

## Buddha's Cārikā after His Enlightenment

Basanta Raj Shakya

Freelancer, M.A. (Theravada Buddhism)

Khachhen-149, Nagabahal, Lalitpur-16

basan.raj@gmail.com

DOI: 10.3126/hj.v15i2.70665

### Abstract

*The Buddha's of cārikā refers to his travels from place to place, particularly to spread the Dhamma teachings aimed at liberating all sentient beings from suffering. This movement begins with the first sermon at Mṛgadāvana and continues until the stage of Mahāparinirvāṇa at Kusinagar. This 45-year journey across Jambudvīpa, or the Indian subcontinent, was one of the most significant changes in the philosophical world. This paper aims to explore the major incidents of the Buddha's movement in spreading the Dhamma around the Indian subcontinent during 563 BC. It also addresses the formation of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha and Bhikkhuni Saṅgha, as well as the tradition of vassāvāsa and the involvement of laypeople from diverse backgrounds during the Buddha's time. Research methods include descriptive techniques that reference both original and secondary sources. This research paper provides insight into the 45 years of spreading the Buddha's teachings and the establishment of his tradition after enlightenment.*

*Keywords:* Buddha, Bhikkhu, Laypeople, Saṅgha, Vassāvāsa.

### Introduction

The *cārikā* (peripatetic movement) generally refers to moving from place to place with a specific goal or purpose. The events just after enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya are considered the starting point of this movement, while the Buddha's Mahāparinibbāṇa at Kusinagar serves as the endpoint. The duration of this movement spans 45 years across Jambudvīpa, now known as the Indian subcontinent. The motive of this movement was to guide individuals from suffering toward enlightenment or liberation and to expose as many people as possible to the teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha began this movement by preaching the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta to the *Pañcavaggīya* Bhikkhu-s and ordaining them, which is regarded as the establishment of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Kondannya, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahānāma, and Assaji—these five attained supreme arahatship. The number of arahants increased to 60, after which the Buddha instructed the Bhikkhu-s to spread the Dhamma teachings far and wide, individually, for the benefit and happiness of all people.

With the increase of Bhikkhu-s in the *saṅgha*, the code of conduct, *vinaya*, was also gradually introduced alongside the emergence of respective incidents. This movement in the

Buddha's life observe through the tradition of rainy retreats, or *vassāvāsa*, as mentioned in Pali literature.

Laypeople who supported the Buddha and the Bhikkhu-s appeared alongside the formation of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Tupussa and Vallika were the first laypeople to take refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. However, the father of Yasa Kumar was the first layperson to take refuge in the triple gem: The Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha. Laypeople from different backgrounds, including kings, beggars, royal courtesans, farmers, and brahmins, have been established in the Dhamma. The formation of the Bhikkhuni Saṅgha was initiated by the Buddha at the request of his foster mother, Prajāpati Gotami, who became the first Bhikkhuni.

This research paper is limited to the significant events in the Buddha's life post-enlightenment, including the formation of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Saṅgha, the spreading of the Dhamma teachings, and the 45 *vassāvāsa*. Therefore, the objective of this research is to concentrate on these incidents from the Buddha's journey after enlightenment. It also introduces selected laypeople from diverse backgrounds, such as kings, queens, businessmen, serial killers, royal courtesans, and farmers, who became devotees of the Buddha after hearing his Dhamma teachings.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive method is used in this research paper, including library visits and online articles. The Pali Tripitaka serves as the primary source for this research, along with translated versions. Books, online articles, and research papers related to the events of the Buddha's life and *vassāvāsa* are utilized as secondary sources.

## Discussion

### Initial phase of the Buddha's journey after enlightenment

Peripatetic movement is defined as roaming or wandering from place to place with a specific goal or purpose. It involves either a single individual or a group of people with a common objective. This term usually appears in the context of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, but here, the concept of peripatetic refers to the movement of preaching the dhamma teachings by the Buddha in various places around the Indian subcontinent. At the age of 35, the Shakya prince Siddhartha Gotama attained Buddhahood under the Bodhi tree, after which the Buddha began preaching the dhamma at the request of Sahampati Brahma. This movement of preaching started with the discourse of the Dhammacakkapavattana to the Pañcavaggīya Bhikkhu-s at Mṛgadāvana, Sarnath, which is considered the first sermon by the Buddha. After hearing the dhamma teachings from the Buddha, Kondannya, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma, and Assaji all initially became arahant, free from the defilements of the mind and the cycle of life and death. The Buddha initiated them as Bhikkhu-s with the following verse: "Come, Bhikkhu-s, this is the clearly explained Dhamma teachings; practice this highest practice to end suffering." "Ehi bhikkhu" ti bhagavā avoca svākkhāto dhammo cara brahmacariyam sammā dukkhassa antakiriyaṃ" (Mahāvaggapāli 1.6, VRI:16).

After that, Yasa Kumar was initiated as a Bhikkhu, followed by four of his closest friends. Subsequently, an additional 50 of Yasa Kumar's friends also became Bhikkhus. One day, the Buddha sent all 60 arahant<sup>1</sup> Bhikkhu-s in different directions for the benefit and happiness of as many beings as possible. He also instructed that no two Bhikkhu-s travel together on the same path to preach the dhamma teachings, which are beneficial in all three phases: the beginning, the middle, and the end (Anāgārikā Upalavannā, 2018).

The Buddha himself went to Uruvela, where three Uruvela ascetic brothers with 1,000 disciples resided. They practiced fire-worshipping rituals and were very famous. After demonstrating his supernatural powers over the three brothers—Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa, and Gayā Kassapa—the Buddha delivered the discourse of the Ādittapariyāya Sutta at Gayāśirṣa Parvata (SN 35.28, VRI: 2.172). After hearing this, all of them attained arahatship at that moment (Anāgārikā Upalavannā, 2018).

In the Ādittapariyāyasuttaṃ, or The Fire Sermon, the Buddha discusses how our sensory experiences—the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and intellect—are aflame with the fuel of passion, aversion, and delusion. Upon hearing this, the noble follower develops disaffection toward each aspect of sensory experience. When encountering the subjects of each sensory experience, such as forms through the eyes and sounds through the ears, the resulting pleasure, pain, or neutral feelings are viewed as disaffected. With deeper insight, one grows disenchanted and becomes dispassionate, and through dispassion, one attains full release or liberation from the cycle of birth, aging, and death (Thanissaro Bhikkhu, 1993).

---

<sup>1</sup> Arahant: the final stage of attainment where all remaining defilements are eradicated and one is free from the cycle of birth and death.

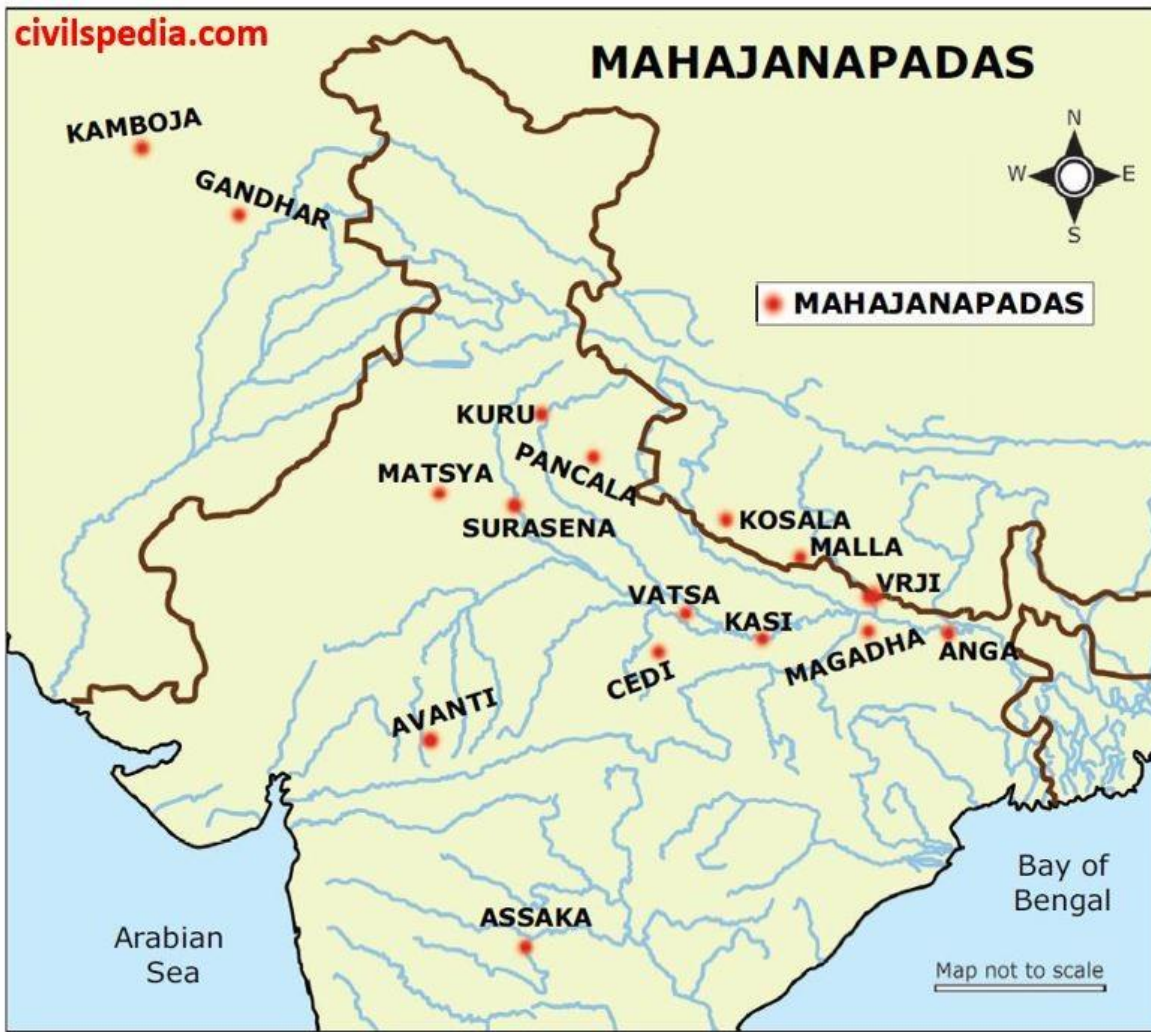
## Bhikkhu - Bhikkhuni Saṅgha and Vassāvāsa

The Bhikkhu Saṅgha began with the ordination of the Pañcavaggīya at Saranatha, which gradually increased to thousands. This saṅgha of Bhikkhu-s, all of whom were arahants, was called the Ariya Bhikkhu Saṅgha of the Buddha. They were sent far and wide to preach the dhamma teachings for the benefit and happiness of as many people as possible (Anāgārikā Upalavannā, 2018). When the Bhikkhu Saṅgha consisted solely of arahant Bhikkhu-s, there was no need for rules. However, when incidents occurred involving Bhikkhu-s, the Buddha introduced new rules accordingly. The Bhikkhuni Saṅgha, on the other hand, was established much later, in the context of Mahā Pajāpati Gotami. As the Buddha's foster mother, she had supported him from birth. One day, when the Buddha was staying at Nigrodhārāma in Kapilvastu, Mahā Pajāpati Gotami made a monk's robe for him and wanted to give it to him. However, the Buddha did not accept it for himself and insisted that it be given to the saṅgha. By donating the robe to the saṅgha, both the Buddha and the Bhikkhu Saṅgha were included (Bhikshu Amritananda, 1974).

After the passing of King Suddhodana, Mahā Pajāpati Gotami requested the Buddha three times to ordain women, but the Buddha had rejected her requests. She, along with many Shakya women, shaved their heads, wore robes, and walked to Vesali on foot. Here, Ananda played a crucial role, further requesting the Buddha for the ordination of women in the saṅgha. The Buddha put forward the *Aṣṭagarudhamma*, eight specific rules for women to be ordained as Bhikkhuni-s. After accepting these rules, the Bhikkhus were permitted to ordain women as Bhikkhuni-s, and thus the Bhikkhuni saṅgha was established (Bhikshu Amritananda, 1974).

During the initial phase of the Bhikkhu ordinations, monks had no proper place to reside. They wandered around villages and cities, residing in *kuti-s*, inside caves, in forests, or under trees. Monks also constructed temporary dwellings called *āvāsa-s*, which were dismantled at the end of the retreat. After seeing the increasing number of Bhikkhu-s, King Bimbisara of Rajagriha thought of establishing a residence for them. He donated his bamboo forest, veluvana, to the Bhikkhu Saṅgha, which was praised by the Buddha, as the donation of a vihāra for the saṅgha was the highest among material donations.

The tradition of *vassāvāsa* was started by the Buddha because of an incident in which the Bhikkhu-s were criticized by the people (Anāgārika Utpalavanna, 2018). They complained that the Bhikkhu-s kept wandering during the rainy season, stepping on grassy lands and disrupting and killing small beings. The Tithankaras, who followed the principle of *ahimsā* (non-violence), paused their wandering lifestyle during the rainy season. It was very difficult to travel through farmlands during rainy days, which also disrupted the farmers. Many insects would emerge from underground during this time, and there were also possibilities of floods and landslides. Seeing these problems, the Buddha introduced a new rule requiring the Bhikkhu-s to reside in one place for three months during the rainy season, which began on the full moon day of *Āṣāḍha* and ended on the full moon day of *Āśvina*. This was the tradition of *vassāvāsa*, or the rainy retreat (Bhikshu Ashvaghosha, 1998). Here is the list of 45 *vassāvāsa* spent by the Buddha in chronological order, along with the major incidents that took place at that time:



The Buddha observed his first *vassāvāsa* in Mṛgadavan after delivering the first sermon to the Pancavaggiya Bhikkhu-s. The discourse of the Anatta Lakhana Sutta was also given by the Buddha after this sermon. The second to fourth *vassāvāsa* were spent at Veluvanārāma, Rajagriha, as requested by King Bimbisara. Upatissa and Kolita were also ordained and appointed as the *Aggasāvaka*, or the chief disciples, named Sariputta and Mahamoggallana. The fifth *vassāvāsa* was observed in the *Mahāvana* forest, going for alms in Vesali. The sixth *vassāvāsa* was spent around the Chāya forest near Mount Mankula. The Buddha is said to have performed the *yamakapātihāra*, the twin miracle, during this retreat. The seventh *vassāvāsa* was observed in the celestial realm of *Tāvātimsa* (a heavenly abode), where the Buddha preached the Abhidhamma discourse to an assembly of celestial deities, including the Buddha's late mother Mahamaya, who was reborn as a divine deity. The eighth *vassāvāsa* was spent in the forest called Bhesakalā near Sumsumāragiri in Bhagga country. Nakulapita and Nakulamata lived here in Sumsumāragiri; they became *sotāpanna* after listening to the Buddha's teachings. In the Nakulapita Sutta, the Buddha discusses the



troubled and afflicted body and mind at old age in response to an inquiry by Nakulapita. He was taught that although the body may be afflicted, the mind can remain serene, calm, and untouched by the flames of distress (SN 22.1, VRI 2.122). The ninth *vassāvāsa* was spent at Ghoṣitārāma in Kausambi. An incident involving a widespread dispute between two groups of Bhikkhu-s took place here in Kausambi. The Buddha emphasized the importance of maintaining acts of loving-kindness through body, speech, and mind toward fellow companions. However, they did not listen to the Buddha's advice and continued quarrelling. The tenth *vassāvāsa* was observed in the Pārileyaka forest by the Buddha after the incident involving the quarrel among the Kausambiya Bhikkhu-s. Here in the Pārileyaka forest, the elephant king and the monkey offered alms to the Buddha. The eleventh *vassāvāsa* was spent at Nalikārāma in a Brahmin village. It was here that the Buddha delivered the Kasibhāradvāja Sutta to a Brahmin farmer, comparing components of farming with the teachings of Dhamma. The twelfth *vassāvāsa* was spent in the Veranjja country. A Brahmin named Veranjja had invited the Buddha to spend the *vassāvāsa* there but forgot about his invitation. As a result, the Buddha and the Bhikkhu-s had to eat very rough food offered by horse merchants. The thirteenth *vassāvāsa* was spent at the Caliya mountain monastery in Caliya country. The discourse of the Meghiya Sutta was given here by the Buddha to Bhikkhu Meghiya, who was the Buddha's personal attendant at that time. The Buddha then taught Meghiya about the five qualities that help mature an immature mind: having good friends, being virtuous and following the precepts, engaging in beneficial conversation, exerting oneself in meditation, and developing wisdom. The fourteenth *vassāvāsa* was spent at Jetavanārāma in Sravasti, donated by Anāthapin dika. It was here that the Buddha's son, Rahula, received his higher ordination *upasampadā* at the age of 20. The fifteenth *vassāvāsa* was spent at Nigrodhārāma in Kapilavastu, donated by King Suddhodana, the chief of the Shakya clan. During the Dhamma teachings in Kapilavastu, the Buddha emphasized the importance of unity, ethical conduct, and meditation. To inspire faith and demonstrate the power of the Dhamma, the Buddha performed several miracles during his stay. The sixteenth *vassāvāsa* was spent in the city of Ālavi. The discourse of the Ālavaka Sutta (SN 10.12) was given by the Buddha to the yakkha named Ālavaka, who was very hostile and had challenged the Buddha to answer his questions about what constitutes the best wealth for a person. What brings happiness when practiced well? What is the sweetest of all tastes? And how should one live to be considered to be living the best life? The Buddha's answers emphasized the importance of faith, ethical conduct, wisdom, and living a life in accordance with Dhamma. Through this interaction, Ālavaka transformed and became a disciple of the Buddha. The seventeenth *vassāvāsa* was spent at Veluvanārāma in Rajagriha. It was here that the Buddha attended the funeral of Sirimā, the famous courtesan and sister of the king's physician, Jivaka. The Buddha had instructed King Bimbisāra to keep Sirimā's dead body for three days without burial. By the fourth day, her body had decomposed. Then, the Buddha took his disciples and used this moment to teach about the impermanence and unsatisfactory nature of the body, which helped the young monk who had infatuations for Sirimā understand the deeper truths about Dhamma. The eighteenth and nineteenth *vassāvāsa* were spent at the Caliya mountain monastery in Caliya country. The twentieth

*vassāvāsa* was again spent at Veluvanārāma in Rājagriha, Magadha. From the twenty-first to the forty-fourth *vassāvāsa*, the Buddha spent time at Jetavanārāma, donated by Anathapindika, and Pubbārāma, donated by Visākhā, in Sāvatti, in the Kosala country. Out of 24, the Buddha spent 18 *vassāvāsa* at Jetavanārāma and 6 *vassāvāsa* at Pubbārāma. The forty-fifth, or last, *vassāvāsa* was spent in the village of Veluva, in Vesāli. It was here that the Buddha announced that after three months, the *Mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha would take place (Sayadaw, Mingun, 1990; Malalasekera, 1937). Despite his illness, the Buddha continued to teach and provide guidance to his disciples about self-reliance and being their own refuge by practicing the Dhamma. The Buddha also reassured the monks that the Dhamma and Vinaya he had taught would be their teacher after his departure.

### Laypeople from Different Backgrounds During the Buddha's Time

The Buddha continued to preach the Dhamma teachings to different people around Jambudvīpa for 45 years. At the age of 80, the Buddha attained *Mahāparinibbāna* in the forest of Kusinagara, concluding this journey. The Buddha wandered from place to place, preaching his sublime Dhamma for the happiness and benefit of all sentient beings. The Buddha can be regarded as one of the most active religious leaders or teachers of all time because of his vigorous daily routine of almost 22 hours a day.

During the first phase of the morning, the Buddha enters a deep meditation of great compassion called *Mahākarunāsamāpatti* (Bhikkhu Amritananda, 2018). During this meditation, the Buddha surveys the world through his psychic power for the virtuous and needy individuals who have the potential to attain one of the four levels of path and fruition (*Maggafala Nāṇa*) within this lifetime. This act of great compassion seems to be the key factor in the Buddha's movement, preaching the Dhamma to the people throughout his life.

Many infinite sentient beings, from celestial beings and humans to those in lower realms, benefited from the teachings of the Buddha. Among humans, many ascetics, hermits, kings and princes, royal courtesans, wealthy people, merchants, Brahmins, and individuals from all backgrounds were inspired by the Dhamma and sought refuge in the Triple Gem. Here are a few selected laypeople from the Buddha's time, representing different backgrounds.

### King Bimbisara

Bimbisara was the king of Magadha and lived in the capital city, Rajagriha. He was one of the prominent kings of that time, with 80,000 villages under his rule. Siddhartha Gotama had promised King Bimbisara that he would come back to visit him after attaining Buddhahood. When the Buddha arrived in Rajagriha with 1,000 Jatila Kassapa, who had recently converted to Bhikkhu-s, King Bimbisara came with 12 lakhs of *grihapati* Brahmins, and 11 lakhs of them became *upāsaka* of the Buddha. Bimbisara thought that the Veluvana garden would be a perfect place for the Buddha to reside since it was neither too near nor too far from the town, making it easier for laypeople to visit him. It was less crowded and had no disturbances at night, and it was far from human surroundings, which would be suitable for meditation. So King Bimbisara donated the Veluvana garden to the Buddha and the Bhikkhu Saṅgha for the longevity of the Buddha's *sāsana*. He was one of the major supporters of the Buddha. He also attained *Sotapatti māggafala* after listening to

the Nāradakassapa Jātaka. This *jātaka*, or the previous life story of the Buddha, emphasizes the importance of seeking true wisdom and being cautious of false teachings. It also highlights the transformative power of the Dhamma and the role of wise and compassionate individuals in guiding others. King Bimbisāra followed the *upoṣatha vrata*, or precepts, six days a month, influencing people in his kingdom as well. King Bimbisara had many sons, among whom Ajatasatru was the eldest, born of Queen Kosala Devi. Ajatasatru was the prince who killed his father to become king himself. Under the influence of Devadatta, Ajatasatru was blinded. Devadatta wanted Ajatasatru to support him as King Bimbisara had supported the Buddha, so he motivated Ajatasatru to become king by killing Bimbisara. After his death, King Bimbisara was born as a *yakkha devatā* under Vessavana, the king of the Yāmā celestial realm. He visited the Buddha and wished to attain *Sakadāgāmi māggafala* (Bhikshu Amritānanda, 2018).

### **Anathapindika**

Anathapindika was a very rich merchant from Sāvatti during the Buddha's time. Born as Sudatta, he was very famous for his generosity. He got his name Anathapindika from the act of feeding rice to orphans. He first met the Buddha in Rajagriha during his trade tour. Upon hearing the Dhamma teachings from the Buddha, Anathapindika became an *upāsaka* and took refuge in the Triple Gem. He later attained *sotāpanna maggafala*. He donated Jetavanārāma, a monastery for the *saṅgha*, from four directions. Jetavana was the property of Jeta Kumar, who was not willing to sell it. Anathapindika laid 18 crore gold coins all over the land to convince Jeta Kumāra to sell it to him. (Bhikshu Amritananda, 2018). He spent a total of 54 crores for Jetavanārāma: 18 crores for the land, 18 crores for construction, and 18 crores for the donation and ceremony of the monastery. The Buddha spent most of his rainy retreats in this monastery, and most of the discourses were also given there. The Buddha taught Anathapindika about different aspects of household rules, Grihī Vinaya, and many more discourses related to wealth, household, peaceful life, and so on. He was the foremost layman of the Buddha and dedicated his whole life to the Triple Gem. He used to visit the Buddha twice a day and daily fed 100 bhikkhu-s in his home. During the last days of his life, Anathapindika was very sick. After hearing the Dhamma teachings from the venerable Sariputta and the venerable Moggallana, he passed away and was reborn in the celestial realm of Tusitā. (Bajracharya, 1997)

### **Angulimāla**

Angulimāla, a serial killer during the Buddha's time, was born as the son of the royal priest of Kosala. His name was Ahimsaka. When he was born, weapons all over the country started shining with bright light. Upon consulting with an astrologer, it was predicted that he was destined to be a great criminal. The father of Ahimsaka decided to send him to Takshashila to avoid this destiny. Ahimsaka became one of the best students at the university and was very much loved by his teacher. He was very sharp-minded, and other students were jealous of him. They created a conspiracy to bring about Ahimsaka's downfall, and without investigating, his teacher also decided to destroy his career. He demanded 1,000 index fingers as a gift, a request that could not be disobeyed. Unwillingly, Ahimsaka started killing people for their index fingers and was thereafter known as



Angulimala, the garland of fingers (Shakya, 2003). Everyone in the country feared him, and after killing 999 people, the Buddha came into his sight. He ran toward the Buddha at full speed but couldn't catch him. After several attempts, he told the Buddha to stop running, and the Buddha replied that he had already stopped and it was Angulimala who was running. Confused by this answer, Angulimala asked further, and the Buddha gave him the Dhamma teachings as mentioned in the Angulimala Sutta (MN 86). This completely changed Angulimala's mindset, and he took refuge in the Buddha and was ordained as a Bhikkhu. Even after being ordained, Angulimala was criticized by many people. Many would be frightened, run away, ignore him, and close their doors upon his arrival. People asked questions about why the Bhikkhu-s had ordained such a notorious killer. Upon hearing this, a Bhikkhu reported it to the Buddha, and a rule prohibiting the ordination of thieves and killers was introduced (Anāgārikā Upalavannā, 2018). One day, Angulimala was beaten by the relatives of the people he had killed before his ordination. Seeing this, the Buddha said that Angulimala had already suffered the consequences of his actions in this very life; otherwise, he would have to face these consequences for infinite lives. Sitting in a lonely place, Angulimala, experiencing this liberating joy, attained arahatship (Bajracharya, 1997).

### **Ambapali**

Ambapali was born under a mango tree in the city of Vesali and was raised by the gardener. She was so beautiful that the young princes of Vesali would fight to win her favor. She announced her intention to become a wealthy courtesan, a *ganikā*, as a decision to resolve the conflict among the princes. She was so famous and beautiful that King Bimbisara also visited her for a night and had a son named Vimala Kondannya, who later became a Bhikkhu (Malalasekera, 1937). As mentioned in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, Ambapali met the Buddha during the last stages of his life while he was residing in her mango grove in Vesali (Anāgārikā Upalavannā, 2018). Upon hearing the Dhamma teachings from the Buddha, she built monasteries in the mango groves and donated them to the Buddha and the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. The Buddha had preached the Satipatthāna Sutta to his newly ordained 500 Bhikkhu-s, instructing them to contain their body, mind, and speech so that they wouldn't be distracted by looking at Ambapali. Upon hearing the Dhamma teachings from her son, Bhikkhu Vimala Kondannya, she was ordained and attained arahatship. She realized the impermanent nature of her body, as can be seen in a few of her verses: "As a fine line drawn by an artist, such were my eyebrows, but now they are wrinkled. My long blue eyes were shining and brilliant like a jewel; now, overwhelmed by old age, they do not look beautiful. My teeth were beautiful like white lotus flowers, but now, because of aging, they are yellow and broken. Puffed, round, firm, and high, both my breasts were once splendid. In the drought of old age, they dangle like empty water bags. Before, my hands looked beautiful, decorated with delicate rings and gold. Words of the Buddha, speaker of the truth, are not otherwise" (Therigātha 1.13, VRI-332).

### **Maha Pajapati Gotami**

Maha Pajapati Gotami was the foster mother of Siddhartha Kumar and the sister of Maha Maya Devi, who gave birth to Siddhartha. Maha Pajapati was born in the eastern

Shakya kingdom of Devdaha as the younger daughter, while Maha Maya Devi was the elder daughter of King Anjana. Both of them were married to King Suddhodana. After the passing of Maha Maya Devi shortly after giving birth to Siddhartha, Maha Pajapati was the one to take care of him. Giving her son Nanda Kumar to a babysitter, she nursed Siddhartha by herself. She was a very caring and loving mother. Maha Pajapati didn't see Siddhartha after he left the palace and attained Buddhahood for six years (Bhikshu Amritananda, 1997). When the Buddha visited Kapilvastu, he was wearing just a robe and didn't require any other clothes. At that time, Maha Pajapati decided to give the robe, which she had made by her own hands, to the Buddha. Instead of accepting it directly, the Buddha insisted that she give it to the *saṅgha*, which includes all the Ariya Bhikkhu-s and the Buddha himself. By doing this, she would benefit more, and the tradition of donating robes to the *saṅgha* was established. After the ordination of Nanda Kumar and Rahul Kumar, Maha Pajapati was taking care of King Suddhodana in the palace. However, King Suddhodana attained arahatship, and after one week, he passed away. By this time, most of the Shakya relatives had left the household to be ordained under the Buddha. Maha Pajapati decided to get ordained along with 500 other Shakya princes but was rejected by the Buddha (G.P. Malalasekera, 1937). They all shaved their heads and wore robes, following Maha Pajapati to Vesali on foot, where the Buddha was residing. Maha Pajapati traveled 51 yojanas to Vesali on foot; she was 80 years old at that time. Bhikkhu Ananda, upon seeing this, was compassionate toward her and requested the Buddha to ordain women. Maha Pajapati Gotami became the first Bhikkhuni, along with 500 others. Upon hearing the Dhamma teachings from the Buddha, she became an arahant with supernatural powers. Several rules and codes were established by the Buddha in the context of the Bhikkhuni-s. The Bhikkhuni Saṅgha rapidly increased in numbers, benefiting all beings, and at the age of 120, Maha Pajapati Gotami passed away (Bhikshu Amritananda, 1997).

### **Visakha Mahaupasika**

Visakha was one of the leading female supporters of the Buddha. She was the granddaughter of one of the five wealthiest persons, named Mendaka Shresthi, from Bhadravati Nagara. She was just 7 years old when she first visited the Buddha in her hometown. At that time, she attained *sotāpati māggafala*, entering the stream to nibbāṇa upon hearing the Dhamma teachings from the Buddha (Bhikshu Amritananda, 2018). At the age of 16, she was married and moved to Savatthi. Visakha had a piece of jewelry made, named Mahalata-pasadana, for herself. It was a full body of gold jewellery with silver wires resembling a peacock. Different precious stones like diamonds, pearls, and corals were used in it, and it was one of a kind. She convinced and converted her father-in-law, Mrigara, to the Buddha's teachings, which gave her the nickname of Mrigaramata (Bhikkhu Amritananda, 2018).

Although Visakha had a total of 20 children—10 sons and 10 daughters—and lived to be 120 years old, she always looked as young as a 16-year-old. Visakha was a chief patron of the Buddha. She especially supported Bhikkhuni-s in terms of their needs. She requested the Buddha to donate eight items that would ease problems related to bathing, food alms, traveling, and medicine during sickness for the *saṅgha*. One day, Visakha forgot

her jewellery attire, Mahalatapasadhana, in Jetavanārāma and sent her servant to retrieve it, hoping it was in the place where she had left it. Bhikkhu Ananda had kept the attire under the stairs, so Visakha decided to donate it. Since the Bhikkhu-s wouldn't accept jewellery as a donation, she sold the jewellery attire for 9 crores and decided to build a monastery for the Buddha. She spent 9 crores for the land, 9 crores for construction, and 9 crores for the donation ceremony, totaling 27 crores. The Buddha spent 6 of his rainy retreats here in Puvvārāma (Bhikshu Amritananda, 2018).

### **Kasibharadvaja Brahmin**

Kasibharadvaja was a rich Brahmin from Sāvatti who lived as a farmer in the village of Ekanala. He worked in the field with 500 ploughs and 3,000 oxen, whose horns were covered with gold and toes with silver. The Buddha saw Kasibharadvaja in his *mahākaruṇā sampati dhyāna* as a potential disciple who could enter the path and fruition toward *nibbāna*. The Buddha reached the farm, emitting rays of light where Bharadvaja was ploughing. Seeing the Buddha with such extraordinary glowing rays, which dimmed the glow of the sun and moon, all the farmers gathered around him and kept looking at the Buddha. Kasibharadvaja, seeing the Buddha coming for food alms, said, "I plough and sow the farmland; by ploughing and sowing, I eat and run my livelihood. You also can eat or live by ploughing and sowing." The Buddha answered, "I also live by ploughing and sowing. Faith is my seed, hard work is my water, wisdom is my yoke and plough, modesty is the pole, the mind is the strap, and mindfulness is my ploughshare and goad. Through control of body, speech, food, and truth, I cut off the weed of untruth and deliverance by *nibbāna*. Exertion is the oxen that hold the yoke, which leads me to *nibbāna*, where once reached, one doesn't need to return and where there is no grief. Thus, by farming like this, one obtains the fruit of deathlessness and is freed from all suffering" (Bhikshu Amritananda, 2018). Hearing this answer, Kasibhāradvāja offered milk rice to the Buddha and accepted him as a farmer who ploughs for the fruit of deathlessness, *nibbāna*. After hearing the dhamma teachings from the Blessed One, Kasibharadvaja took refuge in the Buddha and wished to receive ordination. Not long after his ordination, Kasibharadvaja became an arahant.

### **Findings**

The peripatetic movements of the Buddha were found to be very precise and skilful. The Buddha had the incredible ability to preach the dhamma teachings according to the listeners and their circumstances. He skilfully established the Bhikkhu Saṅgha to be sustained in the long term and for the benefit of all sentient beings. Everyone from every background with the potential to find liberation benefited from the dhamma teachings. Events related to the propagation of the dhamma during the Buddha's time, such as the establishment of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha and Bhikkhuni Saṅgha, the tradition of *vassāvāsa*, its listing, and laypeople from different backgrounds, were described. It was evident that the Buddha's dhamma teachings were for everyone, regardless of their caste, class, occupation, or status, and were very effective in helping them become free from suffering.

## Conclusion

The Buddha's movement, or carika, to propagate the Dhamma across the Indian subcontinent concluded at the age of 80. A major accomplishment of the Buddha's movement was the establishment of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Sangha, the vassāvāsa tradition, and the community of diverse lay followers. The establishment of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Sangha, along with the community of laypeople, helped Buddha's teachings flourish all over the world across different times and civilizations. His teachings spread like wildfire among people under the single condition of wanting freedom from suffering. That is why people of different colors, backgrounds, races, ethnicities, ranks, and statuses were connected to the Buddha's teaching simply to be free from suffering. The vassāvāsa tradition emphasized the implementation of rules for the Bhikkhu-s and Bhikkhuni-s, leading them toward deeper practice for liberation. This tradition also provided exposure to the different teaching techniques used by the Buddha while interacting with various people in different geographical regions.

## References

- Anāgārikā, U. (trans.) (2018). *Mahāvagga*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- Bajracharya, D. B. (trans.) (1997). *Majhima Nikāya*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- Bhikshu, A. (1998). *Ninda bata bachne kohi chaina*. Sangharam. New press Nepal.
- Bhikshu, A. (1974). *The Buddhakalin Srāvika charita. part 1*. Anandakuti Vihar Guthi.
- (2018). *The Buddhakalin Rājparivāra part 1*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- (2018). *The Buddhakalin Grishasthiharu part 2*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- (2018). *The Buddhakalin Brāhmanharu part 2*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- (2018). *The Buddhakalin Mahilāharu. part 1*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- (2018). *The Buddhakalin Mahilāharu part 2*. Bir-purna Pustak Sangrahalaya.
- Malalasekera, G.P. (1937). Dictionary of Pali Proper name. John Murray.
- Shakya, D. R. (trans.) (2003). *Angulimāla*. Shri Krishna Bahadur Nakarmi.
- Sayadaw, M. (1990). the great chronicles of the Buddhas. wisdomlib.  
<https://www.wisdomlib.org/buddhism/book/the-great-chronicle-of-Nuddhas/d/doc364554.html>
- Bhikkhu, T. (1993). Talks, writings, and translations of Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Dhammatalks.  
[https://www.Dhammatalks.org/suttas/KN/Thig/thig13\\_1.html](https://www.Dhammatalks.org/suttas/KN/Thig/thig13_1.html)
- (1993). *Adittapariyaya Sutta: The Fire Sermon*.  
<https://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn35/sn35.028.than.html>
- Vipassana Research Institute (2010). *The Pāli Tipiṭaka*. tipitaka. <https://tipitaka.org/>
- Wordpress. (2023). *Drarosworld*. <https://drarisworld.wordpress.com/2023/10/03/where-did-lord-gautama-buddha-spend-the-45-rains-retreats/>