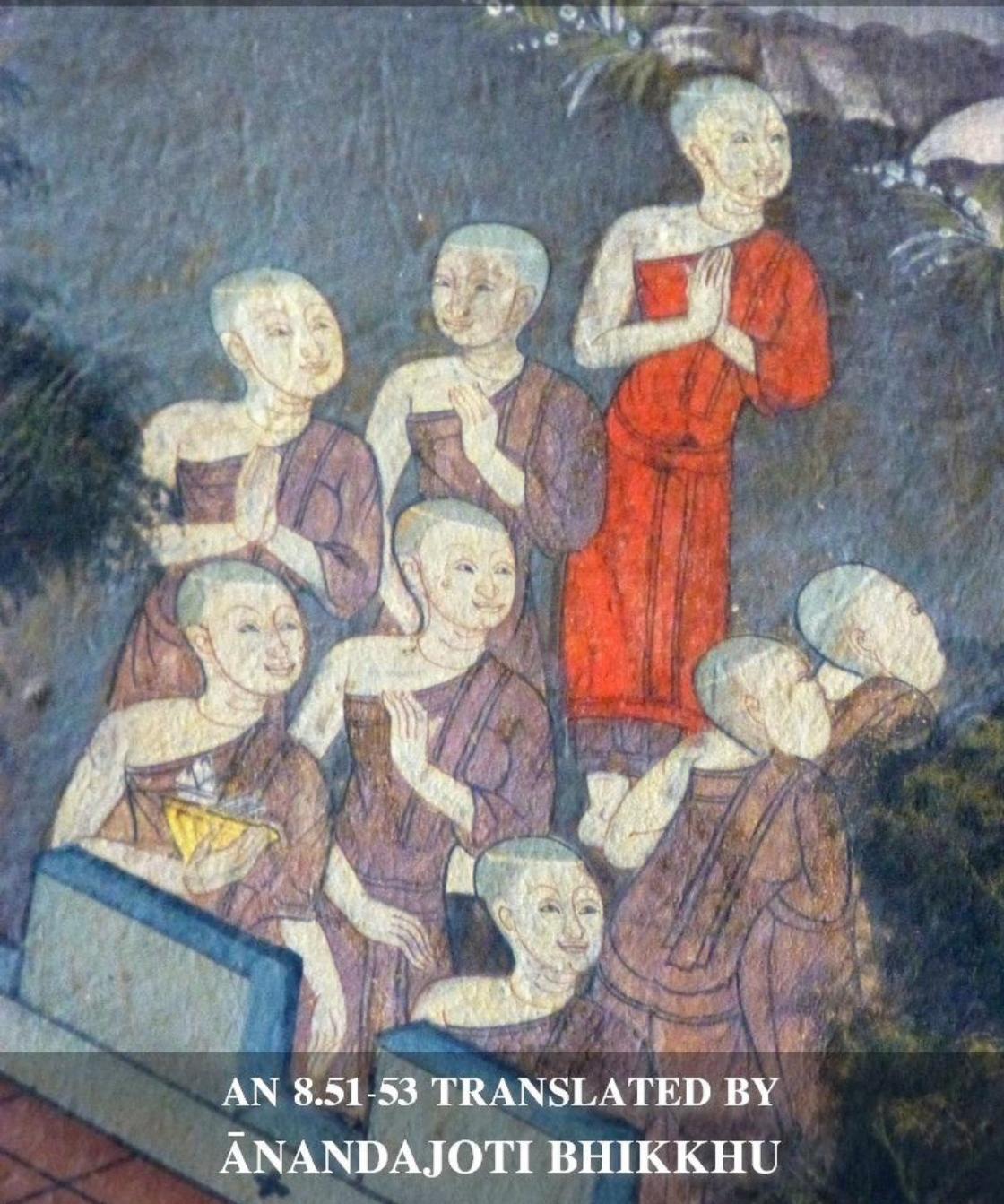


**THREE DISCOURSES CONCERNING  
MAHĀPAJĀPATĪ GOTAMĪ**



**AN 8.51-53 TRANSLATED BY  
ĀNANDAJOTI BHIKKHU**

**Three Discourses concerning Mahāpajāpatī  
Gotamī**

(AN 8.51-53)

translated by

**Ānandajoti Bhikkhu**

(Dec. 2014)

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## Introduction

What follows is a translation of three discourses that follow each other in the Book of the Eights of the Aṅguttaranikāya (8.51-3). The first concerns the establishment of the Community of nuns;<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> This discourse is parallel to the opening story of the Bhikkhunīkkhandhaka of the Vinaya, (Cullavagga, 10), Cv 10.

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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 Gracious One was dwelling amongst the Sakiyans, near to Kapilavatthu, in Nigrodha's Monastery. Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Gracious One...*

A natural reading of this would give the impression that they are connected: the Gracious One was in Kapilavatthu, and Gotamī approaches him. The commentary however, first states that *the Gracious 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 that the story contains a remembrance

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

Ven. Analayo,<sup>2</sup> 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 that the condition of her feet had it been novel.

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<sup>2</sup> See Ven. Analayo: Mahāpajāpati's Going Forth in the Madhyama-āgama, Journal for Buddhist Ethics, Vol 18, 2011.

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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 Vinaya<sup>3</sup> (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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

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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.

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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

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that the nuns should seek advice from the monks before holding the Uposatha ceremony twice a month.<sup>4</sup>

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.

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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

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

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teaching leads to dispassion, unfettering, decrease (of rebirths), little desire, contentment, solitude, energy and ease in support.

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.

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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.

### Presentation

It what follows the repetition (*peyyāla*) text in either is marked up in italics: 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.

Anandajoti Bhikkhu

December 2014

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī

(AN 8.51)

### Requesting the Going-Forth

At one time the Gracious One was dwelling amongst the Sakiyans, near to Kapilavatthu, in Nigrodha's Monastery.<sup>5</sup>

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, she stood on one side. While standing on one side Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Gracious One: “It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Enough, Gotamī! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

For a second time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Gracious One: “It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 14

“Enough, Gotamī! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

For a third time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Gracious One: “It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Enough, Gotamī! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, thinking: ‘The Gracious One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life,’ pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, having worshipped and circumambulated the Gracious One, went away.

Then the Gracious One, having dwelt in Kapilavatthu for as long as he liked, went on walking tour towards Vesālī, and while walking gradually on walking tour he arrived at Vesālī. There the Gracious One dwelt near Vesālī, in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, after having her hair cut off, and donning ochre clothes, together with a great many Sakiyan ladies, went towards Vesālī, and gradually approached the Great Wood, and the Gabled Hall at Vesālī. Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs, pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, stood outside the doorway.

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 15

Venerable Ānanda saw Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs, pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, stood outside the doorway. And after seeing (her), he said this to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī: “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?”

“Because, venerable Ānanda, the Gracious One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Then, Gotamī, just wait here, while I request the Gracious One for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side.

While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “This Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, reverend Sir, with swollen feet, and dust on her limbs, pained and depressed, crying, with tears on her face, is standing outside the doorway, thinking: ‘The Gracious One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.’ It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 16

“Enough, Ānanda! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

For a second time *venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:*  
*“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”*

*“Enough, Ānanda! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”*

For a third time venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One:  
“It is good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

“Enough, Ānanda! Please do not wish for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

Then it occurred to venerable Ānanda: ‘The Gracious One does not allow for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life. What if I were to ask the Gracious One in a different way for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life?’

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Then venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “Is it possible, reverend Sir, for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, having gone forth from the home to the homeless life, to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, or the fruit of Once-Returning, or the fruit of Non-Returning, or the fruit of Liberation?”

“It is possible, Ānanda, that women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, having gone forth from the home to the homeless life, to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, and the fruit of Once-Returning, and the fruit of Non-Returning, and the fruit of Liberation.”

“If it is possible, reverend Sir, for women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, having gone forth from the home to the homeless life, to directly experience the fruit of Stream Entry, *and the fruit of Once-Returning, and the fruit of Non-Returning,* and the fruit of Liberation, and Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī was a great help, reverend Sir, she is the Gracious One’s maternal aunt, his wet-nurse, who looked after him and gave him milk, and after the Gracious One’s Mother had died, she gave him suck at the breast. It would be good, reverend Sir, if women could receive, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, the going forth from the home to the homeless life.”

### The Eight Serious Rules

“If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī accepts these eight serious rules, this will be the higher ordination for her:

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 18

A nun having a hundred years (seniority), in regard to a monk ordained that day, should worship, rise from the seat, salute and pay homage.<sup>6</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

A nun should not enter the Rains Retreat in a dwelling place without monks.<sup>7</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Every fortnight the nuns are to expect two things from the Community of monks: asking about the Observance day, and approaching (the monks) for (getting) advice.<sup>8</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

A nun emerging from the Rains Retreat should invite both Communities in regard to three reasons: with what was seen, or

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 59.

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what was heard or what was suspected.<sup>9</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

A nun who is guilty of a serious offence<sup>10</sup> should observe reparation for a fortnight before both Communities.<sup>11</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

Only a trainee who has trained in the six training rules for two years should seek for higher ordination before both Communities.<sup>12</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

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<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> The monks only do reparation (*mānatta*) for one week, and only before their own Community.

<sup>12</sup> Another anachronism, as the original ordination procedure entailed being ordained by the monks only.

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 20

A nun should not abuse or censure a monk by any means.<sup>13</sup> This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

From today forward nuns are prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to monks, (but) monks are not prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to nuns. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī accepts these eight serious rules, that will be her higher ordination.”

### Accepting the Rules

Then venerable Ānanda, having learned these eight serious rules in the presence of the Gracious One, approached Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, and after approaching he said this to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī: “If you, Gotamī, could accept these eight serious rules, this will be for you your higher ordination:

A nun having a hundred years (seniority), in regard to a monk ordained that day, should worship, rise from the seat, salute and pay homage. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

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<sup>13</sup> This corresponds to Bhikkhuni Pācittaya, 52.

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 21

*A nun should not enter the Rains Retreat in a dwelling place without monks. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.*

*Every fortnight the nuns are to expect two things from the Community of monks: asking about the Observance day, and approaching (the monks) for (getting) advice. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.*

*A nun emerging from the Rains Retreat should invite both Communities in regard to three reasons: with what was seen, or what was heard or what was suspected. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.*

*A nun who is guilty of a serious offence should observe reparation for a fortnight before both Communities. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.*

*Only a trainee who has trained in the six training rules for two years should seek for higher ordination before both Communities. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.*

*A nun should not abuse or censure a monk by any means. This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured,*

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 22

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

From today forward nuns are prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to monks, (but) monks are not prohibited from speaking (advice about discipline) to nuns, This is a rule that should be respected, treated seriously, be honoured, worshipped, and should not be transgressed for as long as her life lasts.

If you, Gotamī, could accept these eight serious rules, that will be for you your higher ordination.”

“It is as though, venerable Ānanda, a woman or a man, young, youthful, having ornaments, with head washed, had been given a garland of waterlilies, or a garland of jasmine, or a garland of whirlybird flowers, and having accepted it with both hands, were to place it on top of the most important limb, on the head, just so, venerable Ānanda, I accept these eight serious rules which should not be transgressed for as long as life lasts.”

### **The Warnings**

Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, reverend Sir, has accepted the eight serious rules which should not be transgressed for as long as life lasts.”

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“If, Ānanda, women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, had not obtained the going forth from the home to the homeless life, Ānanda, the spiritual life would have been long-lasting, the Good Dhamma would have endured for a thousand years. But because, Ānanda, women, in this Dhamma and Discipline taught by the Realised One, have gone forth from the home to the homeless life, now, Ānanda, the spiritual life will not be long-lasting, the Good Dhamma, Ānanda, will now endure for (only) five hundred years.<sup>14</sup>

Just as, Ānanda, those families having lots of women and few men, are easily plundered by thieves and night-time robbers, just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Discipline women receive the going forth from the home to the homeless life, the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.<sup>15</sup>

Just as, Ānanda, in ripe rice fields which go down with the disease called Deadheart, that rice field is not long-lasting, just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Discipline women receive the going forth from the home to the homeless life, the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.

Just as, Ānanda, in ripe sugar-cane fields which go down with the disease called Red Rot, that sugar-cane field is not long-lasting, just so, Ānanda, wherever in this Dhamma and Discipline women receive

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<sup>14</sup> See the discussion in the Introduction.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

## The Discourse concerning Gotamī - 24

the going forth from the home to the homeless life, the spiritual life will not be long-lasting.

Just as, Ānanda, a man might prepare an embankment as a precaution round a large lake so that the water does not overflow, just so, Ānanda, the eight serious rules were laid down by me as a precaution which should not be transgressed for as long as life lasts.”

## The Discourse about Advising the Nuns

(AN 8.52)

At one time the Gracious One was dwelling near Vesālī, in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall. Then venerable Ānanda approached the Gracious One, and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, he sat down on one side. While sitting on one side venerable Ānanda said this to the Gracious One: “With how many qualities, reverend Sir, should a monk who is authorised as an advisor to nuns be endowed?”

“A monk endowed with eight qualities, Ānanda, should be authorised as an advisor to nuns. Which eight?”

Here, Ānanda, a monk is virtuous, *he lives restrained with the Pātimokkha restraint, and is endowed with (suitable) conduct and resort, seeing danger in the slightest faults, he trains in the training rules he has undertaken.*

He is learned, *one who bears in mind what he has heard, one who collects what he has heard, and those Dhamma teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, with their meaning, with their proper phrasing, the spiritual life which is complete, fulfilled and very pure, that he declares, and in things such as these he is learned, one who upholds them, one who has collected the words, considered in his mind, and penetrated them with right view.*

## The Discourse giving Advice- 26

Both Pātimokkhas<sup>16</sup> are well passed down to him with the explanation, well-classified, well-recited, well-discerned in regard to the rule and the details.

He is a beautiful speaker, a beautiful recitor, he is endowed with good speech, that is distinct, clear, that instructs in the meaning.

He is able to talk in conformity with Dhamma to the Community of nuns, to instruct, rouse, enthuse, and cheer them.

He is dear and pleasing to almost all the nuns.

In regard to one who has gone forth under the Gracious One, who dwells wearing the ochre robe, he is not guilty of a serious offence.

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

A monk endowed with these eight qualities, Ānanda, should be authorised as an advisor to nuns.”

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<sup>16</sup> The monks' and nuns' Pātimokkhas. A teacher (*ācariya*), to be qualified, must know both.

## The Discourse: ‘In Brief’

(AN 8.53)

At one time the Gracious One was dwelling near Vesālī, in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Gracious One,<sup>17</sup> and after approaching and worshipping the Gracious One, she stood on one side.

While standing on one side Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said this to the Gracious One: “It is good for me, reverend Sir, let the Gracious One teach the Dhamma in brief, having heard that Dhamma from the Gracious One, I can dwell secluded, heedful, ardent, and resolute.

“Gotamī, of those things which you can know:

‘These things lead to passion, not to dispassion,  
lead to being fettered, not to being unfettered,  
lead to increase, not to decrease,  
lead to great desire, not to little desire,  
lead to discontent, not to content,  
lead to association, not to solitude,

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<sup>17</sup> This discourse is partially parallel to AN 7.83, The Discourse on the Teacher’s Dispensation (*Satthusāsanasuttam*) 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.*

## The Discourse 'In Brief' - 28

lead to indolence, not to being energetic,  
lead to difficulty in support, not to ease in support,'

Gotamī, you should surely bear it in mind: 'This is not Dhamma,  
this is not Vinaya, this is not the Teacher's Dispensation.'

Gotamī, of those things which you can know:

'These things lead to dispassion, not to passion,  
lead to being unfettered, not to being fettered,  
lead to decrease, not to increase,  
lead to little desire, not to great desire,  
lead to content, not to discontent,  
lead to solitude, not to association,  
lead to being energetic, not to indolence,  
lead to ease in support, not to difficulty in support,'

Gotamī, you should surely bear it in mind: 'This is Dhamma, this is  
Vinaya, this is the Teacher's Dispensation.' "