

Tiṭṭaka. Suttapiṭaka. Saṃyuttanikāya. Sagathavagga . Brahmasamyutta.
Parinibbāna Sutta

SN 6.15

Parinibbana Sutta

Total Unbinding

Translated from the Pali by

Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Translator's note: This discourse reports the way the Buddha passed away, giving four verses uttered by those who witnessed the event. It is interesting to note that the verses ascribed to heavenly beings make general comments on how the nature of all beings — even a Buddha — is to pass away, whereas the verses ascribed to the monks comment specifically on the Buddha's display of mental mastery immediately prior to the moment of his total Unbinding.



On one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Kusinara in Upavattana, the Sal Tree Grove of the Mallans, on the occasion of his total Unbinding. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "I exhort you, monks: All fabrications are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful." Those

were the Tathagata's last words.

Then the Blessed One entered the first jhana. Emerging from that he entered the second jhana. Emerging from that, he entered the third... the fourth jhana... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of nothingness... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the cessation of perception & feeling.

Then emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, he entered the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the dimension of nothingness... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the fourth jhana... the third... the second... the first jhana. Emerging from the first jhana he entered the second... the third... the fourth jhana. Emerging from the fourth jhana, he immediately was totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sahampati Brahma uttered this verse:

All beings — all — in the world,
will cast off the bodily heap
in the world
where a Teacher like this
without peer in the world
the Tathagata, with strength attained,
the Rightly Self-Awakened One,
has been totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sakka, ruler of the gods, uttered this verse:

How inconstant are compounded things!
Their nature: to arise & pass away.
They disband as they are arising.
Their total stilling is bliss.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding,
Ven. Ananda uttered this verse:

It was awe-inspiring.
It was hair-raising
when, displaying the foremost
accomplishment in all things,
the Rightly Self-Awakened One
was totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding,
Ven. Anuruddha
uttered this verse:

He had no in-&-
out breathing,
the one who
was Such, the
firm-minded
one,
imperturbable
& bent on peace:
the sage completing his span.



With heart unbowed
he endured the pain.
Like a flame's unbinding
was the liberation
of awareness.

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