

§ 1. The Centres of His Preachings

1. It is not that after the appointment of the missionaries the Lord sat at one place. He too continued to be his own missionary.

2. The Lord seems to have made certain places chief centres of his missionary work.

3. Of such centres, the chief were Shravasti and Rajagraha.

4. He visited Shravasti about 75 times and Rajagraha about 24 times.

5. Certain other places were made minor centres.

6. They were Kapilavastu, which he visited 6 times, Vesali which he visited 6 times, and Kamassadhamma, 4 times.



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§ 2. The Places He Visited

1. Besides these main and minor centres the Blessed Lord visited many other places during the course of his missionary tour.

2. He visited Ukkatha, Nadika, Sal, Assapura, Ghoshitaram, Nalanda, Appana, Etuma.

3. He visited Opasad, Icha-naukal, Chandul Kuppā, Kushinara.

4. He visited Devadaha, Pava, Ambasanda, Setavya, Anupiya and Ugunma.

5. The names of the places he visited show that he travelled over the Sakya Desa, the Kuru Desa and Anga Desa.

6. Roughly speaking, he travelled over the whole of Northern India.

7. These appear to be a few places. But what distance do they cover? Rajagraha from Lumbini is not less than 250 miles. This just gives an idea of distances.

8. These distances the Lord walked on foot. He did not even use a bullock-cart.



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9. In his wanderings he had no place to stay until later on when his lay disciples built Viharas and resting places which he and his Bhikkhus used as halts on their journeys. Most often he lived under the shade of wayside trees.

10. He went from place to place, sometimes from village to village, resolving the doubts and difficulties of those who were willing to accept his message, controverting the arguments of those who were his opponents and preaching his gospel to those who like children came to him for guidance.

11. The Blessed Lord knew that all those who came to listen to him were not all of them intelligent, not all of them came with an open and a free mind.

12. He had even warned the brethren that there were three sorts of listeners.

13. The empty-head, the fool who cannot see,—though oft and oft, unto the brethren going, he hears their talk, beginning, middle, end,—but can never grasp it. Wisdom is not his.

14. Better than he the man of scattered brains, who oft and oft, unto the brethren going, hears all their talk, beginning, middle, end, and seated there can grasp the very words, yet, rising, nought retains. Blank is his mind.

15. Better than these the man of wisdom wide. He, oft and oft unto the brethren going, hears all their talk, beginning, middle, end, and seated there, can grasp the very words, bears all in mind, steadfast, unwavering, skilled in the Norm and what conforms thereto.

16. Notwithstanding this, the Lord was never tired of going from place to place preaching his gospel.

17. As a bhikkhu the Lord never had more than three pieces of clothes. He lived on one meal a day and he begged his food from door to door every morning.

18. His mission was the hardest task assigned to any human being. He discharged it so cheerfully.

§ 3. *Last Meeting between Mother and Son and between Wife and Husband*



1. Before their death Mahaprajapati and Yeshodhara met the Blessed Lord.

2. It was probably their last meeting with him.

3. Mahaprajapati went and first worshipped him.

4. She thanked him for having given her the happiness of the good doctrine, for her having been spiritually born through him: for the doctrine having grown in her through him; for her having suckled him, drinking the Dhamma-milk of him; for her having plunged in and crossed over the ocean of becoming through him—what a glorious thing it has been to be known as the mother of the Buddha !

5. And then she uttered her plea:—

“ I desire to die finally having put away this corpse. O sorrow-ender, permit me.”

6. Yeshodhara, addressing the Blessed Lord, said that she was in her seventy-eighth year. The Blessed Lord replied that he was in his eighties.

7. She told him that she was to die that very night. Her tone was more self-reliant than that of Mahaprajapati. She did not ask his permission to die nor did she go to him to seek him as her refuge.

8. On the contrary, she said to him (*me saranam atthano*), “ I am my own refuge.”

9. She had conquered all the cankers in her life.

10. She came to thank him because it was he who had shown her the way and given her the power.

§ 4. *Last Meeting between Father and Son*

1. Once when the Lord was staying at Rajagraha in the bamboo grove Rahula was staying at Ambalathika.

2. The Blessed One arising towards eventide from his meditation went over to Rahula, who seeing the Lord some way off, set a seat for him and water to wash his feet.



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3. Seating himself on the seat set for him, the Lord poured water over his feet while Rahula, after salutations, took his seat to one side.

4. Addressing Rahula, the Blessed Lord said—“He who does not shrink from deliberate lying has not—say I—left undone any evil thing which he could. Therefore, you must school yourself never to tell a lie even in jest.

5. “In the same way you must reflect and again in doing every act, in speaking every word and in thinking every thought.

6. “When you want to do anything you must reflect whether it would conduce to your or others’ harm or to both, and so is a wrong act productive of woe and ripening into woe. If reflection tells you that this is the nature of that contemplated act, you should not do it.

7. “But if reflection assures you there is no harm but good in it, then you may do it.

8. “Grow in loving kindness; for as you do so malevolence will pass away.

9. “Grow in compassion; for as you do so vexation will pass away.

10. “Grow in gladness over others’ welfare; for as you do so aversions will pass away.

11. “Grow in poised equanimity; for as you do so all repugnance will pass away.

12. “Grow in contemplation of the body’s corruption; for as you do so passion will pass away.

13. “Grow in perception of the fleeting nature of things; for as you do so the pride of self will fall away.”

14. Thus spoke the Lord. Glad at heart, Rahula rejoiced in what the Lord had said.

§ 5. *Last Meeting between the Buddha and Sariputta*

1. The Blessed Lord was staying in Shravasti in the Jetavana in the Gaudhakuti Vihar.

2. Sariputta arrived there with a company of five hundred brethren.

3. After saluting the Blessed One Sariputta told him that the last day of his life on earth had arrived. Will the Blessed Lord be pleased to permit him to give up his mortal coils ?

4. The Blessed Lord asked Sariputta if he had selected any place for his parinibbana.

5. Sariputta told the Blessed One, “ I was born in the village Nalaka in Magadha. The house in which I was born still stands. I have chosen my home for my parinibbana.”

6. The Lord replied, “Dear Sariputta ! Do what pleases you.”

7. Sariputta fell on the feet of the Blessed Lord and said, “I have practised the paramitas for one thousand Kalpas with only one wish, to have the honour of falling on your feet. I have achieved that end and there is no end to my happiness.”

8. ‘ “We do not believe in rebirth. Therefore this is our last meeting. Let the Lord forgive me my faults. My last day has come.”

9. “Sariputta! There is-nothing to forgive,” said the Lord.

10. When Sariputta rose to go, the Lord in his honour got up and stood up on the verandah of the Gaudhakuti Vihar.

11. Then Sariputta said to the Blessed Lord, “ I was happy when I saw you first. I am happy to see you now. I know this is the last *darshan* of you I am having. I shall not have your *darshan* again.”

12. Joining together the palms of his hand he walked away without showing his back to the Blessed Lord.

13. Then the Blessed Lord said to the assembled brethren— “Follow your Elder Brother,” and the assembly for the first time left the Blessed Lord and went after Sariputta.

14. Sariputta on reaching his village died in his home in the very room in which he was born.



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15. He was cremated and his ashes were taken to the Blessed Lord.

16. On receiving the ashes the Blessed Lord said to the brethren—"He was the wisest, he had no acquisitive instinct, he was energetic and industrious, he hated sin, ye brethren see his ashes. He was as strong as the earth in his forgiveness, he never allowed anger to enter his mind, he was never controlled by any desire, he had conquered all his passions, he was full of sympathy, fellowship and love."

17. About that time Mahamogallan was then living in a solitary Vihar near Rajagraha. He was murdered by some assassins employed by the enemies of the Blessed Lord.

18. The sad news of his end was conveyed to the Blessed One. Sariputta and Mahamogallan were his two chief disciples. They were called Dharma-Senapati—Defenders of the Faith. The Blessed Lord depended upon them to continue the spread of his gospel.

19. The Blessed Lord was deeply affected by their death in his lifetime.

20. He did not like to stay in Shravasti and to relieve his mind he decided to move on.

PART II

Leaving Vaishali

1. Farewell to Vesali.
2. Halt at Pava.
3. Arrival at Kushinara.

§ 1. *Farewell to Vesali*

1. Before he set on his last journey the Blessed Lord was staying at Rajagraha on the Vulture's Peak.

2. After staying there for some time he said: "Come Ananda, let us go to Ambalathika."

3. "So be it Lord !" said Ananda in assent, and the Blessed One, with a large company of the brethren, proceeded to Ambalathika.

4. After staying at Ambalathika he moved on to Nalanda.

5. From Nalanda he went to Pataligama, the capital of Magadha.

6. From Pataligama he went to Kotigam and from Kotigam he went to Nadika.

7. At each of these places he stopped for a few days and delivered a religious discourse either to the brethren or the householders.

8. From Nadika he went to Vesali.

9. Vesali was the birth-place of Mahavira and consequently a stronghold of his faith.

10. But the Blessed Lord soon succeeded in converting the people of Vesali to his own faith.

11. It is said that owing to drought, a famine ravaged the city of Vesali to such an extent that people died in large numbers.

12. The people of Vesali complained of it in a general assembly convoked by them.

13. The assembly after much discussion decided to invite the Blessed Lord to the city.

14. A Lichchavi by name Mahali, a friend of King Bimbisara and son of the chaplain of Vesali, was sent to offer the invitation.

15. The Blessed Lord accepted the invitation and started with five hundred Bhikkhus. As soon as he entered the territory of the Vajjins there was a thunderstorm, rain fell in torrents and famine disappeared.

16. This is the origin of the welcome which the people of Vesali gave to the Blessed Lord.

17. Having won their hearts it was natural that the people of Vesali should give him a warm response.





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18. Then came *vasa*. The Blessed Lord went to Beluna for his *vasa* and asked the brethren to make their *vasa* in Vesali.

19. After finishing his *vasa* the Lord came to Vesali with a mind to leave Vesali and move on his journey.

20. So the Blessed Lord early one morning robed himself, and taking his bowl, entered Vesali for alms; and when he had passed through Vesali and eaten his meal he gazed at Vesali with an elephant's look and addressed the venerable Ananda and said: "This will be the last time Ananda that the Tathagatha will behold Vesali."

21. Thus saying he bade farewell to the people of Vesali.

22. He gave to the Lichchavis, when they took leave of him at the old city on their northern frontier, his alms-bowl as a memento.

23. It was his last visit to Vesali. He did not live to return to it again.

§ 2. *Halt at Pava*

1. From Vesali the Blessed Lord went to Bhandagam.

2. From Bhandagam he went to Hatthi-gam to Bhoga-Nagara.

3. And from Bhoga-Nagara he went to Pava.

4. At Pava the Blessed One stayed at the mango grove of one blacksmith by name Chunda.

5. Now Chunda heard that the Blessed One had come to Pava and was staying in his mango grove.

6. Chunda went to the mango grove and sat near the Blessed One, who gave him a religious discourse.

7. Gladdened by it Chunda addressed the Blessed One and said: "May the Blessed One do me the honour of taking his meal together with the brethren, at my house tomorrow."

8. And the Blessed One signified, by silence, his

consent. Seeing that the Blessed One had consented, Chunda departed thence.

9. Next day Chunda made ready in his dwelling-place sweet rice and cakes and some preparation of *Sukara-Madhava*. And he announced the hour to the Blessed One, saying: "The hour, Lord, has come, and the meal is ready."

10. And the Blessed One robed himself and taking his bowl went with the brethren to the dwelling-place of Chunda and partook of the food prepared by him.

11. Again after the meal the Blessed One gave a discourse on religion to Chunda, then rose from his seat and departed thence.

12. The food offered by Chunda did not agree with the Blessed One. There fell upon him a dire sickness, the disease of dysentery, and sharp and shooting pain came upon him even unto death.

13. But the Blessed One, mindful and self-possessed, bore it without complaint.

14. Returning to the mango grove and after nature was relieved, the Blessed One told Ananda: "Come let us go to Kushinara" and the party moved from Pava.

§ 3. *Arrival at Kushinara*

1. The Blessed Lord walked for part of the way. He soon felt the need for some rest.

2. On the way the Blessed One went aside from the path to the foot of a certain tree and said to Ananda: "Fold, I pray you, Ananda, the robe; and spread it out for me. I am weary, Ananda, and must rest a while!"

3. "Even so, Lord!" said the venerable Ananda, in assent, to the Blessed One, and spread out the robe folded fourfold.

4. And the Blessed One seated himself on the seat prepared for him.

5. And when he was seated, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ananda, and said: "Fetch me,





I pray you, Ananda, some water. I am thirsty, Ananda, and would drink.”

6. Ananda replied: “This river Kakuttha is not far off, is clear and pleasant, cool and transparent, easy to get down into and delightful. There the Blessed One may both drink the water and cool his limbs. The water of this stream is foul and turbid.”

7. The Blessed One was too weak to walk down to the river. He preferred to have the water of the nearby stream.

8. Ananda brought the water and the Blessed One drank it.

9. After resting for a while the Blessed One with the company of the brethren went on to the river Kakuttha; and when he had come there, he went down into the water, and bathed, and drank. And coming out again on the other side he went on to the mango grove.

10. And when he came there he again asked his robe to be spread out, saying: “ I am weary and would lie down.” The robe was accordingly spread out and the Blessed One laid himself down on it.

11. After resting for a while the Blessed One got up and said to Ananda: “ Let us go on to the Sala grove of the Mallas, the Upavana of Kushinara on the further side of the river Hiranyavatti.”

12. On reaching the place in the company of Ananda, he again asked Ananda to spread his robe between the twin Sala trees. “I am weary and would lie down.”

13. Ananda spread the robe and the Blessed One laid himself down on it.

PART III

His End

1. The Appointment of a Successor.
2. The Last Convert.
3. Last Words.
4. Ananda in Grief.
5. The Lament of the Mallas and the Joy of a Bhikkhu.
6. The Last Rites.
7. Quarrel Over Ashes.
8. Loyalty to the Buddha.

§ 1. *The Appointment of a Successor*

1. The Exalted One was at one time sojourning among the Sakyans in the mango grove of the Sakyan family named the archers.

2. Now at that time Nataputta the Nigantha had just died at Pava. And at his death the Niganthas became disunited and divided into two parties, in mutual strife and conflict, quarrelling and wounding each other with wordy weapons.

3. Now Chunda, the novice, having passed the rainy season at Pava, came to see the venerable Ananda and said: "Nataputta, sir, the Nigantha had just died at Pava. And he being dead the Niganthas have become disunited and divided and are quarrelling and wounding one another. This is because they are without a protector."

4. Then said the venerable Ananda, "Friend Chunda, this is a worthy subject to bring before the Exalted One. Let us go to him, and tell him about it."

5. "Very good, sir," replied Chunda.

6. So the venerable Ananda and Chunda, the novice, sought out the Exalted One and saluting him, told him about the Niganthas and pleaded the necessity of appointing a successor.

7. The Blessed Lord on hearing what Chunda had said, replied: "But consider Chunda, where a teacher hath arisen in the world, Arahata, supremely enlightened: where a doctrine hath been well set forth, well imparted, effectual for guidance, conducive to peace; but where his disciples have not become proficient in good Norm, nor has it been made a thing of saving grace to them, well proclaimed among men when their teacher passes away.

8. "Now for such a teacher to die, Chunda, is a great affliction for his disciples and a great danger to his Dhamma.

9. "But consider, Chunda, where a teacher has appeared in the world who is all-enlightened; where the Norm has been well set forth, well imparted, effec-





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tual for guidance, conducive to peace, and where the disciples have become proficient in the good Norm, and where the full scope of the higher life has become manifest to them when that teacher passes away.

10. "Now for such a teacher, Chunda, to die is not an affliction for his disciples. Why then have a successor ? "

11. When Ananda raised the same question on another occasion the Blessed Lord said: "What think you Ananda ? Do you observe even a couple of almsmen at variance about what I have taught ? "

12. "No. But those who are about the Lord might after his death, stir up quarrel in the confraternity respecting the regimen or of the code and such quarrels would make for general grief."

13. "Of little concern, Ananda, are quarrels respecting rigours of regimen or of the code ; it is possible quarrels in the confraternity about the path which really matter," said the Blessed Lord.

14. "These disputes about the path cannot be settled by a dictator. What then a successor can do unless he acts as a dictator.

15. "The controversies regarding the path cannot be settled by a dictator.

16. "The decision of a controversy should be reached by the fraternity. The whole conjoint body should assemble and thrash out the matter till there is agreement and then to settle it conformably with such agreement.

17. "Majority agreements is the way to settle the disputes and not the appointment of a successor."

§2. *The Last Convert*

1. Now at that time Subhadda the Wanderer was staying at Kusinara. And Subhadda the Wanderer heard the rumour, " This very day, it is said, in the last watch of the night will be the final passing away of Gotama the recluse." Then this thought came to Subhadda the Wanderer.

2. "Thus have I heard it said by other wanderers

who are old and far gone in years, both teachers and disciples; 'Rarely, rarely do Tathagatas arise in the world, they, who are Arahats, fully Enlightened Ones, And here tonight, in the last watch, will be the final passing away of Gotama, the recluse. Now a doubt has arisen in my mind and I am assured of Gotama, the recluse. Gotama, the recluse, can show me a teaching, so that I may dispel this doubting state of mine.'



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3. Then Subhadda the Wanderer went towards the branch road to the Sala grove of the Mallas, where the venerable Ananda was, and coming there he told the venerable Ananda what he had thought and he exclaimed: "O Master Ananda ! If only I could get a sight of Gotama the recluse !"

4. At these words the venerable Ananda said to Subhadda the Wanderer: " Enough, friend Subhadda! Trouble not the Master! The Exalted One is wearied."

5. Then a second and yet a third time did Subhadda the Wanderer make the same request, and got the same reply.

6. Now the Exalted One overheard this talk between the venerable Ananda and Subhadda the Wanderer. And He called to the venerable Ananda, saying, " Enough, Ananda ! prevent not Subhadda. Let Subhadda be permitted to see the Tathagata. Whatsoever Subhadda shall ask of me, he will ask it all from a desire to know, not from a desire to trouble me. And whatever I shall say in answer, that will be quickly understood."

7. So then the venerable Ananda said to Subhadda the Wanderer, " Go you in, friend Subhadda. The Exalted One gives you leave."

8. So Subhadda the Wanderer went in to the Exalted One, and coming to Him greeted Him pleasantly, and after the exchange of friendly compliments he sat down at one side. So seated, Subhadda the Wanderer thus addressed the Exalted One:

9. "Master Gotama, all those recluses and Brahmins who have followings and companies of listeners, who are teachers of companies, well known,