Bhante, Mahāpajāpatiyā Gotamiyā
“Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, reverend Sir, has accepted

aṭṭha garudhammā yāvajīvaṃ anatikkamanīyā.” ti
the eight serious rules which should not be transgressed for as long as life lasts.”

“Sace, Ānanda, nālabhissa māṭugāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
“If, Ānanda, women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, had not
obtained

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjam,
the going forth from the home to the homeless life,

¹²⁸ PTS: *sīsaṃ nahāto*; Thai: *sīsanhāto*, and similarly elsewhere.

¹²⁹ PTS, Thai, ChS: *adhimuttaka-*.

¹³⁰ BJT, PTS omit: *Ānanda*; RTE places it in brackets.

¹³¹ BJT: *paṭigaṇhāmi*.

ciraṭṭhitikaṃ, Ānanda, brahmacariyaṃ abhavissa,
Ānanda, the spiritual life would have been long-lasting,

vassasahasam-eva Saddhammo tiṭṭheyya.¹³²
the Good Dhamma would have endured for a thousand years.

Yato ca kho, Ānanda, mātuḡāmo Tathāgatappavedite Dhammavinaye,
But because, Ānanda, women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One,

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajito,
have gone forth from the home to the homeless life,

na dāni, Ānanda, brahmacariyaṃ ciraṭṭhitikaṃ bhavissati,
now, Ānanda, the spiritual life will not be long-lasting,

pañceva dāni, Ānanda, vassasatāni Saddhammo ṭhassati.
the Good Dhamma, Ānanda, will now endure for (only) five hundred years.¹³³

Seyyathā pi, Ānanda, yāni kānici kulāni bahutthikāni¹³⁴ **appapurisakāni,**
Just as, Ānanda, those families having lots of women and few men,

tāni suppadhamsiyāni honti corehi kumbhatthenakehi,
are easily plundered by thieves and night-time robbers,

‘Kumbhatthenakehī’ ti kumbhe dīpaṃ jāletvā,
‘By night-time robbers’ means having lit lights in a pot,

tena ālokena paraghare bhaṇḍaṃ vicinitvā thenakacorehi.
and discerned valuables in another’s house by their light, (they are plundered) by burglars and thieves.

evam-evaṃ kho, Ānanda, yasmiṃ Dhammavinaye labhati mātuḡāmo
just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Discipline women receive

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjāṃ,
the going forth from the home to the homeless life,

na taṃ brahmacariyaṃ ciraṭṭhitikaṃ hoti.
the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.¹³⁵

¹³² BJT: *patiṭṭheyya*.

¹³³ See the discussion in the Introduction.

¹³⁴ BJT: *bahukitthikāni*.

¹³⁵ The whole tone of this end section is so out of keeping with the Buddha’s other sayings, that it seems it must be an interpolation.

Seyyathā pi, Ānanda, sampanne sālikkhette

Just as, Ānanda, in ripe rice fields

Setaṭṭhikā nāma rogajāti nipatati,

which go down with the disease called Deadheart,

‘Setaṭṭhikā nāma rogajāti’ ti

‘The disease called Deadheart’ means

eko pāṇako nālamajjhagatam¹³⁶ kaṇḍam vijjhati.

some worms pierce the stem and enter the middle of the stalk.

Yena viddhā kaṇḍā nikkhantam-pi

At the place where it departs from the pierced stem

sālisīsam khīram gahetum na sakkoti.

the sap is not able to get to the rice head.

evam taṃ sālikkhettam na ciraṭṭhitikam hoti,

that rice field is not long-lasting,

evam-evam kho, Ānanda, yasmiṃ Dhammavinaye labhati mātugāmo

just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Disciple women receive

agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajjam,

the going forth from the home to the homeless life,

na taṃ brahmacariyam ciraṭṭhitikam hoti.

the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.

Seyyathā pi, Ānanda, sampanne ucchukkhette¹³⁷

Just as, Ānanda, in ripe sugar-cane fields

Mañjīṭṭhikā¹³⁸ nāma rogajāti nipatati,

which go down with the disease called Red Rot,

‘Mañjīṭṭhikā nāma rogajāti’ ti ucchūnam antorattabhāvo.

‘The disease called Red Rot’ means being reddened on the inside of the sugar cane.

evam taṃ ucchukkhettam na ciraṭṭhitikam hoti,

that sugar-cane field is not long-lasting,

¹³⁶ RTE: *nālimajjhe gatam*.

¹³⁷ PTS: *ucchukhette*; similarly below.

¹³⁸ RTE: *Mañjēṭṭhikā*; and in the Commentary on the following line.

evam-evam̐ kho, Ānanda, yasmiṃ Dhammavinaye labhati mātugāmo
just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Disciple women receive

agārasmā anagāriyam̐ pabbajjam̐,
the going forth from the home to the homeless life,

na tam̐ brahmacariyam̐ ciraṭṭhitikam̐ hoti.
the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.

Seyyathā pi, Ānanda, puriso mahato taḷākassa paṭigacceva¹³⁹ āḷim¹⁴⁰ bandheyya
Just as, Ānanda, a man might prepare an embankment as a precaution round a large lake

yāvad-eva udakassa anatikkamanāya,
so that the water does not overflow,

evam-evam̐ kho, Ānanda, mayā
just so, Ānanda,

paṭigacceva bhikkhunīnam̐ aṭṭha garudhammā paññattā
the eight serious rules were laid down by me as a precaution

yāvajīvam̐ anatikkamanīyā.” ti
which should not be transgressed for as long as life lasts.”

‘Mahato taḷākassa paṭigacceva¹⁴¹ āḷin,’-ti¹⁴²
‘An embankment as a precaution round a large lake,’

iminā pana etam-attham̐ dasseti:
this is the meaning that is shown in this:

yathā mahato taḷākassa pāḷiyā abaddhāya pi,
just as with a large tank that has no embankment,

kiñci¹⁴³ udakam̐ tiṭṭhateva paṭhamam-eva baddhāya,
whatever water could have stayed there had there been an embankment at the beginning,

¹³⁹ RTE, ChS: *paṭigacceva*; similarly below.

¹⁴⁰ PTS: *āḷim̐*; RTE: *pāḷim̐*.

¹⁴¹ RTE, ChS: *paṭigacceva*.

¹⁴² RTE: *pāḷin-ti*.

¹⁴³ RTE: *na kiñci*.

pana¹⁴⁴ abaddhapaccayā¹⁴⁵ na tiṭṭheyya, na patiṭṭheyya,¹⁴⁶
cannot stay there, cannot remain, because there is no embankment,

evam-eva¹⁴⁷ ye ime anuppanne vatthusmim,
in the same way, although these grounds (for offense) have not arisen,¹⁴⁸

paṭigacceva anatikkamanāya¹⁴⁹ garudhammā paññattā,
the precaution is (taken that) the serious rules that are not to be transgressed are laid down,

tesu hi¹⁵⁰ apaññattesu mātugāmassa pabbajitattā,
because if for women these (rules) about going forth were not laid down,

pañca vassasatāni Saddhammo tiṭṭheyya.
the Good Dhamma can endure (only) for five hundred years.

Paṭigacceva paññattattā¹⁵¹ pana aparāni pi pañca vassasatāni ṭhassatī. ti
But with the precaution regarding the going forth being laid down they will endure for another five hundred years.

Evam paṭhamam vuttavassasahassam-eva ṭhassati.
Thus at first it was said it will endure for one thousand years.

‘Vassasahassan’-ti
‘One thousand years,’¹⁵²

cetaṃ paṭisambhidāpabhedappattakhīṇāsavānam¹⁵³ vaseneva vuttam,
this was said in regard to those who have attained destruction of the pollutants together with the analytic knowledges,

¹⁴⁴ RTE, ChS add: *yam*.

¹⁴⁵ SHB, PTS: *-pp-*.

¹⁴⁶ RTE, ChS: *tam-pi tiṭṭheyya*.

¹⁴⁷ SHB, PTS: *evam-evam*.

¹⁴⁸ The Buddha only normally laid down rules after a transgression of an offense, and nowhere else is he seen laying down disciplinary rules in advance, which also casts doubt over their historicity.

¹⁴⁹ RTE: *avītikkamanatthāya*; ChS: *anatikkamanatthāya*.

¹⁵⁰ ChS omits: *hi*.

¹⁵¹ RTE: *paññattā*.

¹⁵² The commentator, writing a thousand years after the passing of Lord Buddha, now has to explain how it is that the Good Dhamma is still flourishing in his own time, despite the dire warnings given to Ānanda. Instead of rejecting the prediction as spurious as it was not fulfilled, he uses a sophisticated argument to change the meaning of the plain sense of the words.

¹⁵³ RTE: *paṭisambhidāppattakhīṇāsavavaseneva*.

tato pana uttarim-pi¹⁵⁴ sukkhavipassakakhīṇāsavavasena vassasahassam,
but a further thousand years beyond that for those who have attained destruction of
the pollutants through dry insight,

Anāgāmvassena vassasahassam,
a thousand years in regard to those who are Non-Returners,

Sakadāgāmvassena vassasahassam,
a thousand years in regard to those who are Once-Returners,

Sotāpannavasena vassasahassan-ti
a thousand years in regard to those who are Stream Enterers,

evam pañcavassasahassāni paṭivedha-Saddhammo ṭhassati.
thus the Good Dhamma of penetration (to Awakening) will endure for five thousand
years (in all).

Pariyattidhammo pi tāni yeva.
Then there will be only the Dhamma of learning.

Na hi pariyattiyā asati, paṭivedho atthi,
For there being no learning, there will be no penetration,

nāpi pariyattiyā sati, paṭivedho na hoti.
but there being learning there will (also) be penetration.

Liṅgam pana pariyattiyā antarahitāya pi ciram pavattissatī. ti
But the signs of the disappearance of learning will last for a long time.

***Paṭhamam*¹⁵⁵**
The First

¹⁵⁴ RTE, ChS: *uttari pi*.

¹⁵⁵ BJT, Thai omit: *Paṭhamam*.

Bhikkhunovādakasuttam¹⁵⁶
The Discourse about Advising the Nuns
(AN 8.52)

Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Vesāliyaṃ viharati,
At one time the Fortunate One was dwelling near Vesālī,

Mahāvane Kūṭāgārasālāyaṃ.
in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami,
Then venerable Ānanda approached the Fortunate One,

upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā, ekam-antaṃ nisīdi.
and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, he sat down on one side.

Ekam-antaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etad-avoca:
While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Fortunate One:

“Katihi¹⁵⁷ nu kho, Bhante, dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu
“With how many qualities, reverend Sir, should a monk

bhikkhunovādako sammannitabbo?” ti
who is authorised as an advisor to nuns be endowed?”

“Aṭṭhahi kho, Ānanda, dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu
“A monk endowed with eight qualities, Ānanda,

bhikkhunovādako sammannitabbo.
should be authorised as an advisor to nuns.

Katamehi aṭṭhahi?
Which eight?

Idh’ Ānanda, bhikkhu sīlavā hoti,
Here, Ānanda, a monk is virtuous,

Pātimokkhasaṃvarasaṃvuto viharati, ācāragocarasampanno,
he lives restrained with the Pātimokkha restraint, and is endowed with (suitable) conduct and resort,

aṇumattesu vajjesu bhayadassāvī,
seeing danger in the slightest faults,

¹⁵⁶ PTS, RTE omit; ChS: *Ovādasuttaṃ*.

¹⁵⁷ RTE, PTS: *Katīhi*.

samādāya sikkhati sikkhāpadesu. [1]

he trains in the training rules he has undertaken.

Bahussuto hoti sutadharo sutasannicayo,

He is learned, one who bears (in mind) what he has heard, one who collects what he has heard,

‘Dutiye, bahussuto,’ ti

‘In the second (discourse), he is learned,’

idha sakalassa pi¹⁵⁸ Buddhavacanassa vasena bahussutabhāvo veditabbo.

here it is to be understood: he is learned regarding the whole of the Buddha’s teaching.¹⁵⁹

ye te Dhammā ādikalyāṇā majjhekalyāṇā pariyosānakalyāṇā

and those Dhamma teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end,

sāttham sabyañjanam,

with their meaning, with their (proper) phrasing,

kevalaparipuṇṇam parisuddham brahmacariyam abhivadanti,

the spiritual life which is complete, fullfilled and very pure, (that) he declares,

tathārūpāssa dhammā bahussutā honti dhātā,

and in things such as these he is learned, one who upholds them,

vacasā paricitā, manasānupekkhitā, diṭṭhiyā suppaṭividdhā. [2]

one who has collected the words, considered in his mind, and penetrated (them) with (right) view.

Ubhayāni kho panassa Pātimokkhāni vitthārena svāgatāni honti,

Both Pātimokkhas¹⁶⁰ are well passed down to him with the explanation,

suvibhattāni suppavattāni¹⁶¹ suvinicchitāni suttaso anubyañjanaso. [3]

well-classified, well-recited, well-discerned in regard to the rule and the details.

¹⁵⁸ RTE: *sakalassāpi*.

¹⁵⁹ Literally in the whole of the Buddha-word, which indicates the teaching, of course.

¹⁶⁰ The monks’ and nuns’ Pātimokkhas. A teacher (*ācariya*), to be qualified, must know both.

¹⁶¹ RTE: *suppavattāni*.

Kalyāṇavāco hoti kalyāṇavākkaraṇo,

He is a beautiful speaker, a beautiful recitor,

poriyā vācāya samannāgato, vissaṭṭhāya anelagaḷāya atthassa viññāpaniyā. [4]

he is endowed with good speech, that is distinct, clear, that instructs in the meaning.

Paṭibalo hoti bhikkhunisaṅghassa¹⁶² Dhammiyā kathāya,

He is able to talk in conformity with Dhamma to the Community of nuns,

sandassetuṃ samādapetuṃ samuttejetuṃ sampahaṃsetuṃ. [5]

to instruct, rouse, enthuse, and cheer (them).

Yebhuyyena bhikkhunīnaṃ piyo hoti manāpo. [6]

He is dear and pleasing to almost all the nuns.

Na kho panetaṃ Bhagavantaṃ uddissa pabbajitāya, kāsāyavatthanivasaṇāya,

° In regard to one who has gone forth under the Fortunate One, who dwells wearing the ochre robe,

garudhammaṃ¹⁶³ ajjhāpannapubbo hoti. [7]

he is not guilty of a serious offence.

‘Garudhamma’-ti kāyasaṃsaggam.

‘Serious offence’ means bodily contact.¹⁶⁴

Ayam-ettha saṅkhepo.

This is in brief.

Bhikkhunovādakavinicchayo pana Samantapāsādikāya vuttanayeneva veditabbo.

But the decisions on the advice to nuns should be understood as it is said in (the Commentary) Pleasing on all Sides.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² RTE, PTS: *bhikkhunīsaṅgham*.

¹⁶³ RTE: *-dhamma-*.

¹⁶⁴ The rule refers to a Pātimokkha rule, Saṅghādisesā, 2: *if any monk, with a mind affected by lust should engage in bodily contact (kāyasaṃsaggam) with a woman - holding her hand or holding her hair or any other sort of caressing of the limbs - (it requires) the Community at the beginning and for the rest (of the procedure)*. Note the Saṅghādisesa offence is called a *garudhamma*, the exact word used in reference to the eight rules for nuns.

¹⁶⁵ The Commentary on the Discipline.

Vīsativasso vā hoti Atirekavīsativasso vā. [8]

He has either twenty Rains Retreats or more than twenty Rains Retreats.

Imehi kho, Ānanda, aṭṭhahi dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu

A monk endowed with these eight qualities, Ānanda,

bhikkhunovādako sammannitabbo.” ti

should be authorised as an advisor to nuns.”

*Dutiyam*¹⁶⁶
The Second

¹⁶⁶ BJT omits: *Dutiyam*.

Saṅkhittasuttam¹⁶⁷
The Discourse: ‘In Brief’
 (AN 8.53)

Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Vesāliyaṃ viharati,
 At one time the Fortunate One was dwelling near Vesālī,

Mahāvane Kūṭāgārasālāyaṃ.
 in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

Atha kho Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami,
 Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Fortunate One,¹⁶⁸

upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā, ekam-antaṃ aṭṭhāsi.
 and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, she stood on one side.

Ekam-antaṃ ʾhitā kho¹⁶⁹ Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī Bhagavantam etad-avoca:
 While standing on one side Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Fortunate One:

“Sādhu me,¹⁷⁰ Bhante, Bhagavā saṅkhittena Dhammam desetu,
 “It is good for me, reverend Sir, let the Fortunate One teach the Dhamma in brief,

yam-ahaṃ Bhagavato Dhammam sutvā,
 having heard that Dhamma from the Fortunate One,

ekā¹⁷¹ vūpakaṭṭhā appamattā ātāpinī pahitattā vihareyyan-ti.
 I can dwell secluded, heedful, ardent, and resolute.

“Ye kho tvaṃ, Gotamī, dhamme jāneyyāsi:
 “Gotamī, of those things which you can know:

‘Ime dhammā sarāgāya saṃvattanti, no virāgāya,
 ‘These things lead to passion, not to dispassion,

¹⁶⁷ PTS, RTE omit; BJT: *Saṅkhitta-Gotamī-y-ovādasuttam*.

¹⁶⁸ This discourse is partially parallel to AN 7.83, The Discourse on the Teacher’s Dispensation (*Satthasāsanasuttam*) but there it is Ven. Upālī who requests a teaching in brief, and the answer is not as detailed as here, but just a summary: *those things that lead for sure to weariness (with the world), dispassion, cessation, peace, deep knowledge, Complete Awakening, and Emancipation, Upālī, you should surely bear it in mind: ‘This is not Dhamma, this is not Vinaya, this is not the Teacher’s Dispensation; and the reverse.*

¹⁶⁹ ChS adds: *sā*.

¹⁷⁰ BJT omits: *me*.

¹⁷¹ BJT omits: *ekā*.

‘Tatiye sarāgāyā’ ti sarāgatthāya.

‘In the third (discourse),’ to passion means it goes towards passion

‘Virāgāyā’ ti virajjanatthāya.

‘To dispassion’ means it goes towards dispassion.

saṃyogāya saṃvattanti, no visāmyogāya,

lead to being fettered, not to being unfettered,

‘Saṃyogāyā’ ti vaṭṭe saṃyogatthāya.

‘To being fettered’ means it goes towards being fettered in the round (of continuation).

‘Visāmyogāyā’ ti vaṭṭe visāmyogabhāvatthāya.

‘To being unfettered’ means it goes towards being unfettered in the round (of continuation).

ācayāya saṃvattanti, no apacayāya,

lead to increase, not to decrease,

‘Ācayāyā’ ti vaṭṭassa vaḍḍhanatthāya.

‘To increase’ means it goes towards development of the round (of continuation).

‘No apacayāyā’ ti na vaṭṭavidhamsanatthāya.

‘Not to decrease’ means it goes towards the destruction of the round (of continuation).

mahicchātāya saṃvattanti, no appicchātāya,

lead to great desire, not to little desire,

asantuṭṭhiyā saṃvattanti, no santuṭṭhiyā,

lead to discontent, not to content,

saṅgaṇikāya saṃvattanti, no pavivekāya,

lead to association, not to solitude,

kosajjāya saṃvattanti, no viriyārambhāya,¹⁷²

lead to indolence, not to being energetic,

dubbharatāya¹⁷³ saṃvattanti, no subharatāyā,’ ti

lead to difficulty in support, not to ease in support,’

¹⁷² ChS: *vīriy-*; similarly elsewhere.

¹⁷³ BJT: *Dubharatāyā*.

‘Dubbharatāyā’¹⁷⁴ ti dupposanatthāya.

‘To difficulty’ means it goes towards difficulty in support.

‘No subharatāyā’ ti na sukhaposanatthāya.

‘Not to ease’ means it goes towards ease in support.

Imasmiṃ sutte paṭhamavārena vaṭṭaṃ kathitaṃ,

In this discourse the first time the round (of continuation) is spoken about,

dutiyavārena vivaṭṭaṃ kathitaṃ.

the second time the unfolding (of continuation) is spoken about.

ekamsena, Gotamī, dhāreyyāsi:

Gotamī, you should surely bear it in mind:

‘Neso Dhammo, neso Vinayo, netam Satthu Sāsanan.’ ti

‘This is not Dhamma, this is not Vinaya, this is not the Teacher’s Dispensation.’

Ye ca kho tvaṃ, Gotamī, dhamme jāneyyāsi:

Gotamī, of those things which you can know:

‘Ime dhammā virāgāya saṃvattanti, no sarāgāya,

‘These things lead to dispassion, not to passion,

visaṃyogāya saṃvattanti, no saṃyogāya,

lead to being unfettered, not to being fettered,

apacayāya saṃvattanti, no ācayāya,

lead to decrease, not to increase,

appicchatāya saṃvattanti, no mahicchatāya,

lead to little desire, not to great desire,

santuṭṭhiyā saṃvattanti, no asantuṭṭhiyā,

lead to content, not to discontent,

pavivekāya saṃvattanti, no saṅgaṇikāya,

lead to solitude, not to association,

viriyārambhāya saṃvattanti, no kosajjāya,

lead to being energetic, not to indolence,

subharatāya saṃvattanti, no dubbharatāyā,” ti

lead to ease in support, not to difficulty in support.’

¹⁷⁴ SHB: *Dubharatāyā*.

ekamsena, Gotamī, dhāreyyāsi:

Gotamī, you should surely bear it in mind:

‘Eso Dhammo, eso Vinayo, etaṃ Satthu Sāsanan.’” ti

‘This is Dhamma, this is Vinaya, this is the Teacher’s Dispensation.’”

Iminā ca pana ovādena Gotamī Arahattaṃ pattā ti.

With this advice Gotamī attained Liberation.¹⁷⁵

*Tatiyaṃ*¹⁷⁶

The Third

¹⁷⁵ Elsewhere in the Aṅguttara Commentary it is said that Gotamī received a meditation subject and attained liberation, see the Stories about The Foremost Nuns elsewhere on this website.

¹⁷⁶ BJT omits: *Tatiyaṃ*.