


## CHAPTER 4

# AFTER THE ENLIGHTENMENT

“Happy in this world is non-attachment.”

—Udāna

n the memorable forenoon, immediately preceding the morn of his enlightenment, as the Bodhisatta was seated under the Aja-pāla banyan tree in close proximity to the bodhi tree,<sup>50</sup> a generous lady, named Sujātā, unexpectedly offered him some rich milk rice, specially prepared by her with great care.

This substantial meal he ate, and after his enlightenment the Buddha fasted for seven weeks, and spent a quiet time, in deep contemplation, under the bodhi tree and in its neighbourhood.

### *The Seven Weeks*

#### *First Week*

Throughout the first week the Buddha sat under the bodhi tree in one posture, experiencing the bliss of emancipation (*vimutti-sukha*, i.e., the fruit of arahantship).

After those seven days had elapsed, the Buddha emerged from the state of concentration, and in the first watch of the night, thoroughly reflected on “the dependent arising” (*paṭicca samuppāda*) in direct order thus: “When this (cause) exists, this (effect) is; with the arising of this (cause), this effect arises.”<sup>51</sup>

Dependent on ignorance (*avijjā*) arise moral and immoral conditioning activities (*saṅkhārā*).

Dependent on conditioning activities arises (relinking) consciousness (*viññāṇa*).

Dependent on (relinking) consciousness arise mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*).

Dependent on mind and matter arise the six spheres of sense (*saḷāyatana*).

Dependent on the six spheres of sense arises contact (*phassa*).

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50. The famous pipal tree at Buddha Gaya in northern India which sheltered him during his struggle for enlightenment.

51. See Ud I.1.

Dependent on contact arises feeling (*vedanā*).

Dependent on feeling arises craving (*taṇhā*).

Dependent on craving arises grasping (*upādāna*).

Dependent on grasping arises becoming (*bhava*).

Dependent on becoming arises birth (*jāti*).

Dependent on birth arise decay (*jarā*), death (*maraṇa*), sorrow (*soka*), lamentation (*parideva*), pain (*dukkha*), grief (*domanassa*), and despair (*upāyāsa*).

Thus does this whole mass of suffering originate.

Thereupon the Exalted One, knowing the meaning of this, uttered, at that time, this paean of joy:

“When, indeed, the truths become manifest unto the strenuous, meditative brāhmaṇa,<sup>52</sup> then do all his doubts vanish away, since he knows the truth together with its cause.”

In the middle watch of the night the Exalted One thoroughly reflected on “the dependent arising” in reverse order thus: “When this cause does not exist, this effect is not; with the cessation of this cause, this effect ceases.

With the cessation of ignorance, conditioning activities cease.

With the cessation of conditioning activities (relinking) consciousness ceases.

With the cessation of (relinking) consciousness, mind and matter cease.

With the cessation of mind and matter, the six spheres of sense cease.

With the cessation of the six spheres of sense, contact ceases.

With the cessation of contact, feeling ceases.

With the cessation of feeling, craving ceases.

With the cessation of craving, grasping ceases.

With the cessation of grasping, becoming ceases.

With the cessation of becoming, birth ceases.

With the cessation of birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair cease.

Thus does this whole mass of suffering cease.

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52. “Brahmin” is a racial term which means “one who studies the Vedas,” generally applied to the priestly caste. Sometimes the Buddha uses this term in the sense of “one who has discarded evil”—a saint.

In this book “brāhmaṇa” is used to denote a saint, and “brahmin,” to denote a member of that particular caste.

Thereupon the Exalted One, knowing the meaning of this, uttered, at that time, this paean of joy (*udāna*):

“When, indeed, the truths become manifest unto the strenuous and meditative brāhmaṇa, then all his doubts vanish away since he has understood the destruction of the causes.”

In the third watch of the night, the Exalted One reflected on “dependent arising” in direct and reverse order thus. “When this cause exists, this effect is; with the arising of this cause, this effect arises. When this cause does not exist, this effect is not; with the cessation of this cause, this effect ceases.”

Dependent on ignorance arise conditioning activities ... and so forth.

Thus does this whole mass of suffering arise.

With the cessation of ignorance, conditioning activities cease ... and so forth.

Thus does this whole mass of suffering cease.

Thereupon the Blessed One, knowing the meaning of this, uttered, at that time, this paean of joy:

“When indeed the truths become manifest unto the strenuous and meditative brāhmaṇa, then he stands routing the hosts of the Evil One even as the sun illumines the sky.”

### ***Second Week***

The second week was uneventful, but he silently taught a great moral lesson to the world. As a mark of profound gratitude to the inanimate bodhi tree that sheltered him during his struggle for enlightenment, he stood at a certain distance gazing at the tree with motionless eyes for one whole week.<sup>53</sup>

Following his noble example, his followers, in memory of his enlightenment, still venerate not only the original bodhi tree but also its descendants.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Third week***

As the Buddha had not given up his temporary residence at the bodhi tree the devas doubted his attainment to buddhahood. The Buddha read their thoughts, and in order to clear their doubts he created by his psy-

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53. On the spot where the Buddha stood, a cetiya was erected by King Asoka. This was named Animisalocana cetiya and is still to be seen.

54. The right-hand branch of the original bodhi tree which was brought to Sri Lanka by Saṅghamittā Therī and planted by King Devānampiyatissa at Anurādhapura, the ancient capital of Sri Lanka, still exists in a flourishing condition, though more than 2200 years old.

chic powers a jewelled ambulatory (*ratana-caṅkamana*) and paced up and down for another week.

### ***Fourth Week***

The fourth week he spent in a jewelled chamber (*ratana-ghara*)<sup>55</sup> contemplating the intricacies of the Abhidhamma (Higher Teaching). Books state that his mind and body were so purified when he pondered on the Book of Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*), the seventh treatise of the Abhidhamma, that six coloured rays emitted from his body.<sup>56</sup>

### ***Fifth week***

During the fifth week the Buddha enjoyed the bliss of emancipation (*vimutti-sukha*), seated in one posture under the famous Ajapāla banyan tree in the vicinity of the bodhi tree. When he arose from that transcendental state a conceited (*huhunkajātika*) brahmin approached him and after the customary salutations and friendly greetings, questioned him thus: "In what respect, O Venerable Gotama, does one become a brāhmaṇa and what are the conditions that make a brāhmaṇa?"

The Buddha uttered this paean of joy in reply:

"That brahmin who has discarded evil, is without conceit (*huhunka*), free from defilements, self-controlled, versed in knowledge and who has led the holy life rightly, would call himself a brāhmaṇa. For him there is no elation anywhere in this world."<sup>57</sup>

According to the Jātaka commentary it was during this week that the daughters of Māra—*Taṇhā*, *Arati* and *Rāga*<sup>58</sup>—made a vain attempt to tempt the Buddha by their charms.

### ***Sixth week***

From the Ajapāla banyan tree the Buddha proceeded to the Mucalinda tree, where he spent the sixth week, again enjoying the bliss of emancipation. At that time there arose an unexpected great shower. Rain clouds and gloomy weather with cold winds prevailed for several days.

Thereupon Mucalinda, the serpent-king,<sup>59</sup> came out of his abode, and coiling round the body of the Buddha seven times, remained keeping his

55. So called because the Buddha reflected on the jewels of the Abhidhamma.

56. Namely, blue (*nila*), yellow (*pīṭa*), red (*lohita*), white (*odāta*), orange (*mañjettā*) and a mixture of these five colours (*pabhassara*).

57. Udāna, p. 10.

58. These three cannot be personified passions as the incident took place after the enlightenment.

59. This Nāga king cannot be a human being. The Vinaya texts also cite an interesting story of a serpent, who, assuming the form of a human being, lived for some time as a bhikkhu in robes.

large hood over the head of the Buddha so that he was not affected by the elements.

At the close of seven days Mucalinda, seeing the clear, cloudless sky, uncoiled himself from around the body of the Buddha, and, leaving his own form, took the guise of a young man, and stood in front of the Exalted One with clasped hands.

Thereupon the Buddha uttered this paean of joy:

“Happy is seclusion to him who is contented, to him who has heard the truth, and to him who sees. Happy is goodwill in this world, and so is restraint towards all beings. Happy in this world is non-attachment, the passing beyond of sense desires. The suppression of the ‘I am’ conceit is indeed the highest happiness.<sup>60</sup>

### ***Seventh week***

The seventh week the Buddha peacefully passed at the Rājāyatana tree, experiencing the bliss of emancipation.

One of the first utterances of the Buddha:

Through many a birth in existence I wandered,  
Seeking, but not finding, the builder of this house.  
Sorrowful is repeated birth.

O house builder, you are seen!  
You shall build no house again.  
All your rafters are broken. Your ridgepole is shattered.  
Mind attains the Unconditioned.  
Achieved is the end of craving.<sup>61</sup>

At dawn on the very day of his enlightenment the Buddha uttered this paean of joy which vividly describes his transcendental moral victory and his inner spiritual experience.

The Buddha admits to his past wanderings in existence which entailed suffering, a fact that evidently proves the belief in rebirth. He was compelled to wander and consequently to suffer, as he could not discover the architect that built this house, the body. In his final birth, while engaged in solitary meditation which he had highly developed in the course of his wanderings, after a relentless search he discovered by

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60. *Sukho viveko tuṭṭhassa sutadhammassa passato  
Abyāpajjhaṃ sukhaṃ loke pāṇabhutesu saṃyamo  
Sukhā virāgatā loke kāmānaṃ samatikkamo  
Asmimānassa yo vinayo etaṃ ve paramaṃ sukhaṃ.*  
—Udāna p. 10.

61. Dh p. vv. 153-54. The ‘house builder’ is craving; the ‘house’ is the body; the ‘rafters’ are the defilements; the ‘ridgepole’ is ignorance, and the ‘Unconditioned’ is Nibbāna.

his own intuitive wisdom the elusive architect, residing not outside but within the recesses of his own heart. It was craving or attachment, a self-creation, a mental element latent in all. How and when this craving originated is incomprehensible. What is created by oneself can be destroyed by oneself. The discovery of the architect is the eradication of craving by attaining arahantship, which in these verses is alluded to as “end of craving.”

The rafters of this self-created house are the passions (*kilesa*) such as attachment (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*), illusion (*moha*), conceit (*māna*), false views (*diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), sloth (*thīna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), moral shamelessness and (*ahirika*), and moral fearlessness (*anottappa*). The ridgepole that supports the rafters represents ignorance, the root cause of all passions. The shattering of the ridge-pole of ignorance by wisdom results in the complete demolition of the house. The ridge-pole and rafters are the material with which the architect builds this undesired house. With their destruction the architect is deprived of the material to rebuild the house which is not wanted.

With the demolition of the house the mind, for which there is no place in the analogy, attains the unconditioned state, which is Nibbāna. Whatever that is mundane is left behind, and only the supramundane state, Nibbāna, remains.

