

§ 1. *His Personal Appearance*

1. From all accounts the Blessed Lord was a handsome person.

2. His form was like the peak of a golden mountain. He was tall and well built; with a pleasing appearance.

3. His long arms and lion gait, his bull-like eyes, and his beauty, bright like gold, his broad chest, attracted everyone to him.

4. His brows, his forehead, his mouth or his eyes, his body, his hands, his feet or his gait— whatever part of him anyone beheld that at once riveted his eyes.

5. Whoever saw him could not help being struck with his majesty and his strength, his splendid beauty, surpassing all other men.

6. On seeing him, he who was going elsewhere stood still and whoever was standing followed him: he who was walking gently and gravely, ran quickly, and he who was sitting at once sprang up.

7. Of those who met him some revered him with their hands, others in worship saluted him with their heads, some addressed him with affectionate words, not one went on without paying him homage.

8. He was loved and respected by all.

9. Men as well as women were ever ready to hear him.

10. His voice was singularly sweet and deep as a drum, lovely, vibrant and eloquent. It made his speech as though it was heavenly music.

11. His very tones convinced the hearer, and his looks inspired awe.

12. His personality alone sufficed to make him not only a leader but a god to the hearts of his fellows.

13. When he spoke he obtained hearers.

14. It mattered little what he said. He influenced



VIII



the emotions and bent whoever listened to his will.

15. He could create in the minds of his hearers that what he taught was not only a verity, but the very hope of their salvation.

16. His hearers could recognize in his words the truth that makes of slaves free men.

17. When he talked with men and women his serene look inspired them with awe and reverence and his lovely voice struck them with rapture and amazement.

18. Who could have converted the robber Augulimala or the Cannibal of Atavi? Who could have reconciled King Pasenjit to his queen Mallika by a single word. To have come under his spell is to be his for ever. So charming was his personality.

§ 2. *The Testimony of Eye-witnesses*

1. This traditional view is supported by the testimony of eye-witnesses who saw him and met him while he was alive.

2. One such eye-witness is a Brahmin by name Sale. After seeing the Blessed One face to face he uttered the following sentiments in praise of him.

3. Arrived in the Lord's presence, the Brahmin, seating himself after greetings, scanned the Lord's body for the two and thirty marks of a Superman, and in time observed them.

4. Quite sure now about the presence of the two and thirty marks, Sale still did not know whether or not he had enlightenment. But he remembered hearing from old and aged Brahmins, teachers of teachers, that those who became Arahats, all enlightened, reveal themselves when their praises are sung, and so he made up his mind to extol the Lord to his face in the following lines of eulogy :

5. "Perfect of body, goodly, Lord, art thou, well grown, well liking, golden-hued, with teeth which gleam lustre; vigour fills the frame; the body's full

perfection manifests each single sign that marks a Superman.

6. "Clear-eyed and handsome, tall, upright art thou, effulgent as a sun among thy train, so debonair, so golden-hued; why waste thy beauty's prime as homeless anchorite.

7. "As world-wide monarch thou shouldst ride in State; and indeed from sea to sea should own thy sway. Proud princes shall thy village headmen be; rule thou mankind, as sovereign, king of kings."

8. Ananda describes the colour of his body as exceedingly clear and bright so much so that the pair of cloth of gold when placed on the body of the Blessed One appears to have lost its splendour.

9. No wonder he was called by his opponents a glamour boy.



§ 3. *His Capacity to Lead*

1. The Sangh had no official head. The Blessed One had no authority over the Sangh. The Sangh was a self-governing body.

2. What was, however, the position of the Blessed One over the Sangh and its members?

3. In this we have the evidence of Sakuldai and Udai, contemporaries of the Blessed One.

4. Once the Lord was staying at Rajagraha in the bamboo grove.

5. One morning the Lord went into Rajagraha for alms; but, deeming the hour too early, he thought of going to Sakuldai in Wanderers' Pleasance; and thither he repaired.

6. At the time, Sakuldai was sitting with a great company of Wanderers, who were making a great noise about being and not being.

7. When from some way off, Sakuldai saw the Lord coming, he hushed his company by saying: "Be quiet, sirs; do not make a noise; here comes the recluse Gotama, who is a lover of silence."

8. So they became silent and the Lord came up. Said Sakuldai: "I pray the Lord to join us; he is truly



VIII

welcome; it is a long time since he last managed to come. Pray, be seated; here is a seat for the Lord.”

9. The Lord sat down accordingly, asking Sakuldai what had been their theme and what was the discussion which had been interrupted.

10. “Let that pass for the moment,” answered Sakuldai; “you can easily gather that later on.”

11. Of late, when recluses and Brahmins of other creeds met together in the Discussion Hall, the topic was mooted, what a good thing, what a very good thing, for the Magdha people in Anga, that such recluses and Brahmins—all at the head of confraternities or followings, all well known and famous teachers, all founders of saving creeds, held in high repute by many people should have come to spend the rainy season at Rajagraha.

12. There was Purana Kassappa, Makhali Ghosala, Ajit Kesakambal, Pakudha Kacchayana, Sanjaya Belaiputta, and Nata-putta the Nigantha, all men of distinction and all of them here for the rains; and among them there is also the recluse Gotama here, at the head of his confraternity and following, a well-known and famous teacher, a founder of a saving creed, who is held in high repute by many.

13. Now, which of these lords, which of these recluses and Brahmins of such eminence as teachers, is esteemed, respected, venerated and adored by his disciples? And on what terms of esteem and respect do they live with him?

14. Said some: “Purana Kassappa gets no esteem or respect; no veneration or adoration, from his disciples; they live with him on no terms of esteem and respect.”

15. Time was when, as he was preaching his doctrine to some hundreds of his following, a disciple broke in with—“Don’t question Purana Kassappa, who does not know about it; ask me who do; I will explain everything to your reverences.”

16. With arms outstretched Purana Kassappa tearfully remonstrated, saying: “Do be quiet, sirs; do not make a noise.”

PART II
His Humanity

1. His Compassion—The Maha Karunik.
2. Healing of the Stricken.
3. His Concern for the Sick.
4. His Tolerance of the Intolerant.
5. His Sense of Equality and Equal Treatment.

§ 1. *His Compassion—The Maha Karunik*



1. When once the Blessed Lord was staying in Shravasti the almsmen came and informed him that they were constantly harassed by the Deva who disturbed them in their meditations.

2. After hearing their stories of harassment the Blessed Lord gave them the following instructions :—

3. “He, who is skilled in his godness, who wishes to attain that calm state, should act thus: he should be able, upright, near perfectly upright, of noble speech, gentle and humble.

4. “Contented, easily supportable, with few duties, of light livelihood, controlled in senses, discreet, not impudent, not greedily attached to families.

5. “He should not pursue anything trifling such that other wise men might censure him. He should wish, ‘May all beings be happy and secure; may their hearts be wholesome.’

6. “Whatever living beings there be—feeble or strong, tall, stout and medium, short, small or large, without exception;

7. “Seen or unseen, those dwelling far or near, those who are born, or who are to be born, may all beings be happy.

8. “Let none deceive another, nor despise any person whatsoever in any place, let him not wish any harm to another, out of anger or ill-will.

9. “Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so let him cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings.

10. “Let his thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world, above, below and across without any obstruction, without any enmity.

11. “Whether he stands, walks, sits, lies down, as long as he is awake, he should develop this mindfulness, this they say is the noblest living here.

12. “Not falling into error (self-illusion), being virtuous and endowed with insight, by discarding



VIII

attachment to sense desires never does he come again for conception in a womb.”

13. In short, he told them “Love your enemies.”

§ 2. *Healing of the Stricken*

A Consummate Healer of Sorrow.

(i)

Consoling Visakha

1. Visakha was an upasika. It was her routine to give alms to the bhikkhus.

2. One day her grand-daughter, Suddata, who lived with her, fell ill and died.

3. Visakha was unable to bear the grief.

4. After cremation she went to the Buddha and sat on one side sad with tearful eyes.

5. “O Visakha,” asked the Blessed One, “wherefore dost thou sit, sad and mournful, shedding tears?”

6. She told him of her grand-daughter’s death, saying, “she was a dutiful girl, and I cannot find her like.”

7. “How many young girls, say, are there dwelling in Shravasti, O Visakha?”

8. “Lord, men say there are several kotis (several millions).”

9. “If all these were like thy grand-daughter, wouldst thou not love them?”

10. “Verily, Lord,” replied Visakha.

11. “And how many die daily in Shravasti?”

12. “Many, Lord.”

13. “Then there is never a moment when thou wouldst not be grieving for someone?”

14. “True, Lord.”

15. “Wouldst thou then spend thy life weeping day and night?”

16. “I understand Lord ; it is well said !”

17. “Grieve then, no more.”

(ii)

Comforting Kisa Gotami

1. Kisa Gotami was married to the son of a merchant of Shravasti.

2. Soon after marriage a son was born to her.

3. Unfortunately her child died of a snake-bite before it could walk.

4. She could not believe that her child was really dead as she had not seen death before.

5. The little spot red from the bite of a snake, did not look as if it could be the cause of the child's death.

6. She, therefore, took her dead child and wandered about from house to house, in such a wild state of mind that people believed that she had gone out of her senses.

7. At last one old man advised her to go and seek out Gotama who happened at the time to be in Shravasti.

8. So she came to the Blessed One and asked him for some medicine for her dead child.

9. The Blessed One listened to her story and to her lamentations.

10. Then the Blessed One told her, "Go enter the town, and at any house where yet there has been no death, thence bring a little mustard seed and with that I will revive your child."

11. She thought this was easy and with the dead body of her child she entered the town.

12. But she soon found that she had failed as every house she visited had suffered loss in the death of some member.

13. As one householder told her, "the living are few and the dead are many."

14. So she returned to the Blessed Lord disappointed and empty-handed.

15. The Blessed Lord then asked her if she did not then realize that death was the common lot of all and whether she should grieve as though it was her special misfortune.



VIII

16. She then went and cremated the child, saying: "All is impermanent; this is the law."

§ 3. *His Concern for the Sick*

(i)

1. Now at one time a certain brother was suffering from dysentery and lay where he had fallen down in his own excreta.

2. And the Exalted One going on his rounds of the lodgings, with the venerable Ananda in attendance, came to the lodging of that brother.

3. Now the Exalted One saw that brother lying where he had fallen in his own excreta and seeing him he went towards him, and said: "Brother, what ails you?"

4. "I have dysentery, Lord."

5. "But is there anyone taking care of you, brother?"

6. "No, Lord."

7. "Why is it, brother, that the brethren do not take care of you?"

8. "I am useless to the brethren, Lord, therefore the brethren do not care for me."

9. Then the Exalted One said to the venerable Ananda: "Go you, Ananda, and fetch water. I will wash this brother."

10. "Yes, Lord," replied the venerable Ananda to the Exalted One. When he had fetched the water, the Exalted One poured it out, while the venerable Ananda washed that brother all over. Then the Exalted One, taking him by the head and the venerable Ananda taking him by the feet, together they laid him on the bed.

11. Then the Exalted One, in this connection and on this occasion, gathered the Order of Brethren together, and questioned the brethren, saying:

12. "Brethren, is there in such and such a lodging a brother who is sick?"

13. "There is, Lord."

14. "And what ails that brother?"

15. "Lord, that brother has dysentery."

16. "But, brethren, is there anyone taking care of him?"

17. "No, Lord."

18. "Why not? Why do not the brethren take care of him?"

19. "The brother is useless to the brethren, Lord. That is why the brethren do not take care of him."

20. "Brethren, ye have no mother and father to take care of you. If ye will not take care of each other, who else, I ask, will do so? Brethren, he who would wait on me, let him wait on the sick.

21. "If he have a teacher, let his teacher take care of him so long as he is alive, and wait for his recovery. If he have a tutor or a lodger, a disciple or a fellow lodger or a fellow disciple, such should take care of him and await his recovery. If no one takes care of him, it shall be reckoned an offence."

(ii)

1. Once the Exalted One was staying near Rajagraha in the great grove, at the squirrels feeding ground.

2. On that occasion the venerable Vakkali was staying in the potter's shed, being sick, afflicted, stricken with a sore disease.

3. Now the venerable Vakkali called to his attendants, saying: "Come hither, friends! Go ye to the Exalted One and, in my name worshipping at the feet of the Exalted One, say unto Him: 'Lord, the brother Vakkali is sick, afflicted, stricken with a sore disease. He worships at the feet of the Exalted One.' And thus do you say: 'Well, were it, Lord, if the Exalted One would visit brother Vakkali, out of compassion for him.'"

4. The Exalted One consented by His silence. Thereupon the Exalted One robed himself, and, taking bowl and robe, went to visit the venerable Vakkali.

5. Now the venerable Vakkali saw the Exalted



VIII



One coming while he was yet far off, and on seeing him he stirred upon his bed.

6. Then said the Exalted One to the venerable Vakkali: "Enough, Vakkali ! Stir not on your bed ! There are these seats made ready. I will sit there." And he sat down on a seat made ready. So the Exalted One sat down and said to the venerable Vakkali :

7. "Well, Vakkali, I hope you are bearing up. I hope you are enduring. Do your pains abate and not increase ? Are there signs of their abating and not increasing?"

8. "No, Lord, I am not bearing up. I am not enduring. Strong pains come upon me. They do not abate. There is no sign of their abating but of their increasing."

9. "Have you any doubt, Vakkali ? Have you any remorse."

10. "Indeed, Lord, I have no doubt. I have no remorse."

11. "Have you not anything, Vakkali, wherein you reproach yourself as to morals ?"

12. "Nay, Lord, there is nothing wherein I reproach myself as to morals."

13. "Then, Vakkali, if that is so, you must have some worry, you must have something you regret."

14. "For a long time, Lord, I have been longing to set eyes on the Exalted One, but I had not strength enough in this body to come to see the Exalted One."

15. "Hush, Vakkali; what is there in seeing this vile body of mine ? He who seeth the Norm, he seeth me: he who seeth, Vakkali, seeth the Norm. Verily, seeing the Norm, Vakkali, one seeth me : seeing me, one seeth the Norm."

(iii)

1. Thus have I heard: The Exalted One was once staying among the Bhaggi, at crocodile haunt in Bhesakala grove in the deer-park. Then the housefather, Nakulapita, came to the Exalted One, saluted Him, and sat down at one side.

2. As he sat there, the housefather, Nakulapita, addressed the Exalted One, saying: "Master, I am a broken-down old man, aged, far gone in years, I have reached life's end, I am sick and always ailing. Moreover, Master, I am one to whom rarely comes the sight of the Exalted One and the worshipful brethren. Let the Exalted One cheer and comfort me, so that it be a profit and a blessing unto me for many a long day."



VIII

3. "True it is, true it is, housefather, that your body is weak and cumbered ! For one carrying this body about, housefather, to claim but a moment's health would be sheer foolishness. Wherefore, housefather, thus should you train yourself: 'Though my body is sick, my mind shall not be sick.' Thus, housefather, must you train yourself."

4. Then Nakulapita, the housefather, welcomed and gladly heard the words of the Exalted One, and rising from his seat he saluted the Exalted One by the right, and departed.

(iv)

1. Once the Exalted One was staying among the Sakyans at Kapilavastu, in the fig-tree park.

2. Then on that occasion a number of brethren were busy with making robes for the Exalted One, "For," said they, "when the three months are over, the Exalted One, his robes being complete, will go forth on his rounds."

3. Now Mahanama, the Sakyan, heard it said, "A number of brethren are busy with making robes, and so forth". . . and he went to the Exalted One, saluted him, and sat down at one side. So seated, Mahanama, the Sakyan, said :

4. "I hear it said, Lord, that a number of the brethren are busy with making robes for the Exalted One, saying, 'when the robes are complete, at the end of the three months, the Exalted One will go forth on his rounds.' Now, Lord, we have never heard from the Exalted One's own lips how a discreet layman who is sick, in pain, grievously afflicted, should be cheered by another discreet lay-brother."