

The Radiant Dhamma

An illuminated history of the Theravada lineage,
its cyclical preservation, and its journey to nine realms.

Translated from the *Sāsanavaṁsa*.



The Great Passing

After forty-five years of extending the net of great compassion, the Supreme Buddha attained Parinibbana. Like a flickering lamp extingtished, he passed entirely into the sphere of Nibbana.



The First Threat Arises

Hearing of the Parinibbana, Subhadda rejoiced: “We are freed from the recluse Gotama. Now we may do whatever we like.” This enmity threatened to quickly destroy the newly established religion.



The First Council Purifies the Order

The Venerable Mahakassapa convened five hundred Arahats in the Sattapanni Cave. Patronized by King Ajatasattu, they recited the doctrine for seven months, establishing the religion to last until the Kali age's end.

Corruption Returns After a Century

One hundred years later, the Vajjiputtaka monks promulgated Ten Illegal Points at Vesali. They sought forbidden worldly allowances: storing salt in horns, eating past noon, and accepting gold and silver.







The Second Council Restores the Law

The Venerable Yasa recognized the danger. Gathering seven hundred Arahats at the Valukarama under King Kalasoka's patronage, they refuted the illegal points over eight months, upholding the true Dhamma.



Heretics Infiltrate the Sangha

By the 238th year, Buddhist prosperity attracted sixty thousand uninitiated heretics. Seeking worldly gains, they corrupted the Order, forcing the suspension of the sacred Observance ceremony for seven long years.



The Third Council Expels the False

King Dhammasoka learned the true doctrine and expelled the heretics. The Elder Moggaliputta Tissa then led one thousand Arahats for nine months, reciting the Dhamma and preserving its ultimate purity.



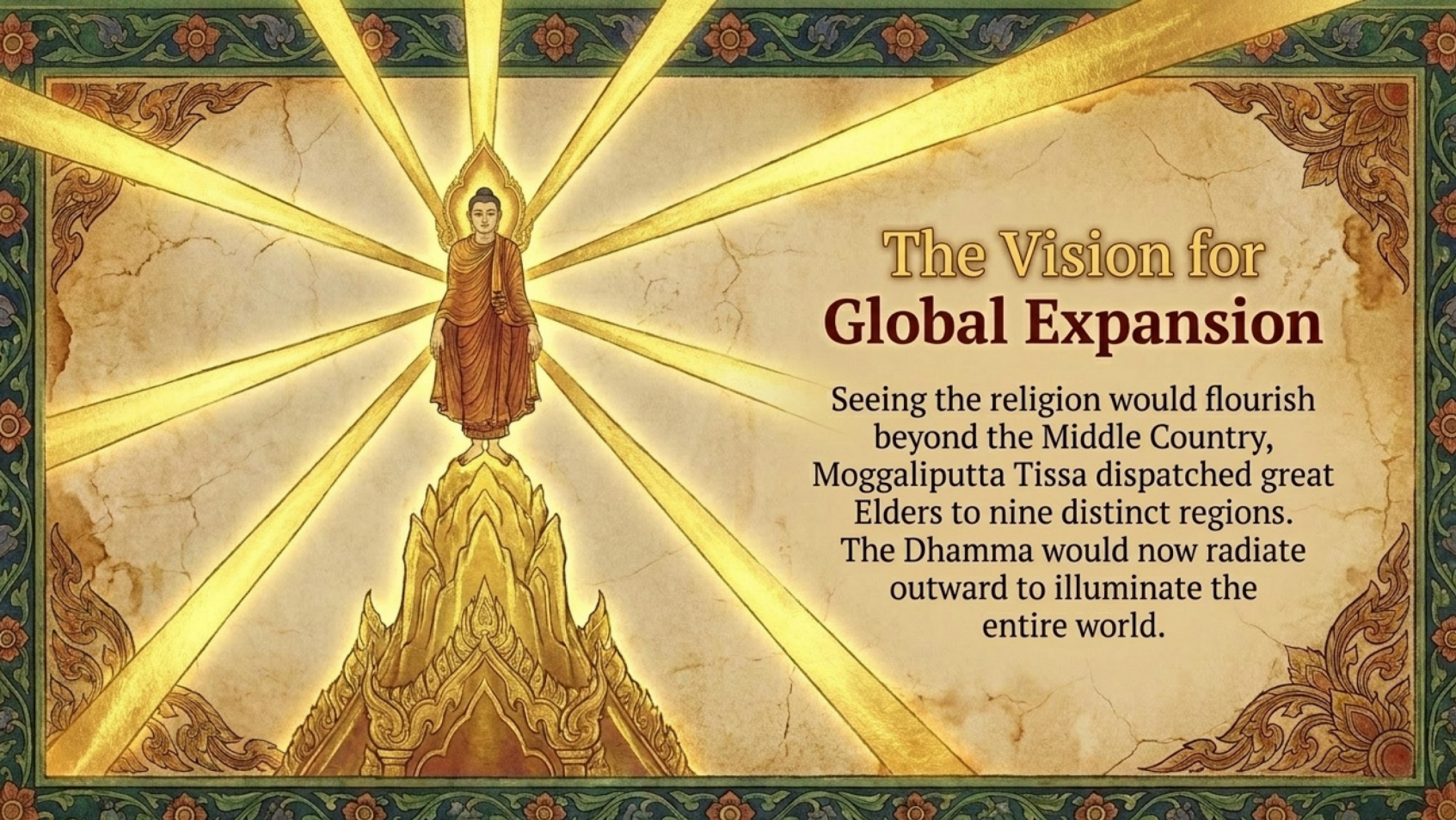
The Great Schisms Diverge

Heretics split into seventeen splinter schools—like a crane in a flock of swans. Only the Theravada lineage remained a straight, unbreakable thread, preserving the uncorrupted word of the Buddha.



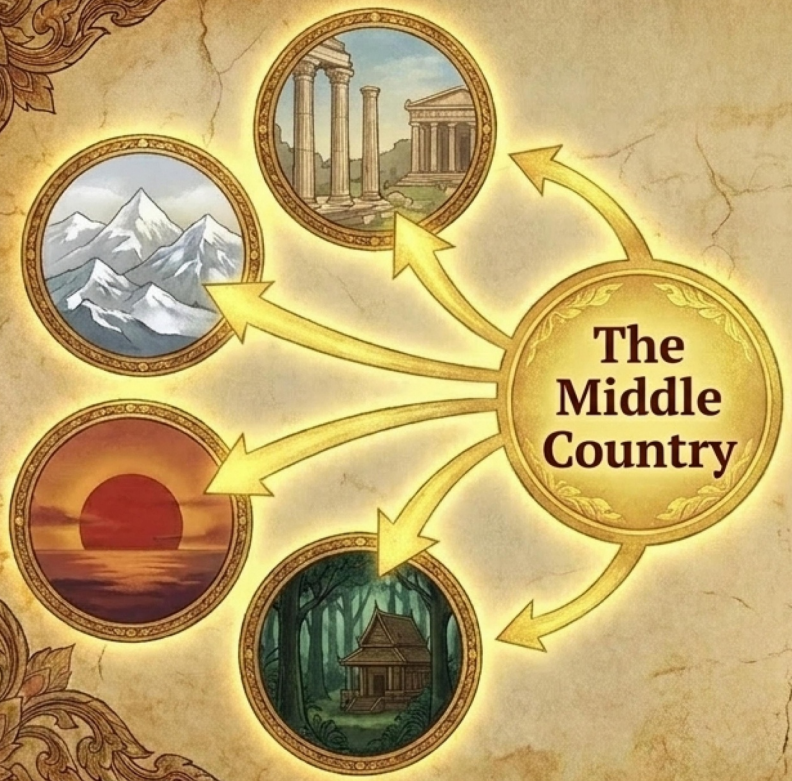
The Unbroken Golden Footprints

Just as visible footprints prove an unseen step, the pure conduct of the Elders proves an unbroken lineage.
The Theravada succession flowed perfectly from Upali down to Moggaliputta Tissa.



The Vision for Global Expansion

Seeing the religion would flourish beyond the Middle Country, Moggaliputta Tissa dispatched great Elders to nine distinct regions. The Dhamma would now radiate outward to illuminate the entire world.



Missions to the North and West

Elders carried the teachings across mountains and oceans: Majjhantika to Kasmira-Gandhara, Maharakkhita to Yonaka, Dhammarakkhita to Aparanta, and Rakkhita to the forests of Vanavasi.

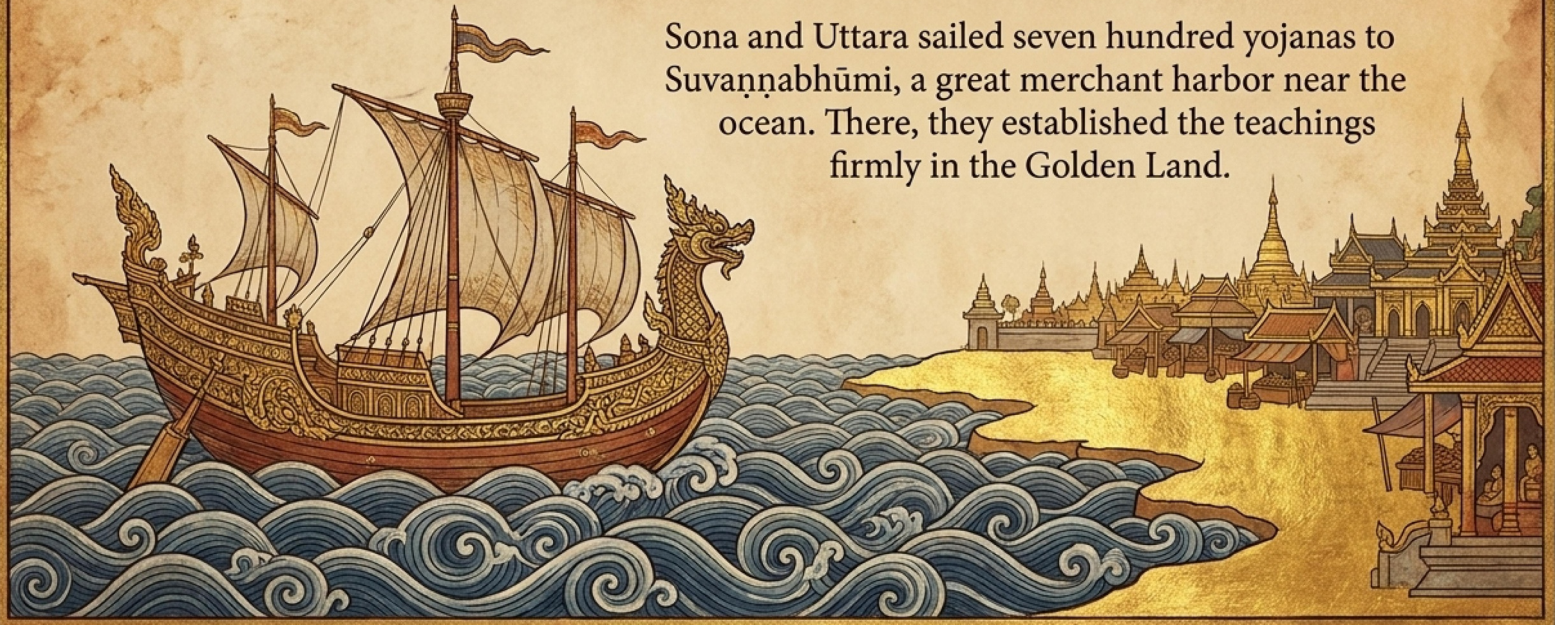
Missions to the East and South

The Dhamma reached new horizons: **Mahinda** established the religion in Sri Lanka, while others traveled far to **Mahimsakamandala**, the great cities of Maharattha, and the distant **Cina** country.



The Golden Land of Suvaṇṇabhūmi

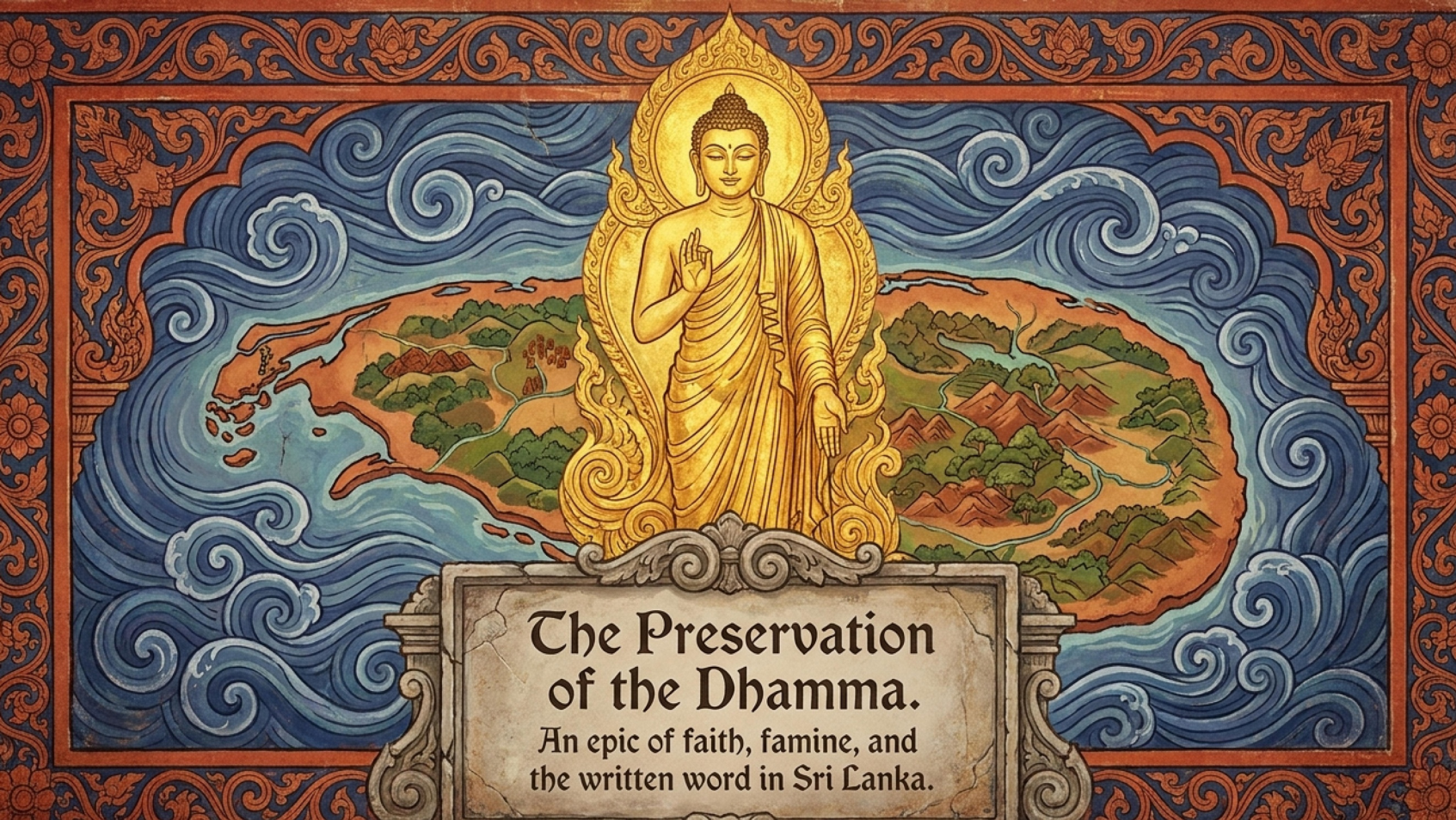
Sona and Uttara sailed seven hundred yojanas to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, a great merchant harbor near the ocean. There, they established the teachings firmly in the Golden Land.





A Legacy Shining Like the Moon

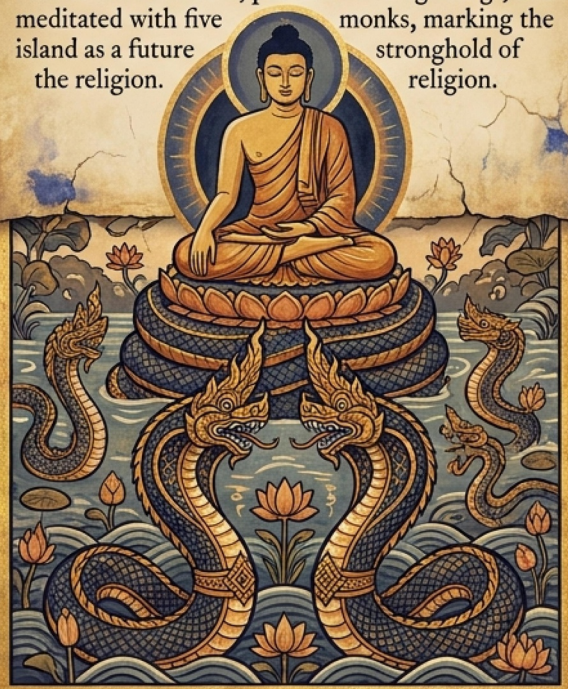
Freed from danger, the religion stood firm across the nine realms. It shone forth with the true luster of yellow robes, like the moon finally freed from a dark cloud.


The Preservation
of the Dhamma.
An epic of faith, famine, and
the written word in Sri Lanka.

The Divine Consecration.

The Supreme Buddha visited Sri Lanka thrice. He subdued the Yakkhas, pacified the Naga kings, and meditated with five monks, marking the island as a future stronghold of the religion.



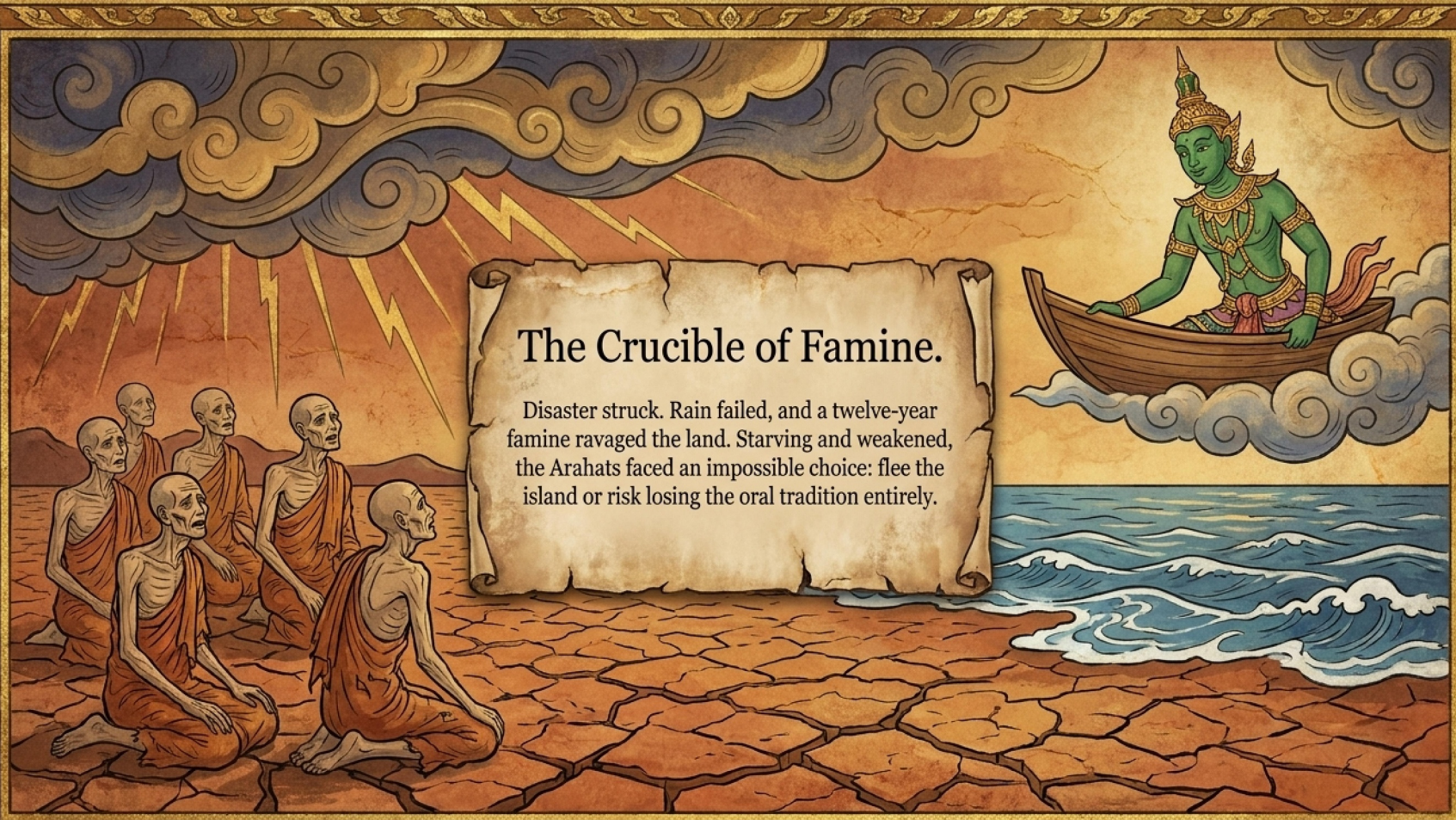





Flight to the Island.
Elder Mahinda and his disciples crossed the sky like royal swans. Alighting on a mountain peak, they met young King Devanampiya Tissa, initiating the profound transmission of the Dhamma.

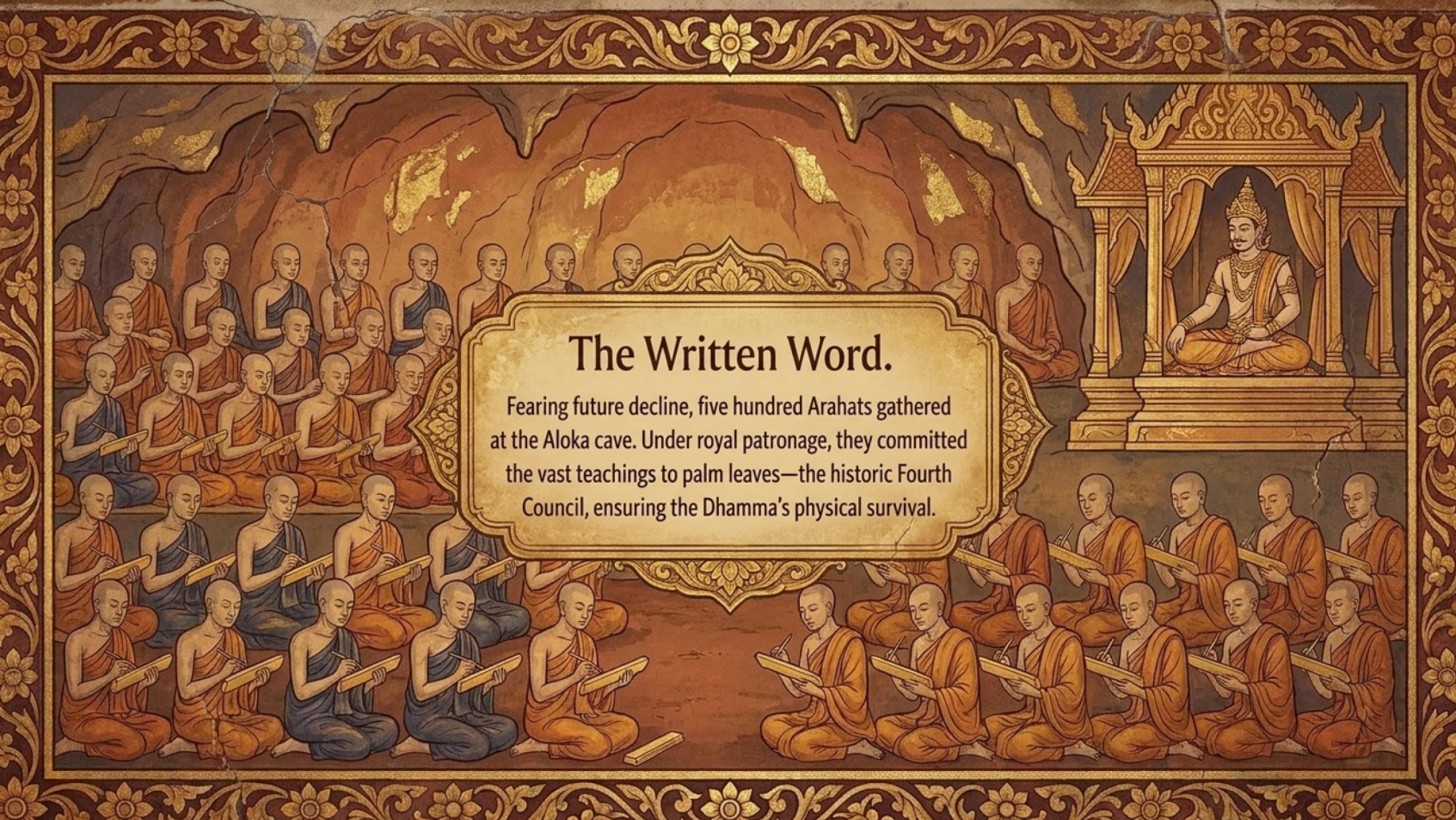

Other Mangoes
Non-Mangoes
The Mango Tree Test.
To test the King's wisdom, Mahinda posed a riddle of categories: mangoes, non-mangoes, kinsmen, and strangers. The King's flawless logic proved him a wise and worthy protector of the Dhamma.
Kinsmen
Strangers
Self


The Oral Lineage
For generations, the profound texts were preserved entirely in the minds of Arahats. Passed flawlessly from teacher to disciple, the sacred words remained unbroken, glowing like a shining lamp in the darkness.

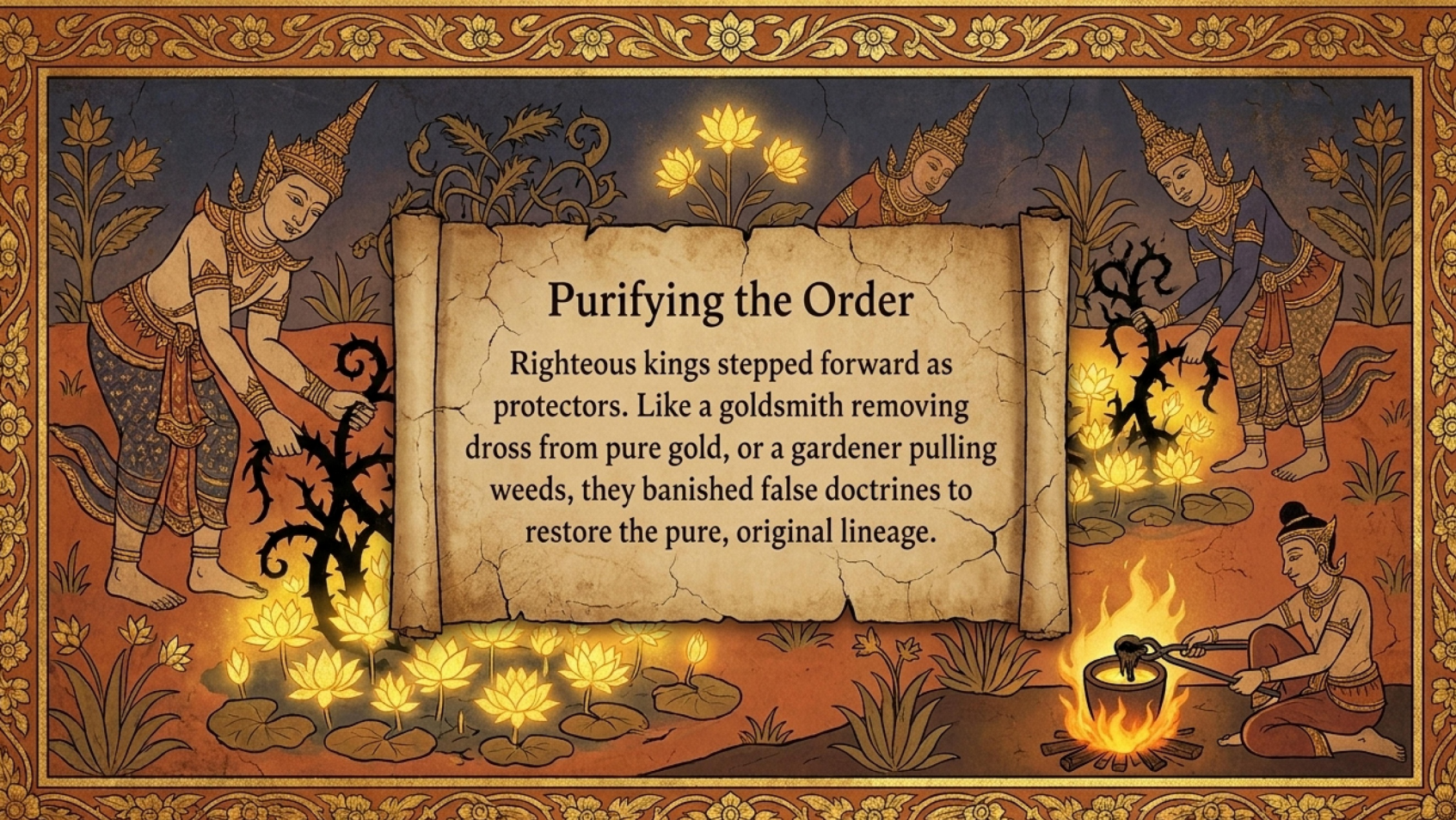

The Crucible of Famine.
Disaster struck. Rain failed, and a twelve-year famine ravaged the land. Starving and weakened, the Arahats faced an impossible choice: flee the island or risk losing the oral tradition entirely.

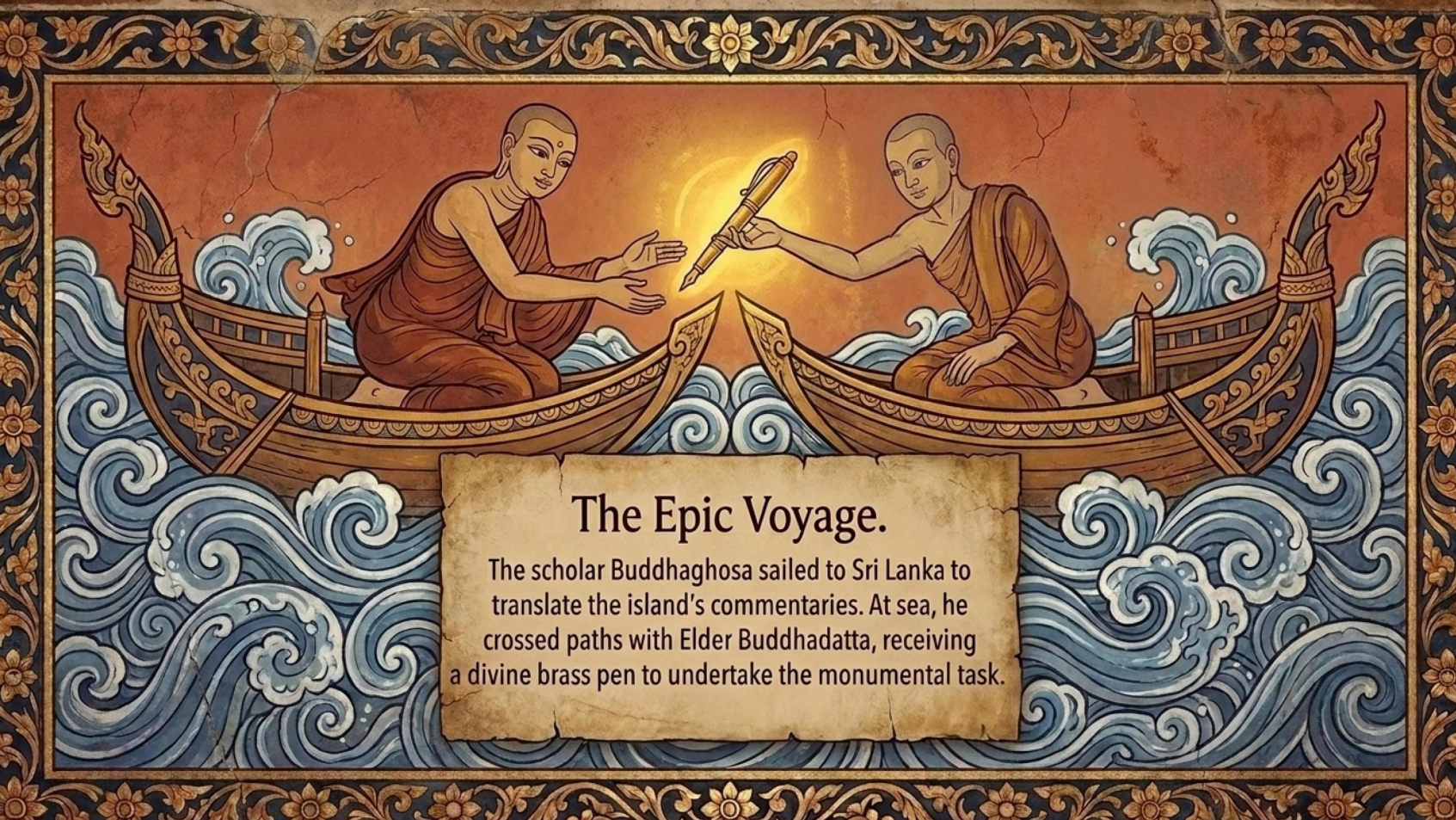

Heroic Preservation
Too weak to speak, the Arahats lay head-to-head on the sand. They silently recited the texts in their minds, preserving the Dhamma through sheer willpower and concentration amidst the brutal famine.


The Perfect Reunion.
When the famine lifted, monks who had fled to India returned. Reciting the texts together, their memories matched perfectly, blending seamlessly like the waters of the Ganges and Yamuna.


The Written Word.
Fearing future decline, five hundred Arahats gathered at the Aloka cave. Under royal patronage, they committed the vast teachings to palm leaves—the historic Fourth Council, ensuring the Dhamma's physical survival.


Anotatta
The Great Schism.
Over centuries, the monastic order fractured. Like divergent rivers flowing from a single great lake, rival sects split away, distorting texts and threatening the pure teachings of the Great Monastery.
Abhayagiri
Jetavana


Purifying the Order
Righteous kings stepped forward as protectors. Like a goldsmith removing dross from pure gold, or a gardener pulling weeds, they banished false doctrines to restore the pure, original lineage.


The Epic Voyage.
The scholar Buddhaghosa sailed to Sri Lanka to translate the island's commentaries. At sea, he crossed paths with Elder Buddhadatta, receiving a divine brass pen to undertake the monumental task.


The Divine Trial.
To test his brilliance, the king of gods made Buddhaghosa's manuscript vanish twice. The scholar rewrote it flawlessly each time. When compared, not a single syllable differed across all three versions.


The Golden Flowering.
Translated and pure, the Dhamma illuminated Sri Lanka. The island became a radiant paradise resembling the heavenly realms, teeming with Arahats who had realized the highest fruits of the path.


The Enduring Banyan.
Fortified by these great Arahats,
the teachings grew vast and indestructible.
Like a mighty Banyan tree with deep roots
and sheltering branches, the Dhamma
was preserved to endure for all time.

The Kalyani Reformation

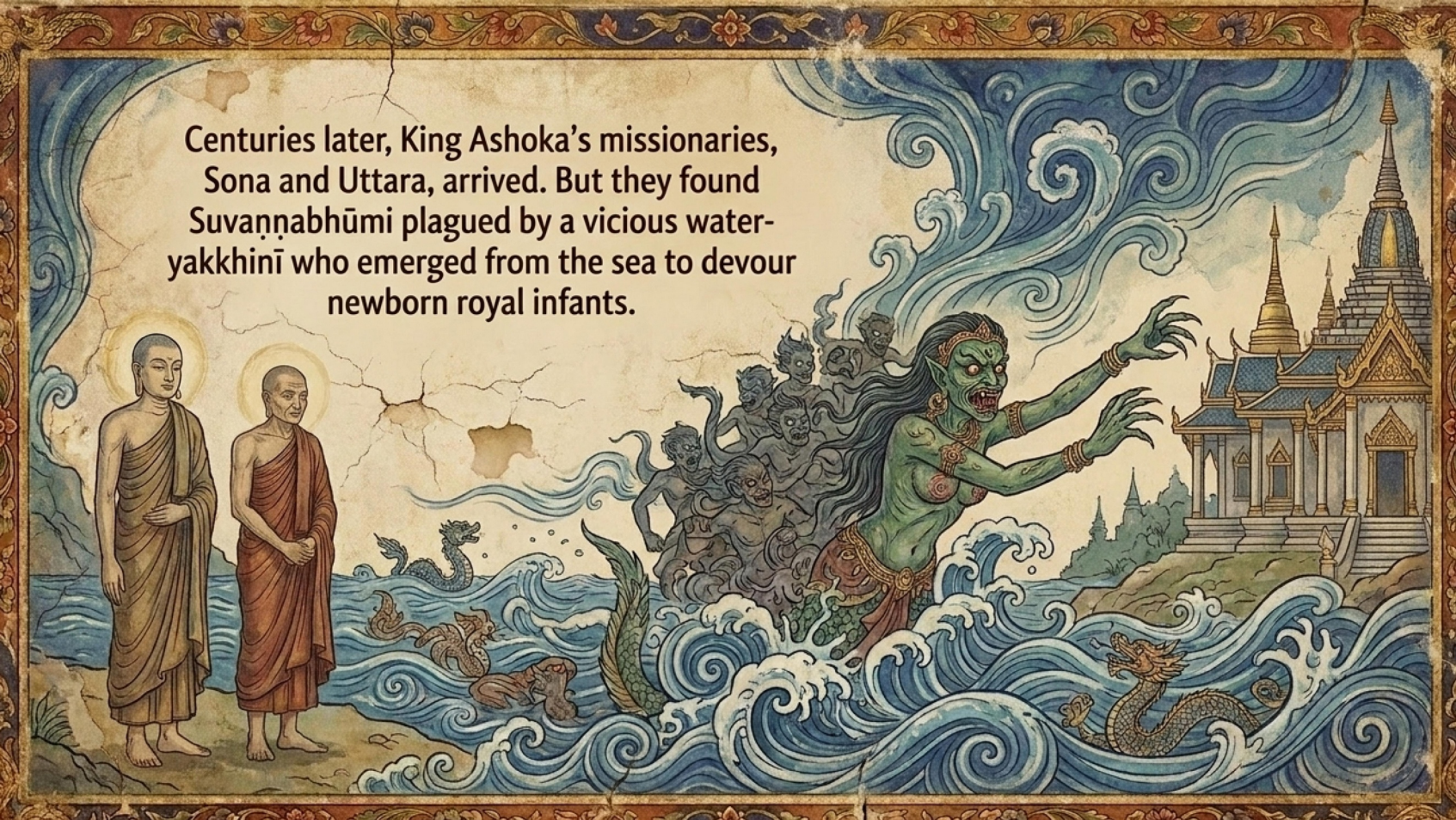


Seven Establishments of the Dharma in Suvaṇṇabhūmi


Ramañña—comprising Hamsāvatī, Mottama, and Suvaṇṇabhūmi—was the cradle of the Dharma. Across the vast ocean lay Sri Lanka, the keeper of pure lineage. This perilous sea route forged a sacred bond of purification.
Hamsāvatī
Ramañña
Mottama
Sri Lanka
Suvaṇṇabhūmi



The Dharma first arrived when the Arahat Gavampati guided the Buddha to Sudhammapura. The Blessed One bestowed hair relics. Later, thirty-three sacred teeth were enshrined, establishing the foundation of the religion.

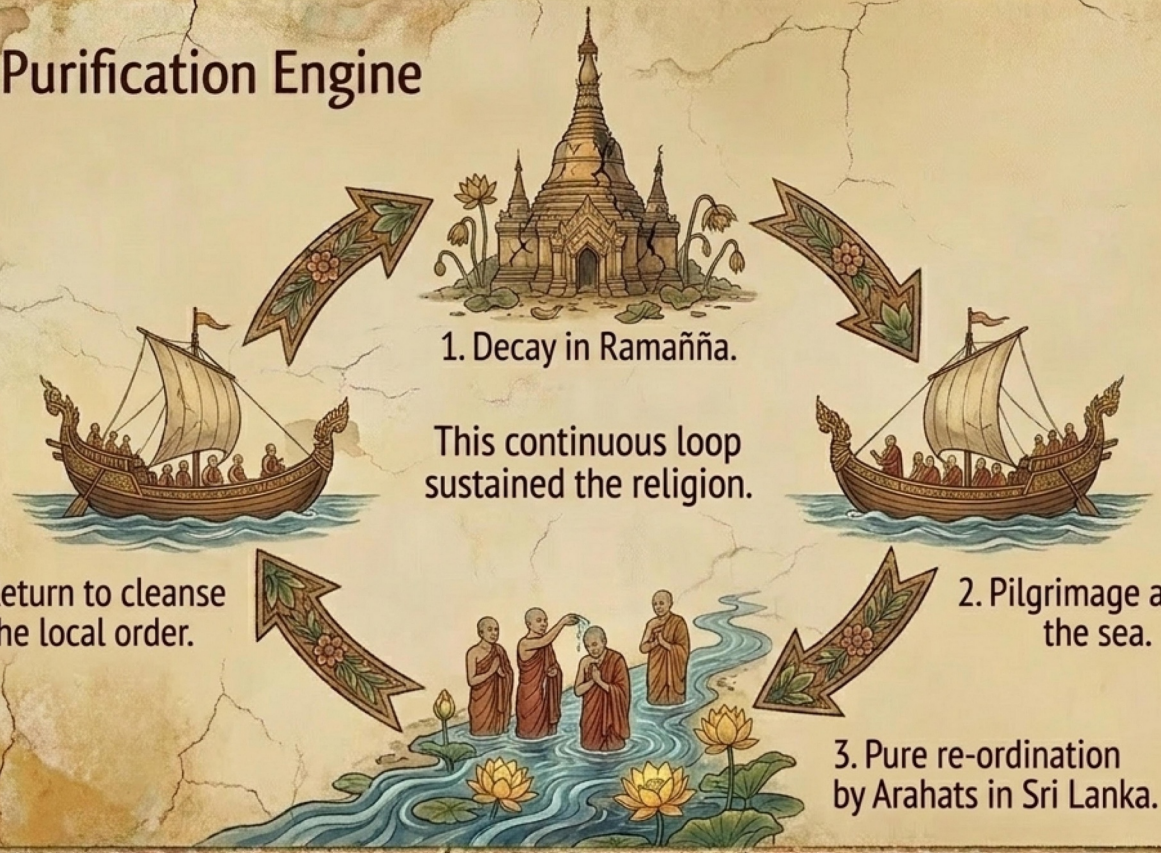

Centuries later, King Ashoka's missionaries, Sona and Uttara, arrived. But they found Suvaṇṇabhūmi plagued by a vicious water-yakkhinī who emerged from the sea to devour newborn royal infants.



To banish the water-yakkhinī, the Arahats created the Manūsīha: a terrifying guardian with two human bodies joined to a single lion's head. Sixty thousand people converted, securing the Second Establishment.


Centuries passed. Plagued by thieves, fever,
and adversaries, Ramañña's religion
weakened like lotuses in shallow water. To save
Dharma, a historical mechanism emerged:
The Cycle of Purification.

The Purification Engine

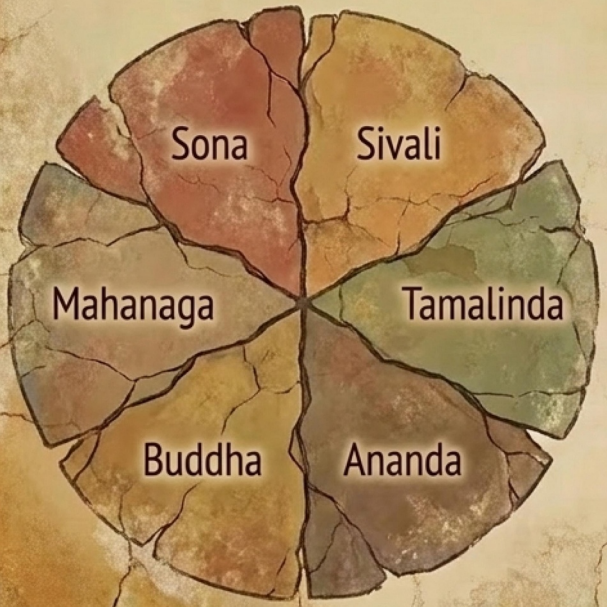


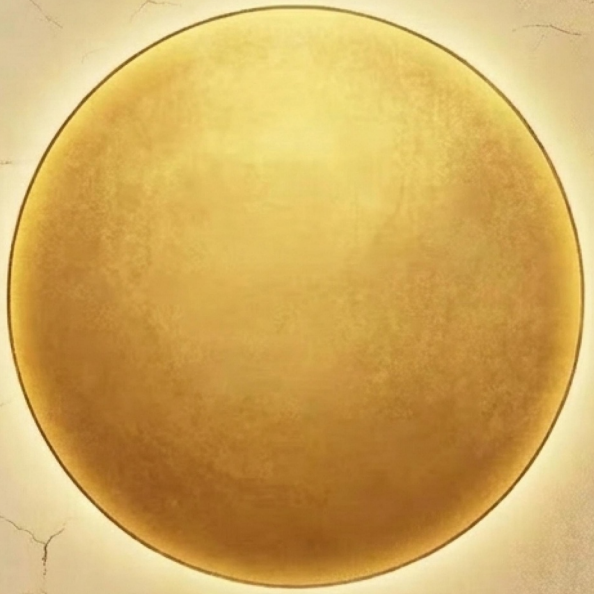
Chapada

Monks like Chapada traveled to Sri Lanka, mastered the texts, and returned with Arahats. Successive elders from Mottama repeated this voyage, continuously bringing the pure lineage back home.



Despite these pilgrimages, the religion fractured. By the reign of King Dhammacetiya, Mottama alone held six divided schools of different communions. The Dharma lacked unity.









King Dhammacetiya resolved
to unify the region. Discovering that local
ordinations were tainted by improper
boundaries, he declared:
“I will exert myself to make
the religion stainless.”

He dispatched monks to Sri Lanka. Despite violent winds and fatal shipwrecks, the survivors reached the Kalyani River. There, they received an indisputable, unified ordination from the pure Arahats.






Returning to Ramañña, they consecrated the new Kalyani Boundary. All local monks were retrained and re-ordained. The six fractured schools dissolved into a single, pure lineage.

Through divine origins, Sri Lankan lifelines, and royal reformation, the Dharma in Suvaṇṇabhūmi was perpetually renewed. This relentless pursuit of purity left an enduring legacy of unity.





The Six Foundings of Yonaka

A Chronicle of the Sāsana.

Adapted from the *Sāsanavaṁsa*, tracking the dawn of the religion across centuries.



Visiting Labhuñja, the Buddha was offered a yellow myrobalan fruit. When discarded, its seed hovered in mid-air. Smiling at this miracle, the Buddha prophesied that his religion would stand firm in the Yonaka country for a long time.



At that very site, a local headman dedicated his seven-year-old son to the Order. Through intense meditation, the boy swiftly became an Arahat, marking the first true establishment of the religion.



In the year 235, Elder Mahārakkhita flew via an air route to the Yonaka world. By preaching the Kāḷakārāma Sutta, he adorned 170,000 beings with the fruits of the Paths and ordained ten thousand, expanding the faith.



Five hundred years after the conqueror's wheel, the god Vissakamman crafted a jewelled Buddha image for Elder Nāgasena. By the Elder's resolve, seven miraculous relics descended into the statue, firmly establishing the religion during King Milinda's era.



In Kali year 65, Elder Kassapa arrived from the middle country.
Soon after, another Elder brought miraculous relics from **Sri** Lanka.
Witnessing their power, the King enshrined them in **Labhuñja**,
sparking the **fourth** founding of the Yonaka Sāsana.



When the ruler of Cina conquered Yonaka, two great Elders fled to Sri Lanka. Overcoming famine, they sought refuge and strict training with devoted monks. They eventually returned, fully disciplined, to breathe life back into the Siyama and Yonaka regions.



In Kali year 825, King Sirisaddhamma vastly expanded the Labhuñja shrine and built four monasteries. Dedicated to Elders Medhaṅkara and Sāriputta, these grounds allowed the monks to purify the teachi-ings and finalize the sixth founding of the religion.



Decades later, King Anekasetibhinda conquered Yonaka. Revering it as the religion's ancient birthplace, he spared its citizens from captivity. He dispatched **Elder Saddhammacakkasāmi** to further purify the Sāsana, ensuring the Yonaka teachings remained a pristine beacon of the faith.



The purified religion birthed Elders possessing supernormal faculties and profound wisdom. They authored great commentaries. One Elder, merely by reciting the *Uppātasanti*, miraculously conquered an invading army. Through their brilliance, the Yonaka Sāsana achieved ultimate purity.

The Six Pillars of Yonaka



1. The Prophecy:
A floating seed.



2. The Air Route:
Mass enlightenment.



3. The Jewelled Image:
Miraculous relics.



4. Sri Lanka's Gift:
Royal enshrinement.



5. The Return:
Surviving invasion.



6. The Great Expansion:
Monastic purification.



The Three Foundings of Sirikhetta.

An Illustrated Chronicle from The Sāsanavaṁsa.

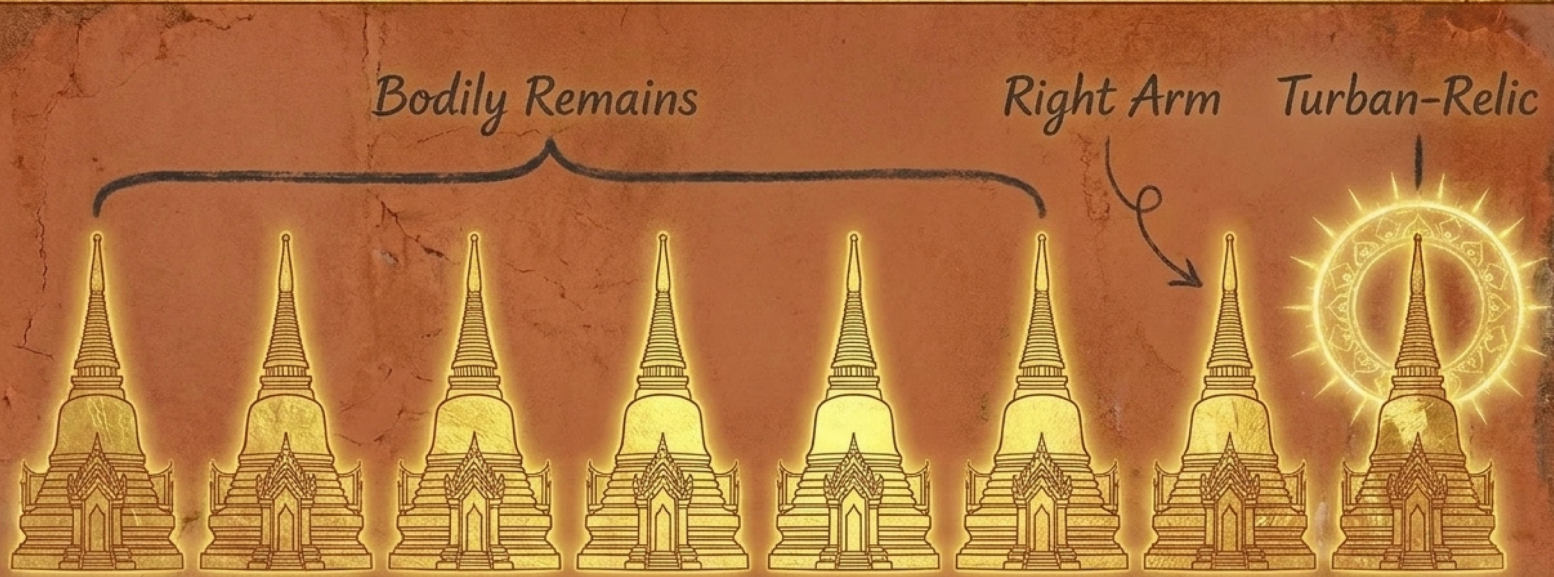


The history of the Dhamma in Vanavāsī follows the rhythm of cultivation.

- First, a seed is planted.
- Next, roots spread across the land.
- Finally, the Dhamma blooms like a brilliant full moon.



Year 100: The First Founding.
Seven celestial and earthly beings raise the city of Sirikhetta. The three-eyed King Dvattaponga reigns, providing daily requisites to three thousand Arahats.



King Dvattaponga builds eight great shrines to house sacred relics, establishing the physical foundation of the religion.

The Turban-Relic shrine remains unfinished for centuries.
Ultimately, King Anuruddha brings the relic to the city of Arimaddana,
depositing it in the Caññiṅkhu shrine.



Sirikhetta

Caññiṅkhu



Arimaddana



The Seed is Planted.
The religion is established in Sirikhetta long before the missionaries arrive.
Yet, it remains structurally weak, waiting for deeper roots.

The Second Founding.



Dispatched by Elder Moggaliputta Tissa, the Elder Rakkhita arrives in Vanavāsī.
Standing suspended in the air, he preaches the Anamatagga Discourse.

The Dhamma takes root. The aerial discourse transforms the region instantly:

60,000



converted to Dhamma.

70,000



ordained.

500



monasteries erected.

The Roots Spread.

The religion now stands firm, plunging deep into the Vanavāsī country through monasteries and mass ordination. However, it does not yet encompass the entire land.



The Three Eras of Cultivation.

Centuries of groundwork prepared Sirikhetta for its ultimate spiritual awakening.

Era	Key Figure	Core Action	Metaphor
Yr 100	 King Dvattaponga	 8 Shrines	 The Seed
Asokan Era	 Elder Rakkhita	 500 Monasteries	 The Roots
Yr 433	 King Kukkuṭasīsa	 Spiritual Zenith	 The Bloom



Year 433: The Third Founding.

King Kukkuṭasīsa ascends the throne. He faithfully supports the Sangha with the four daily requisites, nurturing an era of unprecedented spiritual attainment.

The Era of 500 Arahats.

A golden age dawns. Five hundred Arahats dwell in Sirikhetta. The number of stream-winners, once-returners, and non-returners grows beyond reckoning.



The Bloom.

The religion reaches its zenith. Driven by hundreds of Arahats, the Dhamma illuminates the Vanavāsī country, shining as brilliantly as the full moon.



The Setting Sun.

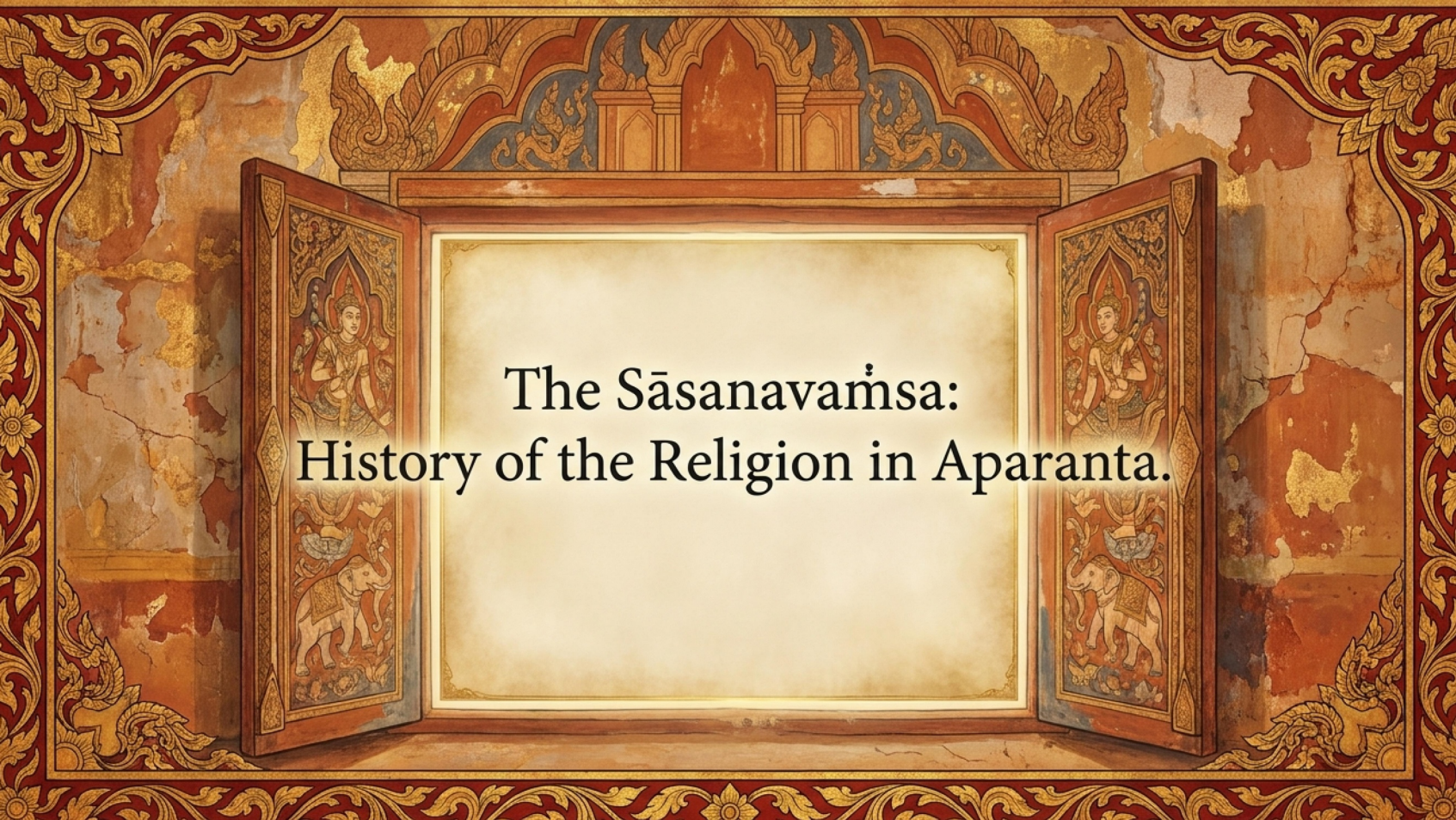
These great elders composed only one treatise at the behest of kings. Having upheld the religion, the wise Arahats eventually went to their deaths, fading like the setting sun.



The Ancient Call to Merit.



A wise man should always do meritorious deeds
until he comes to death. Let him not be careless at any time.


The Sāsanavaṁsa:
History of the Religion in Aparanta.


In the Maramma circle, the Dhamma took root across five distinct eras. From the Buddha's own footsteps to epic sieges for sacred texts, this is the story of how the religion stood firm.

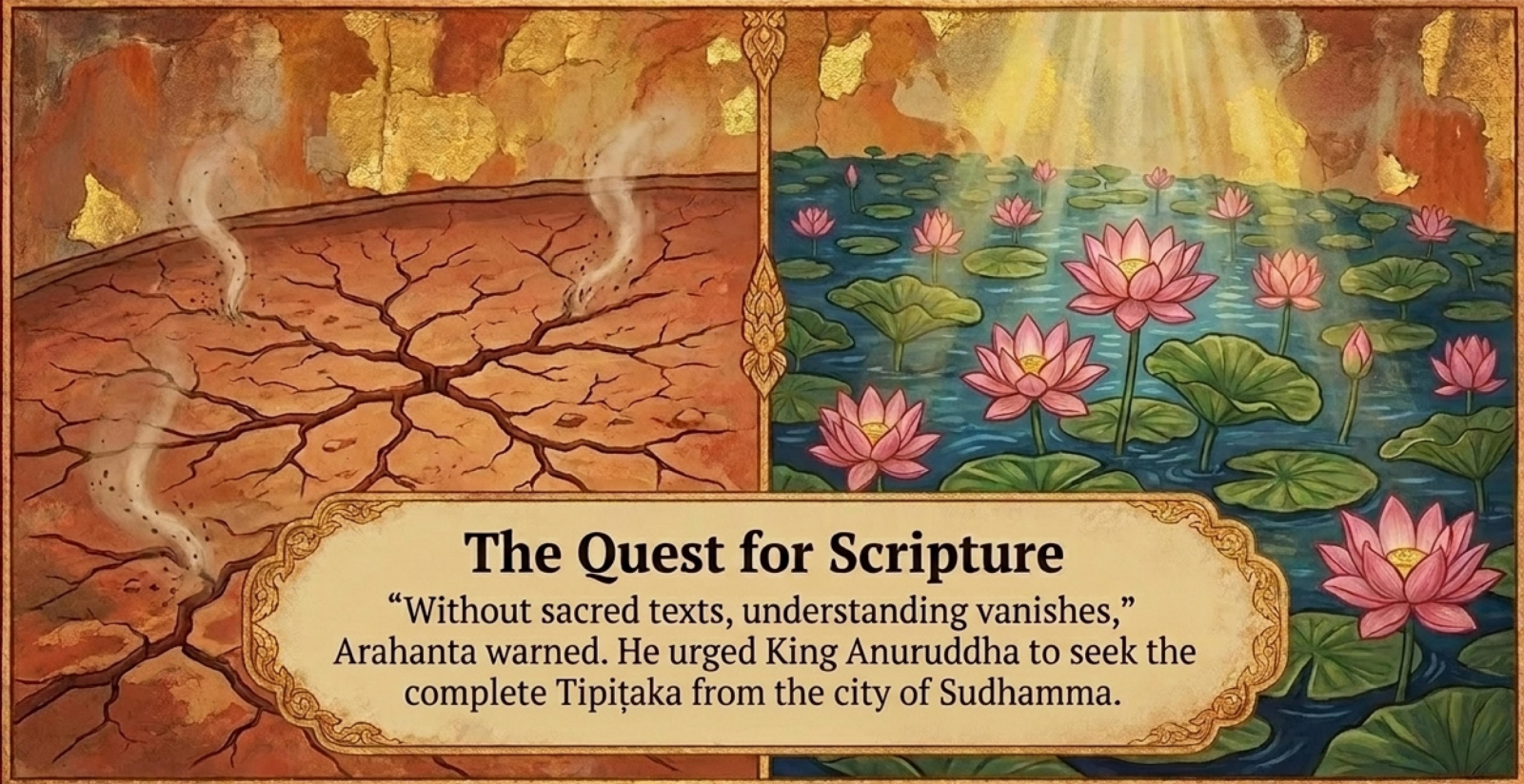

The First Founding
Two merchant brothers built the Red-Sandal-Monastery. The Buddha visited, offering the Dhamma's flavor. Eighty-four thousand beings converted, and the sage Saccabandha attained Arahatship.


The Second Founding
235 years after the Buddha, Elder Dhammarakkhita arrived. He preached the *Aggikkhandhopama Sutta*. Seventy thousand tasted the Dhamma, and over sixty thousand women were ordained.


The Sham Ascetics
In Arimaddana, thirty thousand sham ascetics taught false views. They sold spells to erase evil deeds, leading the people of Tambadīpa astray for generations.


The Third Founding
King Anuruddha rejected the sham ascetics.
The great Elder Arahanta arrived from the
forest, preaching the Appamāda-doctrine.
The King's mind blossomed like a lotus
reaching the sunshine.


Burning the False Books
The sham ascetics forged a false book, hiding it in a trumpet-flower tree. King Anuruddha burned the text, broke their power, and engaged them as common soldiers.



The Quest for Scripture

“Without sacred texts, understanding vanishes,” Arahanta warned. He urged King Anuruddha to seek the complete Tipiṭaka from the city of Sudhamma.

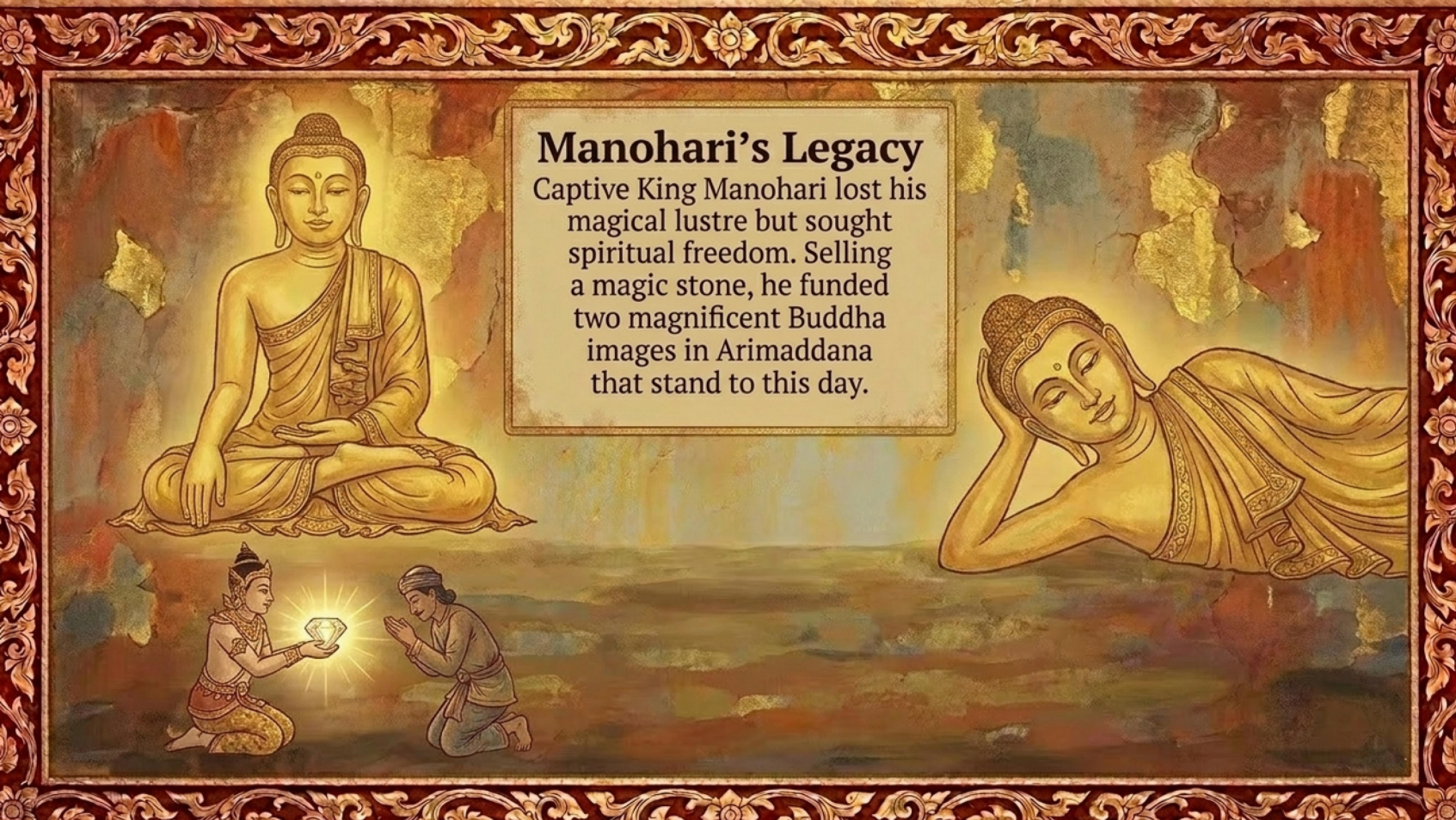

The Siege of Sudhamma
King Manohari refused to share the texts. Anuruddha marched with eighty million soldiers. Using ancient Atharvaveda magic to break the defenses, he breached the city and captured the king.


The Fourth Founding
Anuruddha claimed the Three Piṭakas and sacred relics,
carrying them to Arimaddana on thirty-two elephants.
The texts were housed in a jewelled palace for study.

Purifying the Canon

Anuruddha sent warriors to Sri Lanka for more texts. Elder Arahanta compared them with the Sudhamma texts. They matched perfectly, neither deficient nor abundant, like the waters of two great rivers.




Manohari's Legacy
Captive King Manohari lost his magical lustre but sought spiritual freedom. Selling a magic stone, he funded two magnificent Buddha images in Arimaddana that stand to this day.


The Fifth Founding
Elder Uttarajīva journeyed to Arimaddana.
With him was Novice Chapada, who traveled
onward to Sri Lanka, studying the sacred texts
deeply for ten years before returning.

The Raft Ordination

Chapada returned with four great Elders. Refusing to mix with local monks, they performed pure ordinations on a raft in the river, renewing the lineage and cementing the religion.

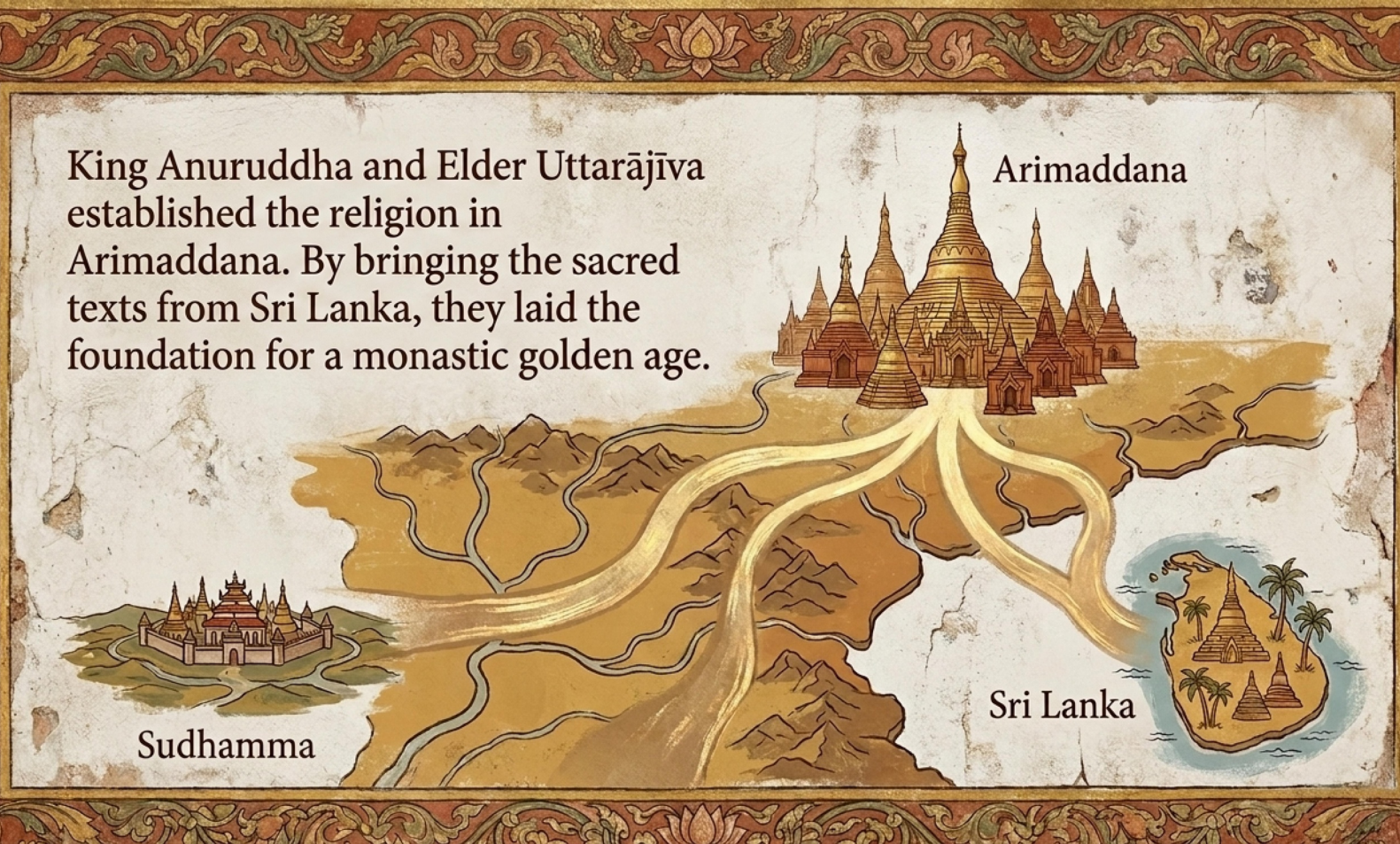



The Unbroken Lineage
Through divine visits, reformed kings, epic sieges, and pure ordinations, the Dhamma prevailed. The Five Foundings secured the Religion in the Maramma circle forever.



The Luminous Religion of Arimaddana: The Golden Age of Scholars, Kings, and Arahats




King Anuruddha and Elder Uttarājīva established the religion in Arimaddana. By bringing the sacred texts from Sri Lanka, they laid the foundation for a monastic golden age.
Arimaddana
Sudhamma
Sri Lanka

The novice Chapada studied in Sri Lanka for ten years. He returned with four expert Elders bringing profound mastery of the sacred texts to Arimaddana.





Enamored by a dancer at a royal festival, Elder Rāhula abandoned his vows. Despite the Elders' warnings, he departed for Mottama to pursue a householder's life.

Disagreements fractured the order into four schools:



Ānanda: Exiled for gifting elephants to relatives.

Arahanta: The original lineage.



Tāmalinda: Exiled for verbal intimation of alms.



Sīvali: The strict traditionalists.

The true nature of Arahats is difficult to see. Because exhibiting supernatural states is forbidden, even an Arahat's closest attendant might never realize their master's spiritual perfection.







When King Narapati offended Elder Sīlabuddhi, a fearsome Yakkha blocked the royal gate. Only by placing a golden Buddha image in a royal boat was the Elder persuaded to return.

Elder Kassapa's boat halted mid-ocean. A karmic debt from a past life—tiring a dog in a river—forced the crew to throw him overboard. Sakka rescued him via a crocodile.

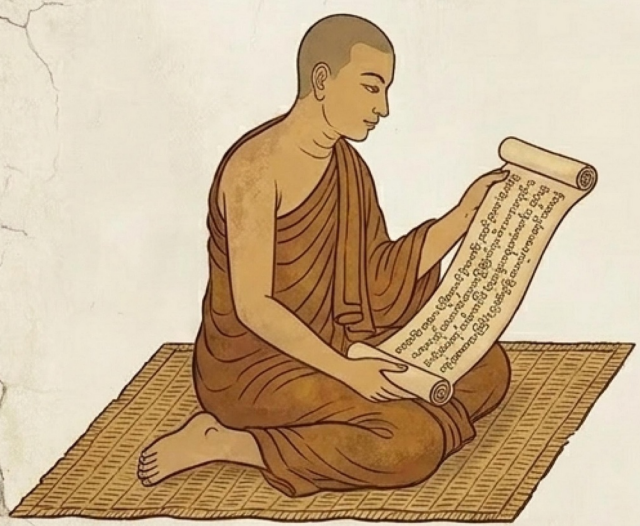




Elder Aggavaṁsa wrote the Saddanīti. This grammar text was so brilliant that visiting scholars from Sri Lanka admitted they had no book capable of matching its detailed analysis.

The virtuous Chapada wrote masterful texts on grammar and the Vinaya. Yet, because a shameless monk shared his name, many falsely slandered the great scholar through mistaken identity.







King Kyacva delegated his royal duties to his son. Longing for awakening, he dedicated his life entirely to mastering and teaching the profound canonical texts.



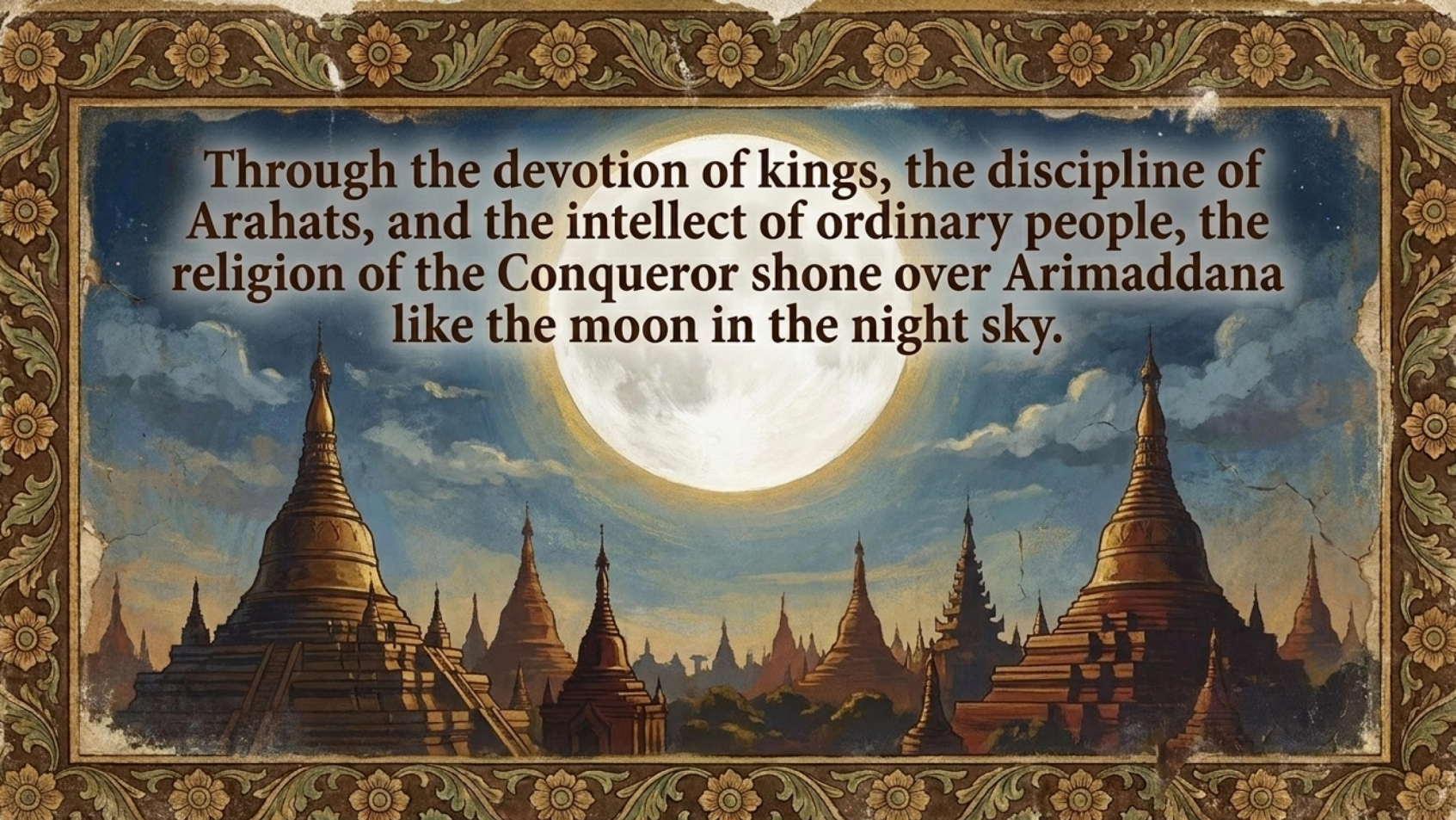
“Can an old man master the texts?” the King mocked. The old monk studied relentlessly, returning with a sprouting club to prove that with immense effort, even the aged can blossom.

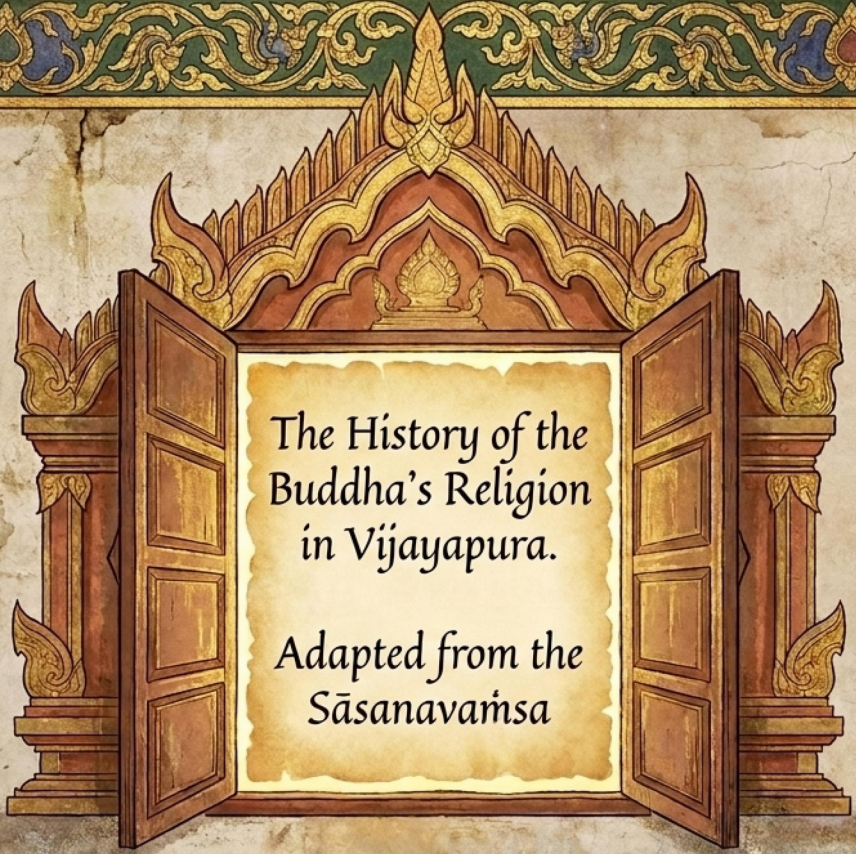
In Arimaddana, the passion for learning reached everyone. Women famously memorized complex scriptures. Even mothers nursing young children recited the advanced philosophical classifications of the *Paṭṭhāna*.



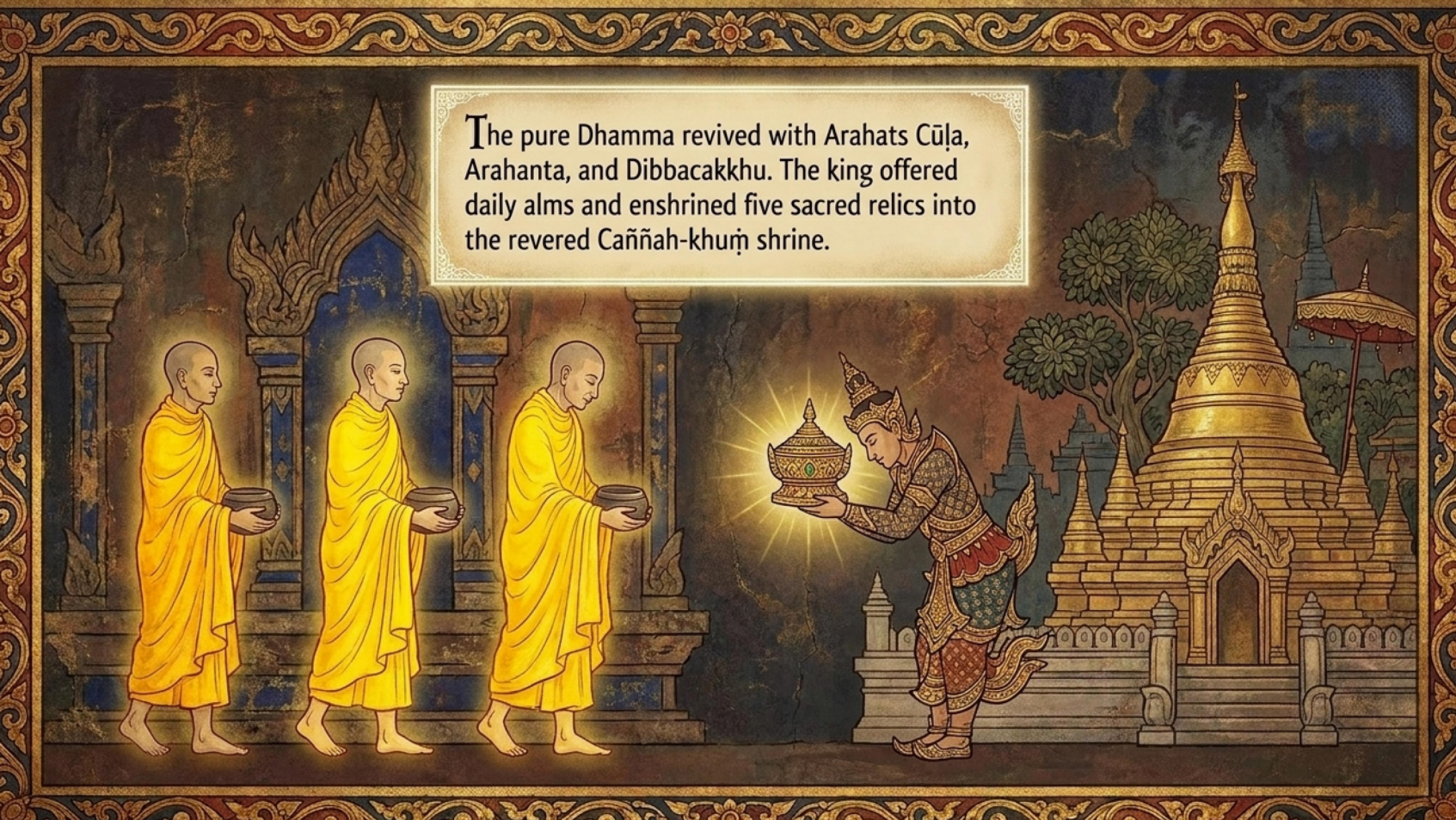


A twelve-year-old girl challenged a monk named Khema on his name's gender classification. Her mother proudly noted the linguistic nuances, proving the profound grammatical literacy of Arimadana's commoners.


Through the devotion of kings, the discipline of Arahats, and the intellect of ordinary people, the religion of the Conqueror shone over Arimaddana like the moon in the night sky.

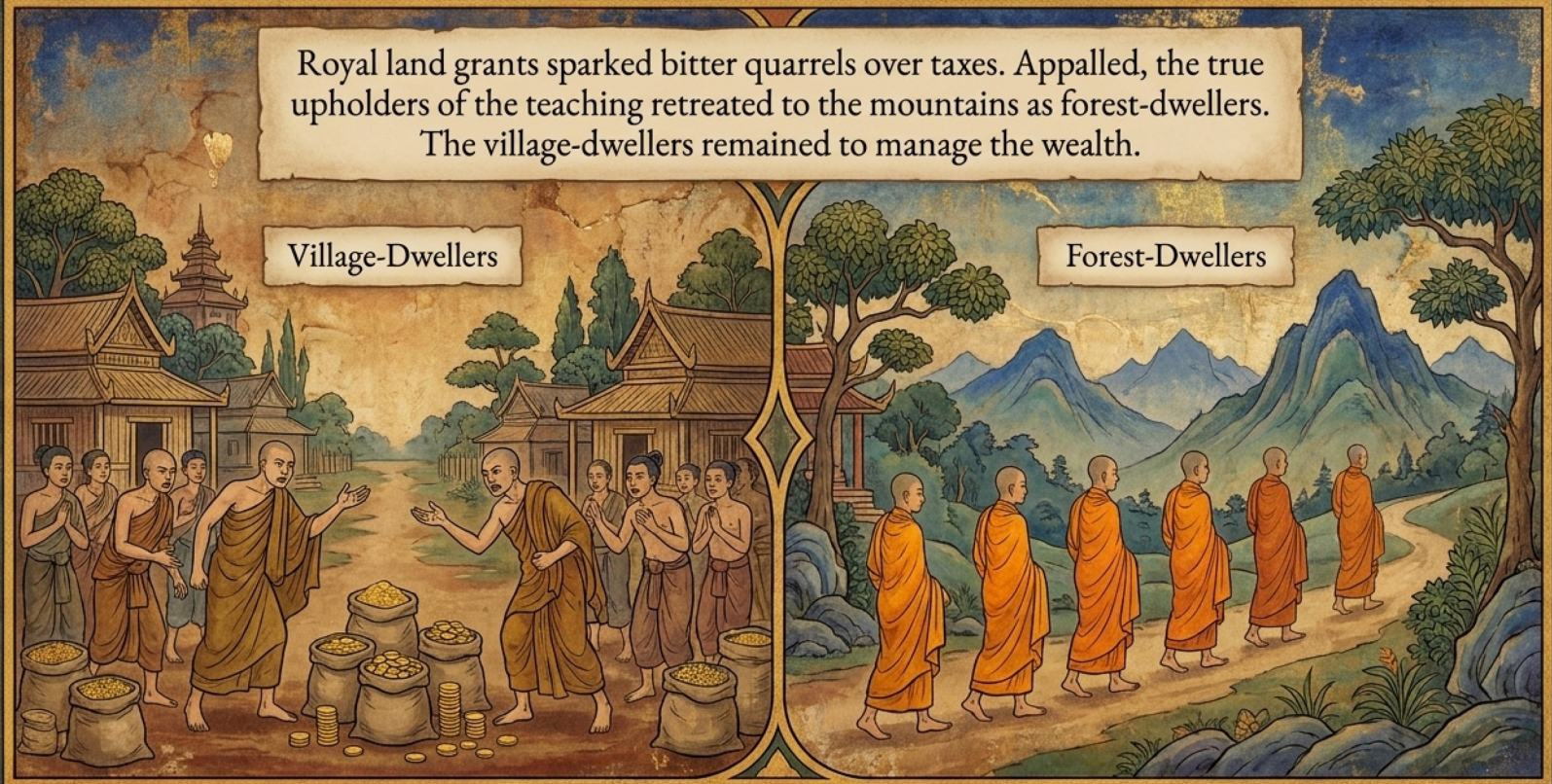

The History of the Buddha's Religion in Vijayapura.
Adapted from the Sāsanavaṁsa

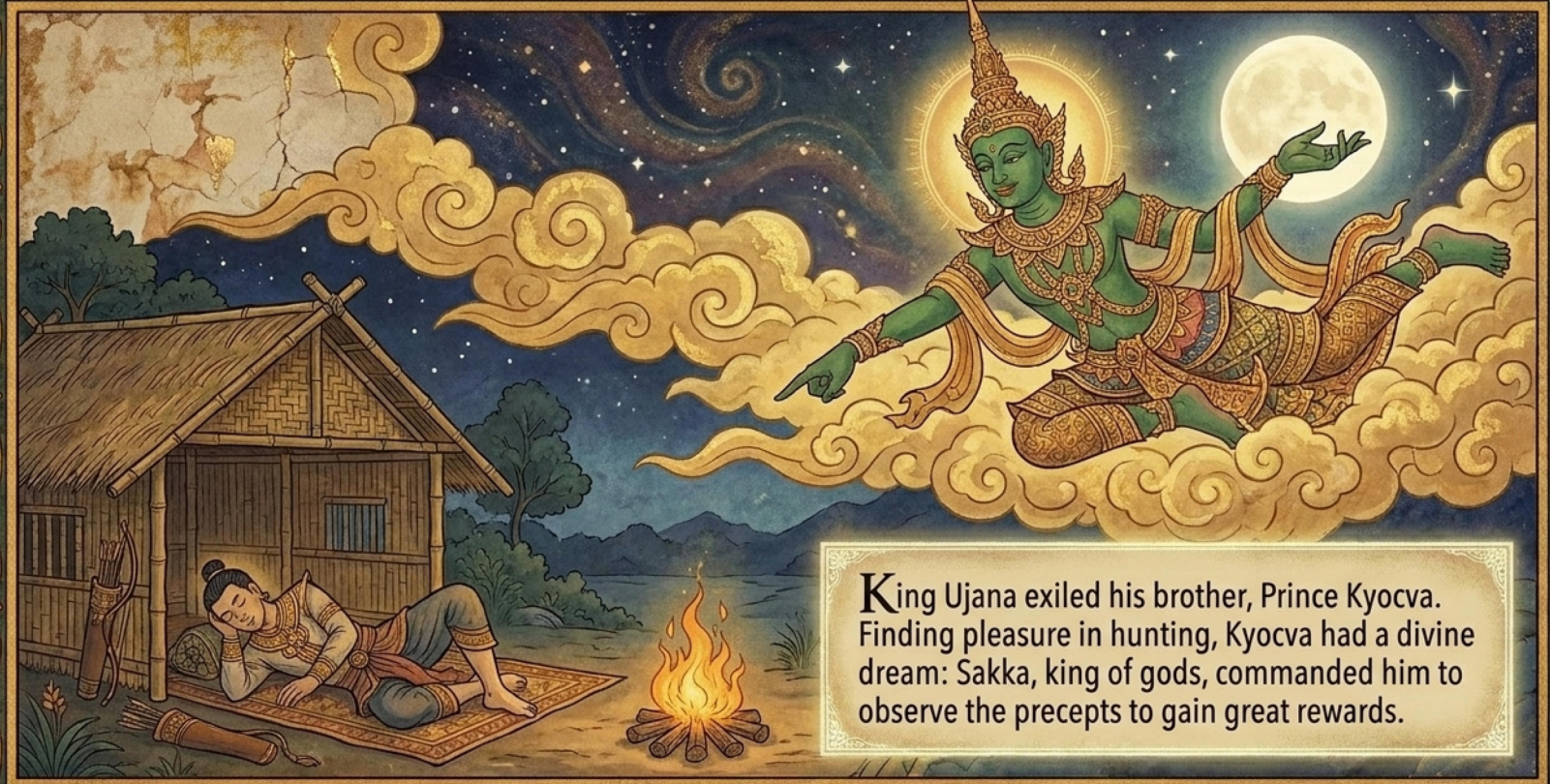

In Kali Age 674, King Sihasura founded Vijayapura. Known as Ekasetibhinda for capturing a white elephant, his city struggled early with corrupt sham ascetics hiding from previous kings.


The pure Dhamma revived with Arahats Cūḷa, Arahanta, and Dibbacakkhu. The king offered daily alms and enshrined five sacred relics into the revered Cañña-khuṃ shrine.

King Ujana built 77 Campaka-wood monasteries for modest Arahats from the pure lines of Chapada and Ananda. He planted a great Bo-tree, sparking a brief era of purity.




Royal land grants sparked bitter quarrels over taxes. Appalled, the true upholders of the teaching retreated to the mountains as forest-dwellers. The village-dwellers remained to manage the wealth.
Village-Dwellers
Forest-Dwellers


King Ujana exiled his brother, Prince Kyocva. Finding pleasure in hunting, Kyocva had a divine dream: Sakka, king of gods, commanded him to observe the precepts to gain great rewards.


Observing the precepts, Kyocva miraculously obtained five white elephants, becoming *Pañcasetibhinda*. Terrified by this omen of royal power, King Ujana secretly abdicated, allowing Kyocva to seize the throne.

Sham ascetics persisted. One tricked King Kyocva by vanishing. A guard discovered the ascetic's wife had helped him flee, but lied to the king to increase royal faith and his own wealth.





Corrupted monks openly flouted rules, even wrestling for horses in the royal arena. The sham ascetic Saṅghaja famously defeated a skilled Kamboja challenger with a single, brutal blow.



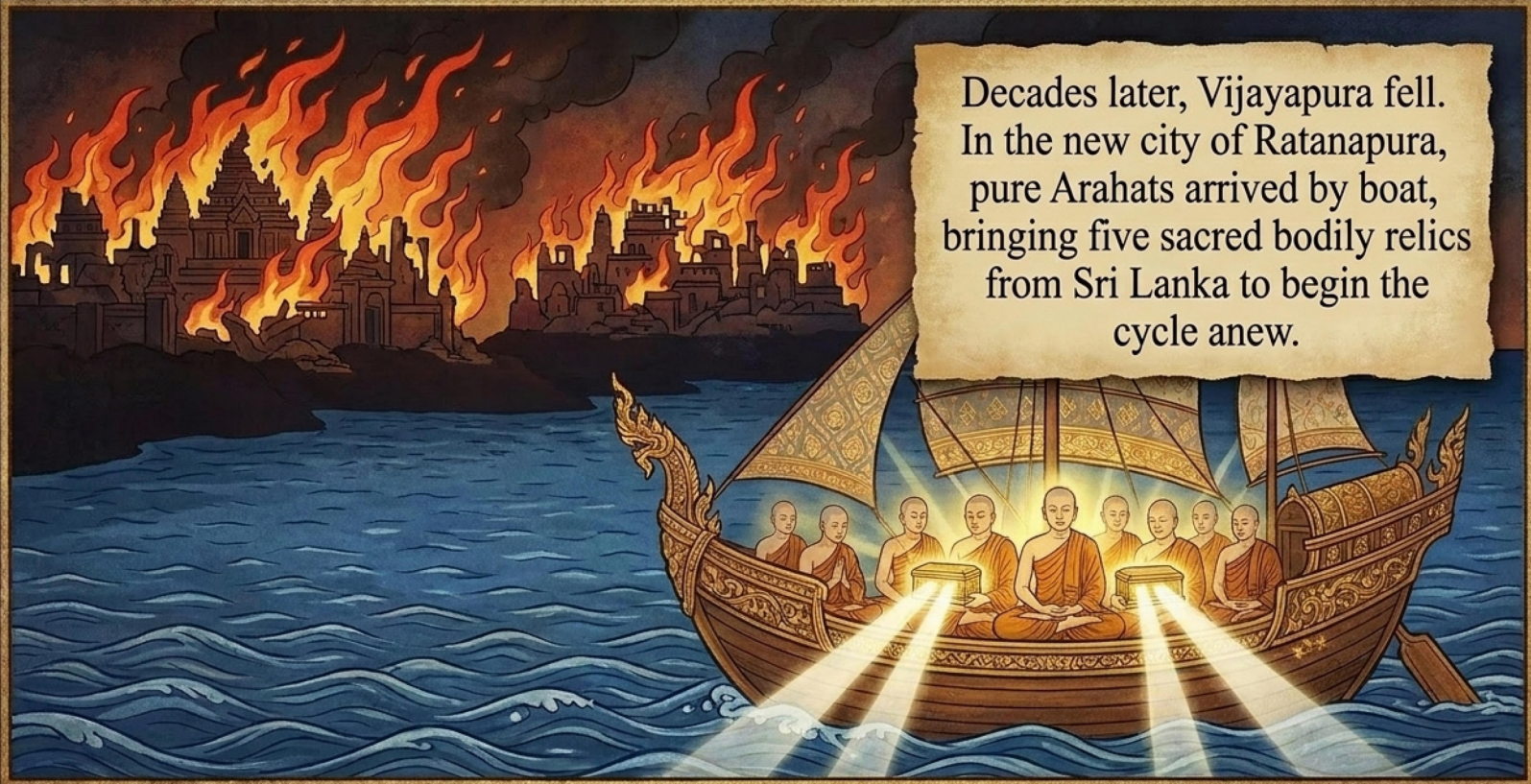
Under King Kitti, the monk Nāgita emerged. Thrown into thorns as a boy for refusing to study, he fled to Arimaddana, secretly transforming into a brilliant scholar.

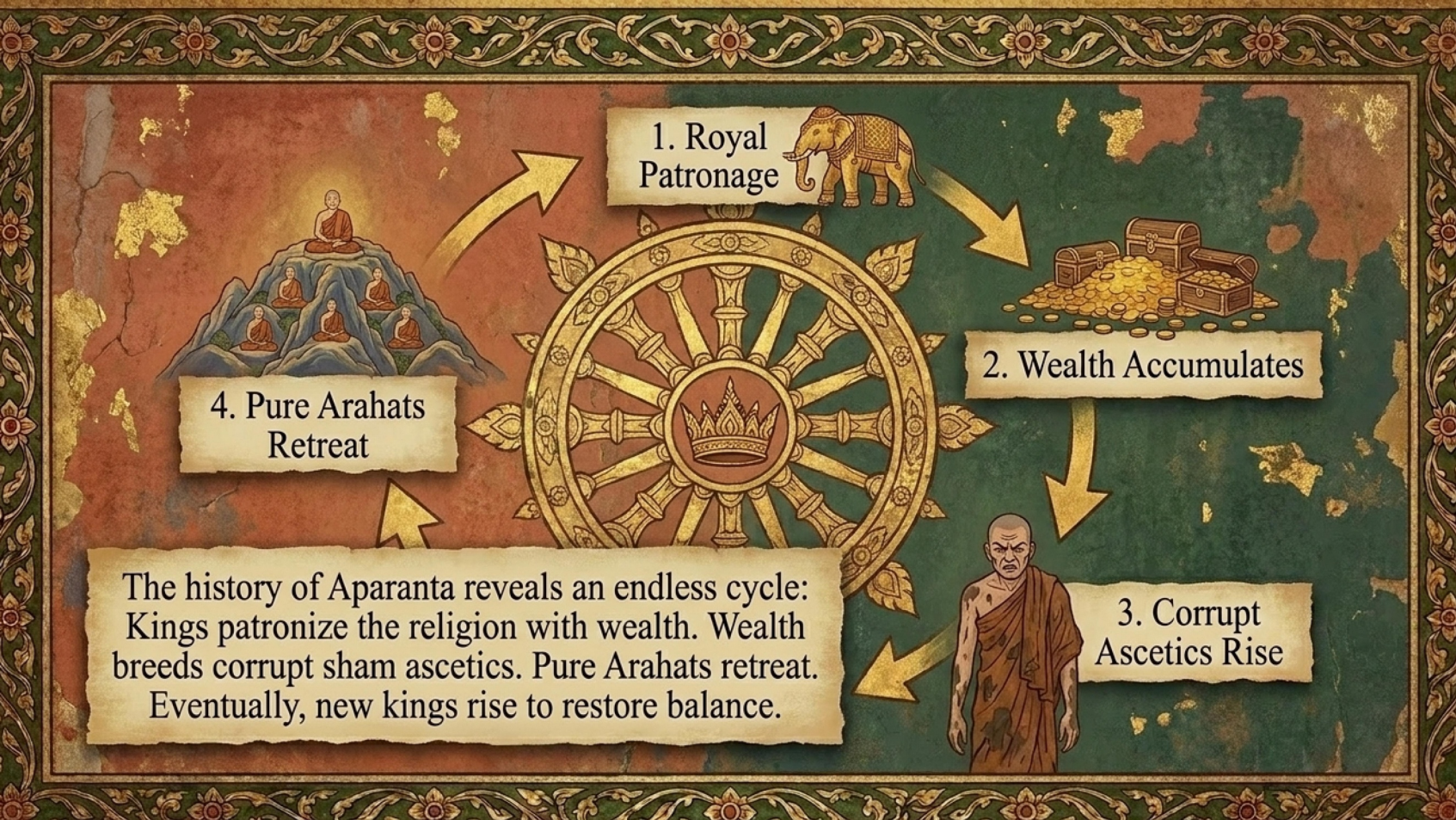


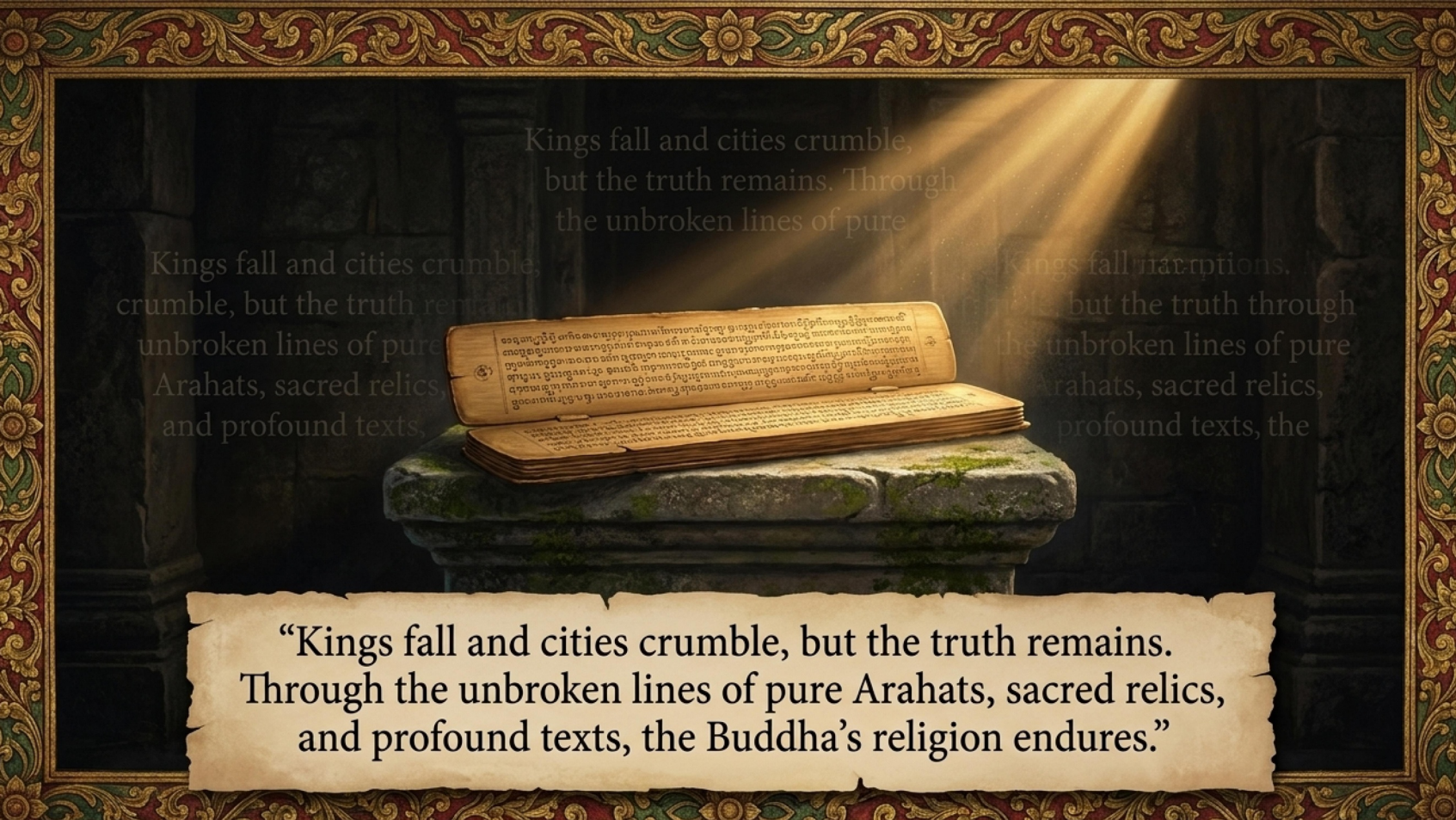
To test Nāgita, the king sent Minister Caturangabala with hidden riddles. Answering flawlessly, Nāgita was gifted a grand monastery where he authored the famous grammatical text, *Saddasāratthajālinī*.

Vijayapura became a legendary center of learning. Over a thousand monks practiced deep contemplation, while brilliant Elders like Mahāvijitāvī authored profound treatises that endure today.




Decades later, Vijayapura fell.
In the new city of Ratanapura,
pure Arahats arrived by boat,
bringing five sacred bodily relics
from Sri Lanka to begin the
cycle anew.


1. Royal Patronage
2. Wealth Accumulates
3. Corrupt Ascetics Rise
4. Pure Arahats Retreat
The history of Aparanta reveals an endless cycle: Kings patronize the religion with wealth. Wealth breeds corrupt sham ascetics. Pure Arahats retreat. Eventually, new kings rise to restore balance.


Kings fall and cities crumble,
but the truth remains. Through
the unbroken lines of pure
Kings fall and cities crumble,
crumble, but the truth
unbroken lines of pure
Arahats, sacred relics,
and profound texts,
Kings fall
but the truth through
the unbroken lines of pure
Arahats, sacred relics,
profound texts, the
“Kings fall and cities crumble, but the truth remains.
Through the unbroken lines of pure Arahats, sacred relics,
and profound texts, the Buddha’s religion endures.”



The Dawn of the Dhamma in Ratanapura.

A Chronicle of Crown, Sangha, and the Great Schism.



King Sativa brought five bodily relics from Sri Lanka. As they reached Ratanapura, the great earth shook and resounded. The King recognized the omen: the religion of the Conqueror was established here forever.



The Lineage of Truth.

The pure teachings flowed from Sri Lanka, anchoring the Chapada lineage,
and blossomed through the wisdom of the Arahats.



The eternal symbiosis.

The Crown protects the Sangha; the Sangha, through purity and scholarship, legitimizes the Crown.
The religion endures under the patronage of the King.


The Golden Age of Letters.
Monks translated sacred texts into the Maramma language. Their spiritual power was absolute.
Through an act of truth and the water of love, the Elder Ariyavamsa revived the King's dying elephant.



Trials of the Faith.

The Sangha survived violent purges. When a foreign king slaughtered thousands of monks and burned the sacred books, the Dhamma survived only through the hidden resilience of the Arahats.



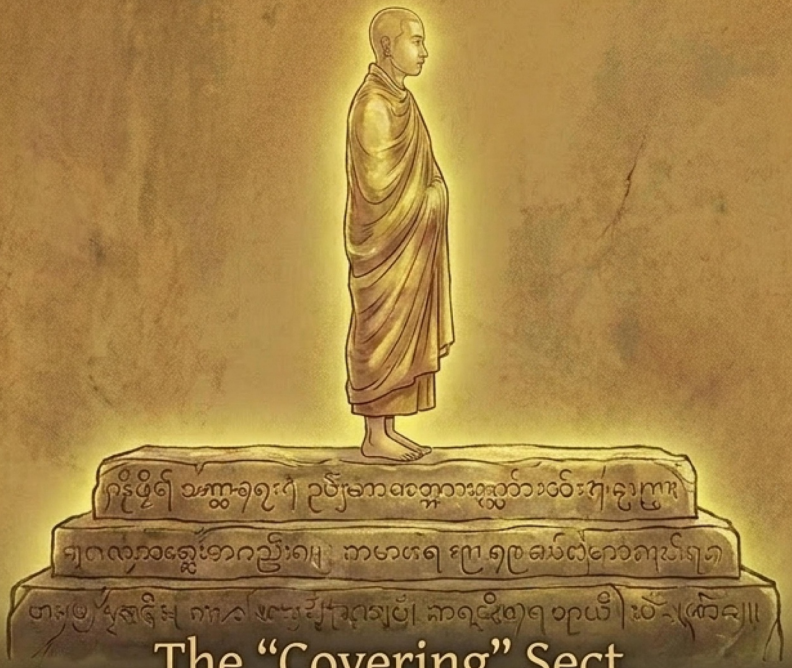
The Great Schism.

Peace brought a new threat: internal division. A fierce controversy erupted over a single, profound question: How should a novice wear their robes when entering a village?



The “One-Shoulder” Sect.

They exposed a shoulder, carried fans, and used sun-shades. They claimed their practice was an ancient tradition from Sri Lanka, but their views floated without a foundation.



The “Covering” Sect.

They entered villages fully covered. Their practice was firmly rooted. It was backed by the original texts, the commentaries, and the unbroken tradition of the Arahats.

	Covering နေင့်း Covering Sect (Fully Covered)	One-Shoulder နေင့်း One-Shoulder Sect (Exposed Shoulder)
အငင်း by original ဖြဒန် Backed by Original Texts	✓	✗
အငင်း by အခရိတ် Backed by Arahats	✓	✗
ခေျိဘေ to Vinaya Adheres to Vinaya	✓	✗

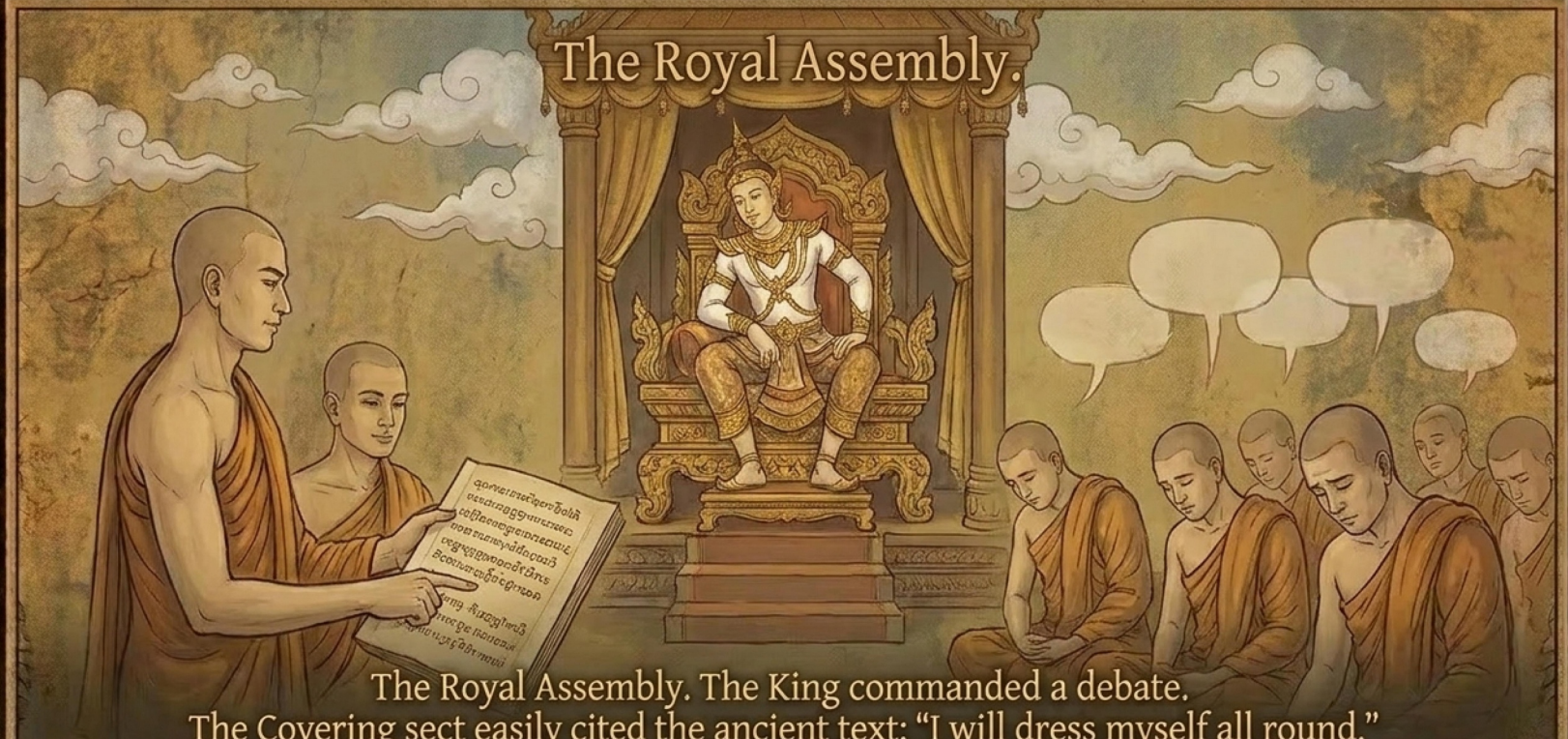
အန်မိုက်သေး အာဖြိင်း တုက်နောက်ဖေနှာ်၊. ရေသွက်အေသိုကောဘောိုပြူကြားတရည်။

Decades of stalemate paralyzed the Sangha. Successive kings failed to resolve the debate, lacking the textual mastery to separate truth from preference.

The Divine Warning.

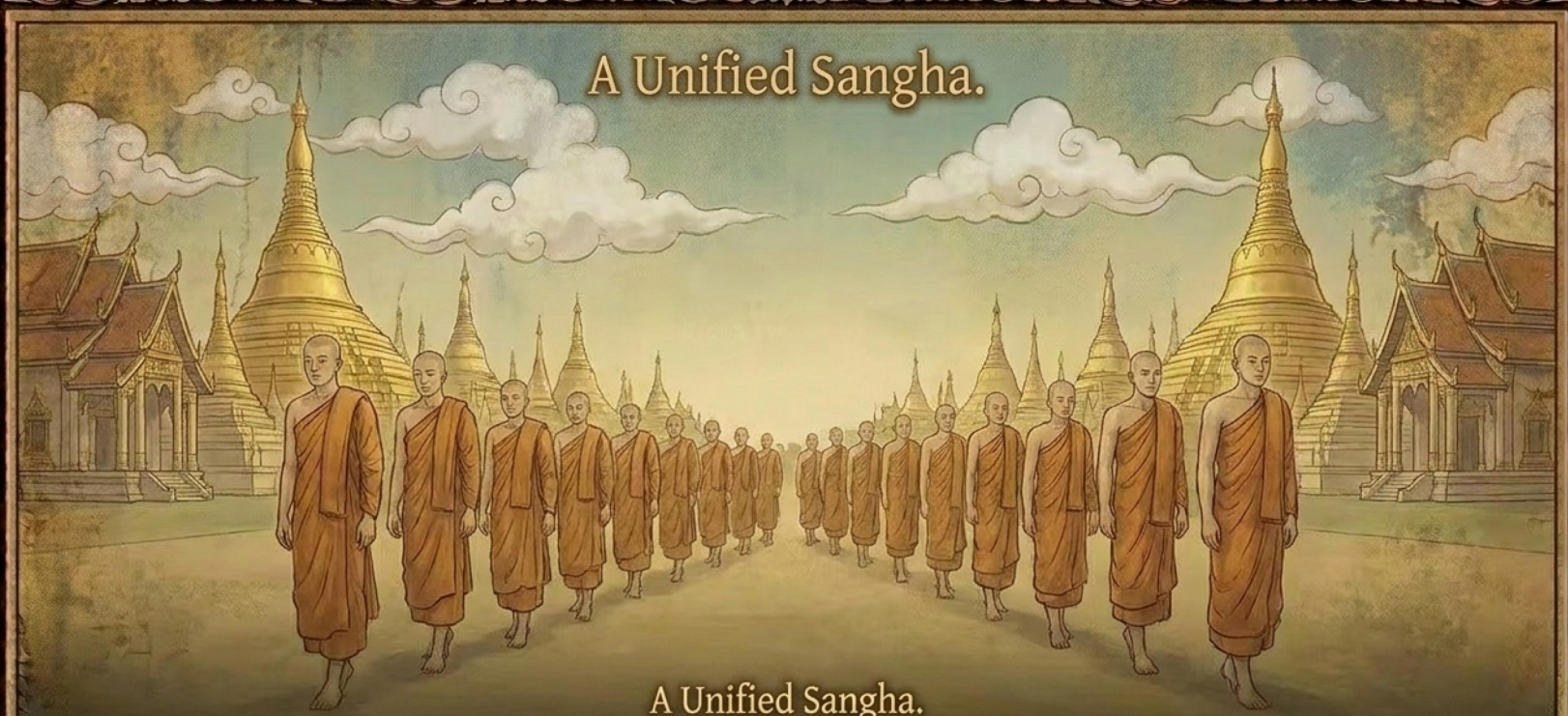


Sakka appeared in the King's dream, showing a sacred foot-shrine choked by intertwined weeds.
The weeds were false doctrines, untouched by former kings, demanding to be cleared.



The Royal Assembly. The King commanded a debate.
The Covering sect easily cited the ancient text: “I will dress myself all round.”
The One-Shoulder sect sat in total silence, unable to defend their baseless tradition.


The Final Decree.
With the truth revealed, the King issued his royal writ. All novices were ordered to enter villages fully covered. The false practices were swept away, and the Vinaya was restored.



A Unified Sangha.

The founding of Amarapura marked a new era. The religion was purified. Once again, the Crown and the Sangha stood united, preserving the true Dhamma for generations to come.



Sāsanavaṁsa

The Taming of Kasmira-Gandhara

The Journey of Elder Majjhantika and the Serpent-King.



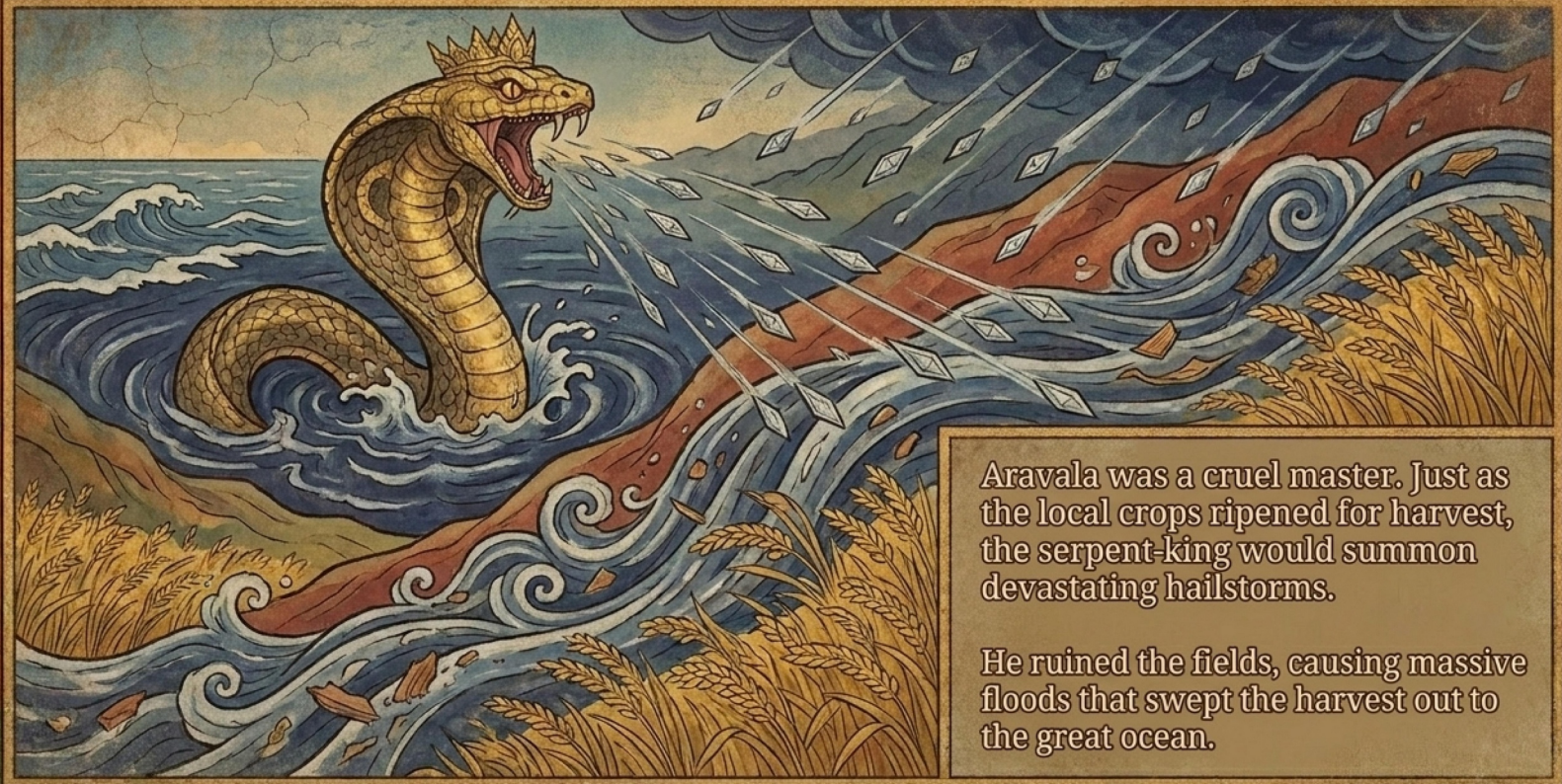
At the close of the Third Council, Elder Tissa dispatched Elder Majjhantika to the distant Kasmira-Gandhara country.

His great mission: to travel to this new realm and firmly establish the Buddhist religion there.

Kasmira-Gandhara lay near the borders of China. Here, the people lived in deep awe and fear of Aravala, a mighty serpent-king.

They worshipped him constantly, crafting serpent figures for their garments and vessels.





Aravala was a cruel master. Just as the local crops ripened for harvest, the serpent-king would summon devastating hailstorms.

He ruined the fields, causing massive floods that swept the harvest out to the great ocean.



Elder Majjhantika and four companions soared through the sky
from Pāṭaliputta to the Himalayas.

Arriving at the sacred lake, the Elder miraculously walked, stood, and rested
directly upon the surface of Aravala's waters.

Seeing this, young serpents rushed to their king.
“A shaven-headed man in yellow robes is spoiling our water!” they cried.

Overcome by blazing anger, Aravala emerged to confront the fearless intruder.





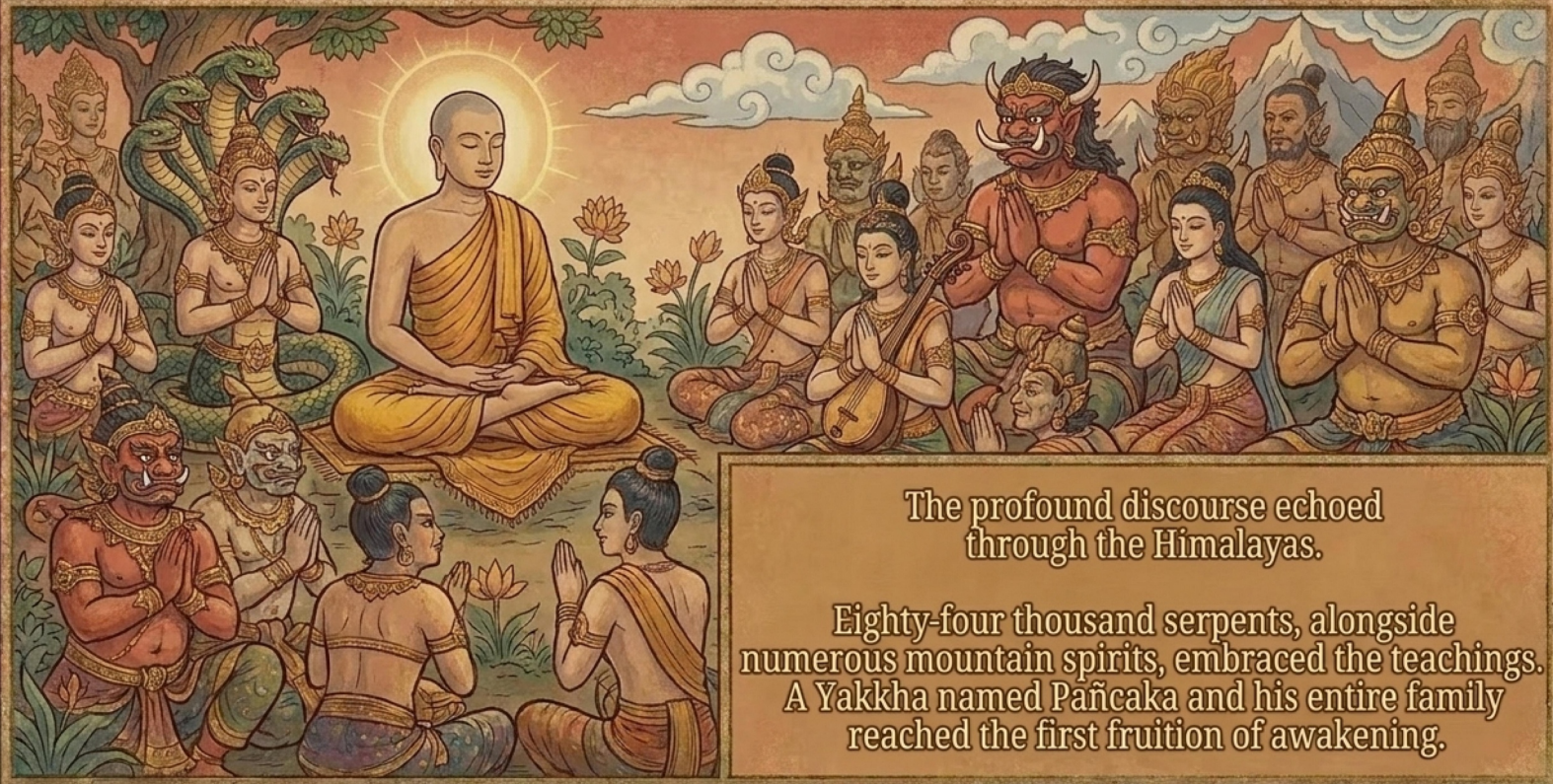
Aravala unleashed terrors: howling winds, falling mountains, and deafening thunder.

Yet, Majjhantika easily repelled them. He declared, "Even if you lift the whole earth and ocean, you cannot produce fear or dismay in me."

His terrible power rendered useless, the serpent-king grew sorrowful and powerless.

Seeing his despair, the Elder skillfully preached the Dhamma. He calmed the beast's heart, establishing him in the Three Refuges and Five Precepts.





The profound discourse echoed
through the Himalayas.

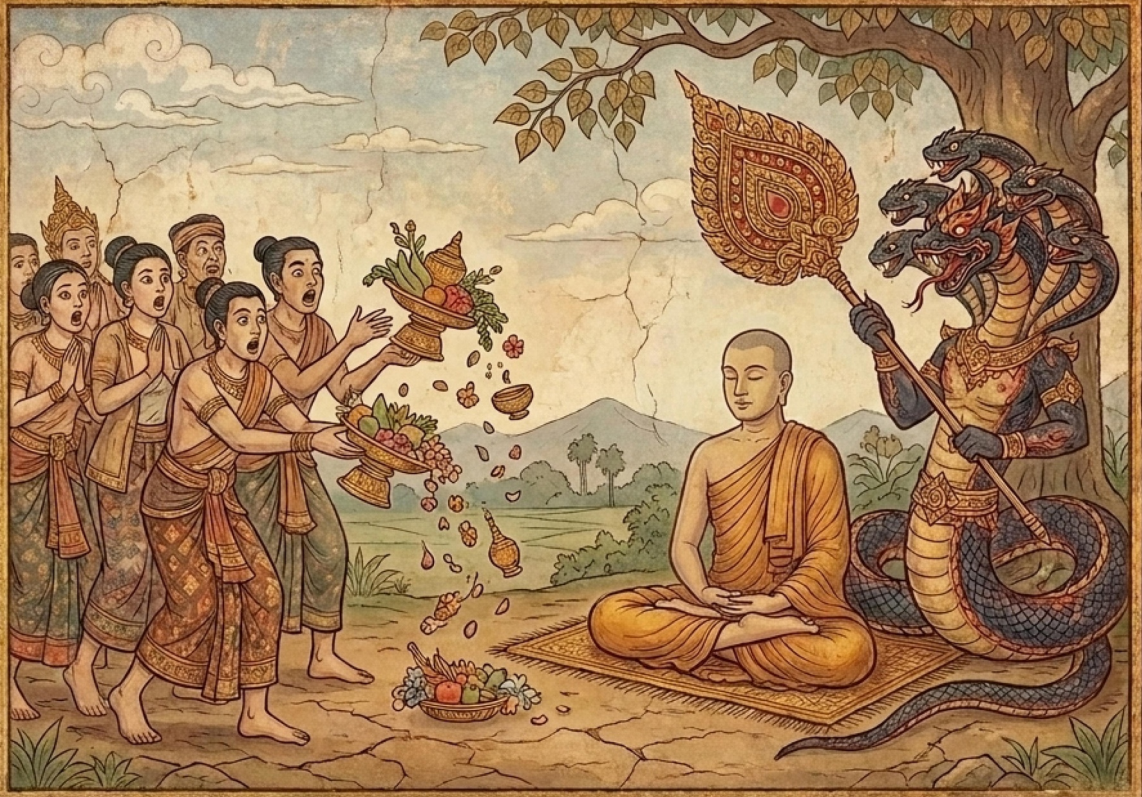
Eighty-four thousand serpents, alongside
numerous mountain spirits, embraced the teachings.
A Yakkha named Pañcaka and his entire family
reached the first fruition of awakening.

Majjhantika commanded the spirits: ‘Let go of anger.
Cease destroying the crops, for all beings desire happiness.
Show loving-kindness, and let humanity live in peace.’
The spirits bowed, regulating their lives as instructed.



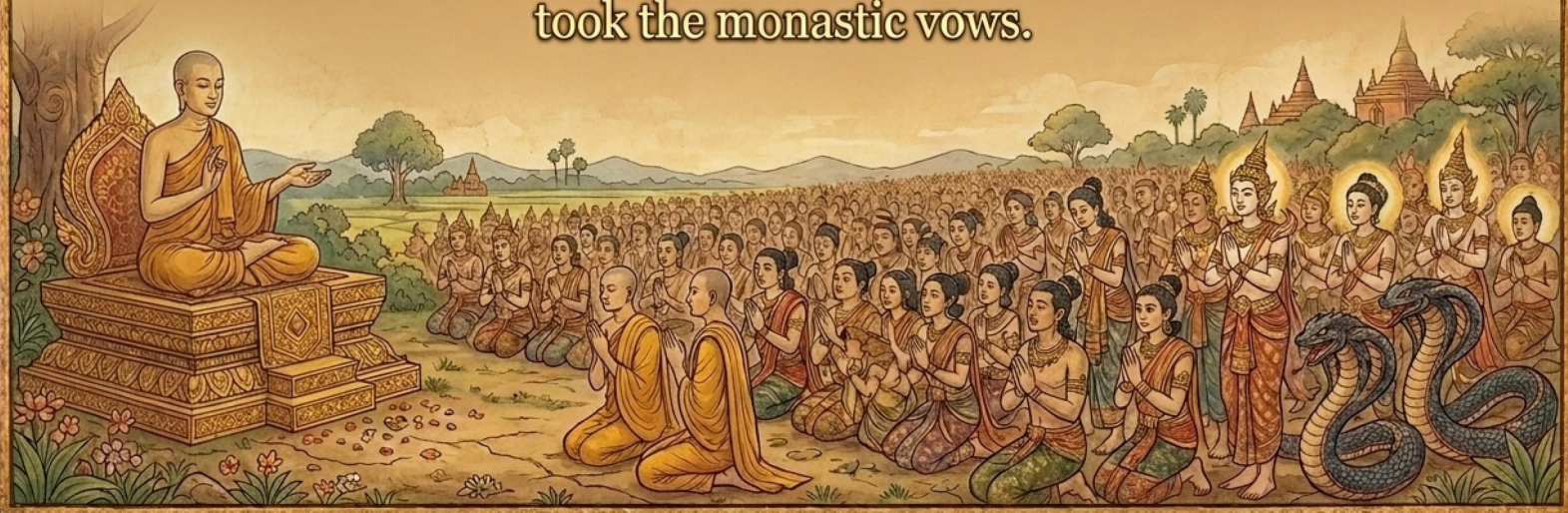
When the villagers arrived to appease the serpent, they witnessed a miracle.

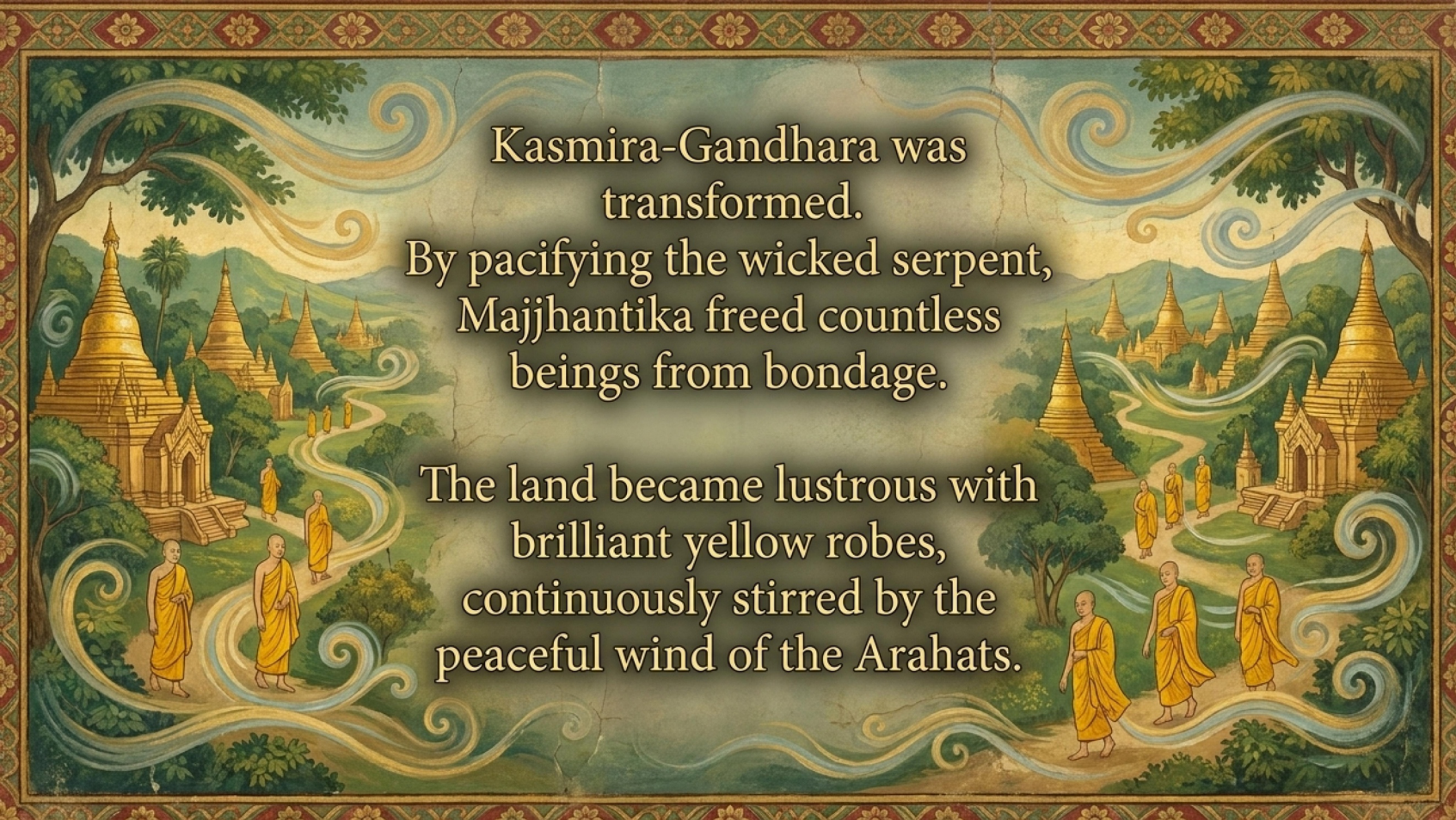
The terrifying Aravala stood humbly, fanning Elder Majjhantika. Realizing the monk possessed vastly superior power, the people sat down in deep reverence.

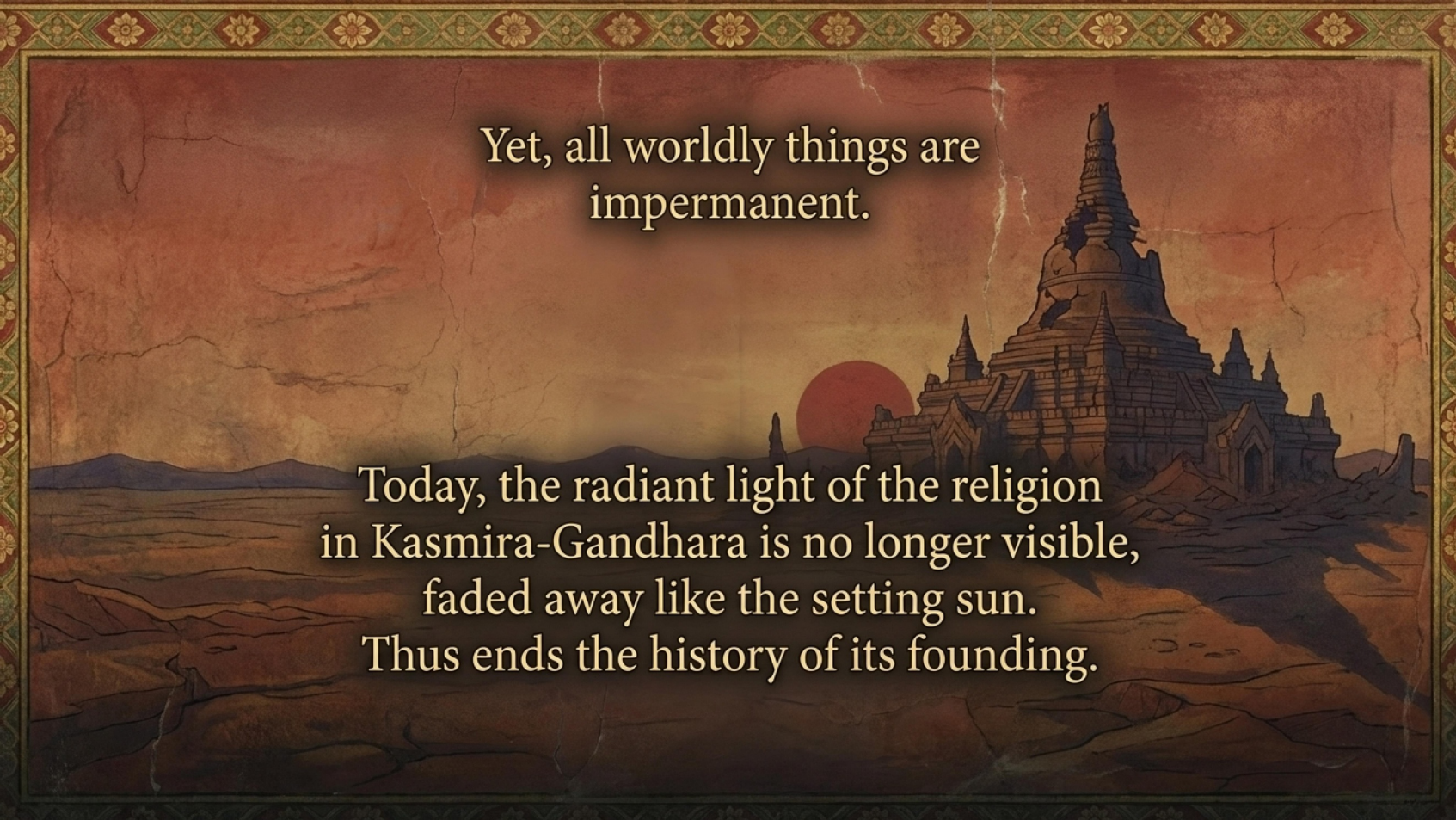


To the gathered multitudes, the Elder preached the Āsīvisopama Sutta.

The teachings penetrated their hearts. Eighty thousand beings were converted to the religion, and one hundred thousand clansmen took the monastic vows.




Kasmira-Gandhara was
transformed.
By pacifying the wicked serpent,
Majjhantika freed countless
beings from bondage.
The land became lustrous with
brilliant yellow robes,
continuously stirred by the
peaceful wind of the Arahats.


Yet, all worldly things are
impermanent.
Today, the radiant light of the religion
in Kasmira-Gandhara is no longer visible,
faded away like the setting sun.
Thus ends the history of its founding.



The Sāsanavaṁsa: The Great Expansion of the Religion



At the close of the Third Council, Elder Tissa dispatched great monks to bordering lands. His command: “Go to this country and establish the religion there.”



Elder Revata journeyed to the
Mahimsaka circle with five monks.
To free the people from bondage,
he preached the Devadūtasutta.



Forty thousand beings obtained the eye of wisdom and became Arahats. Yet today, the religion's radiance there is weak, like a sun covered by clouds.



Elder Dhammarakkhita journeyed to Mahārattha.
The people formerly made oblations to fire. To guide them,
he preached the Mahānāradakassapa Jātaka.



Eighty-four thousand beings attained the path. The people grew to deeply love Jātaka discourses, especially honoring the Vessantara Jātaka with abundant gifts.

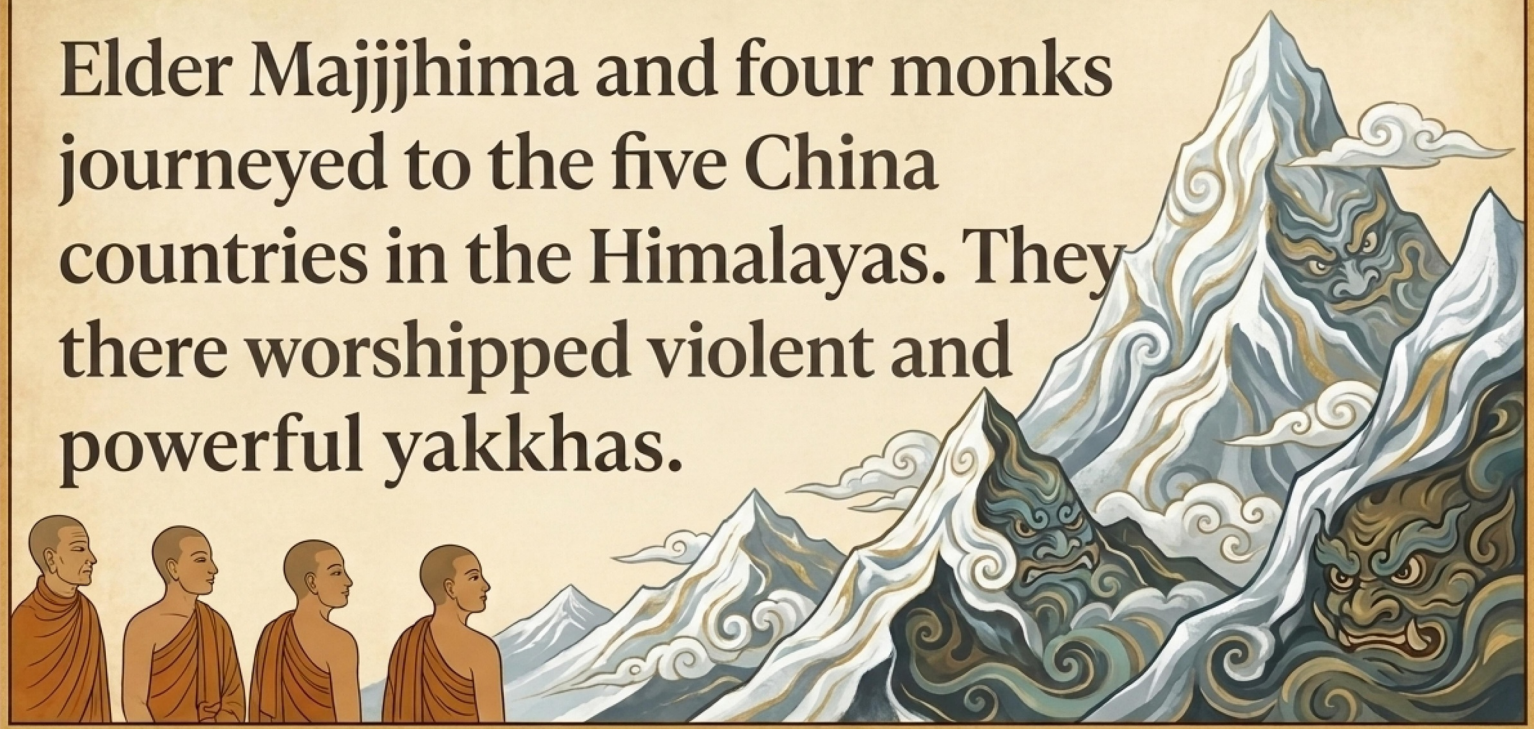


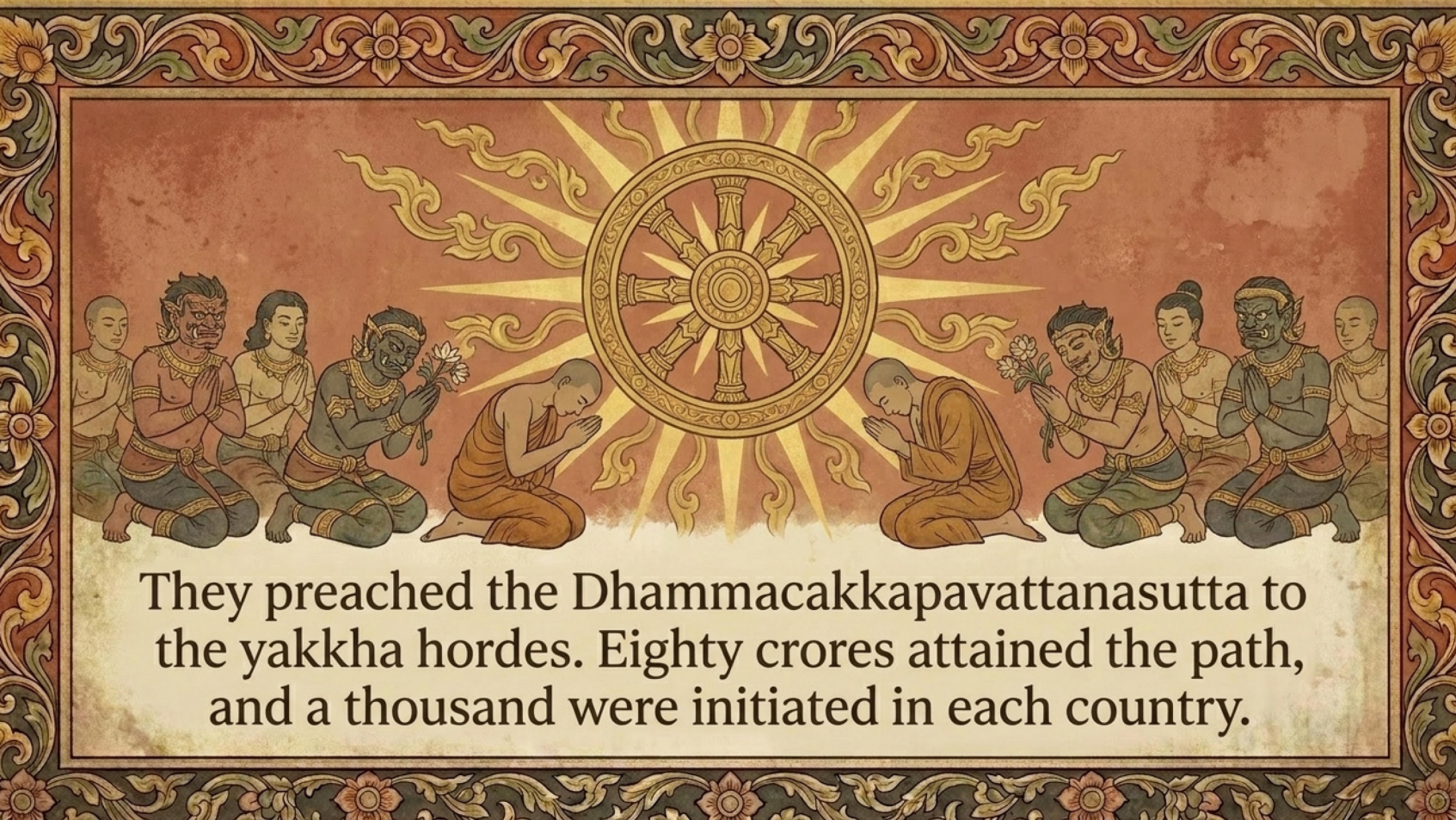
Mahārattha borders the Siyāma country. Elder Dhammarakkhita's teachings reached Siyāma, firmly establishing the religion. Later, monks traveled between Sri Lanka and Siyāma to nurture the faith.



In the year 2290, King Kittisirirājasiha of Sri Lanka requested monks. Elder Upāli traveled to the island, establishing the famous Upāli lineage in two great divisions.

Elder Majjjhima and four monks journeyed to the five China countries in the Himalayas. They there worshipped violent and powerful yakkhas.





They preached the Dhammacakkapavattanasutta to the yakkha hordes. Eighty crores attained the path, and a thousand were initiated in each country.



Despite massive conversions, the religion remained weak and unfixed in Cīna. Today, it survives only as a shadow, like a cloud scattered by the wind.

Region	Key Discourse	Lasting Impact
Mahimsaka:	Devadūtasutta	Weak (Clouded Sun)
Mahārattha:	Jātakas	Firm (Spread to Siyāma)
Cīna:	Dhammacakka	Weak (Scattered Cloud)



In the year 1223, the monk Paññāsāmi completed this text, the *Sāsanavaṁsappadīpikā*. Entreated by monks of Sri Lanka, he wrote it to ensure the Good Faith lasts forever.