Chapter – III

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The Jātaka

(Stories of the Lives of the Buddha)

A Jātaka is a story about the repeated births (jātī) of the Bodhisattva, the being destined to the present Buddha in his final birth. These are the stories that tells about the previous lives of the Buddha, in both human and animal form. The tales comprise one of the largest and old collection of stories in the world. The earliest sections, the verses are the earliest part of the Pali tradition and dated from the 5th Century BCE. The later part of the stories were incorporated up to 3rd Century CE. Buddha often cited examples from his past lives in order to explain the right conduct to his disciples. Since he told the stories according to a given situation, there was never a sequence to these stories.¹

The Pali Jātakas are the 10th book of the Khuddaka Nikāya of the Sutta pitaka. They had attained popularity among the students of religion and culture on account of their noble contents, apart from furnishing valuable information on the social, political and religious life of the people in ancient India. It is interesting to note that each story opens with a preface which describes the circumstances in the life of the Buddha which led him to tell the story of his past lives. The Jātaka stories depict the long series of encounters in life faced by the Enlightened One in his previous lives when he existed as a Bodhisattva. At the end of every story there is a brief summary in which the Buddha identifies the different persons in the story.²

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The overall purpose of the Pali Jātakas is to show how the Buddha lived many lives with the goal of realizing enlightenment. The Buddha was born and reborn in the forms of humans, animals. In Theravada Buddhism, the Jātakas are a textual division of the Pali Canon, included in the Khuddaka Nikāya of the Sutta Piṭaka. The term Jātaka may also refer to a traditional commentary on this book.

**History**

The Jātakas were originally amongst the earliest Buddhist literature, with metrical analysis methods dating their average contents to around the 4th century BCE. The Mahāsāṅghika Cātikā sects from the Āndhra region took the Jātakas as canonical literature, and are known to have rejected some of the Theravada Jātakas which dated past the time of King Aśoka. The Cātikās claimed that their own Jātakas represented the original collection before the Buddhist tradition split into various lineages.

According to A.K. Warder, the Jātakas are the precursors to the various legendary biographies of the Buddha, which were composed at later dates. Although many Jātakas were written from an early period, which describe previous lives of the Buddha, very little biographical material about Gautama's own life has been recorded.

As of today, a total of 547 Jātakas are in existence. But there are indications that the actual number of Jātakas could be more. The Pettieik Pagoda at Pagan has representation of at least 550 Jātakas. Some scholars believe that the latter figure could be due to the human tendency of rounding off figures. But popular belief is that the actual number was indeed 550 and the remaining three have been lost.

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3. Barbara O'Brein, *The Jātaka Tales stories of the lives of the Buddha* p. 3
Origin

The Jātaka narratives rose from the oral literature of Madhyadeśa (the "middle country") coinciding with the areas of Harayana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Some of the tales are also found in a modified version in the Pañcatantara, Kathāsaritsāgara, etc. while in some other cases they have parallels in the Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, Purāṇas and a few episodes mentioned in the religious literature of Jainism. The Northern Indian flavour of the Jātaka tales is evident. Many Jātakas occur in the Mahāvastu in prose as well as in verse written in mixed Sanskrit. A careful study of the Jātakas shows that the stories are highly edifying and have various purpose to serve. However, the proto-Mahāyāna schools like Sarvāstivādin Buddhists also added certain sacred episodes based on earlier traditions called "Avadānas" which are also represented in arts. Yet, the Jātakas never lost their significance. According to Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra, Buddha himself admitted that he had been utilizing sutras, gāthās and Jātakas to highlight his teachings. ⁶

The Jātaka stories come from multiple sources and have a multitude of authors. Like other Buddhist literature, the many stories can be divided into "Theravāda" and "Mahāyāna" canons.

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The Theravada Jātaka Tales

The oldest and largest collection of Jātaka Tales is in the Pali Canon. They are found in the Sutta-piṭaka ("basket of sutras") part of the canon, in a section called the Khuddaka Nikāya, and they are presented there as the record of the Buddha's past lives. Some alternative versions of the same stories are scattered about in other parts of the Pali Canon.

The Khuddaka Nikāya contains 547 verses arranged in order of length, shortest to longest. The stories are found in commentaries to the verses. The "final" collection as we know it today was compiled about 500 CE, somewhere in Southeast Asia, by unknown editors. 7

The Mahayana Jātaka Tales

The Mahāyāna Jātaka stories are also called the "apocryphal" Jātakas, indicating they come from unknown origins outside the standard collection (the Pali Canon). These stories, usually in Sanskrit, were written over the centuries by many authors.

One of the best known collections of these "apocryphal" works does have a known origin. The Jātakamālā ("garland of Jātakas"; also called the Bodhisattvāvadānamāla) probably was composed in the 3rd or 4th century CE. The Jātakamālā contains 34 Jātakas written by Arya Sura (sometimes spelled Āryasūra). The stories in the Jātakamālā focus on the perfections, especially those of generosity, morality, and patience.

Although he is remembered as a skillful and elegant writer, little is known about Āryasūra. One old text preserved at the University of Tokyo says he was the son of a king who renounced his inheritance to become a monk, but whether that is true or a fanciful invention no one can say.

Contents

The Theravada Jātakas comprise 547 poems, arranged roughly by increasing number of verses. According to Professor von Hinüber, only the last 50 were intended to be intelligible by themselves, without commentary. The commentary gives stories in prose that it claims provide the context for the verses, and it is these stories that are of interest to folklorists. Alternative versions of some of the stories can be found in another book of the Pali Canon, the Cariyapitaka, and a number of individual stories can be found scattered around other books of the Canon. Many of the stories and motifs found in the Jātaka such as the Rabbit in the Moon of the Śasajātaka (Jātaka Tales: no.316), are found in numerous other languages and media. For example, The Monkey and the Crocodile, The Turtle Who Couldn't Stop Talking and The Crab and the Crane that are listed below also famously feature in the Hindu Pañcatantra, the Sanskrit Nīti Śāstra that ubiquitously influenced world literature. Many of the stories and motifs being translations from the Pali but others are instead derived from vernacular oral traditions prior to the Pali compositions.

Jātakas tales embody the ethical system of Buddha's insights into the natural laws that govern all existence. They form a cosmos of wisdom by themselves. At the heart of these stories lies the law of kamma (karma- skt) which states, according to Buddhist philosophy, that every being becomes what he makes himself. kamma, here, does not stand just a synonym for action. It includes all the causal connections between actions and their consequences.

The Buddha revealed the inner complexities of kamma’s workings, and pointed out that one can, change the course of one’s life, by understanding the nature of karma. He also taught that karma does not unfold in a simple manner with a single cause giving rise directly to a specific effect. The good do not always immediately prosper and the evil do not immediately pay for their sins. Yet, over many lifetimes, every one gets what he deserves. The Bodhisattva too achieved Buddhahood after he had accumulated enough good karmas over a period of many births. 10

Thus Bodhisattva as depicted in the Jātakas was in aspirant after knowledge who wanted to rise through a chain of good deeds and virtuous living to the exalted status of Buddhahood. The original concept of the Jātakas support the belief in rebirth and the principle of kamma. Despite their Buddhist affiliation, the genesis of the Jātaka stories is shrouded in obscurity. No doubt, they were reduced to writing (in Pali) of a much later date after the passing away of Buddha, but they seem to have been a part of India’s archaic oral tradition which was presented in a Buddhist context with necessary modifications in the early historical periods. The evidence preserved in early Buddhist art of Bharhut and Amarāvati reliefs and other sites shows that by about the second century B.C., their narrative forms were more or less standardized. The Jātaka stories in Bharhut reliefs bear inscribed captions probably with a view to educate those Buddhist worshippers who were visiting the sacred sites, urging them to follow the righteous path. The Jātakas are numerous, nearly 500 or so referring to significant events relating to the lives of the Bodhisattvas constructively preparing for a higher goal leading to perfection of knowledge. 11

The Jātaka Tales in Practice and Literature

Through the centuries these stories have been much more than fairy tales. They were, and are, taken very seriously for their moral and spiritual teachings. Like all great myths, the stories are as much about ourselves as they are about the Buddha.

As Joseph Campbell said, "Shakespeare said that art is a mirror held up to nature. And that's what it is. The nature is your nature, and all of these wonderful poetic images of mythology are referring to something in you." ¹²

These stories exercised a great moral influence on the people, establishing a firm conviction that merit would result from performing virtuous acts of courage, liberality, fortitude, nobleness and self sacrifice. ¹³

The Jātaka Tales are portrayed in dramas and dance. The Ajanta Cave paintings of Maharashtra, India (ca. 6th century CE) portray Jātaka Tales in narrative order, so that people walking through the caves would learn the stories.

**Jātakas in World Literature (Sculptures and Paintings)**

The popular Buddhism that is embedded in Jātakas still lies at the heart of living tradition. Countless people in Buddhist countries such as Myanmar, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Cambodia have grown up with tales as the main source of teaching anecdote and imaginative background. They are depicted in early stone relief and paintings at Ajanta, Bharhut and Sanchi in India, at Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and in Abhayagiri and paintings in and around Kandy, in Sri Lanka. The stories of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva at one stage were extremely popular in Indonesia as exemplified in the first 135 sculptures at Balushade (top series) in the first gallery of Borobudur temple in Java. ¹⁴

These stories were translated by the Greeks, Persians, Jews, and Arabs, and they traveled across the world. Aesop’s animal fables, for example, are likely primarily Indian in origin. Because the stories are largely optimistic and have happy endings, they also have been a rich source of fairy-tales for children.

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¹²:"Joseph Campbell: with Bill Moyers The Power of Myth,"PBS
¹⁴. Saw, Sarah. *Jātakas, Birth stories of the Bodhisattva* p. 2
Many of the Jātakas bear a striking resemblance to stories long familiar in the West. For example, the story of Chicken Little -- the frightened chicken who thought the sky was falling is essentially the same story as one of the Pali Jātakas (Jātaka 322), in which a frightened monkey thought the sky was falling. As the forest animals scatter in terror, a wise lion discerns the truth and restores order.  

The famous fable about the goose that laid golden eggs is similar to Pali Jātaka 136, in which a deceased man was reborn as a goose with gold feathers. He went to his former home to find his wife and children of his past life. The goose told the family that they could pluck one gold feather a day, and the gold provided well for the family. But the wife became greedy and plucked all the feathers out at a stretch. When the feathers grew back, they were ordinary goose feathers, and the goose flew away.

It can be attributed that Aesop and other early storytellers had copies of the Jātakas handy. And it's unlikely that the monks and scholars who compiled the Pali Canon more than 2,000 years ago ever heard of Aesop. Perhaps the stories were spread by ancient travelers. Perhaps they were built from fragments of the first human stories, told by our paleolithic ancestors. The Jātakas unfold, with great artistry and convincing power, the entire panorama of ancient Indian life, laden with scenarios of passion and compassion, wickedness and benevolence, reward and punishment, life and death, beyond her boundaries to enliven and enrich the art and culture of the country that There is also a fluent sculpturing of the Jātaka tales for the sheer delight of story-telling which has indeed emigrated from India far adopted it. The Jātaka stories became a favorite subject with artists in ancient India, Ceylon, Central Asia, China, Nepal and Tibet.

16. *Ibid*
17. Joshi M.C. & Banerjee R *op. cit.* p.1
Jātaka on Monuments

Jātaka stories adorn many ancient Indian monuments including Bharhut and Sanchi during second and first century BC, in Amarāvati and Goli during 2nd and 3rd century A.D., and also in the caves of Ajanta from 2nd century B.C. to fifth century AD and else where during the later periods. The Chinese pilgrim, Fahien, while visiting Ceylon around AD 412 saw at Abhayagiri depictions of the 500 various presentations of the Bodhisattva during his various births. Xuanzang, another Chinese pilgrim of the 7th century, mentioned stūpas erected in honour of the Bodhisattva whose deeds were related in the Jātakas. We now take up four Jātaka stories and discuss their places in Indian and Chinese art. Painted parallels of Ajanta Jātaka scenes are available in the Chinese Central Asian art especially at Dunhuang, Kizil, Miran, etc. bringing out various adaptations of original Indian Jātaka stories in localized versions.  

In the murals of Ajanta presently, nearly twenty five Jātaka stories have been found painted in addition to two Avadānas. A few Jātakas like Sāma,. Sibi, Hamsa and Śaḍḍanta Jātakas have been painted in more than two caves. To some extent the painter had followed Āryasura in regard to Jātakas like Visvantara, Sibi, Matsya, Hamsa, Ruru, Kapi, Khānti, etc. but with modifications whenever required.

The Sibi Jātaka in cave No.1 follows the archaic Brahmanical (Mahābhārata) version while its depiction in cave No.17 remains faithful to Jātakamālā with certain additions of details to highlight the story. The portrayal of Sāma and Śaḍḍanta Jātakas in cave No.10 (dated 2nd/1st century B.C.) follows the Pali version, so also are the paintings of most of other Jātaka stories in later caves of the 5th century A.D. yet it is evident that the artists who created these Jātaka painting had also drawn inspiration from other available sources of information as well as their own imagination.

18. Joshi M.C. & Banerjee R op. cit. p.1
It is worth mentioning that in eastern Central Asia the artists worked at Kizil seem to have drawn inspiration from the art of Ajanta especially in the case of the representation of the Jātakas and Avadānas. Scholars have invited our attention to the fact that many of the Jātakas and Avadānas depicted in Kizil correspond to those painted in Ajanta, like Mahisha Jātaka, Visvantara Jātaka, the Sibi Jātaka, the Vanara or Kapi Jātaka, the Hasti Jātaka, the Pūrṇa Avadāṇa, and Sāma, etc. There is however, some difference in the mode of delineation of the Jātakas, in Ajanta and Kizil. While at Ajanta mostly the stories are depicted in various scenes in spatial arrangement according to the different settings of the Jātakas, in Kizil only the most dramatic part of the story is generally delineated. There are however some exceptions in illustrating only the central idea of Jātaka. 20

The popularity of the Jātakas can be sensed from the fact that they have been represented in almost all the significant Buddhist structures. Depictions of the Jātaka can be seen in Madhya Pradesh, Nagārjunakoṇḍa at Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh, the shrines at Sanchi and Amravati, Goli in Andhra Pradesh, Nalanda and Mathura, Boro-Budur in Java, and of Sukhodaya in Siam, Pagan in Burma.

Avadānas

Meaning of the word Avadāna

"An avadāna is a tale in which the heroism or other virtue of a living character is explained by the Buddha as the result of a good deed performed in a previous existence" The compound ‘avadāna’ means good, noble, illustrious or heroic act.

Max Muller, an authority on Vedic literature, observes in his translation of the Dhammapada that the word ‘Avadānas’ is derived from a legend. Originally a pure

and virtuous act, afterwards a sacred story, and possibly a story, the hearing of which purifies the mind.  

A section of Buddhist literature is called ‘Avadána’ because it deals with the tales pertaining to the noble deeds either of the Buddha or any of the disciples. These tales do not contain deep philosophical views. They simply intended to propagate the good law to the masses and bring them home to accept the law and support the Sanga. It was through the active support of the laity that the Sangha could get the indispensable requisites of daily life. The list of these indispensable goods is very often found in the Avadánas literature in the following way (i.e. cloth, food, bed, seat and medicines etc.) Thus the object of these tales was to popularize Buddhism and get active support of the masses. 

In the Buddhist traditions Avadána is the name of a particular type of literature which narrates the stories pertaining to the illustrious actions of either the Buddha or any of his followers. This type of literature does not be belong to the higher religious literature of Buddhism as it does not contain some deep philosophical views. Its main purpose seems to be the depiction of moral principles through interesting stories. It aimed at preaching the good law of Buddhism to the common people by presenting before them the main facets of Buddhism through the medium of interesting and edifying stories. This type of literature was important for its excellent propaganda material. Different motifs and symbols have been employed to achieve this end.

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21. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, Buddhist Avadanas (socio-political Economic and cultural study) p. 5
22. ibid op cit p. 7
23. Ibid Preface
The word *Avadāna* signifies a great religious or moral achievement, as well as the history of a great achievement. Such a great act may consist in sacrifice of one’s own life, but also may be confined to the founding of an institution for the supply of incense, flowers, gold and jewels to, or the building of, sanctuaries - *stūpas, caityas*, and so forth. Since these stories as a rule are designed to inculcate that dark deeds bear dark fruits, white acts beget fair fruit, they are at the same time tales of *karma* which demonstrate how the actions of one life are intimately connected with those in the past or future existences. They are to be regarded as legends only from our modern standpoint. To the Buddhist they are actualities. They have indeed been related by the Buddha himself and are warranted to be the words of the Buddha - *Buddhavacana* - like a *Sūtra*.  

**Origin**

In order to make the people interested in Buddhism the Theravādins incorporated in their doctrines the concept of the Bodhisattva and the practice of the Pāramitas. The result was that the new literature, the Jātakas and the Avadānās, came into being. With the introduction of this type of literature they intended to show how the devotees sacrificed everything for the performance of some pāramita or some virtuous deed. It is an accepted fact that any doctrine of morality when taught in a straightforward manner, does not carry much weight. It becomes more acceptable when it is presented in an interesting way. Likewise it seems that the Law of Karma was emphasized by the Buddhist scholars through the medium of tales. These tales dealt with the endless theme of the fruits of human actions. It showed how a man, who performed noble deed, got appropriate reward and one, who did not, did not get any of the kind. Thus indirectly it emphasized that the people, too, should perform noble deeds in order to get rewards and should not indulge in wrong deeds in order to get rewards and should not indulge in wrong deeds which certainly lead to

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24. Nariman Gushtaspshah Kaikhushro, *Literary history of Sanskrit Buddhis (from Winterhitz, Sylvain Levi, Heiber)* Ch. 6
undesirable result. Thus through the medium of these tales the Buddhist scholars tried to preach the people the Law of Karma by presenting before them the examples of these tales.  

Central theme, morals and motifs of the Avadānasass

“The mention of the saññ-pāramita, the fulfillment of which is compulsory for the Bodhisattvas, is frequently found in the works of both are responsible for the growth of the large mass of Avadānas literature, the central theme of which is the fulfillment of the pāramitas”

Like other Buddhist Sanskrit works, the Avadānas literature also has attached “the greatest importance to the pāramitas, which distinguish the bodhisattvas from the inferior arhats and pratyeka buddhas. These latter are regarded as representatives of merely negative ethical ideals, while the pāramitas are put forward as a scheme of positive moral development.” In this formula of pāramitas the latter Buddhists had combined “the social virtues of a righteous layman householder with the ascetic ideals of meditative monks.” Thus they provided a bridge in the form of these pāramitas between the two i.e. popular and monastic Buddhism. It was “not only to inspire faith, but also to encourage people in the performance of dana, sila, kṣānti, vīrya, dhyāna and prajñā that they invented story after story and associated them not only with the life of Buddha but also with the lives of persons who attained prominence in the history of the Buddhist faith.” A number of instances can be quoted from the pages of the Avadānas literature which, directly or indirectly, reveal their stress upon the performance of the six pāramitas.

25. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op. cit. p. 8
26. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op. cit p. 13
Original Sources of the Avadānas

When we go back to the original sources of the Avadānas, we are reminded of the Punyakathā and the Punyavi pakakatha which according to Kanga Takahata, may be taken as the sources to the Avadānas stories. Referring to the development of the Avadānas from these early Buddhist types of stories, he holds, “there exist instances of Avadānas being called alternatively ‘Kathā’ and, since they are normally stories developed stage by stage describing acts of worship, such as alms-giving or offering to the Buddha and the fruit borne by the merit thus acquired throughout past and subsequent existences, I think it not inappropriate to fit them in here. Looked at in this light, the Avadānas literature is a development from the early Buddhist types of stories concerning such matters as alms-giving, the moral precepts and the heavens into which human beings may be reborn .. . .” 27

Those stories generally related to the glorious deeds of the Bodhisattvas “who offered their body as food to a famished tigress, their eyes, their flesh and blood, their head to those who pretended to be in need of these, who gave away wife and children to a begging brāhmaṇa etc.” But the common people could not be made familiar with the glorious deeds of the world-famed heroes (Bodhisattvas); They could not understand what the great hero had done they too could do. So there was a need for something humbler i.e. the glorious deeds of some ordinary humans with whom the common folk could make identity. The Avadānas literature served this purpose because in these stories the Bodhisattva was not necessarily a hero.

Any saint could play the part of a hero in these Avadānas, Besides the glorious deeds such as offering gifts to the Sangha, paying homage to the lord and his ardent followers by offering incense, flowers, silver, jewels, honouring of stūpas and caityas, the performance of which brought glorious results, some wicked deeds

27. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op.cit. p. 18
such as non-practice of charity, abusing and disrespecting the Lord and his disciples etc., which certainly brought wicked results, were also given expression in the Avadānas. Theoretical and idealistic descriptions of all good and no evil generally become incredible and hence without desired impact. So in order to fulfill the purpose of inculcating religious precepts and laying down moral and life-regulating ideals under the guise of tale-telling the Avadānas type of literature was introduced.

Since the Avadānas try to inculcate among the masses the moral qualities of love, charity, compassion, piety etc., so they are important for their moral values. In addition to moral values these Avadānas have historical importance also as they reflect the contemporary culture. The Avadānas have contributed to the themes of sculptures and paintings, Reading, writing, painting and carving the events narrated in the Avadānas was considered of great religious merit, which resulted in many sculptures, only some of which are presented to us at Sanchi and Bharhut.

Many popular stories which originated in non-Buddhist context were incorporated and given Buddhistic appearance in the Avadānas, In this way they can also be said to possess value for the history of Indian Literature. 28

All these proofs bear testimony to the fact that the Avadānas literature contains many elements of Mahayana Buddhism which shows that either the Sarvāstivādins, who composed these books, were not very much conservatives or these books are a composite work of both i.e. Sarvāstivādins and Mahāyanists. The second probability offers some clue about its date. It seems that these books were composed and compiled at the time when it was a transition period from Theravada to Mahayana. The reference to the existence of a class of monks called Bodhisattva at the time of Kaniṣṭha’s court is also significant, for we read in the Divyāvadānas of his existence of monks called Bodhisattva Jātika along with a hint that they were not

28. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op.cit.p.20
looked upon with favour by the Hinayānists. This shows that some class of monks (Mahayanists) other than the existing ones (Hinayanists) was cropping forth. 29

Comparison of Avadānas and Jātaka

The Buddhist Jātaka tales or Birth stories of the Buddha also have been a source of inspiration for later story-tellers. The Jātakas can rightly be acclaimed as the forerunners of the Avadānas. The Jātakas and the Avadānas are closely related to each other, and this close relation between the two is well set up by J. S. Speyer in his Preface to the Avadānas Jātaka, edited by him. There he writes, “The Avadānas type is nearly related to the Jātakas. Both concern edifying tales told with the purpose of inculcating moral precepts as taught by the Saddharma revealed by the Buddhas” J. J. Jones also held the view that the Avadānass were “not unlike in their nature to Jātakas which were first fashioned by Theravādins.” 30

The difference between the two consists in this, that in a Jātaka the Bodhisattva is always either the hero or one of the characters occurring in the story, while any saint may play a part in an Avadānas. But there are many Avadānas in which the Bodhisattva is the hero. These are called the Bodhisattvāvadānāmālā and may as well as called Jātakas. 31

Almost all the Avadānass and Jātakas are marked by a happy ending i.e. that of attaining Arhathood, taking birth into Tusita heaven etc. It is because of the fact that the Buddhists wanted to stress the idea that virtue is always rewarded. Thus they intended to inspire the listeners to perform virtuous deeds.

Supernatural element is found in almost all the Avadānas and Jātakas. The main purpose of these Avadānass was to edify the reader or listener by presenting

29. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op.cit.pg 22
30. Ibid p 9
31. Ibid p. 10
Some of the Avadānass, such as KunalAvadānas, VitasokAvadānas, AsokAvadānas, Sudhanakumar Avadānas, MaittrakanyakAvadānas etc. have their own peculiar way of beginning the text. All the Avadānas, compiled in the Avadāna-Kalpalata, start with some stanza praising the virtues of the Lord. 33

As regards the story of the present some story is told by either the Lord or any other person (in most of the cases it is the Lord who tells). In this section some special significant attribution of a person is mentioned.

Then the monks enquire the Lord what good deed that fellow had done in his previous life that he was gifted with that attribution? Then the Lord related the story of the previous life of that character and explained the deed by which he got such an attribution. In some of the Avadānass there is no story of the past, Instead of it a prediction is given.

4 Then follows the identification of the characters.
5 And finally comes the moral of the story.

The fruit of quite black deed is quite black, that of quite white is quite white and of mixed is mixed. Hence one should perform the white deeds only shunning out the black or mixed ones. 34

The Jātaka tales always begin with an incident in the life of the Buddha, usually a sermon he is giving which he illustrates with a story from one of his previous lives. After the tale is told he often indicates who were the other characters in the story of their previous existence. In this way the law of karma, or the consequences of actions, is illustrated, and the deep patterns of different souls can be seen. The Buddha, who is referred to as the Bodhisattva in the stories since he is then a future Buddha, is usually the most heroic and wisest character. He is often an animal or a tree spirit and is frequently the leader of his group. 35

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33. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op. cit. p. 23.
34. Ibid p. 24
35. Barbara O’Brien – The Jātaka Tales - Stories of the lives of the Buddha.p.2
Each story ends with a moral illustrating the Buddhist ideal of Dharma and self sacrifice in diverse forms. The tradition avers that these stories were narrated by Buddha himself during the course of his sermons to drive home the message that by constant practice of virtuous deeds or Pāramita (the highest virtue) one reaches the status of "Enlightened One". In these tales, the pre-Enlightened Buddha was designated as the "Bodhisattva" - a lay creature on the path of Enlightenment, in the form of a human being, or animal, birds, fish etc.

Some of the Avadānas betray the above-mentioned standard of the Avadānas. There we find so many episodes interwoven within the framework of one Avadāna. As in the Pamsupradan Avadānas the episode of Upagupta, Vasavadatta, Mara, King Asoka's childhood, his cruelty in youth, the episode of Canda-Girika and then Asoka's conversion into Dharmasoka-all these incidents are stated in one Avadāna.

The Jātakamālā is also called Bodhisattva Avadānamālā, for Bodhisattva Avadāna is synonymous with Jātaka. The Jātakas are consequently nothing but Avadānas having the Bodhisattva for their hero. Consequently works like the Sūtrālāṁkāra and the Jātakamālā have much in common with the texts of the Avadāna literature. On the other hand numerous Jātakas are to be found in the collections of Avadānas. 36 Like both books of Buddhist story literature, the avadāna texts also stand, so to say, with one foot in the Hinayāna and the other in the Mahāyāna literature. And I- tsing lets us know that the line of demarcation between the Hinayāna and the Mahāyāna was often anything but rigid. The older works belong entirely to the Hinayāna and yet they display the same veneration for

36. Nariman Gushtaspshah Kaikhushro – Literary history of Sanskrit Buddhis (from Winterhitz, Sylvain Levi, Heiber) – Ch. 6
the Buddha which is not wanting likewise in the Pāli jātakas and apadānas; but they eschew the hyperbole and the mythology of the Mahāyāna, while the latest avadāna books are permeated with the Mahāyāna. Like the jātakas the avadānas also are a species of sermons. It is accordingly usually related by way of an introduction where and on what occasion the Buddha narrated the story of the past and at the close the Buddha draws from the story the moral of his doctrine.

Hence a regular avadāna consists of a story of the present, a story of the past and a moral. If the hero of the story of the past is a Bodhisattva the Avadāna can also be designated a Jātaka. 37

A particular species of avadānas are those in which the Buddha instead of a story of the past relates a prognostication of the future. These prophetic anecdotes serve like the stories of the past to explain the present karma. There are besides avadānas in which both the parties of the stories are united and finally there is a class in which a karma shows good or evil consequence in the present existence. All these species of avadānas occur sporadically also in the Vinaya and the Sūtra piṭakas. They however, are grouped in large collections with the object of edification or for more ambitious literary motives.

Avadānas and Jātaka stories in different versions

Some of the stories of the Avadānass and Jātaka are found in different versions. Though the same theme is generally maintained yet they differ in their details and settings considerably. Some such stories of Jātaka and Avadānas are given here.

37. Nariman Gushtaspshah Kaikhushro Literary history of Sanskrit Buddhīs (from Winterhitz, Sylvain Levi, Heiber), Ch. 6
The story of Sibi:

The story of Sibi, is the Avadānas-ṣataka, is traced in the Jātaka literature also. In the Jātaka Sibi is stated to be the king of Aritthapura, while in the Avadānas literature he is referred to as the king of Sibighosa. In the Jātakas the amount of his alms is stated to be of six hundred thousand but in the Avadānas-ṣataka no reference to the exact amount is mentioned. Here it is said that he gave food, cloth and other things to the needy. In the Jātaka the idea of giving the part of his body even to anyone, who might need it, crept up in his mind, but in the Avadānas-ṣataka this idea, that 'the human beings are being satisfied by me but there is none to satisfy the small insects' crept up in his mind. So he, after inflicting wounds on his body, went to the dwelling place of the insects. Then Sakra, in order to test his genuineness, went to him. In the Jātaka it is mentioned that he appeared before him as a blind Brahmana and asked for his eyes.

In the Avadānas-ṣataka it is stated that first of all he appeared before the king in the form of a vulture and started plucking his eyes. When the king did not object to it and asked him to take with pleasure whatever it wanted, he appeared before him in the form of a Brahmana (not blind) and asked for his eyes. In the Jātaka Sibi's eyes are removed by his surgeon Sivaka in spite of lamentations of his family members and his subjects, and then given to the Brahmana. It is also stated there that Sibi, after becoming blind, wished to be an ascetic. Later on, Sakra came to his rescue and blessed him with the boon of restoring his eyes.\(^{38}\)

In the Avadānas-ṣataka it is mentioned that when sacra begged for his eyes, he readily agreed to donate. At this Sakra got pleased with him and did not take his eyes. The incidents of plucking and restoring of eyes are not mentioned in the Avadānas-ṣataka.

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38. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, Buddhist op. cit. p 165
Thus it is found that the idea of charity constitutes the main theme of all these stories.

The story of Cudapaksa :-

The account of a young man’s becoming rich through the sale of a dead mouse is found in the Divyāvadānas as well as in the Jātakas. Of course every minor detail of the story varies but the main episodes of the story viz. his picking up the dead mouse on overhearing the words of a Sreṣṭhi, making bargains by selling that mouse to a tavern for a cat and finally getting married with the beautiful daughter of the Sreṣṭhi, are the same in both the sources. Other incidents, concerned with the investment of his capital and his trade such as whether he first of all got grams or mollases, whether he sold that to a gardener or a wood-cutter, whether he established various shops before going for the sea-voyage or removed some of rotten branches and leaves from the king’s pleasure garden and thus got money for ship-fare by selling a grass-bundle etc., of course, very. In the DivyAvadānas it comes under an Avadānas entitled Cudapakāvadānas while in the Jātakas it bears the title Cullakasetthi Jātaka.39

Avadānas and Apadānas

The thirteenth section of the Khuddaka Nikāya is called Apadānas. Like the Avadānas literature the Apadānas also deal with the stories of the previous lives of Budha, solitary Buddha, the chief Disciples or some Arhats stress upon the theory of Karma. A noble deed never goes unrewarded. Sooner or later it is bound to be rewarded. This very fact is revealed in almost all the Apadānass. That is why some scholars have assigned those Apadānas as the Pall counterpart of the Avadānass. A close relation between the two is established by N. Dutt while he observes thus:

39. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, Buddhist op. cit. p 178
“Apadānas is more closely allied to the Sanskrit Avadānās than to the remaining works of the Pali Canon.” T.W. Rhys observes: “The word of Apadānas means ‘pure action,’ ‘heroic action’; the book is a Buddhist Vitae Sanctorum. When the Buddhists, in the first century of our era, began to write in Sanskrit, these stories lost none of their popularity. The name was Sanskritized into Avadānas.”

Composed in metrical style, the text of the Apadānāss has two sections – one dealing with the life-stories of the male saints (Thera-Apadānas) and the other dealing with that of the female saints (Their-Apadānas). The first section includes 56 Vaggas, each consisting of 10 Apadānāss except the 56th which consists of 11 Apadānas. The second section includes four Vaggas, each consisting of 10 Apadānas. Here it should be made clear that the Pali Apadānas are certainly different from the Sanskrit Avadānas: Firstly because the Apadānas literature is in Pali while the Avadānas literature is in Sanskrit. Secondly the Apadānas literature in metrical composition while the legends of the Avadānas literature are told in prose interspersed here and there with frequent verses. (No doubt the Avadānas Kalpalatā of Ksemendra is written in metrical style but the major part of the Avadānas literature i.e. Avadānas Sataka, Divyāvadānas etc is not metrical. Thirdly most of the Apadānas stories are very short and simple while those of the Avadānas literature are relatively longer and more complex. The fact remains that Apadānas literature belongs to the 5th Section (Khuddaka-Nikāya) of the Sutta-Piṭaka. 40

Mula-Sarvāsti-vādins. A vast section of it has been derived from the Vinaya texts.

Of course some part of it can also been traced in the Sutra-literature. 41

40. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op. cit. p 12
41. Dr. Sharmistha Sharma, op. cit. p 12
According to Cowell, Neil and Levi the Avadānas literature forms part of the Vinaya texts of the thus we find that the Avadānass and the Apadānass are mainly different though in name they seem to be identical.

Types of Avadānas

A) Avadānaśataka

The Avadānaśataka consists of ten decades, each treating of a different theme. The first four contain stories designed to show the nature of acts, the performance of which enables a man to become a Buddha or a Pratyeka Buddha. The division into vargas (Pali vagga) of ten components each is a favorite with Pali texts and accordingly would appear to date from the older Buddhist period. All the tales of the first and nearly all of the third decade are of a prophetic nature.

Here an act of piety is related by which a person - a Brahman, a princess, the son of an usurer, a wealthy merchant, a gardener, a king, a ferry man, a young maiden and so forth - makes adoration to the Buddha which usually leads to the occurrence of some kind of miracle, and then the Buddha with a smile reveals that the particular person in a future age will become a Buddha or a Pratyeka Buddha. On the other hand the histories in the Second and in the Fourth decades are Īṭakas. With regard to the saintly virtues and astounding acts, it is explained that the hero of these tales was no other than the Buddha himself in one of his earlier births. 42

B) Divyāvadāna

A collection younger than the Avadānaśataka but one which has incorporated in it exceedingly old texts is the Divyāvadāna or the Divine Avadāna.

42. Nariman Gushtaspshah Kaikhushro, Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism (from Winterhitz, Sylvain Levi, Heiber) p. 3
GREATFUL ANIMALS IN JĀTAKA STORIES

The animal stories of Jātaka tales and other Buddhist texts include simple moral tales advising the Buddha’s followers to avoid hurting animals intentionally.

The Buddha tells of meritorious actions performed by animals, including remarkable acts of charity and compassion. He uses examples of the suffering of animals to sermonize against the ritual use of animals who have sacrificed their own lives to save the life of others. In Buddhism, animals are seen not so much as animals but as potential humans or as animals that can teach humans some lessons. That is why animals occupy an important place in Buddhism. ⁴⁷

The Jātaka stories, frequently involve animals as peripheral or main characters. The stories sometimes involve animals alone, and sometimes involve conflicts between humans and animals. In the later cases the animals often exhibit characteristics of kindness and generosity that are absent in the humans. In many Jātaka stories animals “set an example” for humans and also deepen the threads of human experience. Jātaka animals frequently exhibit “compassionate and often heroic self-giving”. Jātaka stories focus on animals as individuals, with personality, volition, flaws and moral excellence.

The five hundred and fifty stories related with the Jātaka belonging to the Theravada tradition occupy the most venerable position both from the philosophical and the religious points of view. Of the 550 stories, half of them present animals as central characters. Out of 225 central animal characters of the Jātaka, 70 different types of animals are enumerated and 319 animals or groups of animals are mentioned in the 225 stories. Among the animals, the monkey forms the lead pack. Monkeys

⁴⁷ Singh Arvind kumar *Animals in early Buddhism* p.21
are represented in 27 different stories. Elephants are mentioned in 24 tales followed by Jackals (20), Lions (19), Crows (17), Deer (15), Birds (15), Fish (12) and Parrots (11). It is very interesting to note that animals represent prior life forms of persons living at the time as the Buddha. The actions of these animals throw enough light for understanding and explaining the present day human behaviour.

Jātaka tales embody the ethical system of Buddha’s insights into the natural laws that govern all existence. They form a cosmos of wisdom by themselves. At the heart of these stories lies the law of Karma which states, according to Buddhist philosophy, that every being becomes what he makes himself. The Jātaka tales are a huge source of wisdom. They have had a profound influence over mankind since time immemorial and they find reflection not just in Indian literature, but also the literature of the whole world.

From the Jātaka stories we realize that how the animals are grateful, compassionate and how they sacrificed their own life for others.

A) Animals scarified their life for others

1) Jātaka tales highlight the horrors of hunting and reveal hunting as a base activity. In Nigrodhamiga Jātaka(12) deer are perpetually hunted by a king, who chases them through the woods wounding many and ultimately killing one. The deer agree that it would be better to volunteer for death than to be so hunted and so each day one of the deer must go forward to the king to be killed. One day the lot fell on a pregnant doe of the herd. The doe went on to the golden king of the deer (Bodhisattva) and said “Lord, I am with young. When I have brought forth my little one, there will be two of us to take our turn. Order me to be passed over this turn.”

48. Singh Arvind kumar Animals in early Buddhism p.2
49. Ibid
50. Prof. Cowel E.B , The Jātaka or stories of the Buddhas former Births Vol. 1, p.40
The deer king Bodhisattva answered, "Very well, you go away and I will see that the turn passes over." and he went to the place of execution and lay down with his head on the block. The hunter who happens to be the king of the realm is impressed by the magnanimous nature of the stag and said "My lord the golden king of the deer, I never saw even among men, one so abounding in charity, love and pity as you. Therefore, I pleased with you. I spare the lives both of you and of her."  

The king ultimately agrees to stop killing all the animals for food. Because of the stag "Love had entered into the heart of the king." And he ceased to kill animals.

2) In Sasa Jātaka (316), The Bodhisattva, in the form of the hare, lived near the river with three friends, an otter, a monkey and a Jackal. The hare was considered by his friends almost like a king, as they believed that he was superior to any other animal. The Sakra in the garb of a Brahman mendicant came down as it secured half dead of hunger and heat and sat under the tree. The otter offered seven rohita-fishes to the hungry Brahman. The Jackal appeared with one lizard and a bowl of sour milk and asked him to eat them and rest. Then the monkey offered. Ripe mangoes, cool water, refreshing shade. Then the hare approached the Brahman and said "A hare, who has grown up in the forest has neither rice nor beans to offer, so accept my body as the gift of hospitality from me." With these words the hare threw himself into the blazing fire; But the flames did not give the hare any pain, but closed round his body like golden cloud. Sakra, the king of the Devas took the body of the hare out of the flames and said he sacrificed his body to use as food to his guest; though he did not know who I was. The Sakra put an emblem of the hare in his own palace and in the hall at the Devas and from that night, the full moon night, the form of the hare is seen in the moon, it preaches to mankind the virtue of charity.

3) In Mahakapi Jātaka (407): The Bodhisattva in the shape of monkey had became the leader of the whole tribe of monkey, who considered him their king. He

posses the human wisdom and his charity and compassion were well known among the animals. One day the king of Banares found a delicious mango fruit. The king along with his army searched the tree in the forest near Benares. In jungle he saw that many hundred of monkeys were eating the fruits which he wanted to have, he ordered his soldiers to destroy them. The poor monkeys were frightened to death, when they saw the soldiers shooting arrows and throwing clubs and stones at them. They looked helplessly and pleadingly at their king, who was contemplating what he could do to save his poor subjects.

The Bodhisattva sprang up to the top of the tree and jumped on a mountain peak too far away for the ordinary monkey to reach. He found one deep-root strong and tall, and fastening the top at it to his feet he dared the leap again to his tree. He jumped and he would just catch hold of the nearest overhanging branch of the big mango tree. He had thus made a bridge for his monkeys to the mountain side. He called out to them to use this bridge for their escape and the frightened animals, for getting that part of this bridge was formed of the body of their king, wildly rushed over his body to the cave and trampled on the body of the Bodhisattva in such a way that he was totally injured. The king would not allow his soldiers to shoot at the valiant monkey-king who was sacrificing himself for his tribe. But the monkey king died because of injury. Such was the glorious death of monkey who taught that by sacrificing his body for the salvation of his subjects a ruler must think of their needs when they all in misery.

4) Once the Bodhisattva lived as a huge white elephant in a large forest, which was surrounded on three sides, a desert. One day the white elephant heard in the distance the voice of many people, who seemed to be in great trouble. He thought that these people are lost in the desert, or perhaps banished by the command of a king and they are perishing of hunger and thirst. So I must run to them and see what I can do for them. These people, about seven hundred in all told that they have been driven away from their country by their angry king, now they are famished through want of drink and food. The compassionate elephant thought. How can I help these poor,
miserable, starving people, who look up to me for assistance. Even if they should reach my forest, how could they find enough food there? If I gave up my body to them they might be sustained by my flesh. The elephant shows the lake to them and told them there is corpse of an elephant, take his flesh and satisfy your hunger, take the remainder as provisions on your road and fill the entrails of his body with water, using them for water bags. The elephant with a glad heart threw himself down the precipice. The seven hundred people taking their food from his body, using his entrails as water bags, they went on their way, after burning the remains of the elephant with all funeral rites due to a king. They reached the fruitful valley behind the mountain ridge safely, and from that time they worshipped the statue of a white elephant, as their guide and protector.

B) Animals observing Uposatha

Uposatha, Sabbath celebration was the practice of wise men in order to subdue the sins of passion and lust. It is observed by fasting on full moon and New Moon days; and also on two Aastami’s (eight days of the two fortights)
In early Buddhism there are Animals who were observing Uposatha.

1) Panc-Uposatha Jātaka (490)

   In a clump made of bamboos, lived a wood pigeon with his mate. In a certain ant-hill lived a snake. In one thicket a Jackal had his lair, in another a Bear. These four creatures used to visit the sage from time to time and listened to his discourse one day the pigeon and his mate left their nest and went a foraging for food. The hen went behind, a Hawk pounced on her and killed her. The cock-bird burned with the fire of love for his mate. But he decided to subdue it and he went to the ascetic and taking upon him the vow for the subduing of desire, he lay down on one side by observing Uposatha.

52. Higgins Marie Musaeus , Jātaka Mala or a Garland of Birth Stories p., 55
The snake terrified at the noise of the bull's hooves, the angry snake bites the bull and the bull died then and there. The villagers found out that the bull was dead, they all ran together weeping and honoured the dead with garlands. The snake thought that due to anger he killed the Bull and caused sorrow to the hearts of many. He decided to subdue it and went to hermitage and taking upon him the vow for the subduing of anger, (uposatha) lay down and side.

The Jackal went to seek food and found a dead elephant. He entered inside of the body of elephant. There he remained, eating when he was hungry and when he was a thirst drinking the blood. But by and bye the corpse grew dry in the wind and the heat and the way out by the rear was closed. He saw the narrow passage there and he went fast, so his body was bruised and he left all his hair behind him. Now he thought that it is his greed brought all these trouble upon him. He decided to subdue the greed and went to hermitage and took on him the vow for subduing of greed (Uposatha).^53

The Bear too came out of the forest and being a slave to greediness, went to a frontier village of the kingdom of Mala the villagers, crowd belaboured him with their bows and cudgels. He came home with a broken head and running with blood, he thought that it is because of his exceeding greed which has brought all this trouble upon him and he decided to learnt how to subdue it so he went to the hermitage and took on him the vow for subduing of greediness (Uposatha).

Thus these four animals abiding by admonitions, went to swell the hosts of heaven. Thus the Sabbath vows (Uposatha) were the custom of wise man of old and must be kept now.

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2) Bhuridatta – Jātaka (543)

Lord Buddha while dwelling at Savatthi told importance of Uposatha and about some lay-brethren who kept the fast days. On a fast day, it is said, they rose early in the morning, took upon them the fasting vows, gave alms, and after their meal took perfumes and garlands in their hands and went to Jethana and hearing the law seated themselves on one side. He explained to lay-brethren that there were no teachers-sages of old who were without an teacher forsook great glory and kept the fast-day, but you have got teacher like me and told the old legend at Uposatha, how Bhuridatta – Nāga observed Uposatha.

Bhuridatta-Nāga used to go to pay his homage to sakka, and when he saw the exceedingly delightful splendour of his court with its heavenly nymphs he longed for the heavenly world “what have I to do with this frog-eating snake-nature? I will return to the snake-world and keep the fast and follow the observances by which one may be born among the gods.” 54 With these thoughts he asked his parents on his return to the abode of the snakes and they permit to keep it.

Bhuridatta-Nāga, under the banyan tree on the bank of the Yamuna, hold up body in the top of an ant-hill near by and undertake the fast with its four-divisions i.e. free from jealousy, drunkenness, desire and wrath.

Thus, Bhuridatta-Nāga (Bodhisatta) having kept the precepts all his life and performed all the duties of the fast-day (Uposatha), at the end of his life went with the host of Nāgas to fill the seat of heaven. 55

54. Prof. Cowel E. B, op. cit, Vol-4-6 Book XXII Pg. 87 Pvt. II
55. Ibid p. 88
3) Sasa-Jātaka (316)

The hare had three friends—a monkey, a jackal and an otter. These four wise creatures lived together (52) and each of them got his food on his own hunting-ground, and in the evening they again came together. The hare in his wisdom by way of admonition preached the Truth to his three companions, teaching that alms are to be given, the moral law to be observed, and holy days to be kept. They accepted his admonition and went each to his own part of the jungle and dwelt there.\(^{56}\)

And so in the course of time the Bodhisatta one day observing the sky, and looking at the moon knew that the next day would be a fast-day, and addressing his three companions he said, "To-morrow is a fast-day. Let all three of you take upon you the moral precepts, and observe the holy day. To one that stands fast in moral practice, alms giving brings a great reward. Therefore feed any beggars that come to you by giving them food from your own table." They readily assented, and abode each in his own place of dwelling.

That day Sakka in the form of Brahmin appears in front of these four creatures and ask for food. The otter gave him seven red fish, the jackal offered him a Lizard and a jar of curd and monkey offered mangoes but there was nothing with hare to offer food to the Brahmin so he requested to let fire and he jumped into fire and asked Brahmin to take his roasted flesh. But the flame failed even to heat the pores of the hairs of hare’s body. The Brahmin pleased and said “I am no Brahmin. I am Sakka, and I have come to put your virtue to the test.” The Bodhisatta said, “If not only thou, Sakka, but all the inhabitants of the world were to try me in this matter of alms giving, they would not find in me any unwillingness to give,” and with this the Bodhisatta uttered a cry of exultation like a lion roaring. Then said Sakka to the Bodhisatta, “O wise hare, be thy virtue known throughout a whole aeon.” And squeezing the mountain, with the essence thus extracted, he daubed the sign of a hare on the orb of the moon.

\(^{56}\) Prof. Cowel E.B op. cit Vol-1-3 Book IV Pg. 35
And after depositing the hare on a bed of young kuca grass, in the same wooded part of the jungle, Sakka returned to his own place in heaven. (56) And these four wise creatures dwelt happily and harmoniously together, fulfilling the moral law and observing holy days, till they departed to fare according to their deeds.  

4) Vaka-Jātaka (300)

A wolf lived on a rock by the Ganges bank. The winter floods came up and surrounded the rock. There he lay upon the rock, with no food and no way of getting it. The water rose and rose, and the wolf pondered. "No food here, and no way to get it. Here I lie, with nothing to do. I may as well keep a Sabbath feast." Thus resolved to keep a sabbath, as he lay he solemnly resolved to keep the religious precepts. Sakka in his meditations perceived the wolf's weak resolve, thought he, "I'll plague that wolf" and taking the shape of a wild goat, he stood near and let the wolf see him.

"I'll keep Sabbath another day! "thought the wolf, as he spied him; up he got and leapt at the creature. But the goat jumped about so that the wolf could not catch him. When wolf saw that he could not catch him, he came to a standstill, and went back, thinking to himself as he lay down again "Well, my Sabbath is not broken after all"! Then Sakka, by his divine power, hovered above in the air, said he,"What have such as you, all unstable, to do with keeping a Sabbath? You didn't know that I was Sakka, and wanted a meal of goats -flesh!"  

Thus by observing unstable, weak Sabbath the wolf has missed from the fruits of Uposatha.

57. Ibid p. 37.
C) Animal gave importance to the Panchaśīl (Five precepts)--

Five Precepts - There are Five basic prohibitions binding on all Buddhists, Monks and Laymen alike. "Traditionally, laymen should observe five Precepts.
1) Not to take life 2) Not to take what is not given to one 3) Not to engage in improper sexual conduct. 4) Not to lie and 5) Not to drink intoxicants. 59

1) Sarabha – Miga – Jātaka (483)

A King was much delighted in hunting one day he went a hunting, a deer rose up and breaking the circle of men, swift as the wind he was off, the King girding up his loins on foot and sword in hand, he set off at speed crying "I will catch the stag!" He kept him in sight and chased him for three leagues. sword in hand, he set off at speed crying "I will catch the stag!" He kept him in sight and chased him for three leagues. Now in the stag's way was a pit, a great hole where a tree had rotted away, sixty cubits deep and full of water to a depth of thirty cubits, yet covered over with weeds. The stag swerved aside somewhat from his course. But the king went straight on and fell in. The stag saw, the king in dire straits, struggling in the deep water, he pitifully thought, "Let not the king perish before my eyes; I will set him free from this distress" standing upon the edge of the pit, he cried out, "Fear nothing, O King, for I will deliver you from your distress." 60 Then with an efforts, as earnest as though he would save his own beloved son, he supported himself upon the rock, and that King who had come after him to slay, him he drew up from out of the pit, sixty cubits in depth and comforted him and set him upon his own back and led him forth from the forest and set him down not far from his army. Then he admonished the King and established him in the Five virtues (Pañcaśīl). The King offered the lordship over Benares, but the deer denied and said.

60. Prof. Cowel E. op. cit. Vol.4-6 Book. XIII Pg. 170
“Great King, I am one of the animals and I want no kingdom. If you have any care for me, keep the good precepts I have taught you, and teach your subjects to keep them too.” With this advice, he returned into the forest. And King returned to his army and as he remembered the noble qualities of the stag his eyes filled with tears. Surrounded by a division of his army he went through the city while the drum of the law was beat and caused this proclamation to be made.

From this day forward, let all the dwellers in this city observe the five virtues (Panchasheel). From hence forwards the King was devoted to alms giving and good deeds and his people being also devoted to good deeds as they died went to heaven.

2) Bhojajaniya – Jātaka (23)

The King has a thoroughbred Sindh horse: He was fed on exquisite three-year old rice, which was always served upto him in a golden dish worth a hundred thousand pieces of money; and the ground of his stall was perfumed with the four odours.

Round his stall were hung crimson curtains, while overhead was a canopy studded with stars of gold on the walls were festooned wreaths and garlands of fragrant flowers; and a lamp fed with scented oil was always burning there.

One day seven kings encompassed Banares and sent a message to the King saying “Either yield up your Kingdom to us or give battle.”

Then the King sent for Knight and said to him, “Can you fight the seven kings, my dear Knight,” he said, “Give me but your noble descrier and then I could fight not seven kings only, but all the kings in India.”

61. Prof. Cowel E. op. cit. Vol.4-6 Book. XIII Pg. 171
Mounted on his noble steed he passed out of the city-gate and with a lightning charge broke down the first camp, taking one King alive and bringing him back a prisoner to the soldier's custody. Returning to the field he broke down the second, third camps and so on until he captured alive five kings. The sixth camp he had just broken down and had captured the sixth king when his horse received a wound which streamed with blood and caused the noble animal sharp pain. As per the request of the steed the Knight bound up his wound and armed him again in proof and he broke down the seventh camp and brought back alive the seventh king.

Then the royal steed requested king that not to slay these seven kings, bind them by an oath and let them go don’t kill them. And as for yourself, exercise charity, keep the commandments and rule your kingdom in righteousness and justice and he passed away. The king sent the seven kings to their homes after exacting from each an oath never to war against him anywhere. And he ruled his kingdom in righteousness and justice. 63

3) Rohanta migā Jātaka (501)

When the hunter set free the royal stag, Rohanta he asked the cause of his capture. The huntsman said that the kings queen, Khema, desires to hear your discourse of righteousness, therefore I snared you at the King’s bidding. The stag said, come bring me to the king, and I will discourse before the queen. But the huntsman thought that the king is cruel and he decided not to take the deer to the king. Then golden deer said take my golden hairs to the king and show them, tell them here are hairs from that golden stag; take my place and discourse to them in the words of these verses I shall repeat, when she hears you, that will alone be sufficient to satisfy her craving. The deer taught him ten stanzas of the holy life, and described the five virtues (Pañcasīl) and dismissed him with a warning to be vigilant.

The hunter treated the golden deer as one would treat a teacher; thrice he worked round him right-wise, did the four obeisances and wrapping the hairs in a lotus leaf went to the king. Then sitting upon a golden throne he declared the law in those stanzas. The queens craving was satisfied. The king was pleased and he rewarded the huntsman with great honour. 64

4) Nandiya Miga – Jātaka (385)

There was a deer named Nandiyamiga, being excellent in character and conduct he supported his father and mother. The Kosala King was intent on the chase and went every day to hunt with a great retinue, so that his people could not follow farming and their trades. The people decided to drive the deer of forest along force them into the park like cows into a pen! At the time Nandiya had taken his father and mother into a little thicket and was lying on the ground. Nandiya was caught in the trap. His parents gave message to get free by his power and strength but he said.

"I might go, brahmin, I might certainly leap the fence and go but I have enjoyed regular food and drink from the King and this stands to me as a debt besides I have lived long among these deer and it is improper for me to go away without doing good to this king and to them or without showing my strength. I will do good to them and come gladly." 65

Afterwards on the day when his turn came, he did not run away as other animals do when scared by the fear of death but fearless and making his charity his guide he stood firm. The king owing to the efficacy of his love could not discharge the arrow. The deer said, "Great King, why do you not shoot the arrow? shoot!" "King of deer, I cannot." "Then see the merit of the virtuous, O great King." Then the king, pleased with the deer, dropped his bow and said, "This senseless length of wood knows your merit: shall I who have sense and am a man not know it? forgive me; I give you security."

64. Prof. Cowel E.B op.citVol.4-6 Book XV. Pg. 263.
“Great king, you give me security but what will this herd of deer in the park do!” “I give it to them too.” So the deer, having gained security for all deer in the park for birds in the air and fishes in the water, established the king in the five commands and said, “Great King, it is good for a king to rule a Kingdom by forsaking the ways of wrongdoing, not offending against the ten kingly virtues and acting with just righteousness.

Alms, moral, charity, justice and penitence, peace, mildness, mercy, meekness, patience, These virtues planted in my soul I feel, Hence springs up love and Perfect inward weal.”

With these words he showed forth the Kingly virtues in the form of a stanza, and after staying some days with the King he sent a golden drum round the town, proclaiming the gift of security to all beings: and then saying, “O King, be watchful,” he went to see his parents.⁶⁶

D) Animals observing 10 Pāramitas

There are ten transcendental virtues, which, in pali, are termed pārami that every Bodhisattva practices in order to gain Supreme Enlightenment – Sammā – Sambuddhahood. They are Generosity (Dāna), Morality (sila), Renunciation (Nekkhamma), Wisdom (Panna), Energy (Viriya), Patience (Khanti), Truthfulness (Sacca), Determination (Adhitthāna), Loving-kindness (Mettā) and Equanimity (Upākkhā).⁶⁷

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⁶⁷ Narada – The Buddha and his Teachings p. 576
In Jātaka there are various Animals practicing 10 Pāramitas.

1) Sila Pāramita

SilavaNāga – Jātaka – (72)

Once on a time there was an elephant dwelling in the Himalayas. When born, he was white all over, his eyes were like diamond balls. He was very handsome. When he grew up, all the elephants of the Himalayas in a body followed him as their leader. When he became aware that there was sin in the herd, he detached himself from the herd he dwelt detached himself from the herd, he dwelt in solitude in the forest, one day a man lost his bearings and way and wandering in the forest with fear to perish.

The elephant brought the man to his own dwelling and there entertained him for some days, regaling him with fruits of every kind. The elephant seated the forester on his back and brought back to the haunts of men.

When he walks through the city, the ivory-worker, craftsmen told that a living elephants tusk is worth a great deal more than a dead ones. Suddenly he went to the forest with sharp saw and demanded front tusk to the elephant saying that he is very poor and he could not make a living any how.

The elephant allowed him and he bowed his knees till he was couched upon the earth like an ox. Then the forester sawed off both the chief tusks of the elephant. And the man took them off and sold them. And when he had spent the money he came back to the elephant and begged for the rest of ivory. The elephant consented and gave up the rest of his ivory after having it cut as before. The forester went away and sold this also. Returning again and demanded for the stamps of the tusks. The elephant lay down as before and the man sawed out the stumps and went his way. 68

Thus the elephant by giving all his tusk to the forester man without expecting any returns observed the pāramita of Sila and therefore the elephant has called as "SilavaNāga".

2) Dana Pāramita

Chaddanta Jātaka (514)

The chief elephant was a pure white, with red feet and face. By and bye when grown up he was eighty-eight cubits high, one hundred and twenty cubits long. He had a trunk like to a silver rope, fifty-eight cubits long and tusks fifteen cubits in circumference, thirty cubits long and emitting six-coloured rays. He was the chief of a herd of eighty thousand elephants and paid honour to pacceka buddhas. His two head queens were Cullasubhadda and Mahāsubhadda. Chaddanta the elephant king with his following of eight thousand elephants, in the rainy season lived in the golden cave; in the hot season he stood at the foot of the great banyan tree, amongst its shoots, welcoming the breeze from off the water. When the great sal grove was in However, the herd along with King elephant with his queens attended there. At that moment cullasubhadda stood to windward and dry twigs mixed with dead leaves and red ants fell upon her person. But Mahāsubhadda stood to leeward and flowers with pollen and stalks and green leaves fell on her. Thought Cullasubhadda “He let fall on the wife dear to him flowers and pollen and fresh stalks and leaves, but on my person he dropped a mixture of dry twigs, dead leaves and red ants.

"well, I shall know what to do !" And she conceived a grudge against the great elephant.

When she died she reborn as a dear and chief queen of king of Banares. And she recalled to mind her former existences and thought, “my prayer is fulfilled, now will I have this elephant’s tusks brought to me.”

69. Prof. Cowel E.B op.cit. Vol-4-6 Book XVI p..22.
The queen called all the hunters in the Kingdom and selected one and told him about the king elephant and said, kill six-tusked elephant and get possession of a pair of his tusks and she gave him a thousand pieces and all the weapons required for hunt. The hunter after seven years, seven months and seven days, having reached the dwelling place of the great king elephant, took note of his dwelling place and dug a pit there. The King elephant asked to hunter why you wants to kill me, he told it is as per the request of queen Subhadda, Hearing this and recognizing that this was the work of Culasubhadda, he bore his sufferings patiently and told hunter to saw off tasks of ivory and gave it to queen.

Hearing his words the hunter rose up from the place where he was sitting and, saw in hand, came close to him to cut off his tusks. Now the elephant, being like a mountain eighty cubits high, was but ineffectually cut. For the man could not reach to his tusks. So the Great Being, bending his body towards him, lay with his head down. Then the hunter climbed up the trunk of the Great Being, pressing it with his feet as though it were a silver rope, and stood on his forehead as if it had been Kelasa peak. Then he inserted his foot into his mouth, and striking the fleshy part of it with his knee, he climbed down from the beast’s forehead and thrust the saw into his mouth. The Great Being suffered excruciating pain and his mouth was charged with blood. The hunter, shifting about from place to place, was still unable to cut the tusks with his saw.

So the Great Being letting the blood drop from his mouth, resigning himself to the agony, asked, saying, “Sir, cannot you cut them?” And on his saying “No,” he recovered his presence of mind and said, “Well then, since I myself have not strength enough to raise my trunk, do you lift it up for me and let it seize the end of the saw.”

The hunter did so: and the Great Being seized the saw with his trunk and moved it backwards and forwards, and the tusks were cut off as it were sprouts. Then bidding him take the tusks, he said, “I don’t give you these, friend hunter, because I

70. Prof. Cowel E.B op.cit. Vol.4-6 Book XVI p. 29.
do not value them, nor as one desiring the position of Sakka, Mara or Brahma, but the
tusks of omniscience are a hundred thousand times dearer to me than these are, and
may this meritorious act be to me the cause of attaining Omniscience.” And as he
gave him the tusks, he asked, “How long were you coming here?” “Seven years,
seven months, and seven days.” “Go then by the magic power of these tusks, and you
shall reach Benares in seven days.” And he gave him a safe conduct and let him go.
And after he had sent him away, before the other elephants
and Subhadda had returned, he was dead. 71

3) Sacca-Parāmita
Vattaka – Jātaka – (35)

A quail breaking his way out of the shell of the egg in which he was born, he
became a young quail, about as big as a large ball. And his parents kept him lying in
the nest, while they fed him with food which they brought in their beaks. In himself,
he had not the strength either to spread his wings and fly through the air, or to lift his
feet and walk upon the ground. Year after year that spot was always ravaged by a
jungle-fire; and it was just at this time that the flames swept down on it with a mighty
roaring. The flocks of birds, darting from their several nests, were seized with the
fear of death, and flew shrieking away. The father and mother of the Bodhisatta were
as frightened as the others and flew away, forsaking the Bodhisatta.

Lying there in the nest, the Bodhisatta stretched forth his neck, and seeing the
flames spreading towards him, he thought to himself, “Had I the power to put forth
my wings and fly, I would wing my way hence to safety; or, if I could move my legs
and walk, I could escape elsewhere afoot. Moreover, my parents, seized with the fear
of death, are fled away to save themselves, leaving me here quite alone in the world.
I am without protector or helper. What, the, shall I do this day?” 72

71. Prof. Cowel E.B op.cit. Vol.4-6 Book XVI p. 29.
Then this thought came to him:— "In this world there exists what is termed the Efficacy of Goodness, and what is termed the Efficacy of Truth. There are those who, through their having realized the Perfections in past ages, have attained beneath the Bo-tree to be All-Enlightened; who, having won Release by goodness, tranquility and wisdom, possess also discernment of the knowledge of such Release; who are filled with truth, compassion, mercy and patience; whose love embraces all creatures alike; whom men call omniscient Buddhas. There is an efficacy in the attributes they have won. And I too grasp one truth; I hold and believe in a single principle in Nature. Therefore, it behoves me to call to mind the Buddhas of the past, and the Efficacy they have won, and to lay hold of the true belief that is in me touching the principle of Nature; and by an Act of Truth to make the flames go back, to the saving both of myself and of the rest of the birds."

Accordingly, the quail, calling to mind the efficacy of the Buddhas long since past away, performed an Act of Truth in the name of the true faith that was in him, repeating this stanza:

With wings that fly not, feet that walk not yet,
Forsaken by my parents, here I lie!
Wherefore I conjure thee, dread Lord of Fire,
Primaeval Jataveda, turn! go back!

Even as he performed his Act of Truth, Jataveda went back a space of sixteen lengths; and in going back the flames did not pass away to the forest devouring everything in their path. No; they went out there and then, like a torch plunged in water.73

E) Animals respected for the Yellow Robes

There are animals described in the Jātaka who were respected for the yellow robes:-

73. Ibid p. 90.
1) Kasava Jātaka

A poor man that lived in Benares, seeing the workers of ivory in the ivory bazaar making bangles and all manner of ivory trinkets, he asked them would they buy an elephant's tusks, if he should get them. To which they answered, Yes. So he took a weapon, and clothing himself in a yellow robe, with a covering band about his head. Taking his stand in the path of the elephants, he slew one of them with his weapon, and sold the tusks of it in Benares; and this manner he made a living. After this he began always to slay the very last elephant in the King Elephant Troop. Day by day the elephants grew fewer and fewer. Then they went and asked the King elephant how it was that their numbers dwindled. He perceived the reason. "Some man," thought he, "stands in the place where the elephants go, having made himself like a Pacceka-Buddha in appearance. Now can it be he that slays the elephants? I will find him out." 74 So one day he sent the others on before him (198) and he followed after. The man saw the King Elephant and made a rush at him with his weapon. The King Elephant turned and stood. "I will beat him to the earth, and kill him!" thought he: and stretched out his trunk, - when he saw the yellow robes which the man wore. "I ought to pay respect to those sacred robes!" said he. So drawing back his trunk, he cried - "O man! Is not that dress, the flag of sainthood, unsuitable to you? Why do you wear it?" and he repeated these lines:

"If any man, yet full of sin, should dare
To don the yellow robe, in whom no care
For temperance is found, or love of truth,
He is not worthy such a robe to wear.
He who has spend out sin, who everywhere
Is firm in virtue, and whose chiefest care
Is to control his passions, and be true,
He will deserves the yellow robe to wear." 75

74. Prof. Cowel E.B op. cit Vol.1-3 Book II p..139.
F) Animals taking care of their old parents

1) Mati-Posaka Jātaka (455)

Once upon a time there was an elephant in the Himalaya region. He was all white, a magnificent beast and a herd of eighty thousand elephants surrounded him but his mother was blind. He would give his elephants the sweet wild fruit, so sweet, to convey to her they gave none but themselves ate all of it. When he made enquiry and heard news at his he said, “I will leave the herd, and cherish my mother.” So in the night season, unknown to the other elephants taking his mother with him, he departed to mount candorana; and there he placed his mother in a cave of the hills, hard by a lake, and cherished her. 76

At that time the kings state elephant had just died. The king proclaimed if anybody seen an elephant fit and proper for the kings riding. A forester tells about the elephant in the forest. The king sent with the man a forester and a great troop of followers.

The elephant saw them and thought “I am very strong, I can scatter even a thousand elephants; in anger I am able to destroy all the beasts that carry the army of a whole-kingdom. But if I give way to anger, my virtue will be marred.” With this resolve he remained unmovable. The kings men take him to the Banares.

The elephant tells, the king that “My mother is blind and wretched one, beats with her foot on some tree-root for lack of me, her son!” . By hearing this king gave him freedom and said “This mighty elephant, who feeds his mother go, and to all his family.” The elephant tells to his mother,” Rise mother! Why should you there lie? Your own, your son has come! Vedaha, Kasi’s glorious king has sent me safely home.” 77

76. IbidVol.4-6 Book p..58.
77. Prof. Cowel E.B op. cit Vol.4-6 Book XI p. 60.
And she returned thanks to the king saying “Long live that king! long may he bring his realms prosperity, who freed that son who ever hat done so great respect to me!”

The king was pleased with the elephants goodness and he built a town and did continual service to the elephant and his mother when his mother died the king has made a stone image. There the inhabitants of all India year by year gathered together to perform what was called the Elephant Festival.

2) Rohanta – Miga – Jātaka (501)

In Rohanta – Miga-Jātaka, Rohanta a golden deer was a king of the deer lived beside a lake called Lake Rohanta and surrounded by a herd of eighty thousand deer. He used to support his parents, who were old and blind. A hunter came to the Himalayas and caught to the deer King, the brother and sister of that royal stag also stand beside him. Brother deer of royal stag said to the hunter. “Friend hunter, do not imagine that this creature is a deer and no more. He is king of fourscore thousand deer, one of virtuous life, tender-hearted to all creatures of great wisdom, he supports his sire and dam, now blind and old. If you slay a righteous being like this, in slaying him you slay dam and sire, my sister and me, all five; but if you grant my brother his life, you bestow life on the five of us. When the hunter heard this pious discourse he thought, “what do I want with the king and his honours! If I hurt this royal deer, either the earth will gape and swallow me up, or a thunderbolt will fall and strike me. I will let him go.” 78 and the hunter made free to the royal deer.

The old parents of the deer king expressed their gratitude saying that the wife and family of hunter may became happy.

78. Ibid. Vol.4-6 Book XV p. 261.
3) **Salikedara – Jātaka (484)**

In the north-east of the Magadha there was a great wood of silk-cotton trees on the flat top of a hill, and in this wood lived a great number of parrots. The king of parrots refused to permit his parents to go foraging, but with the whole flock away he flew to the Himalaya hills, and after eating his fill of the clumps of rice that grew wild there on his return brought food sufficient for his mother and father and fed them with it.

One day a watchman of the rice field set a snare and caught the parrot king. He took the parrot out of the snare and he delivered the bird to the Brahmin. The Brahmin asked to the parrot that after eating rice why you are taking so much rice with you, where is your store. The parrot king replied that in the wood forest, I pay a debt and also grant a loan and there I store a treasure up. 79

Then the Brahmin asked him, “What is that loan which you grant? what is the debt you pay? Tell me the treasure you store up, and then fly free away.”

To this request of the Brahmin the parrot king made reply, explaining his intent in four stanzas: “My callow chicks, my tender brood, whose wings are still ungrown who shall support me by and bye: to them I grant the loan.

“Then my old ancient parents, who far from youth’s bounds are set, with that within my beak I bring, to them I pay my debt.

“And other birds of helpless wing and weak full many more, To these I give in charity: this sages call my store.

“This is that loan the which I grant this is the debt I pay, And this the treasure I store up now I have said my say.”

The Brahmin was pleased when he heard this pious discourse from the great parrot king he replied,

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79. Prof. Cowel E.B op. cit Vol.4-6 Book XIV p. 177.
“what noble principles of life! how blessed is this bird!
From many men who live on earth such rules are never heard.
Eat, eat your fill whereas you will, with all your kindred too!
And parrot! let us meet again! I love the sight of you “ 80

With these words, he looked upon the great parrot king with a soft heart, as
though it were his liegest son; and loosing the bonds from his feet, he rubbed them
with oil an hundred times refined and seated him on a seat of honour and gave him to
eat sweetened corn upon a golden dish, and gave him sugar-water to drink:

With this Brahmin offered the thousand acres rice field to the parrot king but
he accepted only eight acres.

4) Nandiya miga Jātaka (385)

Nandiya miga a deer, being excellent in character and conduct he supported
his father and mother.

The Kosala King was intent on the chase and went every day to hunt with a
great retinue, so that his people could not follow farming and their trades. The people
gathered together and consulted, saying “Sirs, this king of ours is destroying our
trades, our home-life is perishing; what if we were to enclose the Anjanavana park,
providing a gate, digging a tank and sowing grass there, then go into the forest with
sticks and clubs in our hands, beat the thickets, and so expelling the deer and driving
them along force them into the park like cows into a pen? then we would close the
gate, send word to the king and go about our trades.” “That is the way, “they said, and
so with one will they made the park ready, and then entering the wood enclosed a
space of a league each way. 81

80. Prof. Cowel E.B op.cit., Vol. 4-6 Book XIV p..178.
At the time Nandiya had taken his father and mother into a little thicket and was lying on the ground. The people with various shields and weapon in their hands encircled the ticket arm to arm; and some entered it looking for deer.

Nandiya saw them and thought, “It is good that I should abandon life to-day and give it for my parents,” so rising and saluting his parents he said, “Father and mother, these men will see us three if they enter this thicket; you can survive only in one way, and your life is best: I will give you the gift of your life, standing by the skirts of the thicket and going out as soon as they beat it; then they will think there can be only one deer in this little thicket and so will not enter; be heedful”: so he got their permission and stood ready to run. As soon as the thicket was beaten by the people standing at its skirts and shouting he came out, and they thinking there would be only one deer there did not enter. Nandiya went among the other deer, and the people drove them along into the park: then closing the gate they told the king and went to their own homes. 82

Then after many days his parents longing to see him thought, “Our son Nandiya, king of deer, was strong as an elephant and of perfect health: if he is alive he will certainly leap the fence and come to see us: we will send him word”

The parents sent message through Brahmin to Nandiya but Nandiya refused to run away, but decided to do good to the king and all the deer. He established the king in the five commands and advice to rule a kingdom by forsaking the ways of wrongdoing, not offending against the ten kingly virtues and acting with just righteousness.

The king gave security to all deer in the park, for birds in the air and fishes in the water. After giving discourse, Nandiya went to see his parents.

There are so many animals mentioned in the Jātakas who have taken great care of their old parents even in unfavorable condition and followed the path of Buddhism.

G) Animals served for their owners

1) Nandivisal Jatak (28)

A Bull was presented by his owners to a Brahmin when he was quite a tiny calf. The Brahmin called it Nandi-Visala (Great – Joy) and treated it like his own child, feeding the young when the bull grew up he thought to repay the Brahmin the cost of his nurture.

There he went to the Brahmin and told him to go to some merchant rich in herds and wager him a thousand pieces that your bull can draw a hundred loaded costs. The merchant accepted the wager and staked a thousand pieces. The Brahmin bathed Nandi-Visala, gave him a measure of perfumed rice to eat, hung a garland round his neck and harnessed him all above to the leading cart. The Brahmin in person took his seat upon the pole, and flourished his goad in the air, shouting “Now then, you rascal! Pull them along you rascal!”

By calling rascal Nandi visal not pulled loaded cart and straightway, the merchant made the Brahmin pay over the thousand pieces. The Brahmin realized his fault. Next time bull asked him to bet for two thousand pieces with the merchant. Now seated on the pole, the Brahmin stroked Nandi-Visala on the back, and called as him in this style “Now then, my tie fellow! Pull them along my fine fellow!” with a single pull the Bull Nandi-visala tugged along the whole string of the hundred carts till the hindermost stood where the foremost had started the merchant, rich in herds, paid up the two thousand pieces he had lost to the Brahmin. Thus did he gain greatly by reason of the Bull Nandi-visala.

83. Prof. Cowel E.op.cit Vol.1-3 Book I p.. 72.
2) Kanha-Jātaka (29)

When a bull was young calf, an old woman reared him like her own child, feeding him as rice-gruel and rice and on other good cheer. The name he become known by was “Granny’s Blackie.” One day he thought to himself “My mother is very poor, she has painfully reared me as if I were her own child. What If I were to earn some money to ease her hard lot.” Henceforth he was always looking out for a job. One day a young merchant came with five hundred wagons to a ford the bottom of which was so rough that his oxen could not pull the wagons through. The merchants eye fell on the bull, he felt sure he would do and he said to the herdsman, If this bull get my wagons across he will pay for his service. The men harnessed him to the carts. The first he dragged over with a single pull and landed it high and dry and in like manner he dealt with the whole string of wagons.

The merchant tied round the bulls neck a bundle containing five hundred coins but the bull stood across the path and blocked the way of wagons then merchant as per the contract tie one thousand coins around the neck of the bull and he reached safely to his mother with the coins But his mother get cried and asked “Have I any wish to live on your earnings, my child? Why did you go through all this fatigue?” So saying, she washed the bull with warm water and rubbed him all over with oil; she gave him drink and regaled him with due victuals.

H)

Animals having great friendship -

1) In Abhinha Jātaka (27) an elephant and a dog has set an example how to perform friendship. There was a dog which used to go to the stall of the elephant of state and eat the gobbets of rice which fell where the elephant fed. Haunting the place for the food’s sake the dog grew very friendly with the elephant, and at last would never eat except with him. And neither could get on without the other. The dog used to disport himself by swinging backwards and forwards on the elephants

84. Prof. Cowel E.op.cit Vol.1-3 Book I p. 73.
trunk. Now one day a villager bought the dog of the mahout and took the god home with him. Thence forward the elephant missing the dog, refused either to eat or drink or take his bath. The king dispatched the Bodhisattva to find out why the elephant behaved like this. Bodhisattva found that the elephant has got no bodily ailment; he must have formed an ardent friendship, and is sorrowing at the loss of his friend. The Bodhisattva suggested king to made a proclamation that the man in whose house that dog shall be found, shall pay such and such penalty.” 85 The king acted on this advice; and the man, when he came to hear of it, promptly let the dog loose. Away ran the dog at once, and made his way to the elephant. The elephant took the dog up in his trunk and placed it on his head and wept and cried and again setting the dog on the ground, saw the dog eat first and then took his own food.

2) Suvannakakkata – Jātaka (389)

The Bodhisatta was born in the salindiya village in a Brahmin farmer’s family. When he grew up he settled down and worked a farm of a thousand karisas. One day he had gone to the field with his men and giving them orders to plough he went to a great pool at the end of the field to wash his face. In that pool there lives a crab of golden hue, beautiful and charming when he was washing his mouth, the crab came near. Then he lifted up the crab and taking it laid it in his outer garment. Thus crab became a friend of bodhisatta.

A she-crow in a nest on a palm in that corner of the field saw the eyes of the Brahmin and wishing to eat them requested he-crow that she had a longing to eat the eyes of a certain Brahmin. And she told him that, in the ant-hill near our tree there lives a black snake, request him, he will bite the Brahmin and kill him, then you will tear out his eyes and bring them to me. He-crow requested to snake and snake agrees to bite the Brahmin. Next day the snake lay waiting for the brahmin’s coming, hidden in the grass, by the boundary of the field where he came. The Bodhisatta

85. Prof. Cowel E.B., op.cit., Vol.1-3 Book I p.70
entering the pool and washing his mouth felt a return of affection for the crab, and embracing it laid it in his outer garment and went to the field. The snake saw him come, and rushing swiftly forward bit him in the flesh of the calf and having made him fall on the spot fled to his ant-hill. The fall of the Bodhisatta, the spring of the golden crab from the garment, and the perching of the crow on the Bodhisatta's breast followed close on each other. The crow perching put his beak into the Bodhisatta's eye. The crab thought, "It was though this crow that the danger came on my friend: if I seize him the snake will come," so seizing the crow by the neck with its claw firmly as if in a view, he got weary and then loosed him a little. The crow called on the snake, "Friend, why do you forsake me and run away? this crab troubles me, come ere I die," 86

The snake hearing him, made its hood large and came consoling the crow. Puffing his mighty hood he came: but the crab turned on the snake.

The crab being weary then loosed him a little. The snake thinking, "Crabs do not eat the flesh of crows nor of snakes, then for what reason does this one seize us?" Hearing him, the snake thought: "By some means I must deceive him and free myself and the crow."

Hearing him the crab thought, "This one wishes to make me let these two go by some means and then run away, he knows not my skill in device; now I will loosen my claw so that the snake can move, but I will not free the crow,"

I'll free the snake, but not the crow;
The crow shall be a hostage bound:
Never shall I let him go
Till my friend be safe and sound. 87

86. Prof. Cowell E.B op.cit. Vol.1-3 Book VI p.185
87. Ibid  p186.
So saying he loosened his claw to let the snake go at his ease. The snake took away the poison and left the Bodhisatta's body free from it. He rose up well and stood in his natural hue. The crab thinking, "If these two be well there will be no prosperity for my friend, I will kill them," crushed both their heads like lotus-buds with his claws and took the life from them. The she-crow fled away from the place. From that time there was still greater friendship between him and the crab. 88

There are so many such stories of the animals exhibiting their sense of gratitude in the Jātakas. The animals have their own lives, their own karma, taste, purpose and aspirations. And, as often brief and painful their lives may be, they are also graced with purity which we can only humbly respect, and perhaps even occasionally envy.

Pl. 83. Sasa Jātaka, Goli
Pl. 65. Mahākapi Jātaka, Sāñchi
Pl. 60. Chaddanta Jātaka, Ajantā
Pl. 56. Matipośaka Jātaka, Ajantā
Pl. 45. Silvanāga Jātaka, Amarāvatī
Pl. 21. Suvaṇṇa Kakkaṭa Jātaka, Bharhut
Pl. 22. Suvāṇṇa Kakkaṭa Jātaka, (Brāhmin and Snake), Tripurantakesvara Temple, Balligave, Karnataka
Pl. 13. Paśc-Uposatha Jātaka, Mathurā
Pl. 47. Mātipośaka Jātaka, Bharhut
Pl. 49. Matipošaka Jātaka, Ajantā