

Realization of the DHAMMA

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SAYADAW U. DHAMMAPA

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REALIZATION OF THE DHAMMA

Saddharaṇa (Dhammapadam)



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SELANGOR BUDDHIST VIPASSANA MEDITATION SOCIETY

No. 29-A, Jalan 1245, 4001 Petaing Jaya,

Selangor Darul Ehsan, West Malaysia.

Tel./Fax: 603 - 79650598

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Redemption of the Dhamma



Sayadaw U Dhammapiya

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The gift of Dhamma excels all gifts.

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First Printing: July 1993

Revised Edition: July 1994

2nd Revised Edition: November 1995

3rd Reprint June 1996 - 1,000 copies

4th Reprint Oct 1997 - 2,000 copies

5th Reprint April 1999 - 1,150 copies

6th Reprint April 1999 - 2,000 copies

7th Reprint Dec 1999 - 1,000 copies

This Reprint Dec 2003 - 1,000 copies

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Published by *Selangor Buddhist Vipassana Meditation Society*

Book layout and design by *Mudita*, Penang

Cover design by *Veronica Hoe*

Printed and Bound in Kuala Lumpur

by *Majujaya Indah Sdn Bhd*

Tel : 03-42916001 , 42916002

Fax : 03-42922053

Redignation
of the
Dhamma

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PREFACE

In the world today, there are approximately five billion people who belong to different kinds of religions. Each religion has its own teachings. However, some teachings are similar to one another. In each religion and denomination, there are adherents with various degrees of involvement, religious feeling, and different degrees of clarity about their beliefs. It is important for a Buddhist to have religious feeling and degrees of clarity about Buddhism. We should know ourselves how deep and how genuine our understanding of the teaching of the Buddha is. We should also try to become true Buddhists rather than Buddhists in name only.

I write this book quoting from many sources. The book is designed mainly for young adult students and those who are beginning to learn Buddhist doctrines to understand what is the basic belief of Buddhists. However, if you are one who wishes to learn the basic teachings of the Lord Buddha, you are welcome also. The goal of this book is to show readers how Buddhists practise, and how to attain peace and happiness.

Sayadaw U Dhammapiya
Tathāgata Meditation Centre (USA)
1995



CHAPTER

one

Though very young children do not know the virtues of the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*, they may still take the three Refuges. During the Buddha's time, the mother of prince Boddhirāja Kumāra took refuge on behalf of her child while the child was still in her womb. She said: "My beloved child pays homage to the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha." Later, after birth, when the mother came to the Buddha with the baby prince, she again said to the Buddha: "My little baby boy pays homage to the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha."

Here, although the mother took refuge on behalf of her son, the son was not as yet a genuine Buddhist. Why? Because the son knew nothing yet about the virtues of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. However, the mother had great compassion for the tender boy. That is why she tried to sow the seed of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha in her son's heart by taking refuge on his behalf despite his ignorance of the virtues. Actually, the prince had not been a true Buddhist at the time for not understanding about Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha.

WHO IS THE BUDDHA?

Buddha is the One who knows the Four Noble Truths and attains enlightenment by himself. He also attains *sabbaññutañāna*, the great wisdom of omniscience, that is the ability to know everything, including

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mental and physical worlds (*loka*). He is an incomparable man because of his great compassion for all beings, unique wisdom and supernatural powers. That is why all the kings of the *Brahmā* and *Deva*, heavenly realms and the human realm called him "The Lord Buddha". The Buddha is not a God nor a savior. He is a great teacher because he teaches us how to escape from all sufferings, how to gain worldly happiness and how to attain enlightenment.

You yourselves should make the effort; Buddhas are only teachers who show the way. Those who enter the path and practise Tranquility and Insight Meditation will be freed from the fetter of illusion.

- Dhammapada verse 276

The Life of the Buddha

More than two thousand five hundred years ago, a prince was born on the full moon day of May (623 BC) in Lumbini Park at Kapilavatthu which is located in present day Nepal near the Indian border. His father was King Suddhodana of the Sakya clan and his mother was Queen Mahā Māyā. The prince was named Siddhattha which means "wish fulfilled". His family name was Gotama.

When he was very young, many strange things happened to him. Soon after his birth, the infant prince stood on the ground and, taking seven paces to the north, spoke the words: "I am the most exalted and excellent one". That same day the holy man Kaladevila came to the palace to behold the extraordinary child. The baby boy, on being carried near to pay reverence, raised both feet and placed them on the braided hair of the holy man.

The holy man smiled, because he saw that the Prince would become a Buddha, and then wept, because he himself would not live to see that

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event. On the fifth day after the birth, eight distinguished brahmins examined the prince. They then proclaimed that he would become either a universal monarch or a Buddha. A month after the birth of the *Bodhisatta*, the Buddha-to-be, his father the king, went out to perform the royal ploughing ceremony. When he was left under a rose apple tree at the ploughing festival, the Bodhisatta meditated on the breath *ānāpāna* meditation and achieved one-pointedness of mind and entered into the first state of *jhāna*, absorption concentration.

At the age of sixteen, he married Princess Yasodhara. They lived a happy married life for thirteen years in luxurious conditions created by King Suddhodana. One day while Prince Siddhattha was on the way to the royal garden in his carriage, he saw four signs which made a great impact upon him. The four signs were an old man, a sick man, a corpse and a monk. And, when he thus learnt of old age, disease and death, his mind became agitated by the miseries of the world. As a result, he renounced worldly life to search for the Truth at the age of twenty-nine.

Prince Siddhattha left the palace and became a forest ascetic. During his stay in the forest he learned meditation under Ālāra and Uddaka. He mastered their teachings very fast and attained the highest stages of *jhāna*. But he left them to continue his search, for he realised that their teachings could not lead him to enlightenment. Five ascetics joined him in his quest. Siddhattha practised extreme austerities for six years. But his efforts were in vain. He still could not attain enlightenment.

He then remembered the one-pointedness of mind he attained as a child under the rose apple tree. He decided to renounce the extreme ascetic practices and follow the Middle Path (*Majjhima-paṭipadā*). As a result of this, his five companions (*pañcavaggis*) deserted him thinking that he had returned to a life of luxury.

On the full moon day of May 588 BC, Siddhattha meditated under the

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Bodhi tree near Buddhagayā, in India and attained enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. Since then, he is known as the Buddha, the Enlightened One. Seven weeks later, the Buddha walked to the Deer Park near Benares to expound the very first sermon to his five former companions. On the full moon day of July, the Buddha preached the first discourse to them. The five *bhikkhus* attained enlightenment after listening to the teachings of the Buddha. Soon after, the Buddha established the Saṅgha - the Order of *Bhikkhus* (monks) and *Bhikkhunis* (nuns).

The Buddha taught for forty-five years. At the age of eighty, the Buddha died on the full moon day of May 543 BC in the Sālā Grove at Kusināra. His passing away is known as *Mahāparinibbāna*, entering into *Nibbāna*, i.e. extinction of all kinds of mental and physical sufferings. Though the Buddha passed away, his teachings still exist. His teachings are known as the Dhamma. They are embodied in the *Tipiṭaka*, the three baskets: the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya Piṭaka*), the Basket of Discourses (*Sutta Piṭaka*) and the Basket of Philosophy (*Abhidhamma Piṭaka*). Pāli is the language of Buddhism.

A unique being, an extraordinary man arises in this world for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world. Who is this unique being? It is the Buddha, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.

- Sutta Piṭaka

WHAT IS DHAMMA?

Dhamma means the teachings of the Buddha. It also has other meanings such as object of mind, a state, a phenomenon, etc. The Dhamma protects those who practise the Dhamma from dangers and falling into the four woeful states (*apāya*): hell (*niraya*), animal kingdom (*tiracchāna*), hungry ghosts (*peta*) and demons (*asura*).

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The Dhamma deals with truth and facts that can be testified and verified by personal experience and is not concerned with theories and speculations.

- Nārada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*

The Buddha said,

The person who sees the Dhamma (i.e. realises the Dhamma) sees the Buddha.

- Sutta Pitaka

It is very important for everyone to learn the Truth through their own experience. Otherwise he or she might be confused by the many different doctrines. In one *sutta*, the Buddha asked us to learn something before we accept it.

Practise the Dhamma in a proper way, and avoid improper practice. The one who follows the right path lives happily in this world and the next.

- Dhammapada verse 169

Kālāma Sutta

Once the Lord Buddha and many bhikkhus went to Kesamutti town. The Kālāmas dwelling there went to see the Buddha. Their town was located at the entrance of a thick forest. Whoever wanted to go through the forest had to stop at the town for a night or so. Of those, some were brahmins and some were ascetics. They tried to persuade the people there, saying their doctrine was right and noble, and the doctrines of others were wrong and shallow. Some condemned others' views or teachings. Because of that, the Kālāmas had doubts. They were unable to judge as to which teaching was right and which was wrong. That was why they approached and consulted the Buddha.

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The Buddha said:

O Kālāmas, do not accept anything on mere hearsay. Do not accept anything by mere tradition. Do not accept anything on account of rumours. Do not accept anything just because it accords with your scriptures. Do not accept anything by mere supposition. Do not accept anything by mere inference. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable. Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is respected by us. But when you know for yourselves – these things are immoral, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to ruin and sorrow – then indeed do you reject them. When you know for yourselves – these things are moral, these things are blameless, these things are praised by the wise, these things when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness – then do you live and act accordingly.

- Kālāma Sutta

So it is good for everyone to learn, practise and verify for themselves before accepting anything. In the present age, the existence of the *Buddhasāsana*, (the Dispensation), is because of the venerable Saṅgha and supporters.

WHAT IS SAṄGHA?

The word *Saṅgha* in Pāli means the Order or Community of Bhikkhus (monks) and Bhikkhunis (nuns). Though the Buddha did not leave any written teachings when he entered into *Mahāparinibbāna*, his disciples (the venerable Saṅgha) tried to memorise all the Buddha's teachings by reciting them daily. They recited all the teachings of the Lord Buddha from generation to generation until the Saṅgha committed all the teachings into writing. Had the venerable Saṅgha not taken care of the teachings, all the teachings would probably have disappeared by now.

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So the venerable Saṅgha established by the Lord Buddha is indeed worthy of being paid homage to for their good deeds: learning the Doctrine (*pariyatti*), practising the Dhamma (*paṭipatti*), and realising its goal (*paṭivedha*).

Who with strong mind, practising themselves thoroughly in the Dispensation of Buddha, they have attained the highest state, having encountered the immortality, they enjoy the perfect peace (Nibbāna) in absolute freedom. In the Saṅgha is this precious jewel (holiness) found, so by this truth, May all beings be happy.

- Ratana Sutta

WHAT IS BUDDHISM?

The original Pāli term for Buddhism is *Dhamma*, the teachings of the Buddha. We call those who practise in accordance with the teachings “Buddhists”. A Buddhist should be non-aggressive, should possess good morals with pure thinking and pure living, and should abstain from all evil deeds. He or she should have compassion for himself or herself and others. The final goal of a Buddhist is to attain enlightenment. Superstitious beliefs, ideas, practices and blind faith are not the right way for the Buddhist. The Buddha’s teachings are all based on the premise of *Ehipassiko* - “come and see”.

An attitude of patience, compassion and forgiveness is part of a Buddhist’s practice. The Buddha never encouraged his followers to harbour hateful thoughts or an attitude of discrimination and racism, because this attitude might lead people to be more hateful. Hateful or harmful thoughts can destroy both oneself as well as others and even the whole world. So a Buddhist should be wise to make human society happy, peaceful and united. Also, a Buddhist should understand that if he lets hateful thoughts be acted upon, he will become the heir of those deeds and

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this is not the kind of deed to bring him to full enlightenment. Indeed, when he attempts to act wrongly, he is like a man who wants to throw dust at another against the wind.

*When a fool hates a man that has no hate,
Is purified and free from every blemish,
Such evil he will find, comes back on him,
As does fine dust thrown up against the wind.*

- Visuddhi Magga

WHAT IS BUDDHASĀSANA?

The Pāli word, *Buddhasāsana* literally means the doctrine of Buddha, or the teachings of Buddha. It is also known as the Dispensation of the Buddha. Those who have been practising the Dhamma in accordance with the teachings of Buddha are considered to be living within the Buddhasāsana. For them, the Buddhasāsana is still prosperous within themselves; the Buddhasāsana still exists in these individuals. If Buddhists firmly practise moral conduct and meditation in accordance with the Dhamma, then the attitude of racism, discrimination and superstition will no longer exist among the Buddhist community. The Buddhasāsana will enable people who firmly practise the teachings of Buddha to possess humane attitudes. In addition, there is no doubt that if we practise the Dhamma, the Dhamma will equally give happiness and peace, to everyone.

Oh! Pahārada (the asura king). just as the great rivers: Gangā, Yamunā, Aciravati, Sarabhū and Mahī, entering the mighty ocean, lose their former names and identities and are termed simply ocean; so also these four castes: Khattiya (king or a warrior caste), Brahmṇā (brahamāns), Vessa (merchants) and Sudda (a member of low caste), going forth from the world into the orders of saṅghas,

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lose their former names and lineages are termed simply Bhikkhus, monks. This is fourth wondrous marvel in Buddhasāsana, the dispensation of the Buddha, which the monks delight to see and see.

- Āṅguttara Nikāya

When a Buddhist starts learning the teachings and understands the virtues of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, he or she will take three Refuges as follows:

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.

Homage to Him, the Exalted, the Worthy, the Fully Enlightened One!

Buddham saranam gacchāmi.

Dhammam saranam gacchāmi.

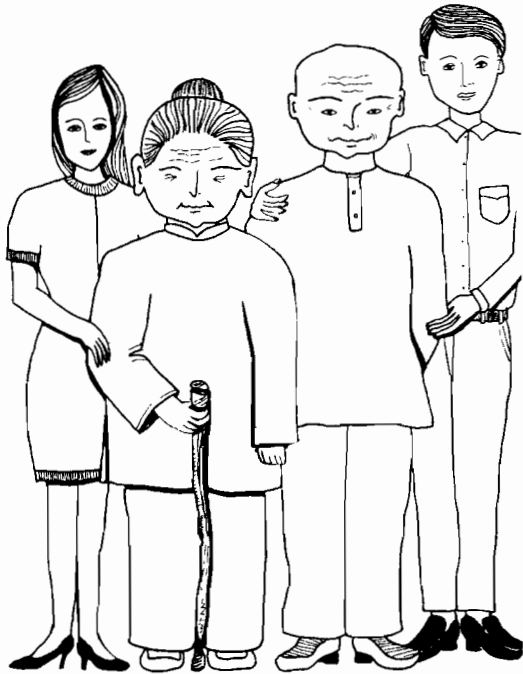
Sangham saranam gacchāmi.

I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

I go to the Saṅgha as my refuge.

Taking care of one's parents is to perform
MERITORIOUS DEEDS



CHAPTER two

SUPPORTING PARENTS IS A SUPREME BLESSING

According to the Buddha's teachings, taking care of one's parents is performing meritorious deeds, because parents do many things for their children with enormous love and endless compassion from the time they are born. They bring up their children with great care and affection. Parents possess four great qualities – *Mettā* (loving-kindness), *Karunā* (compassion), *Muditā* (sympathetic joy) and *Upekkhā* (equanimity) for their own children. These four categories are called *Brahma-Vihāra*, "sublime states" or "divine abodes"; also called the 4 "Boundless states" (*appamañña*). Therefore, the Lord Buddha likens parents to *Brahmās* i.e. gods (celestial beings) who are always endowed with these four great qualities. Parents do not only look after their children but are also their first teachers (*pubbācariyas*), because they teach the right things such as language, behaviour and right action to their children. The children who are born in a civilized society should repay great debts of gratitude that they owe to their parents. That is why the Buddha said, "Supporting parents is one of the supreme blessings."

Though we cannot compare parents' compassion with the Lord Buddha's (because the Buddha's compassion extends to all beings), parents' compassion towards their own children is also incomparable. However, they may not feel the same compassion towards others. Whatever troubles are brought upon them by their children, parents

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endure them, bear them and forget them. We cannot find anyone in this world, whose compassion and affection are greater than our parents'. If we compare gratitude that we should feel towards our parents with Mount Meru, the mountain will be too small. Parents are wonderful beings for the children because of their endless compassion. That is why we should have sympathy for them. And also we should have empathy with them before they die. After our parents' death, please do not say, "I am so sorry because I haven't repaid great debts of gratitude to my parents." That will be too late. Parents' compassion and affection for their children are incomparable. They can do anything for their own children. We clearly see that parents can bring up ten children but the ten cannot afford to look after their two parents.

The Way to Repay

Children need to repay the debt of gratitude to parents in a proper way. Otherwise, we can never repay the debt of gratitude to them. How can we repay? The following is the Buddha's way.

O Monks, one can never repay two persons, I declare. What two? Mother and Father. Even if one should carry about his mother on one shoulder and his father on the other for a hundred years; and if he should support them, anointing them with unguents, kneading, bathing and rubbing their limbs, and they meanwhile should even void their excrements upon him, – even so could he not repay his parents.

Moreover, monks, if he should establish his parents in the supreme authority, in the absolute rule over this mighty earth abounding in the seven treasures, – not even thus could he repay his parents.

What is the cause of that?

Monks, parents do much for their children; they bring them up, they nourish them, they introduce them to this world. Moreover, monks, whoever incites his

unbelieving parents, settles and establishes them in the faith; whoever incites his immoral parents, settles and establishes them in morality; whoever incites his stingy parents, settles and establishes them in liberality; whoever incites his foolish parents, settles and establishes them in wisdom, – such a one, just by so doing, does repay, does more than repay what is due to his parents.

- Samacitta Vagga, Aṅguttara Nikāya

The Buddha very often encouraged his followers to look after their parents. Meanwhile, he also did the same thing. This was because the Buddha did not want them to regret that they did not care to fulfil this duty towards their parents after their parents' death, for instance, King Ajātasattu, who killed his own father after associating with a bad man. Even the Buddha allowed his monks, to take care of their parents. Here is a story that comes from Jātaka (No. 540).

A Grateful Monk

Once the Buddha was dwelling at Jetavana monastery. There was a wealthy merchant at Sāvatti, who was worth eighteen crores. He had a son. The son was dear and winning to his father and mother. One day the son saw a great crowd going to Jetavana monastery with perfumes and garlands in their hands to listen to a discourse given by the Buddha. Seeing thus, he also went to the monastery. After listening to the teaching of the Buddha, he asked the Buddha for ordination. The Buddha told him, "I do not ordain anyone who has not obtained his parents' permission." He went back home and asked his parents for permission. However, the parents did not allow him. So he was so disappointed that he lived a week without food. Finally he got their permission and returned to the Buddha begging for ordination.

After ordination, he studied the monks' rules and regulations for five years under his preceptor and teachers. Then he thought to himself, "It is

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not suitable for me to live here to reach the goal of insight." So having obtained instruction in meditation from the Buddha, he departed to a frontier village and dwelt in the forest. He strove there for twelve years to attain spiritual insight. During this time, his parents became poor, for those who rented their land and carried merchandise for them found out that there was no son in the family to enforce the payment. They then seized what they could lay their hands upon and ran away. The servants and labourers in the house also seized the gold and coins and ran away. At last they sold their house. Eventually they wandered around begging for food, carrying potsherds in their hands. They were in extreme misery.

At that time, a bhikkhu from Sāvatti came to his place. He asked him about the health of the teacher and disciples. And then he asked for news of his parents.

"Tell me, Sir, about the welfare of such and such a merchant's family in Sāvatti."

"Oh friend, don't ask for news of that family."

"Why not, sir?"

"They say that there was one son in that family, but he has become a monk. Since he left the world, that family has gone to ruin. Now the two old parents beg for alms and sleep on the bare earth. I am deeply sorry for them, my friend."

When he heard the visitor's words, he could not remain unmoved and began to weep. The visiting monk asked him:

"Oh friend, why do you weep?"

"Oh Sir" he replied, "They are my parents, I am their son."

"Oh friend, your father and mother have become poor because of you. Why don't you go and take care of them?"

The Bhikkhu thought to himself,

"For twelve years, I have striven but have never been able to attain the

path and fruition knowledges; I must be incompetent; what am I doing with monkhood? I will become a householder and will support my parents again. I will thus eventually become destined for heaven.”

Having so determined, he gave up his abode in the forest to the elder and the next day, he departed for Jetavana monastery which was not far from Sāvatti. There he found two roads, one leading to Jetavana, the other to Sāvatti. As he stood there, he thought,

“Shall I see my parents first or the Buddha?”

Then he said to himself,

“In the old days I saw my parents for a long time, from henceforth I shall rarely have the chance of seeing the Buddha; I will see the Buddha today and listen to his teaching. And then tomorrow morning, I will see my parents.”

He then went to Jetavana monastery. That very day at daybreak, the Buddha, as he looked upon the world, had seen the potentialities of this young monk. So when the monk came to see him, the Buddha praised the virtues of parents. The monk thought,

“The Buddha said, ‘A son who has become a monk can support his parents even while remaining as a monk.’ ”

“I will now support my parents as a monk.”

So he took his ticket which he could exchange for food and gruel (this was a custom for monks in the olden days). In the morning, he went to Sāvatti and he thought to himself,

“Shall I first get the gruel or see my parents?”

He reflected that it would not be right to visit them in their poverty empty-handed; so he first got the gruel and then went to the door of their old house. When he saw his parents sitting by the opposite wall, he stood not far from them feeling a sudden burst of sorrow with his eyes full of tears.

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They saw him but knew him not. His mother, thinking that it was someone waiting for food, said to him,

“Oh sir, we having nothing to give to you, be pleased to pass on.”

When he heard his mother, he repressed the grief which filled his heart and remained standing as before, with his eyes full of tears. Though they told him to leave a second and a third time, he continued standing. At last the father said to the mother,

“Oh my dear, go to him; can this be your son?”

She rose and went to him. Recognising him, she fell at his feet and cried. The father also cried. There was a loud outburst of sorrow. Seeing his parents, he could not control himself and burst into tears. After yielding to his feelings, he said,

“Oh mother, cry no longer; today onwards, I will support both of you.”

After having comforted them, he made them drink some gruel and sat down on one side. He then went out again and begged for some food and gave it to them. And then he went again and asked for alms for himself. Having finished his meal, he went back to the monastery.

From that day onwards, he watched over his parents in this manner. He gave them all the alms he received. When he sometimes got very little food, he gave them all. On these days, he had nothing left to eat. As he looked after his parents, he gradually grew very pale and thin. His friends said to him,

“My friend, in older days your complexion was bright, but now you have become very pale. Has some illness come upon you?”

He replied, “No illness has come upon me, but a hindrance has befallen me,” and told them the story.

“Sir” they replied, “The Buddha does not allow us to waste the offering of the faithful; you are doing an unlawful act in giving to the laymen the offerings of the faithful.”

When he heard this, he was ashamed. But not satisfied with this, they went and told all to the Buddha, saying, "Such and such, he did, sir."

The Buddha sent for the monk and said to him,

"Is it true that you take the offerings of the faithful and support laymen with them?"

"Yes, I do, venerable Sir," he confessed.

"Who are they?"

"My parents, Sir."

Then the Buddha, wishing to praise him, said,

"Well done, well done, well done, my son; you are on the path which I have gone before."

Then the Buddha revealed the Jātaka Story (No: 540),

"Once upon a time.... "

After listening to the teaching, the monk attained the first stage of the path and fruition knowledges.

Oh monks, these two persons are hard to find in this world, What two?

The one who is first to do a favour (pubbakāri) and the one who is grateful for what is done (kataññutā-katavedi).

- *Āṅguttara Nikāya*

Who is an Enemy?

Sometimes parents might become enemies of their children if they do not teach them to have good attitudes from young. It is the parents' duty to take care of the welfare of their own children who have not fully grown. Parents are responsible for them to have a better education and to teach them how to behave in a good manner. If the parents do nothing for them, they will be censured by their children. For example, a son may censure his mother, because she did not give him a good education and did not bestow on him a good attitude.

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FIVE DUTIES OF PARENTS

1. Restrain children from evil.
2. Support them in doing good.
3. Give them good education or some skills.
4. Hand over their inheritance to them at a proper time.
5. Arrange a suitable marriage.

- Singāla Sutta

FIVE DUTIES OF CHILDREN

1. Support parents in return (when they have income).
2. Manage affairs on their behalf.
3. Maintain the tradition of the family.
4. Make oneself worthy of the inheritance.
5. Give alms on behalf of the departed parents.

- Singāla Sutta

WE LEARN IT FROM TEACHERS

According to the Buddha's teachings, parents and teachers are very important people because children and students learn many things from them. First of all, children learn "Mama, Papa" from the parents. We have already learnt that parents are our first teachers. We learn many things from our parents and then we also learn from teachers in schools. We are dependent on our teachers to get a better education. Most teachers kindly give education to us.

We divide teachers into two groups: secular teachers (who give us education) and spiritual teachers (who give us instruction for liberation). The Buddha and his disciples are spiritual teachers. Of these the Buddha is the most supreme teacher. It doesn't matter whether they are secular teachers or spiritual teachers, both are beneficial to us. Of course, spiritual

teachers are higher than others because of their virtues. We should repay our gratitude to both teachers for their education and compassion.

However, some students instead of repaying gratitude, are ungrateful to their teachers. If our attitude is always against the guidance of teachers, we will get into trouble. So we should not have ill-will towards those who take care of our welfare out of their compassion. There is a Jātaka Story (No. 252) that teaches us a good lesson.

Animosity over a Handful Sesamum Seeds

Once upon a time, Brahmadata, the king of Benares, had a son named Prince Brahmadata. (In the olden days, though there were famous teachers living in their own countries, kings used to send their sons to foreign countries to complete their education and to learn the ways of life in the world.) Calling his son, who was sixteen years old, to him, the king gave him a thousand pieces of money, saying these words:

“My son, go to Takkasila and study there.” The prince obeyed and went to Takkasila (University). There he inquired for the teacher’s dwelling, and reached it at the time when the teacher had finished his lecture and was walking up and down in his house. He welcomed the new-comer. When the prince stood respectfully by him, he asked,

“Where have you come from?”

“From Benares.”

“Whose son are you?”

“I am the son of the king of Benares.”

“What brings you here?”

“I come to learn.”

“Well, have you brought a teacher’s fee? Or do you wish to attend on me in return for teaching you?”

“I have brought a fee with me.”

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And he laid at the teacher's feet his purse of a thousand pieces. Then the teacher taught the prince.

One day, the prince went to bathe along with his teacher. There was an old woman, who was parching some sesamum seeds. When the prince saw the seeds, he desired to eat them. So he picked up a handful of seeds and ate them.

"You must be hungry," thought the old woman, but she said nothing and sat silently.

The same thing happened the next day. Again the woman said nothing to him. On the third day, he did it again.

Lifting her arms in lamentation, the old woman cried out,

"The great teacher is letting his pupils rob me!"

The teacher turned back.

"What is it mother?" he asked.

"Master, I have been parching some sesamum seeds and your pupil took a handful and ate them! This he has done today, he did it yesterday, and he did it the day before. Surely he will eat all and then even my home!"

"Don't cry, mother: I will pay you for that."

"Oh, I want no payment, master: only teach your pupil not to do it again."

"Then, see here, mother," said he.

He asked two pupils to take the prince by his two hands and beat him thrice upon the back with a bamboo stick, telling him not to do it again.

The prince was very angry with his teacher. With a furious glare, he eyed the teacher from head to foot. The teacher observed how angry the prince was.

The prince applied himself to his work and finished his courses. But the offence he hid away in his heart and was determined to murder his

teacher. When the time came for him to go back to his country, he said to his teacher:

“Oh my teacher, when I receive the kingdom of Benares, I will send for you. Please come to me. I will repay the great debt of gratitude to you.”

He then returned to Benares. He visited his parents and showed proof of what he had learnt. Seeing the magnificence of his performance, the king was satisfied and made his son king in his stead.

As the prince enjoyed the splendour of royalty, he remembered his grudge and anger arose within him. “I will kill him in revenge for beating me,” he thought and sent a messenger to fetch his teacher.

The teacher came. Seeing his teacher, the King at first was glad. Then his anger rose and his eyes grew red. He beckoned to those around him and said to them:

“O courtiers, the place where my teacher struck still hurts me. He has come here with death written upon his forehead. His life must end today.”

Hearing the threat of death, the teacher explained to him the true conditions.

“Great King, understand this yourself.

There is no just cause for anger. Indeed, if you had not been taught this lesson by me, you would have gone on taking cakes and sweets, fruits or the like, until you become covetous through these acts of theft. Then by degrees you would commit crimes; house-breaking, robbery and murder about the villages and towns.

At the end, you would have become a public enemy. So the king would have to say, ‘Take this man, and punish him according to his crimes.’

O great king, you should understand this yourself. If you had done so, how could you get this prosperity which you now enjoy. How could you get such magnificence if not through me?”

After the teacher had finished speaking, the courtiers who stood

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around said, "In truth, my lord, all your magnificence really belongs to your teacher."

At once the king recognised the goodness of his teacher and said to him,

"O my teacher, please receive the kingdom."

"No, my lord king; I have no wish for the kingdom," the teacher replied.

The king then sent for the teacher's wife and family. He treated his teacher like a father and obeyed his admonitions thereafter.

*One should first establish oneself in what is proper, and then instruct others.
Such a wise man will never be blamed.*

- Dhammapada verse 158

FIVE DUTIES OF A TEACHER

1. Give students thorough instructions.
2. Train them in moral disciplines.
3. Teach them generously all arts, sciences and skills that the teacher has learnt.
4. Provide security for the students.
5. Introduce them to his friends (teachers) who can give them further education.

- Singāla Sutta

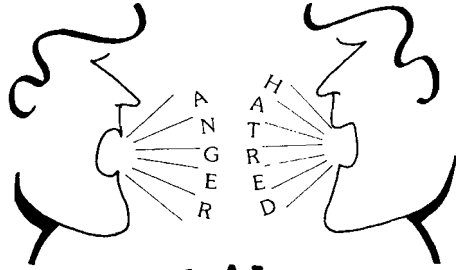
FIVE DUTIES OF A PUPIL

1. Greet or salute the teachers rising from the seat (when the teachers come in).
2. Attend or wait upon the teachers.
3. Obey the words of the teachers.

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4. Offer personal service to the teachers.
5. Study the teachers' instructions thoroughly.

- Singāla Sutta



CHAPTER three

No one can be civilized by merely taking the three Refuges. So we need to observe precepts, at least five. What are they?

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

- 1 Refraining from killing any living being.
- 2 Refraining from taking what is not given.
- 3 Refraining from sexual misconduct.
- 4 Refraining from wrong speech.
- 5 Refraining from taking drinks and drugs which befuddle the mind and reduce mindfulness.

Some Buddhists may think, “We have to observe these five precepts because we are Buddhists.” In fact, it is not so. Whoever wants to be a humane person, to civilise oneself and to get a happy life, really needs to practise these precepts.

A Basic Sense of Humanity

Sila or morality is not a set of commandments handed down by the Buddha, and it need not be confined to Buddhist teachings. It is actually derived from a basic sense of humanity. For example, suppose we have a

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spurt of anger and want to harm another being. If we put ourselves in that other being's place, and honestly contemplate the action we have been planning, we will quickly answer "No, I wouldn't want that done to me. That would be cruel and unjust." If we feel this way about some action that we plan, we can be quite sure that the action is unwholesome (*akusalakamma*). In this way, morality can be understood as a manifestation of our sense of oneness with other beings.

All beings are afraid of the stick, all fear death. Putting oneself in another's place, one should not beat or kill others.

- Dhammapada verse 129

Similarly, we should think very deeply before we do something. By doing so, we will have a basic sense of humanity. And then we should try to refrain from breaking other precepts also.

Some people defend the use of drugs or alcohol, saying that these substances are not so bad. On the contrary, they are very dangerous. Even in small amounts, intoxicating substances can make us less sensitive, more easily swayed by gross motivations of anger and greed. They can lead even a good-hearted person into forgetfulness. Like accomplices to a crime, intoxicants open the door to a host of problems, from just talking nonsense, to inexplicable bursts of rage, to negligence that could be fatal to oneself or others. Indeed, any intoxicated person is unpredictable. Abstaining from intoxicants is therefore a way of protecting all other precepts.

- Sayadaw U Pandita, *In This Very Life*

KAMMA (ACTION AND REACTION)

The Pāli word *kamma* literally means action, or volition (*cetanā*). We create our own kamma through body, speech and mind. These actions

stem from moral or immoral volitions.

Oh monks, volition (cetanā) is what I call action (kamma), for through volition one performs the action by body, speech and mind.

- Aṅguttara Nikāya

We ourselves are responsible for our own fortune, happiness and misery. We build our own heavens, or hells. We therefore speak of kamma as the law of cause and effect; action and reaction.

Kamma or Karma

The subject of kamma is deep and complicated. It is not easy to understand. So I would like to touch on this subject in detail, because kamma is a very important subject for a Buddhist to understand as one of the basic teachings of the Buddha.

When beholding this world and thinking about the destinies of beings, it will appear to most men as if everything in nature is unjust. We often ask ourselves why one man is rich while the other man is poor; why one man is handsome, healthy and happy, while the other is ugly, sickly and unhappy. Why is this so? Why do such differences exist in nature?

These questions have been answered by religious leaders in accordance with their own religious views. All religions have reasonable answers for these questions. However, for me, these questions are only satisfactorily answered by Buddhism. Buddhists believe that no one can come into existence without a previous cause and the presence of a number of necessary conditions. There will be another life after death. The conditions are known as *Kamma* in Pāli or *Karma* in Sanskrit.

The word Kamma literally means action; correctly spoken it denotes the wholesome and unwholesome volitions and their concomitant mental

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factors, causing rebirth and shaping the destiny of beings. These *kammic* volitions are manifested as wholesome or unwholesome actions by body, speech and mind. Kamma does not mean past actions only; it can be both past and present actions. Many people wrongly interpret kamma to mean its effects. In fact, its effects are called *kamma-vipāka*, the result of kamma. Volitional action can be good or bad. Good kamma or good action produces good effects while bad kamma produces bad effects. Therefore, we speak of kamma as the law of cause and effect or action and reaction.

We believe that we are responsible for our own fortune, happiness and misery, because we create our own kamma through body, speech and mind. We build our own heavens and hells. As long as one makes actions that produce reaction, the cycle of life will continue to have future existences. This cycle of existences is known as *samsāra*, the cycle of continuity.

Kamma is not Moral Justice

The theory of kamma is different from “moral justice” or “reward and punishment.” The idea of moral justice is the conception of a supreme being i.e. God, who is a law-giver and sits in judgement, deciding what is right and wrong. Kamma is a law in itself. But it does not follow that there should be a law giver. Inherent in kamma is the potentiality of producing its due effect. The cause naturally produces the effect. Kamma is like a seed that produces the fruit. Therefore, kamma is a natural law and it has nothing to do with the ideas of justice that is governed by God or other mighty beings.

The law of action, according to which good or appropriate acts give rise to good effects, and bad or inappropriate acts to bad effects, is impelling a chain of successive births, each life’s condition being explained by actions in the previous life. Every physical event has its cause and every cause will

have its determinate effects. The theory of kamma extends the concept of causation to include moral and spiritual life as well. Therefore, the theory of kamma is easy to understand thus, "As a man sows, so shall he reap."

Religions that believe in *Kamma*

The theory of kamma is a basic doctrine of these three religions: Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. They all believe that a person's acts generate the power that leads to the round of rebirth and death which must be endured by the individual until the person attains *Nibbāna* (in Pāli) or *Nirvana* (in Sanskrit). *Nibbāna* literally means extinction of flame, or extinction of attachment. However, Hindus and Jainas employ the word, "Moksa" or "Moksha" instead of *Nibbāna* for religious attainment and release. The word Moksa means release or liberation.

According to Hinduism, the word "karma" means act or work. Hindus believe that the practice of merits or wholesome and unwholesome deeds can be transferred into future existences. Though the individual has passed away, the soul (*atman*) still exists. The soul is like a bird that rests on a tree and when the tree falls down on the ground, the bird moves to another tree. Similarly, when the individual dies, the soul will move to another existence to take another shape or form as reincarnation. Hindus strongly believe that "*kamma*" is under the divinity's control and devotion to him or her is believed to bring release. However, some Hindus also believe that meditative disciplines are considered effective ways to bring purification and release.

According to the Buddhist view of kamma, some beings are rich, healthy and happy while some are poor, sickly and unhappy because of the consequences of their kamma. Though Hinduism states the function of kamma in terms of the repeated rebirth of an eternal soul (*atman*), Buddhism explains rebirth by denying the existence of an eternal soul or

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self. Buddhists understand that an individual is composed of an ever changing aggregation of five bodily and mental factors (*khandhas*). When an individual dies, a new aggregation known as a being arises as a result of past deeds. There is a causal connection between the two lives, but no soul is carried over from one life to the next. Buddhists strongly state that all things, including persons, are subjected to the ultimate nature of impermanence. There are no such things that always exist. However, everyone has the opportunity to free himself from *saṃsāra*, the life of continuity, when he practises meditation, i.e. the Eight Fold Path, and attain enlightenment or *Nibbāna*.

Different functions of Kamma

Kamma has different functions in accordance with the Buddha's teachings. For instance, immediately effective Kamma (*ditṭhadhammavedanīya kamma*) is kamma which, if it is to ripen, must yield its results in the existence in which it is performed. Subsequently effective kamma (*upapajjavedanīya kamma*) is kamma which, if it is to ripen, must yield its results in the existence immediately following that in which it is performed. Indefinitely effective kamma (*aparāpariyavedanīya kamma*) is kamma which can ripen at any time from the second existence onwards, whenever it gains an opportunity to produce results.

Defunct kamma (*ahosi kamma*) does not designate a special class of kamma. However, it applies to kamma that is due to ripen in either the present existence or the next, but does not meet conditions conducive to its ripening. In the case of Arahants, all their accumulated kamma from the past which is due to ripen in future lives become defunct with their final passing away.

The above are the different functions of kamma.

Jainism also has a large number of detailed texts dealing with the

problem of kamma. Jains believe that kamma includes its bondage and fruition. The major distinction of the Jains' concept of kamma is material. Kamma is a subtle form of matter that attaches to the individual soul (*jiva*). The embodied state of the soul is the result of the karmic matter. All actions cause the accumulation of some kammic matter through evil deeds and good deeds. The unliberated soul is bound by kamma through eternity. However, liberation comes about only through the abandonment of action and the practice of penance (*tapa*).

Now we have learnt the different religious concepts of kamma. In brief, kamma is action, based on volition (*cetanā*) that produces results in accordance with the consequences of kamma.

*I am the owner of my own deeds (kamma); heir to deeds, deeds are cause.
deeds are relative, deeds are refuge. Whatever deed I do, whether good or bad,
I shall become heir to it.*

- Āṅguttara Nikāya

Unintentional actions, however, do not create any kinds of kamma, because there is no volition (*cetanā*) involved. Here is the story of Cakkhupāla to illustrate.

A Blind Bhikkhu

During the time of the Lord Buddha, there was an *arahant* (one who had already attained enlightenment) named Venerable Cakkhupāla who was blind. One day, Venerable Cakkhupāla came to pay homage to the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery. One night, while he was pacing up and down in meditation, he accidentally stepped on some insects. In the morning, some bhikkhus visiting him found the dead insects. They

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thought ill of him and reported the matter to the Buddha. The Buddha asked them whether they had seen Venerable Cakkhupāla killing the insects. They answered in the negative. The Buddha said, "Just as you had not seen him killing, so also he had not seen those living insects. Besides, being an arahant he had no intention (*cetanā*) of killing and was not guilty of committing an unwholesome act." On being asked why Venerable Cakkhupāla was blind although he was an arahant, the Buddha told the following story to explain the nature of *kammic* effects.

Venerable Cakkhupāla had been a physician in one of his past existences. Once, he had deliberately made a woman patient blind. That woman had promised to become his servant together with her children if her eyes were completely cured. Fearing that she and her children would have to become servants, she lied to the physician. She told him that her eyes were getting worse when, in fact, they were perfectly cured. The physician knew she was deceiving him. So in revenge, he gave her another ointment which made her totally blind. As a result of this evil deed, the physician lost his eyesight many times in his later existences.

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

All mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made.

If one speaks or acts with an evil mind, suffering (dukkha) follows him just as the wheel follows the hoofprint of the ox that draws the cart.

- Dhammapada verse 1

KAMMA AND VIPĀKA

In brief, kamma is action (cause) and vipāka is reaction (result). Our wholesome kamma gives us pleasant vipāka (good fortune) and our unwholesome kamma gives us unpleasant vipāka (bad fortune). However, most Buddhists usually combine two things, cause and effect, at the same time saying things like, "My kamma is too poor".

Akusala kamma (unwholesome action)

Body action (*kāyakamma*)

- 1 *Pānātipatā* - killing
- 2 *Adinnādānā* - stealing
- 3 *Kāmesu-micchācārā* - sexual misconduct

Speech (*vacikamma*)

- 4 *Musāvādā* - lying
- 5 *Pisunāvācā* - slandering
- 6 *Pharusavācā* - harsh speech
- 7 *Samphappalāpa* - frivolous talk (vain talk)

Thoughts (*manokamma*)

- 8 *Abhijjhā* - covetousness
- 9 *Vyāpāda* - ill will
- 10 *Micchādittī* - wrong view

We also call these ten *duccarita* (evil conduct or unwholesome actions). By abstaining from these ten, we practise *succarita* (good conduct or wholesome action).

Though we explain only these ten types of unwholesome actions, there are more in the Buddha's teachings.

The unwholesome actions that we create are frightful indeed. Yet we are still forgetful and continue to do them because our faith in kamma and belief in dhamma is not strong enough. That is why we easily do whatever we wish to do. But we are not brave enough to face any misfortune that we have created. Who is brave enough to face their bad kamma?

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The Story of Losaka Tissa Thera

During the time of the Lord Buddha, there was a village where one thousand families lived. Since the day of Losaka's conception, the village had to starve and various misfortunes befell them. By a process of exclusion, they discovered that their misfortunes were due to Losaka's family. So they drove the family out. His mother had difficulty getting a livelihood, but when the time came, she gave birth to her son in a certain place. When he could walk, his mother put a potsherd into his hand and sent him away. The solitary child begged for his food and slept where he could.

When he was seven years old, Venerable Sāriputta saw him in Sāvatti. Like a crow, he was picking, grain by grain, any rice he could find outside a house where they had flung away the rinsings of the rice-pots. Venerable Sāriputta was full of compassion for him and said to himself, "Poor child!". After knowing the whole situation, Venerable Sāriputta admitted him first as a Novice monk, and later ordained him when he was old enough. He then was known as Losaka Tissa. Ever since he was a novice monk, he never got enough to eat. Even after he became an arahant, he still got very little food.

When the time came for him to die, Venerable Sāriputta was determined that Losaka Tissa should have a proper meal. So he went with Losaka Tissa to Sāvatti, but no one noticed them. Venerable Sāriputta then took Losaka Tissa back to the monastery and he went alone. Having collected food himself, he sent it to Losaka Tissa, but the person who delivered the food for Losaka ate it all himself. When Venerable Sāriputta found out, it was already afternoon. He therefore went to the King's palace. Having obtained a bowl of *catumadū* (a mixture of honey, ghee, butter and sugar), he took it to Venerable Losaka Tissa and asked him to eat out of his bowl, holding it by his hands, in case the food should

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disappear. That was the only proper meal for Venerable Losaka Tissa throughout his whole life.

That night, Venerable Losaka Tissa died and a shrine was erected over his ashes. When the Lord Buddha was asked why Venerable Losaka Tissa was so unlucky, the Lord Buddha revealed the following story.

Once upon a time, in the days of Kassapa Buddha, there was a monk in a village who was supported by a rich man. One day an arahant came into the monastery that was donated by the rich man. The latter, liking the arahant's appearance, asked him to stay in the monastery, promising to look after him. The arahant agreed, but the resident monk grew jealous of the arahant. The following day, the resident monk, having first knocked on the gong with the back of his nail and tapped at his door, went off alone to the rich man's house for house-dāna. He told the rich man that the visitor monk was lazy and good for nothing. However, after his meal, the man requested him to bring some food for the arahant but on the way back to the monastery, the resident monk threw all the food into the ember, thinking, "If he gets such delicious food, he might never go away even if I were to kick him out of the door." The arahant, reading his thought, left the monastery and went elsewhere.

The monk was seized with remorse for his wrong doing and was reborn in hell after his death. In five hundred successive births, he was a *Yakkha* (ogre), and never had enough to eat. Then, for the next existence, he was a dog, and here too, it never had enough to eat, except on a single day when he had his fill of vomitted rice.

Then, he became a human being again but he never got enough food to eat until the present life. Because of his wrong-doing in the past, he had to suffer a lot. So unwholesome deeds are indeed horrible.

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Not in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in the cave of a mountain, nor anywhere else, is there a place, where one may escape from the consequences of one's evil deed.

- Dhammapada verse 127

Kusala Kamma (wholesome action)

According to the *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, there are ten bases of meritorious actions (*Puñña-Kiriya-Vatthu*). These ten should be done by everyone because they develop our wholesome deeds (*kusala*).

They are:

- 1 *Dāna* - generosity (giving)
- 2 *Sīla* - morality
- 3 *Bhāvanā* - meditation
- 4 *Apacayana* - reverence
- 5 *Veyyāvacca* - service
- 6 *Pattidāna* - transference of merit
- 7 *Pattānumodana* - rejoicing in others' merit
- 8 *Dhammasavana* - hearing the doctrine
- 9 *Dhammadesanā* - expounding the doctrine
- 10 *Ditthijukamma* - straightening of one's own views.

Of the ten, *dāna* is the easiest one to be done. Yet we are not brave enough to do *dāna*, because our faith in doing *dāna* is not strong enough and we don't really know the benefit of *dāna*, as the Buddha knows. That is why the Buddha says, "If people know the benefit of *dāna* as I know, none of them will be afraid to do *dāna*". However, someone might say, "Of course, I believe in the benefit of *dāna* and I like to do *dāna* but I have nothing to offer." We also usually make excuses in this way. Let's see if we are poorer than this old man!

The Great Dāna of a Poor Man

There was once a brahmin couple in Sāvātthi who had only one outer garment between the two of them. Because of this they were known as *Ekasātaka*. As they had only one outer garment, both of them could not go out at the same time. So, the wife would go to the monastery during the day and the husband would go at night. One night, as the brahmin listened to the Buddha, his whole body became suffused with delightful satisfaction and he felt a strong desire to offer the outer garment he was wearing to the Buddha. But he realized that if he were to give away the only outer garment he had, there would be none left for him and his wife. So he wavered and hesitated. Thus, the first and second watch of the night passed. When the third watch came, he said to himself,

“If I am hesitant, I will miss the opportunity of ending worldly suffering. I shall now offer my outer garment.” So saying, he placed the piece of cloth at the feet of the Buddha and cried out “I have won!” three times.

King Pasenadi of Kosala, who was among the audience, heard those words and ordered a courtier to investigate. Learning about the brahmin’s offering to the Buddha, the king commented that the brahmin had done something which was not easy to do and so should be rewarded. The king ordered his men to give him a piece of cloth as a reward for his faith and generosity. The brahmin offered that piece of cloth too, to the Buddha. Again the king rewarded him with two pieces of cloth. Again, he offered the two pieces of cloth to the Buddha. Whatever the king gave him, he offered them to the Buddha, and each time the king doubled his reward. When the reward came to thirty-two pieces of cloth, the brahmin kept one piece for himself and another for his wife and offered the remaining thirty pieces to the Buddha.

Then, the king again commented that the brahmin had truly performed

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a very difficult task and so must be rewarded fittingly. The king sent a messenger to the palace to bring two pieces of expensive velvet cloth and gave them to the brahmin. This time the brahmin made two canopies and offered one to the Buddha and kept the other for his own use. When the king next went to the Jetavana monastery, he saw the velvet canopy and recognized it as the offering made by the brahmin and he was very pleased. This time he made another great reward to him.

When the monks heard about this, they asked the Buddha, "How is it that, in the case of this brahmin, a good deed done at present bears fruit immediately?" The Buddha replied, "If the brahmin had offered his outer garment in the first watch of the night, he would have been rewarded more; since he had made his offering only during the last watch of the night, he was rewarded less. So when one wants to give in charity, one should do so quickly; if one hesitates the reward comes slowly and only sparingly. Also, if one is too slow in doing good deeds, one may not be able to do it at all, for the mind tends to take delight in doing evil."

One should make haste in doing good deeds; one should restrain one's mind from evil; for the mind of one who is slow in doing good tends to take delight in doing evil.

- Dhammapada verse 116

REBIRTH

Buddhists believe in rebirth. But they do not believe in the existence of an individual soul which passes from one body to another. This is, of course, a puzzle to many people.

The mind or consciousness and body are continually changing. They are not permanent (*nicca*). So we are all actually being reborn every moment. There is no phenomenon that always exists. On the expiry of the consciousness of a dying man, a new consciousness arises in a new life

and we call this rebirth (*bhava*). There is no individual or immortal soul. It is just the process of consciousness that leads him to be reborn. There is only a relation of cause and effect.

Kamma necessarily leads to rebirth. Past kamma conditions the present birth and present kamma, in combination with past kamma, the future

Kamma, which is rooted in ignorance, is the cause of birth and death. As long as this kammic force survives there is rebirth.

- Nārada, *A Manual of Buddhism*

DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

In Buddhism, there is an important teaching known as *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination). We should learn more about *Paṭiccasamuppāda* which clearly explains the relationship of cause and effect.

This *Paṭiccasamuppāda* is the central point of Buddhist doctrine. There is nothing that can arise on its own accord, independently. For example, if there is no tree there would not be fruits arising from the tree. If there is no fruit there would not be seeds. Without seeds, how can the tree grow?

The Doctrine explains the cycle of lives. From it, we can learn how a person accumulates kamma and is reborn. It is called the "Wheel of Becoming" - a wheel of twelve spokes denoting the twelve links of the causal process.

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- 1 & 2 Dependent on ignorance;
intentional activities arise.
- 3 Dependent on intentional activities;
consciousness arises.
- 4 Dependent on consciousness;
mental and physical phenomena arise.
- 5 Dependent on mental and physical phenomena;
the six senses arise.
- 6 Dependent on the six senses;
contact arises.
- 7 Dependent on contact;
feeling arises.
- 8 Dependent on feeling;
craving arises.
- 9 Dependent on craving;
clinging arises.
- 10 Dependent on clinging;
the process of becoming arises.
- 11 Dependent on becoming;
birth arises.
- 12 Dependent on birth;
decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair arise.
Thus the whole mass of suffering arises.

The following diagram shows the relationship of dependence in three successive lives:

Past Cause	1 Ignorance (<i>avijjā</i>) 2 Kamma formation (or) intentional activities (<i>sankhāra</i>)
Present Result	3 Rebirth consciousness (<i>viññāna</i>) 4 Corporeality and mentality (<i>nāma-rūpa</i>) 5 Six bases (<i>āyatana</i>) 6 Contact or impression (<i>phassa</i>) 7 Feeling (<i>vedanā</i>)
Present Cause	8 Craving (<i>tanhā</i>) 9 Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>) 10 Process of becoming (<i>bhava</i>)
Future Result	11 Rebirth (<i>jāti</i>) 12 Old age and death (<i>jarāmarana</i>)

Dependent Origination in brief

The above elaboration of Paṭiccasamuppāda is one of the supreme teachings given by the Buddha through his great wisdom. The teaching is surely deep and wide and difficult to understand with our shallow knowledge. However, if we understand Paṭiccasamuppāda we can understand that the teaching is about the relationship of cause and effect. This will be enough for us to make progress in insight when we practise insight meditation.

The Buddha's teachings are based on cause and effect. Nothing can arise without cause. By understanding the teaching of Paṭiccasamuppāda, we can learn similar teachings having a relationship of cause and effect.

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For example, the teaching of *Paṭṭhāna* i.e. the seventh volume of Abhidhamma, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths etc., are also teachings where the Buddha clearly points out the relationship of cause and effect. So it does not matter how deep, how wide and how difficult the teaching is. After all, we realize that the essence of Paṭiccasamuppāda is a causal relation of cause and result, Dependent Origination.

*The Perfect One has taught the cause of causally arisen things (Phenomena),
And what brings their cessation, too; Such is the doctrine preached by the
Buddha.*

• Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahavagga Pāli

To understand clearly the relationship of cause and effect, here is a story to illustrate.

Ogress Kāla Yakkhinī

Once there lived a householder whose wife was barren. Being unable to bear a child and afraid that she would be mistreated by her husband and her mother-in-law, she herself selected and arranged for her husband to marry another woman. But when she knew the second wife was pregnant, she grew jealous of the fruitful wife. Then the barren wife gave her food mixed with drugs causing her to have a miscarriage.

On her third pregnancy, the fruitful wife kept it to herself without telling the barren wife. But when the latter came to know about it, she again caused an abortion. Eventually, the second wife died in childbirth. Before her death, the unfortunate woman was filled with hatred and vowed vengeance on the barren wife and her future offspring. Thus the feud started.

Among their later existences, the barren wife became a hen while the

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fruitful wife became a cat. The cat ate all the eggs whenever the hen laid eggs, and then ate even the mother hen. Before the hen died, the hen vowed vengeance on the cat and her future offsprings. The two then were reborn as a doe and a leopardess. They took their revenge on one another. Finally, the fruitful wife became a daughter of a noble man in Sāvatti and the other one became an ogress.

One day the Ogress Kāla Yakkhinī was in hot pursuit of the lady with the baby. When the latter learned that the Buddha was nearby, giving a religious discourse at the Jetavana Monastery, she fled to him and placed her son at his feet for protection. The ogress was stopped at the door by the guardian spirit of the monastery. She was later called in and both the lady and the ogress were admonished by the Buddha. The Buddha told them about their past feud as rival wives and how they had been harboring hatred towards each other and killing each other's offsprings through their various lives.

They were made to see that hatred could only cause more hatred, and that it could only cease through friendship, understanding and goodwill. Both realised their mistakes. Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

*Hatred never ceases through hatred in this world; through love alone it ceases
This is an eternal law*

- Dhammapada verse 5

At the end of the discourse, the ogress was established in *Sotāpatti* Fruition (the first stage of supramundane wisdom) and the long-standing feud came to an end.



CHAPTER four

By oneself, indeed, is evil done; by oneself is one defiled; by oneself is evil not done and by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one purifies another.

- Dhammapada verse 165

In general, *dāna* (giving) and *sīla* (morality) lead us to good and better rebirths in future existences. However, merely *dāna* and *sīla* cannot purify our mind completely. As long as our mind is not fully purified, we cannot attain enlightenment.

To purify our mind, we need to practise *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (wisdom). *Samādhi* and *paññā* are called *bhāvanā*: meditation or mental cultivation or mental development.

In Buddhism, there are two kinds of meditation or *bhāvanā* (mental development):

1 *Samatha-bhāvanā*

This means the development of one-pointedness (or) concentration.

2 *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*

This means the intuitive insight into the nature of things.

The insight knowledge gained from *vipassanā* meditation can lead meditators (yogis) to realize *Nibbāna* (enlightenment).

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SAMATHA-BHĀVANĀ (TRANQUILITY MEDITATION)

In Buddha's teachings, there are forty types of tranquility meditation.

Some of them are:

- Buddhānussati* - recollection on the virtues of the Buddha
- Mettā* - meditation on loving-kindness
- Asubha* - meditation on impurity or loathsomeness of the body
- Maranānussati* - recollection on death
- Kāyagatāsati* - mindfulness with regard to the body
- Anāpānasati* - mindfulness of in- and out-breath
- Pathavi kasina* - earth-*kasina* (concentrating on a rounded disc) etc.

Those who wish to learn how to meditate are strongly advised to study with a qualified teacher (*Kammaṭṭhānācariya*). If you do not do so, you may have to face many difficulties in meditation.

In general, you may encounter these things: lustful desire, hatred, ill will, worries and restlessness, sceptical doubts and so on.

Cultivating or purifying your mind through mindfulness and concentration, you may attain these qualities: deep concentration, mindfulness, the analytical faculty, confidence, joy, tranquility, happiness, wisdom, supernatural power, etc. These qualities combining with insight knowledge can lead yogis (meditators) to realize the Ultimate Truth or Nibbāna.

Buddhānussati Bhāvanā

The meditation on the nine virtues of the Buddha is easy to practise and is popular in Buddhist countries. One has just to recite the virtues verbally or mentally, understanding the meaning of the words. But I will write more on these nine virtues and how to practise later.

Mettā Bhāvanā

Mettā should be practised first towards oneself. In doing so a person should charge his mind and body with positive thoughts of peace and happiness. He should think how he could be peaceful, happy, free from suffering, worry and anger. He then becomes the embodiment of loving-kindness. Shielded by loving-kindness, he cuts off the hostile vibrations and negative thoughts. He returns good for evil, love for anger. When he is full of peace and is free from thoughts of hatred, it is easy for him to meditate loving-kindness towards others. What he does not possess he cannot give to others. Before he tries to make others happy, he should first be happy himself. He should know the way and means to make himself happy.

- Nārada, the Buddha and His Teachings

To meditate on *Mettā*, one can recite thus:

May I be well, happy and peaceful.

May my teachers be well, happy and peaceful.

May my parents be well, happy and peaceful.

May my relatives be well, happy and peaceful.

May my friends be well, happy and peaceful.

May the indifferent people be well, happy and peaceful.

May my enemies be well, happy and peaceful.

May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.

The Great Advantage of *Mettā*

If one were to give a hundred pots of rice in the morning, again at noon and again in the evening, or instead, if one were to develop the mind of love in the morning, noon and evening even for as long as it takes to pull a cow's udder, this would be by far the more beneficial of the two.

- Saṃyutta Nikāya

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Eleven benefits of Mettā:

- 1 Sleep soundly.
- 2 Wake up happily.
- 3 Free from bad dreams.
- 4 Loved by human beings.
- 5 Loved by celestial beings (*devas*).
- 6 Protection given by devas.
- 7 Free from fire, poison and weapons.
- 8 Can concentrate easily.
- 9 Have clear complexion.
- 10 Die peacefully.
- 11 Born in abode of heavenly beings (*brahmās*).

Let loving thoughts for all the world be maintained boundlessly, above, below and all around, without any obstruction without hate or enmity.

- Mettā Sutta

Development of tranquillity concentration (*samatha*)

A yogi (meditator) may start the meditation by watching the inhalation and exhalation of his breath. The yogi should not breathe in or out by force. He or she should breathe naturally and should just be aware of his breath going in and out. He has just to be watchful and attentive to it. He should fix his mind and attention on the spot the breath first touches the tip of the nose or the upper lip. This is the preliminary step of this practice. The yogi may have further instructions from qualified meditation teachers (*Kammaṭṭhānācariya*).

Before I proceed further, I need to explain the three characteristics of existence. It is necessary for yogis to understand the three characteristics of existence when they practice *vipassanā* (insight) meditation. They are:

- 1 Impermanence (*anicca*)
- 2 Suffering or unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*)
- 3 Egolessness or impersonality (*anattā*)

The nature of *anicca* is that all living beings and non-living things are constantly arising and passing away. They are always changing, dissolving and vanishing from moment to moment.

The nature of *dukkha* is painful sensation or suffering. All living beings are subject to pain and suffering.

Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be associated with hated persons is suffering, to be separated from beloved persons is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

- Sutta Piṭaka

FIVE AGGREGATES (*KHANDHĀS*)

According to Buddha's teachings, the so-called being consists of five aggregates (*khandhās*):

- 1 *Rūpakkhandhā* aggregate of matter
(that is compared to a lump of froth)
- 2 *Vedanakkhandhā* aggregate of feeling
(that is compared to a bubble)
- 3 *Saññākkhandhā* aggregate of perception or memories
(that is compared to a mirage)
- 4 *Saṅkhārakkhandhā* aggregate of mental formation
(that is compared to banana-tree trunk)
- 5 *Viññānakkhandhā* aggregate of consciousness
(that is compared to a conjuring trick)

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All physical and mental phenomena are included in these five aggregates of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*).

It is difficult to explain the nature of *anattā* because it is deep and delicate and hard to understand. However, in general, *anattā* means egolessness or insubstantiality. No living being may exist for ever. And also there is no individual soul. Indeed, all living beings and non-living things arise on their own accord.

No one but a Buddha can penetrate into the anattā nature of things because only through vipassanā meditation, discovered by Buddha, can insight into anatta be realized.

- Sayadaw U Silānanda, *The doctrine of anatta*

VIPASSANĀ (INSIGHT MEDITATION)

This *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* meditation is also called “The Four Foundations of Mindfulness”.

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

- 1 *Kāyanupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna* - contemplation of the body
- 2 *Vedanānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna* - contemplation of the feelings or sensations
- 3 *Cittānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna* - contemplation of mind
- 4 *Dhammānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna* - contemplation of mind-objects

To gain insight knowledge (*vipassanā ñāna*), we must practise the Noble Eightfold Path.

What, O Bhikkhus (monks) is that Middle Path the Buddha had comprehended which promotes vision and knowledge, and which tends to peace, higher wisdom, enlightenment and Nibbanā? It is this very Noble Eightfold Path.

- Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

**THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH
(ARIYA ATṬHANGIKA MAGGA)**

Wisdom

Paññā

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Right View or Understanding | <i>Sammā Ditṭhi</i> |
| 2 Right Thought or Right Aim | <i>Sammā Sankappa</i> |

Morality

Sīla

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 3 Right Speech | <i>Sammā Vācā</i> |
| 4 Right Action | <i>Sammā Kammanta</i> |
| 5 Right Livelihood | <i>Sammā Ājīva</i> |

Concentration

Samādhi

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 6 Right Effort | <i>Sammā Vāyama</i> |
| 7 Right Mindfulness | <i>Sammā Sati</i> |
| 8 Right Concentration | <i>Sammā Samādhi</i> |

Whoever practises the Four Foundations of Mindfulness can be considered as practising the Noble Eightfold Path also.

How? Just before starting the meditational practice, a *yogi* (meditator) has to observe the precepts, either five or eight precepts (known as *sīlamagganga*). Then the *yogi* makes an effort (*virīya*) to concentrate on the meditational object (*samādhi*), such as the rising and falling of the abdomen with careful noting (*sati*). These three aspects are called *samādhimagganga*. Because of right aim to the meditational object (*sammāsankappa*), the *yogi* may gain the stages of insight and path and fruition knowledges (*sammāditṭhi*). These two aspects are known as *paññāmagga*. In this way, the *yogi* accomplishes the Noble Eightfold Path.

It will be clearer if we explain the Noble Eightfold Path a little further in each and every aspect.

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1 The Right View that can be classified as:

- a Right view of *kamma* *Kammassakata Sammādiṭṭhi*
- b Right view of *jhāna* *Jhāna Sammādiṭṭhi*
(absorption meditation)
- c Right view of *vipassanā ñāna* *Vipassanā Sammādiṭṭhi*
(insight meditation)
- d Right view of *magga* *Magga Sammādiṭṭhi*
(path knowledge)
- e Right view of *phala* *Phala Sammādiṭṭhi*
(fruition knowledge)

2 Right Thoughts

- a Thoughts of renunciation *Nekkhamma Sankappa*
(that is opposed to sensual desire)
- b Thoughts of benevolence for
the welfare of all beings *Abyāpāda Sankappa*
(that is opposed to ill will)
- c Thoughts of harmlessness for
all beings *Avihimsā Sankappa*
(that is opposed to cruelty)

3 Right Speech

- a Refraining from false speech.
- b Refraining from slanderous speech.
- c Refraining from harsh words and abusive language.
- d Refraining from frivolous or vain talk.

4 Right Action

- a Refraining from injuring or killing any living being.
- b Refraining from taking what is not given.
- c Refraining from sexual misconduct.

Immoral physical and verbal actions such as deceit, trickery, usury and ungratefulness are considered wrong actions.

5 Right Livelihood

- a Not dealing in weapons.
- b Not dealing in human beings.
- c Not dealing in living beings and flesh.
- d Not dealing in intoxicating drinks.
- e Not dealing in poison.

6 Right Effort

- a The effort to prevent unwholesome deeds (*akusala*) that have not been done yet.
- b The effort to discard unwholesome deeds that have already been done.
- c The effort to develop wholesome deeds (*kusala*) that have not arisen yet.
- d The effort to promote the wholesome deeds that have already arisen.

7 Right Mindfulness

- a Mindfulness of body.
- b Mindfulness of feelings.
- c Mindfulness of states of mind.
- d Mindfulness of mental objects or mental and physical phenomena.

8 Right Concentration

This is one-pointedness of mind developed through tranquillity meditation or momentary concentration (*khanika samādhi*) developed

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through insight meditation.

To practise the Noble Eightfold Path is to realise the Four Noble Truths (*Ariya Saccā*).

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

ARIYA SACCĀ

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 The Truth of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Ariya Saccā</i>
(<i>Dukkha Saccā</i>) |
| 2 The Truth of the Cause of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Saccā</i>
(<i>Samudaya Saccā</i>) |
| 3 The Truth of the Cessation of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Saccā</i>
(<i>Nirodha Saccā</i>) |
| 4 The Truth of the way to the Cessation of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada Ariya Saccā</i> (<i>Magga Saccā</i>) |

To practise the Noble Eightfold Path effectively is also to attain the Path and fruition Knowledges (*magga-phala ñāṇas*).

FOUR STAGES OF MAGGA-PHALA ÑĀṆA

1. *Sotāpanna*hood - the first stage of path and fruition knowledges.
(a stream winner)
2. *Sakadāgāmi*hood - the second stage of path and fruition knowledges.
(the once-returner)
3. *Anāgāmi*hood - the third stage of path and fruition knowledges.
(the non-returner)
4. *Arahan*thood - the highest stage of path and fruition knowledges.
(the noble one)

Development of Insight (*Vipassanā*)

Nowadays, most yogis (meditators) practise *vipassanā* (insight-development) from the very beginning of their meditation. They start with being mindful of rising and falling of the abdomen or of inhalation and exhalation of the breath.

By continuing mindfulness (*sati*), they develop concentration (*samādhi*). Developing mindfulness and concentration, they carefully contemplate on the beginning, the middle and the end of rising and falling. And also, they contemplate on the different kinds of sensations, states of mind and mental and physical objects such as consciousness, perception and other mental factors.

With the arising concentration (*samādhi*) together with mindfulness (*sati*), yogis see that all phenomena are impermanent (*anicca*), unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) and egoless or insubstantial (*anattā*) after realising *nāma-rūpa* (the mental and physical processes of phenomena) and the four primary elements – earth (*paṭhavī-dhātu*), water (*āpo-dhātu*), fire (*tejo-dhātu*) and wind (*vāyo-dhātu*). Paṭhavī-dhātu is characterised by hardness or softness, while Āpo-dhātu is characterised by cohesion or fluidity; Tejo-dhātu, by heat or cold, and Vāyo-dhātu, by motion or strengthening. In this way, yogis attain the insight knowledge, and happiness of the Dhamma and Nibbāna.

Oneself is indeed one's refuge; how can others be a refuge to one? With oneself thoroughly tamed, one can attain a refuge (i.e. Arahatta Phala), which is so difficult to attain.

- Dhammapada verse 160

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Mindfulness in Daily Life

Another very important and useful method of meditation is to be aware or mindful of whatever you do physically, verbally and mentally during the daily routine in your life.

Whether you walk, stand, sit, lie down or sleep, you should be fully aware or mindful of the act that you perform at the moment. Whether you stretch or bend your limbs, eat or drink, talk or keep silent, you should also be fully aware of or mindful of those acts. Be sure that your mind lives in the present moment and in the present action. You should not think of the past or the future at all. This is the way to gain insight in your daily life.

"Everything arises and passes away."

When you see this (with insight-wisdom), you are away from sorrow.

- Dhammapada verse 277

Seven benefits of Vipassanā

This is the only way, Bhikkhus, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation; for the complete destruction of pain and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbāna. That is to say the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

- Mahāsatipat̥ṭhāna Sutta

Healing incurable illnesses through Vipassanā

Hundreds of stories have been told by those who have recovered from their illnesses through Dhamma-therapy. To practise vipassanā meditation is not for healing illnesses. However, for those who strive very hard in their vipassanā meditation, the meditation can turn into wonderful Dhamma-medicines, whether you believe it or not. Here is one of the true

stories about Sayadaw U Nandiya who passed away at the age of ninety-nine in Burma.

Never say it is incurable

Sayadaw U Nandiya who later became a well-known meditation teacher as Taw Ku Sayadaw was still a layman. He was afflicted by numerous illnesses. For years he suffered from a paralysis of the legs, hydrocele (swelling of the scrotum) and chronic giddiness. Diagnosed as incurable, native doctors refused to treat him. He was very disappointed with his unhealthy life. When he thus learnt of the diseases and death, his mind became agitated by the miseries of this world.

As a result, he resolutely approached Sayadaw U Pandava in Mahasatipatthana Yeikther, Moulmein. On knowing the situation, the Sayadaw encouraged him to practise vipassanā meditation. However, he did not immediately commence his retreat upon arrival, because he was feeling rather weak. But while waiting to recover his strength, he started his meditation, though not seriously. He could relieve himself a little from suffering, while contemplating. He then became a bhikkhu (monk).

After becoming a monk, he had a serious attack of fever and his chronic illnesses worsened.

He then said to himself,

“Old age, pain and death may come to me. If I keep on postponing, I will surely fall into the abyss of foolishness.”

“Within a breath, I may be attacked by death. If possible, I wish to die while striving in the practice of Dhamma.”

With resolute mind, he began to strive for the Dhamma on that very day. He did not speak to a single person, locked himself up in his room and firmly strove on. He relentlessly noted all sensations that occurred, with diligent effort. By not changing postures frequently and being patient, he could steadily remain attentively mindful for longer and longer

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stretches of time – from an hour to two, two to three, three to four and then, four to five hours.

By the time he was able to do so for a continuous six hour stretch, the coarse painful sensations had diminished. And when he could remain still and mindful in one single posture for twelve hours, all the finer unpleasant sensations completely vanished. Eventually, he was relieved of all evident painful sensations through vipassanā meditation. Therefore, there was no more suffering from his chronic illnesses.

He then said, “A yogi’s task is to be mindful of whatever occurs. In doing so, one is indeed eventually relieved of all painful sensations.”

Better than a hundred years in the life of a person who is idle and inactive, is a day in the life of one who makes a zealous and strenuous effort (in Tranquillity and Insight Development Practice)

- Dhammapada verse 112

THE IMMEDIATE BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

In the present day, many people from all over the world have become aware of the benefits of meditation. To gain the immediate benefits of meditation one must train the mind and use it effectively and efficiently in our daily life. The ultimate aim of meditation is to release meditators from the wheel of saṃsāra - the cycle of birth and death.

Practising meditation is not an easy task but it is possible for everyone to practise. We should understand that if we do something that others cannot do, we will gain something that others cannot attain. The benefits of meditation can be summarised as follows: -

- if you are a busy person, meditation can help you to get rid of tension and to find relaxation.
- if you are a worried person, meditation can calm you and help you to find peace of mind.

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- if you are a person who has endless problems, meditation can help you to develop courage and strength to face and overcome them.
- if you are always dissatisfied with everything, meditation can give you the chance to develop and to maintain inner contentment.
- if you are frustrated and heart-broken due to a lack of understanding of the uncertainty of life, meditation can help you to understand the fleeting nature of worldly conditions.
- if you are a rich man, meditation can help you to realise the nature of your wealth and how to make use of it not only for your own happiness but also for the happiness of others.
- if you are a poor man, meditation can help you to develop contentment and not to harbour jealousy towards those who have more than you.
- if you are a young man or woman at the cross-roads of your life, and you do not know which way to turn, meditation can help you to the right path to reach your chosen goal.
- if you are an elderly man who is fed-up with life, meditation can bring you to a deeper understanding of life; this understanding in turn will relieve your pain and increase the joy of living.
- if you are hot-tempered, you can develop the strength to overcome the weakness of anger, hatred and resentment to become a calmer and sober person.
- if you are addicted to drinking or to drugs, you can overcome the dangerous habit which has enslaved you.
- if you are a wise person, meditation will lead you to supreme wisdom. Then you will see things as they are, and not as they appear to be.

These are some of the practical benefits that come from practising meditation.

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Other benefits of meditation is the attainment of supernatural power (*abhiññā*) based on absorption concentration (*jhāna*). Some extraordinary monks can also gain supernatural power when they have attained path and fruition knowledge (*magga-phala ñāṇa*) based on insight meditation. Of course, the power is not for everyone, but only for some whose perfections are mature enough to gain. There were many monks (*bhikkhus*) and novice monks (*sāmaṇeras*) who attained supernatural powers during the time of the Buddha.

Miracle of Young *Sāmaṇeras*

During the time of the Lord Buddha, there were four well-known *sāmaṇeras* (novice monks), namely Paṇḍita, Revata, Saṁkicca and Sopāka. They were all seven years old. Although they were very young, due to their past good kamma, they became arahants endowed with supernormal powers.

One day, the wife of a brahmin sent her husband to the Jetavana monastery to invite four bhikkhus (monks) for almsfood at their house. She told him to specifically request four senior bhikkhus who were true brahmanās (*arahants*). But four young arahant *sāmaṇeras* were sent instead.

When his wife saw the young *sāmaṇeras*, she was very disappointed and blamed her husband for bringing such young *sāmaṇeras*. She was furious with her husband and sent him back to the monastery to get senior bhikkhus. In the meantime, she refused to give the young *sāmaṇeras* the higher seats and she did not offer them almsfood either.

When the brahmin arrived at the monastery, he met the Venerable Sāriputta (the chief disciple of Buddha) and invited him to his house. When Venerable Sāriputta arrived at the house, he saw the four *sāmaṇeras* and asked them whether they had been offered almsfood or not. On learning that they had not been given almsfood yet, and also that food had

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been prepared for four persons only, the Venerable Sāriputta returned to the monastery. So the wife sent the brahmin to the monastery again to get another senior bhikkhu. This time, the Venerable Moggallana came along with the brahmin but he also returned to the monastery when he came to know of the true situation.

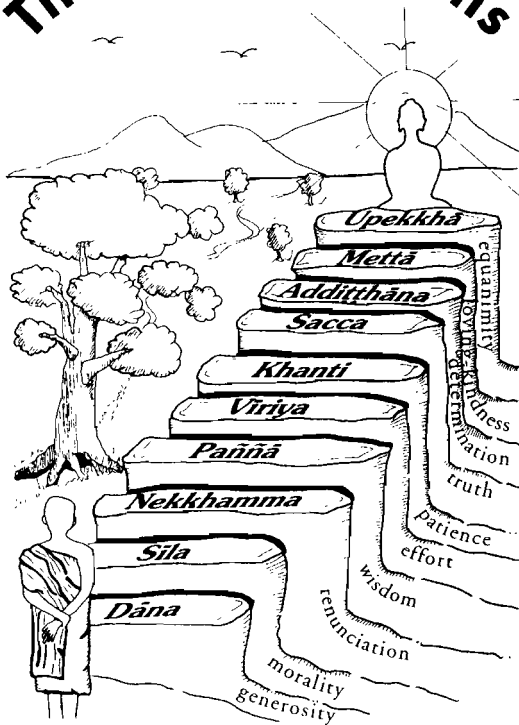
By this time, the sāmaṇeras were feeling hungry and Sakka (King of Devas), seeing the state of things, took the form of an old brahmin and came to the house. The brahmin and his wife paid respects to the old brahmin and offered him a seat of honour but Sakka just sat on the ground and paid respects to the four sāmaṇeras. Then he revealed that he was Sakka. Seeing that Sakka himself was paying respects to the young sāmaṇeras, the brahmin couple offered almsfood to the sāmaṇeras and Sakka.

After the meal, the sāmaṇeras and Sakka manifested their supernormal power. The sāmaṇeras then returned to the monastery showing their power – one went up into the sky through the central roof; one through the right roof; one through the left roof and the other one went back through the earth. Sakka also went back to his celestial abode making a hole in the roof. So there remained five big holes in the house.

When other bhikkhus asked the sāmaṇeras whether they did not get angry when the brahmin couple refused to offer alms-food to them, they answered in the negative. The bhikkhus not believing them reported to the Buddha that the four young sāmaṇeras were falsely claiming to be arahats. To them the Buddha said, “Bhikkhus, arahats bear no ill will towards those who are hostile to them.”

Him I call a brāhmana, who is not hostile to those who are hostile, who is peaceful to those with weapons, and who is without attachment to objects of attachment.

The Ten Perfections



CHAPTER five

WHAT IS NIBBĀNA?

Nibbāna means extinction of sufferings or the end of sufferings.

This, O Bhikkhus, truly is the peace, this is the highest, namely the end of all formations, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth the fading away of craving, detachment, extinction – Nibbāna

- *Ānguttara Nikāya*

The nature of Nibbāna is described in various ways. However, the essence of Nibbāna is very much the same. In general, Nibbāna means extinction: extinction of sufferings; extinction of defilements; extinction of the five aggregates.

Extinction of attachment, extinction of hate, extinction of delusion: this is called Nibbāna.

- *Saṃyutta Nikāya*

In brief, all kinds of sufferings and painful sensations arise based on physical and mental phenomena (*nāma-rūpa*). Dependent on desire, attachment and clinging to existences (*bhava*), birth arises. Dependent on birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair arise. Thus

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the whole mass of suffering arises. If there is no attachment or desire, having realised the truth of suffering completely, there will not be rebirth. As a result, there will be no more sufferings.

Nibbāna is Deathless and Birthless. Since there are no primary elements and no Nāma-Rūpa (mental physical phenomena), everything ceases, and this cessation gives rise to eternal peace. All suffering ends.

• Mahasi Sayadaw, *On the Nature of Nibbāna*

All arahants who have already eliminated all defilements (*kilesas*); who have already attained enlightenment through supramundane wisdom, will enter Nibbāna after their death. And also they will eradicate all kinds of sufferings of *samsāra* (circle of existence).

Arahants, when alive, can enter a state of Nibbāna called *Nirodhasamāpatti* for a maximum of seven days and seven nights. Nothing can disturb them when they are in this state. It is too difficult to explain or talk about because Nibbāna is the experience of meditation that has to be realised within oneself.

When a person has attained Enlightenment, he or she has realised all the nature of dhamma (phenomena). Thus, arahants when touched or attacked by worldly conditions (*lokadhamma*), remain unshaken, sorrowless, undefiled and serene. There are no reactions for them.

Eight Worldly Conditions (*Lokadhammas*)

Gain (*lābha*) and Loss (*alābha*)

Honour (*yasa*) and Dishonour (*ayasa*)

Praise (*pasamsa*) and Blame (*ninda*)

Happiness (*sukha*) and Suffering or Misery (*dukkha*)

Touched by worldly conditions, the mind is not shaken, sorrowless, stainless and safe. This is the Supreme Blessing.

- Maigala Sutta

The Right Aim is for Nibbāna

The final goal of a Buddhist is to attain Nibbāna, or enlightenment. We should aspire for enlightenment whenever we practise *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā* i.e. generosity, morality and mental development instead of wishing for worldly possessions.

There is a threefold classification of Enlightenment:

- 1 *Sāvaka-bodhi* - a noble disciple (*arahant*)
- 2 *Pacceka-bodhi* - an Independently Enlightened One
(private Buddha)
- 3 *Sammā-sambodhi* - a perfectly Enlightened One (Buddha)

Of the three, the last one is higher than others because of the different status of fulfilment of perfection (*pārami*). Whoever wishes to become a Buddha, needs to fulfil ten kinds of perfections. Fulfilling the perfections for the other two enlightenments are not as difficult as that for Buddhahood. The period of time to fulfil the ten perfections is also shorter. For the Bodhisatta (Buddha-to-be), it will take him at least four aeons and one hundred thousand world-cycles to fulfil the perfections.

THE TEN PERFECTIONS (PĀRAMĪS):

- 1 *Dāna* - Generosity
- 2 *Sīla* - Morality
- 3 *Nekkhamma* - Renunciation
- 4 *Paññā* - Wisdom
- 5 *Vīriya* - Effort

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- 6 *Khanti* - Patience
- 7 *Saccā* - Truth
- 8 *Addiṭṭhāna* - Determination
- 9 *Mettā* - Loving-kindness
- 10 *Upekkhā* - Equanimity

Of the ten, *Dāna Pāramī* is the easiest one to be done. That is why the Buddha put it first in order. However, to fulfil *Dāna Pāramī* of Bodhisattas, Buddha to be, is not an easy task because Bodhisattas have to do great sacrifices for the sake of all beings to be a Buddha. Therefore, we should thank them and appreciate their compassion.

Give thanks to them, for what has been given to you, however little.

One who is displeased with gifts cannot attain happiness and peace.

- Dhammapada verse 249

Fulfilment of perfection of Bodhisattas

Buddhists commonly use the word, *Pāramī*. *Pāramī* literally means perfection. These qualities are developed and brought up to maturity by the Bodhisattas, or Buddhas to be, in their past existences. The different ways of fulfilling perfections by Bodhisattas are illustrated in many Jātaka stories.

Their performance for the welfare of beings are excellent and admirable. They can do so many extraordinary things for the sake of all beings while others cannot. However, whenever they do something for other beings, Bodhisattas carefully examine whether the actions will be beneficial for others or not. If the action is not beneficial, they won't do it. If the action is beneficial for others, and even if it will get them into trouble, they will still do it out of great compassion (*mahākarunā*). For

example, Bodhisatta King Sivi donated his eyes to an old brahman, though he knew he would be blind after this act. If the action is not beneficial for others and there is a possibility that they will be born in hell because of it, they will never carry out that action. To understand clearly how Bodhisattas fulfil their perfections, here is a Jātaka story (No. 538) to illustrate renunciation (*Nekkhamma Pāramī*).

Prince Temiya who never speaks

Once upon a time, King Kāsi ruled justly in Benares. He had many queens, but none of them had children. The citizens assembled, saying, “Our king has no son to keep up his line” and they begged the king to pray for a son. The king commanded the queens to pray for sons. He also asked his chief queen, Candādevi, to pray for a son.

So, on the day of the full moon, she took upon herself the Uposatha vows, and while lying on a little bed, she reflected on her virtuous life. She then made a statement on the ‘Act of Truth’ in these terms,

“If I have never broken the precepts, by the Truth in this my protestation, may a son be born to me.”

By the power of her piety, Sakka’s dwelling became hot. Sakka (the king of Devas) having considered the cause, said, “Candādevi asks for a son, I will give her one.” He then saw the Bodhisatta, who had been born in the Ussada Hell where he had suffered for eighty thousand years, after having reigned twenty years in Benares, but right now was a Deva (a heavenly being) in the Deva-world. Sakka went up to him and said,

“Oh Friend, if you are born in the human world, you will fully exercise the perfections and the mass of mankind will be advantaged. Now the queen is praying for a son, do you wish to be born in her womb?”

He consented and was conceived in her womb, while the other deities were conceived in the wombs of the wives of the king’s ministers. At last

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she brought forth a son endowed with auspicious marks. On the same day five hundred sons were born in the ministers' houses.

The king was very happy with the good news. He gave sixty-four nurses for the Bodhisatta and five hundred nurses for the other five hundred sons as honour.

After paying the Bodhisatta great honour, the king also gave the queen a boon. She accepted it and kept it in her mind. On the day of naming the child, they paid great honour to the brahmins who read the different marks, and inquired if there was any threatening danger.

They, beholding the excellence of his marks, replied,

"Oh king, the prince has every mark of future good fortune, he will be able to rule not one continent but all the four, - there is no danger visible."

The king pleased, named his son "Temiya-kumara", because it had rained all over the kingdom of Kasi on the day of his birth. Temiya means wet.

When Prince Temiya was one month old, he was adorned and brought to the king. The king having looked at his dear child, embraced and placed him on his hip and then sat playing with him.

At that time four robbers were brought before the king. The king sentenced one of the robbers to receive a thousand strokes with a barbed whip (whips barbed with thorns), another to be imprisoned in chains, the third to be smitten with a spear, and the fourth to be impaled.

The Bodhisatta, on hearing his father's words, was terrified and thought to himself,

"Ah! My father through his being king, is becoming guilty of a grievous action which brings men to hell."

The next day, the baby prince was laid on a sumptuous bed under a white umbrella. He woke after a short sleep and on opening his eyes beheld the white umbrella and the royal pomp, and he was horrified. He

then pondered, "From where have I come into this palace?"

By recollecting his former births, he remembered that he had once come from the world of the Devas and before that had suffered in hell, after having been a king in that very city.

He pondered to himself,

"I was a king for twenty years and then I suffered eighty thousand years in the Ussada Hell, and now again I am born in this 'house of robbers', and my father, when four robbers were brought before him, uttered such a cruel speech as must lead him to hell; if I became a king, I shall be born again in hell and suffer great pain there."

He became greatly alarmed. His golden body became pale and faded like a lotus crushed by the hand, and he thought of how he could escape from that situation.

Then a goddess who dwelt in the umbrella, and who in a certain previous birth had been his mother, comforted him,

"Fear not, my child Temiya; if you really desire to escape, then, pretend to be a cripple, although you are not really one; though not deaf, pretend to be deaf and though not dumb, pretend to be dumb. Putting on these characteristics, show no signs of intelligence. If so, how will you become a king?"

The Bodhisatta then practised these three characteristics. The king, in order that his son might lose his melancholy, had the five hundred children brought near him. When the children began crying for their milk, the Prince Bodhisatta, being afraid of hell, did not cry. He reflected thus,

"To die of thirst will be better than to reign."

The nurses told this situation to Queen Candādevi and the queen told the king. The king sent for some brahmins who were skilled in signs and omens and consulted them.

They replied,

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“Your majesty, you must give the prince his milk after the proper time has passed. He will then cry and seize the breast eagerly and drink of his own accord.”

The king asked the nurses to follow the advice. But the prince, was stung by the fear of hell, would not cry for milk, even though he was hungry. Then the mother gave him milk, though he did not cry for it, saying thus, “My little son must be hungry.”

Then his nurses reflected, “There must be some reason for all this. Let’s examine it.”

They were determined to try, for one whole day they did not give him milk. But though the prince was hungry, he still did not cry for milk.

Finally his mother said,

“My little child must be famished, give him milk.”

Thus, giving him milk at intervals, they spent a year trying to find the reason but could not discover his weak point.

Then they said, “The other children are fond of cakes and dainties. We will try him with them.”

They set the five hundred children near him and brought various dainties and cakes and placed them close by him, telling them to take what they liked. Some of the children hid themselves but some seized the cakes and dainties and ate them while others quarrelled and struck one another.

But the prince said to himself,

“Oh Temiya, eat the cakes and dainties if you wish for hell.”

And in his fear for hell he didn’t look at them. Thus, even though they tried him with cakes and dainties for a whole year, they discovered not his weak point.

Then they said, “Children are fond of different kinds of fruits.”

And they brought all sorts of fruits and tried him again. While the other children fought for them and ate them, the prince did not look at

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~L.B. Horner

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them.

And thus a whole year passed.

Then they said, "Children are fond of play-things."

So they set golden and other figures of elephants near him. The rest of the children seized them and played with them, but the prince did not look at them.

And thus, for a whole year they tried him with play things.

Then they said, "There is a special food for four year old children, we will try him with that."

So they brought all sorts of food. The other children broke them in pieces and ate them, the prince did not look at them for fear of hell, until at last his mother, with her heart-nigh, fed him with her own hand.

They then determined to try him with frightful things.

At the age of five, they tried to frighten him with fire; at the age of six, with a wild elephant; at the age of seven, with big snakes.

But their attempts were in vain.

Then they said, "Eight-year old boys are fond of social gatherings."

So, having set him in the palace-court with the five hundred boys, they caused an assembly of mimes to be gathered together. The other boys, seeing the mimes, shouted and laughed loudly but the prince said to himself,

"If I were born in hell, there would never be a moment's laughter or joy."

He then remained motionless as he pondered on hell, and never looked at the dancing.

They then said, "We will try him with the sword."

They then placed him with the other boys in the palace-court. While they were playing, a giant-sized man rushed upon them, brandishing a sword and jumping and shouting,

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“Where is this devil’s-child of King of Kasi? I will cut off his head.”

The others fled, shrieking in terror, but the prince still remained there though the man threatened to cut off his head. The man could not frighten him at all and at last went away.

When the prince was ten years old, in order to find out whether he was really deaf, they hung a curtain round a bed and made holes in the four sides and placed the conch-blowers underneath it without letting him see them. All at once they blew the conchs - there was one burst of sound. However, it was also in vain. The prince was still motionless. Then they tried him in many other ways. However, their attempts were in vain.

When the prince was fourteen years old, they said, “A youth who is grown up loves what is clean and abhors what is unclean. We will try him with what is unclean.”

From that time they did not let him bathe or perform any bodily ablutions, until he was reduced to a miserable plight. Though they tried to make him look like a released prisoner, they discovered no weak point in him.

Then they put pans of fire under the bed, saying, “When he is distressed by the heat, he will perhaps be unable to bear the pain and will show some signs of writhing.”

Boils seemed to break out on his body, but the prince said to himself,

“The fire of Avici Hell flames up a hundred miles. This heat is a hundred or a thousand times preferable to that.”

So he remained motionless.

His parents, with breaking hearts, made the men come back and take him out of the fire. And they implored him, saying,

“Oh Prince Temiya, we know that you are not in any way crippled by birth, for cripples have not such feet, face, or ears as you have. We gained you as our child after many prayers. Do not now destroy us, but deliver us

from the blame of all the Kings of Jambudipa.”

Though thus entreated by them, the prince still lay motionless as if he heard them not. Then his parents went away weeping. Sometimes, his father or his mother came back alone and implored him, but he seemed to hear them not.

When the prince was sixteen years old, they considered thus, “A sixteen-year old boy whether he is a cripple or deaf or dumb delights in enjoyable things alike. This is all natural in the proper time like the opening of flowers. We will have dramas acted before him and will thus try him.”

So they summoned many beautiful girls, full of graces. And the king promised them that whoever could make the prince laugh or could entangle him would become his principal queen. Then they had the prince bathed in perfumed water and adorned him like the son of a Deva.

And they put him on a royal bed.

Meanwhile, the girls surrounded him and tried hard to delight him with dancing and singing and all sorts of pleasant words.

He looked at them in his perfect wisdom and stopped his inhalations and exhalations in fear, lest they should touch his body. So his body became quite rigid.

When the girls were unable to touch him, they told his parents,
“His body is all rigid. He is not a man, but must be a goblin.”

Thus, though they tried him for sixteen years with the sixteen great tests and many smaller ones, they were not able to detect any weak point in him.

The king, full of vexation, called for the fortune-tellers and said,

“Oh wise men, when the prince was born, you said that he had fortunate and auspicious marks; he was no threatening obstacle. But he is born a cripple and deaf and dumb. Your words do not answer to the

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facts."

"Oh great king," they replied, "nothing is unseen by your teachers, but we knew how grieved you would be if we told you that the child of so many royal prayers would be all ill-luck. So we did not utter it."

"What must be done now?"

"Oh king, if the prince remains in this house, three dangers are threatened; your life or your royal power, or the queen; therefore, it will be best to have some unlucky horses yoked to an unlucky chariot, and placing him therein, convey him by the western gate and bury him in the charnel-ground."

The king, frightened by the threatened dangers, agreed with their words.

When the queen heard the news, she came to the king, "My lord, a long time ago, you gave me a boon and I have kept it unclaimed, give it to me today."

"What things do you want, my dear?"

"Give the kingdom to my son."

"I cannot, my dear; your son is all ill-luck."

"If you will not give it for this life, give it to him for seven years."

"I cannot, my dear."

"Then give it to him for six years - for five, four, three, two, one year; give it to him for seven months, for six, five, four, three, two, one, half a month."

• "I cannot, my dear."

"Then give it to him for seven days."

"Well," said the king, "take your boon now."

So she had her son adorned and a proclamation was made to the beat of a drum, "This is the reign of Prince Temiya."

He was seated upon an elephant and led round the city, with a white

umbrella held over his head.

When he returned, and was laid on his royal bed, the queen implored him all night,

“Oh my son, Temiya, for sixteen years I have wept and taken no sleep on your account. My eyes are parched up and my heart is pierced with sorrow. I know that you are not really a cripple, or deaf and dumb. Do not make me utterly destitute.”

In this way she implored him day after day for six days.

That sixth night she told the prince,

“Oh, my child, the king has given orders that you are to be buried tomorrow in the charnel-ground. Please talk to me, and tell me what you want. Tomorrow you will certainly die, my son.”

When the prince heard this, he thought to himself,

“Oh Temiya, your sixteen years’ labour has reached its end,” and he was glad.

Next day, the charioteer came to the palace and said to the queen, “Oh queen, do not be angry, it is the king’s command.”

So saying, as the queen lay embracing her son, he pushed her away with the back of his hand and lifted up the prince like a bundle of flowers and came down from the palace. The queen was left in the chamber smitting her breast and lamenting with a loud cry.

Then the prince looked at her. He was very sorry for his mother. Though he desired to speak, he reflected,

“If I speak, my efforts for sixteen years will be rendered fruitless. But if I do not speak, I shall be safe for myself and my parents.”

Then the charioteer lifted him into the chariot and drove to the charnel-ground.

There he began to dig a hole with a spade.

The prince thought, “This is my time for effort; for sixteen years I have

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never moved hand nor feet. Are they in power or not?"

He rose and rubbed his right hand with his left and his left hand with his right and his feet with both his hands. He then resolved to alight from the chariot. When he had alighted, he walked backwards and forwards for several times to regain his strength. He then went to the charioteer who was digging and said to him, standing at the edge,

"Oh charioteer, why are you digging that pit? What do you want to do with it?"

The charioteer went on digging the hole without looking up and spoke to the prince,

"Our king has found his only son crippled and deaf and dumb; and I am sent to dig this hole and to bury him here."

The prince replied,

"I am not deaf nor dumb, my friend, nor crippled. If you bury me in this wood, you will incur great guilt."

Then the charioteer said, "Who is this?" and looked up.

Recognising him as the prince, the charioteer fell at his feet and folding his hands spoke to the prince,

"Oh prince, pardon me. Please come, I will take you back; sit on the throne and act the king."

The prince replied, "I do not want the throne nor wealth. I want not friends nor relatives. I just want to become an ascetic in a forest."

The charioteer thought, "What have I to do with this miserable life? I too will become an ascetic with him."

He then requested the prince to take him along.

The prince reflected,

"If I at once admit him to the ascetic life, seeing him not, people will say that he is a goblin; that he has devoured the charioteer. Then my father and mother will suffer a lot."

So, wishing to save himself from blame and to provide for his parents' welfare, he said,

"Restore the chariot first; you are also not a free man now. First pay your debts, then take the ascetic's vow."

The charioteer thought to himself, "If he departed elsewhere, while I went to the city, the king would punish me if he does not get to see him." And he asked the prince to keep his promise to remain there and went to the palace.

Hearing the news, the king with the ministers and his royal men immediately went to his son. At that same time, the Queen Candādevi, surrounded by the royal ladies, came up. After clasping her dear son's feet and saluting him, she sat on one side with her eyes full of tears.

Then the king said,

"Oh my dear son, this appears wonderful to me. Accept my palace, my elephants, my chariots, horsemen and infantry. I give you all my property."

The prince replied, "No, I don't want them. Let me leave the world. I will embrace the hermit's life. I need no pomp nor throne."

"Oh king, I watch the boy with childish lips, crying for father and mother. Very soon he himself becomes a father of sons and then he too grows old and die. All men and women, whether young or old, soon perish as the river sweeps away trees from its banks. In good sooth, who would put his trust in mortal life? While death smite this world; while old age watches us at our gate, why do you talk of crown or throne?"

"Oh king, we are getting older and older every second; very soon we are chased by dreadful and deadly diseases; why do we waste our lives away? We must hurry up to leave the world; for very soon we will be conquered by death."

The king, as he listened to the prince's discourse, became disgusted at

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life spent in a house and longed to leave the world. And then he exclaimed, "I will not go back to the city; I will become an ascetic here. If my son will go to the city, I will give him the white umbrella."

So, he once more invited his son to take his kingdom.

The prince replied, showing how little he wanted a kingdom,

"Why seek for wealth, it will not last; Why woo a wife, she soon will die; Why think of youth, it will soon be past; and threatening age stands very high."

"What are the joys that life can bring? Beauty, sport, wealth or royal fare? What is a wife or child to me? I am set free from every snare."

"Do what you haste to do today, who can ensure the tomorrow's sun?

Death is the Master-General, who gives his guarantee to none."

The prince's discourse with its application came to an end. When they heard it, not only the king and the queen but also the sixteen thousand royal men and women all desired to lead the astatic life. The king ordered a proclamation to be made in the city by beat of drum that all who wished to become astatics with his son should do so.

Then the king ordered them to open his palace, saying,

"Whoever wishes to get my treasures or my property may take them all."

The citizens also left their houses with the doors opened as if it were an open market and flocked round the king. The king and the multitude took the astatic vow together before Prince Temiya. Then all the astatics went into a forest to practise meditation. They strove very hard under the instruction of the Bodhisatta, Temiya, so that they all speedily developed the Faculties and the Attainments of absorption concentration.

The effort should be made today. One may die tomorrow, who knows?

We have no covenant with the king of Death and his many warriors.

Don't say it is easy

Indeed, to fulfil the perfections or pāramīs to be a Buddha is not an easy task. For those who wish to fulfil Bodhisatta's pāramī energetically, I highly respect them for their perfections. For me, it is really very hard to fulfil the perfections of Bodhisattas. So far, I do not think I have ever wished to fulfil the perfections of the Bodhisattas. Once when I donated a bottle of blood to a Sayadaw, I was very scared to see my own blood. I know that blood donation is an easy task for Bodhisattas. However, it is not so easy for me to do such Dāna. Though I cannot perform the ten perfections bravely to be a Bodhisatta, I am still trying my best to perform a kind of perfection done by Savakas (*noble disciples*). Here is one of my favourite stories, as told by my teacher, Panditarama Sayadaw. This story is to illustrate Savaka Pāramīs.

They are very nice to me

Once the Lord Buddha was staying at Jetavana monastery near Savatthi. One evening, the Venerable Punna, rising from his solitary meditation, approached the Buddha, made obeisance and sat at a suitable place.

He said these words to the Buddha, "Venerable Sir, I beg of you. May Lord Buddha favour me with a brief teaching. After listening to the teaching, I would seek a solitary place and remain directing my mind (towards Nibbāna) with mindfulness and diligence."

"Punna, if so, listen and pay good attention."

Then the Buddha preached to him the six categories of objects (*Ārammana*). After preaching to him, the Buddha asked him,

"Punna, after hearing the instruction of meditation, where will you go?"

"Venerable Sir, I will go to Sunaparanta."

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"Punna, the people of Sunaparanta are rough and brutal. Punna, suppose the people of Sunaparanta were to abuse you and threaten you, in that case, how would you feel?"

"Venerable Sir, if they do so to me, I will feel thus, 'the people of Sunaparanta are very nice to me, they just threaten me; but do not stone me yet.'"

"Punna, if the people of Sunaparanta stone you, how would you feel?"

"Venerable Sir, I will feel thus, 'the people of Sunaparanta are very nice to me. They just stone me; they do not beat me yet with a stick or clubs.'"

"Punna, if they beat you with a stick, how would you feel?"

"Venerable Sir, I will feel thus, 'the people of Sunaparanta are very nice to me. They just beat me; they do not cut me yet with a sharp knife.'"

"Punna, if they cut you with a sharp knife, how would you feel?"

"Venerable Sir, I will feel thus, 'the people of Sunaparanta are very nice to me. They just cut me with a sharp knife; they do not kill me yet.'"

"Punna, if they try to kill you, how would you feel?"

"Venerable Sir, I will feel thus, 'the people of Sunaparanta are very nice to me, because once there were disciples of Lord Buddha who, being disgusted with the body and with life, were looking for a lethal weapon to kill themselves but I have got the lethal weapon without having to look for it. Oh Lord Buddha, this is how I would feel about them.'"

"Sadhu! Sadhu! Punna, being endowed with such complete forbearance, you will be able to live in the Sunaparanta countryside. Punna, you may go, when you wish."

Conquer the angry one by not getting angry (Mettā); conquer the wicked by goodness; conquer the stingy by generosity, and the liar by speaking the truth.

It is indeed not easy to attain enlightenment even as a Noble Disciple i.e. an arahant, because we are so heedless in doing good deeds, so egoistic and selfish, and we have lots of conceit (*māna*). *Māna* is one of the ten fetters binding us to the existence and also one of the ten defilements. *Māna* has full power to destroy our good attitude and keep us away from the entrance to Arahantship. Though we do not know the right path, especially the right teachings, we may think that we know everything, but in actual fact, we do not know very much. It is very dangerous to overestimate one's abilities.

The fool who knows that he is a fool can, for that reason, be a wise man. but the fool who thinks that he is wise is, indeed, called a fool.

- Dhammapada verse 63

We also have strong attachment (*lobha*) and desire (*chanda*) to enjoy worldly sensual pleasures (*kāma sukha*). If we cannot reduce our defilements through *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*, we will be far away from Nibbāna. Sometimes we are not satisfied with others. As a result, we hate them. Sometimes we are brave enough to commit wrong doings because of delusion (*moha*) or ignorance (*avijjā*). That is why *samisāric* sufferings are so long for us. We will have to go round and round endlessly unless we attain enlightenment. So, we should practise meditation harder until we realise the ultimate truth.

Better than a hundred years in the life of a person who does not realise the arising and passing away of the five aggregates, is a day in the life of one who realises the arising and passing away of the five aggregates.

- Dhammapada verse 113

To attain enlightenment, we must have strong determination (*adhitthāna*) and a well-directed mind (*panihita*) towards Nibbāna. Otherwise we will easily lose our determination when we encounter

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hindrances (*nīvaranas*), defilements (*kilesās*) and some obstacles (*palibodhas*) during our intensive practice.

Blind is this world. Few are those who clearly see (with Insight). Just as only a few birds escape from the net, so, also, a few go to the Blissful State (Nibbāna).

- Dhammapada verse 174

FIVE HINDRANCES (*NĪVARANAS*)

- 1 *Kāmachanda* - sensual desire (sensual pleasure)
- 2 *Byāpāda* - ill will
- 3 *Thina-middha* - sloth and torpor (laziness & sleepiness)
- 4 *Uddhacca-kukkucca* - restlessness and worry
- 5 *Vicikicchā* - sceptical doubt

These five are powerful obstacles to the mind and blind our mental vision. In the presence of them we cannot reach access-concentration (*upacāra samādhi*) and full concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) or momentary-concentration (*khanika-samādhi*). And we are unable to clearly discern the truth.

*Pleasures flow everywhere.
You are floating upon them with craving.
Thus, you are carried from life to life.*

- Dhammapada verse 341

TEN DEFILEMENTS (*KILESAS*)

- 1 *Lobha* - Greed (attachment)
- 2 *Dosa* - Hate
- 3 *Moha* - Delusion
- 4 *Māna* - Conceit

- 5 *Ditthi* - Wrong view
- 6 *Vicikiccha* - Sceptical doubt
- 7 *Thina* - Mental torpor
- 8 *Uddhacca* - Restlessness
- 9 *Ahirika* - Shamelessness to do evil deeds
- 10 *Anotappa* - Fearlessness to do evil deeds

These ten are called 'defilements' because they defile the mental factors associated with them.

*Free yourself from attachment and hatred.
You are like the yellow leaf,
The messengers of death are near you,
You are about to travel a long journey,
Yet, you have no provisions (for the journey).*

- Dhammapada verse 235

TEN OBSTACLES (*PALIBODHAS*)

- 1 *Āvāsa* - A crowded monastery
- 2 *Kula* - Association with families
- 3 *Lābha* - Gain or gifts
- 4 *Gana* - Class or pupils
- 5 *Kamma* - Repairs in the monastery
- 6 *Addhāna* - Travelling
- 7 *Ñāti* - Relatives
- 8 *Ābādha* - Sickness
- 9 *Gantha* - Study
- 10 *Iddhi* - Magical power or supernormal power

- Visuddhi Magga

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These ten can obstruct the monk in the strict intensive practice of a subject of meditation. That is why these are named obstacles (*palibodhas*). Some factors are relevant to yogis also. To understand more about these obstacles, we need to illustrate a story here. In the *Visuddhi Magga*, there is a story of a young *bhikkhu* (monk) who overcame the attachment to family and relatives. Even mother and father are not an impediment for him. He was an admirable *bhikkhu* indeed.

Rarely find such a *bhikkhu*

Once there lived a young *bhikkhu* (monk) whose uncle was the chief monk of Korandaka Monastery. The young *bhikkhu* went to Rohana for studies. His mother, a lay devotee, was the chief monk's sister and she was always asking the chief monk how her son was getting on. Hence, one day the elder (the chief monk) set out for Rohana to fetch him back. The young *bhikkhu* thought too, "I have lived here for a long time. Now I might go and visit my Preceptor (*Upajjhāya*) and find out how the lay devotee is." And then he left Rohana.

The two met on the bank of Gangā River. He did the duties to the Elder at the foot of a tree.

"Where are you going?" asked the Elder.

The young *bhikkhu* told the Elder his purpose. The elder said: "You have done well. Your mother is always asking me about you. That was why I came. You may go, but I shall stay here for the rains (*vassa*)".

And the Elder dismissed him.

The young *bhikkhu* arrived at the monastery on the actual day for taking residence for the Rains known as Rain Retreat. At that time, his father had undertaken all responsibilities for the monastery.

His father came on the following day and asked the *bhikkhus*: "To whom was our lodging allotted, Venerable Sir?"

When he heard that it had fallen to a young visitor, he went to the young bhikkhu. After paying homage to him, he said: "Venerable Sir, there is an obligation for him who has taken up residence for the Rains in our monastery."

"What is it, *Upāsaka* (lay follower)?"

"It is to take almsfood only in our house for the three months, and to let us know the time of departure after the *pavāranā* (the invitation to one another between the Saṅgha) ceremony".

The young bhikkhu consented in silence. The *Upāsaka* went home and told his wife: "There is a visiting monk who has taken up residence for the Rains in our monastery. We will carefully look after him."

The wife agreed. She prepared good food of various kinds for him. Though the young monk went to his mother's home daily at the time of the meal, no one recognised him. He had eaten almsfood for three months in his mother's house. When he had completed the residence for the Rains, he announced his departure. So his parents said to him, "Venerable Sir, let it be tomorrow."

On the following day, when they had fed him in their house and filled his oil tube, and given him a lump of sugar and a nine-cubit length of cloth, they said: "Now you may leave, Venerable Sir."

He gave his blessing and set out for Rohana.

His preceptor (the uncle) too had completed the *pavāranā* ceremony and was on his way back. They met at the same place as before. He did again the duties to the Elder at the foot of a tree. The Elder asked him: "How was it, my dear, did you see your mother?"

He replied: "Yes, Venerable Sir."

And he told him all that had happened. He then anointed the Elder's feet with the oil, made a drink with the sugar for the Elder and presented him with the length of cloth. Then he paid homage to the Elder and departed.

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The Elder arrived back at the monastery. Next day he went into the village of Korandaka. The lay devotee, his sister, had always kept looking down the road, thinking: "My brother is now coming with my son."

However, when she saw him alone, she thought: "My son must be dead; that is why my brother is alone." And she fell at the Elder's feet, lamenting and weeping. The Elder comforted her and told her all that had happened. And then he took the length of cloth out of his bag and showed it to her.

She was appeased. She prostrated herself in the direction taken by her son, and she said: "Oh, admirable son! You are really a noble one. You ate in your mother's house for three months, and yet you never said 'I am your son, you are my mother'."

"Oh, Noble son! I heartily pay homage to you."

Give up Evil.

Cultivate Good

Seek happiness in solitude,

The non-attached are peaceful.

- Dhammapada verse 87-88

In conclusion, the Buddha's teachings consist of three baskets (Tipitaka) that contain forty volumes. The Buddha preaches the Dhamma in various ways to understand how to attain the happiness of the Dhamma and how to eradicate sufferings of samsāra. Though the teachings are broad, seep and delicate, the way of the teachings are simple and easy to understand. The following verse is a summary of all Buddhas' teaching.

<i>Sabba-pāpassa akaranam</i>	Avoid evil,
<i>Kusalassa upasampadā</i>	do good deeds.
<i>Sacitta pariyodapanam</i>	Purify the mind.
<i>Etam Buddhāna-sāsanam</i>	These are the teachings of all Buddhas.

The Buddhas' teaching are the teachings that bring happiness and peace into all beings. By this truth, may all beings be well, happy and peaceful.



Oh Bhikkhus, for if you recall the virtue of the Buddha, or of the Dhamma, or the Saṅgha to the mind, your fear, panic and creeping of the flesh will be overcome.

- Dhajjagga Sutta

appendix

(FOR RECITATION)

ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS

*Accayo mam bhante accagamā yathābālam yathāmūḷham yathā akusalam.
Tassa me bhante ācariyo accayam accayato patiggaṇhātu āyatim samvarāga.*

I was overwhelmed by misdeed, being foolish, bewildered and unwise.
I request you, oh teacher, to accept this admission of my guilt so that I
can restrain myself in the future.

*Kāyena vācā cittena
Pamādena mayā katam
Accayam khama me bhante
Bhūri-pañña tathāgata*

If by deeds, speech or thought heedlessly
I have done anything wrong,
Forgive me Oh Master!
Oh teacher, Most Wise!

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THE REFUGES AND PRECEPTS

Asking for the Five Precepts

*Aham bhante tisaranena saha, pañca sīlam dhammam yācāmi,
anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me bhante.*

*Dutiyampi aham bhante tisaranena saha, pañca sīlam dhammam yācāmi,
anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me bhante.*

*Tatiyampi aham bhante tisaranena saha, pañca sīlam dhammam yācāmi,
anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me bhante.*

Venerable Sir, I ask for the five precepts, together with the three
refuges. Please have compassion on me and grant me the precepts.

For the second time, Venerable Sir, I ask for the five precepts, together
with the three refuges. Please have compassion on me and grant me
the precepts.

For the third time, Venerable Sir, I ask for the five precepts, together
with the three refuges. Please have compassion on me and grant me
the precepts.

Monk: *Yamaham vadāmi. Tam vadetha.*
(Repeat after me)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*
(Yes, Venerable Sir)

Vandana (Homage)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato Sammāsambuddhassa.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato Sammāsambuddhassa.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato Sammāsambuddhassa.

Homage to Him, the Exalted One, the Worthy One,
the Fully Enlightened One.

Tisarana (Three Refuges)

Buddham saranam gacchāmi.

Dhammam saranam gacchāmi.

Sangham saranam gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi Buddham saranam gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi Dhammam saranam gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi Sangham saranam gacchāmi.

Tatīyampi Buddham saranam gacchāmi.

Tatīyampi Dhammam saranam gacchāmi.

Tatīyampi Sangham saranam gacchāmi.

I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.

I go to the Dhamma as my Refuge.

I go to the Saṅgha as my Refuge.

For the second time, I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.

For the second time, I go to the Dhamma as my Refuge.

For the second time, I go to the Saṅgha as my Refuge.

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For the third time, I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.
For the third time, I go to the Dhamma as my Refuge.
For the third time, I go to the Saṅgha as my Refuge.

Monk: *Saranagamanam paripunnam.*
(Taking refuges is complete)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*
(Yes, Venerable Sir)

Pañca Sīla (Five Precepts)

1. *Pānātipātā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
2. *Adinnādānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
3. *Kamesu micchācārā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
4. *Musāvādā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
5. *Surā-meraya-majja-pamādatthānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

1. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from killing any living beings.
2. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking what is not given.
3. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from sexual misconduct.
4. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from false speech.
5. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from drinks and drugs
which befuddle the mind and reduce mindfulness.

Idam me sīlam magga-phala-ñāṇassa paccayo hotu.

May this sīla of mine be condition for attainment of
path and fruition knowledge.

Monk: *Appamādena sampādetha.*

(Accomplish the training with mindfulness.)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*

(Yes, Venerable Sir.)

Asking for the Eight Precepts

*Aham bhante tisarāṇena saha, aṭṭhanga-sampannāgatam uposathasilam
dhammam yācāmi, anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me bhante.*

*Dutiyampi aham bhante tisanena saha, aṭṭhanga-sampannāgatam
uposathasilam dhammam yācāmi, anuggaham katvā sīlam detha me
bhante.*

*Tatīyampi aham bhante tisanena saha, aṭṭhanga-sampannāgatam
uposathasilam dhammam yācāmi, annugaham katvā sīlam detha me
bhante.*

Venerable Sir, I ask for the eight precepts, together with the three
refuges. Please have compassion on me and grant me the precepts.

Monk: *Yamaham vadāmi. Tam vadetha.*

(Repeat after me.)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*

(Yes, Venerable Sir.)

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Vandana (Homage)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. (3 x)

Homage to Him, the Exalted One, the fully Enlightened One.

Tisarana (Three Refuges)

Buddham saranam gacchāmi.

Dhammam saranam gacchāmi.

Sangham saranam gacchāmi. (3 x)

I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.

I go to the Dhamma as my Refuge.

I go to the Sangha as my Refuge. (3 x)

Monk: *Saranagamanam paripunnam.*

(Taking Refuge is complete.)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*

(Yes, Venerable Sir.)

Atthanga Sīla (Eight Precepts)

1. *Pānātipātā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
2. *Adinnādānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
3. *Abrahmacariyā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
4. *Musāvādā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
5. *Surā-meraya-majja-pamādatṭhānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
6. *Vikāla-bhojanā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*

7. *Nacca gīta vādita visukadassana mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa mandana vibūsanatṭhānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
 8. *Uccāsāyana mahāsāyanā veramaṇi sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.*
1. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from killing any beings.
 2. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking what is not given.
 3. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from incelibacy.
 4. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from false speech.
 5. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from drinks and drugs which fuddle the mind and reduce mindfulness.
 6. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking food at improper times (after midday).
 7. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from dancing, singing, music, shows; from the use of garlands, perfumes, cosmetics, adornments, and ornaments.
 8. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from using high and luxurious seats (or) beds.

Idam me sīlam magga-phala-ñāṇassa paccayo hotu.

May this sīla of mine be condition for attainment of path and fruition knowledge.

Monk: *Appamādena sampādeṭha.*
(Accomplish the training with mindfulness.)

Reply: *Āma bhante.*
(Yes, Venerable Sir.)

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BUDDHĀNUSSATI BHĀVANĀ (Recollection of the Buddha)

*Iti pi so Bhagavā, araham, sammāsambuddho, vijjācarana-sampanno, sugato,
lokavidū, anuttaro purisa dhammasārathi, satthā devamanussānam,
buddho, bhagavā.*

Such indeed is that Blessed One; Worthy, the Supremely Enlightened One, endowed with knowledge and virtue, well-gone, knower of worlds, an incomparable charioteer for the training of persons, teacher of gods and men, Enlightened and Blessed One.

DHAMMĀNUSSATI BHĀVANĀ (Recollection of the Dhamma)

*Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo, sandiṭṭhiko, akāliko, ehipassiko, opanayiko,
paccattam veditabbo viññūhi.*

Well-expounded is the teaching by the Buddha, to be self-realised, with immediate fruit, inviting investigation, leading onwards, to be realised by the wise each for himself.

SANGHĀNUSSATI BHĀVANĀ (Recollection of the Sangha)

*Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Ujupaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Ñāyapaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Sāmīcipaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho;
Yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭhapurisapuggalā,
esa bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho, āhuneyyo, pāhuneyyo, dakkhineyo,
añjalikaraṇīyo, anuttaram puññakkhettaṃ lokassa.*

Of good conduct is the order of the Buddha's disciples, of upright conduct is the order of the Buddha's disciples, of wise conduct is the order of the Buddha's disciples, of dutiful conduct is the order of the Buddha's disciples – namely, the four pairs of persons, the eight kinds of individuals, worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of reverential salutation, an incomparable field of merits in the world.

PATTHANA (Conditional Relations)

Enumeration of the conditions:

- 1 Root condition - *Hetu paccayo*
- 2 Object condition - *Ārammana paccayo*
- 3 Predominance condition - *Adhipati paccayo*
- 4 Proximity condition - *Anantara paccayo*
- 5 Contiguity condition - *Samanantara paccayo*
- 6 Connascence condition - *Sahajāta paccayo*
- 7 Mutuality condition - *Aññamañña paccayo*
- 8 Dependence condition - *Nissaya paccayo*
- 9 Strong-dependence condition - *Upanissaya paccayo*
- 10 Prenascence condition - *Purejāta paccayo*
- 11 Postnascence condition - *Pacchājāta paccayo*
- 12 Repetition condition - *Āsevana paccayo*
- 13 Kamma condition - *Kamma paccayo*
- 14 Resultant condition - *Vipāka paccayo*
- 15 Nutriment condition - *Āhāra paccayo*
- 16 Faculty condition - *Indriya paccayo*
- 17 Jhana condition - *Jhāna paccayo*
- 18 Path condition - *Magga paccayo*

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- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 19 Association condition | - | <i>Sampayutta paccayo</i> |
| 20 Dissociation condition | - | <i>Vippayutta paccayo</i> |
| 21 Presence condition | - | <i>Atthi paccayo</i> |
| 22 Absence condition | - | <i>Natthi paccayo</i> |
| 23 Disappearance condition | - | <i>Vigata paccayo</i> |
| 24 Non-disappearance condition | - | <i>Avigata paccayoti</i> |

SAMBUDDHE GĀTHĀ

(Power of all the Buddhas)

*Sambuddhe atthavīsañca
Dvādasāñca sahasake
Pancasata sahasāni*

*Namāmi sirasamaham
Appakā vālukā gangā
Anantā nibbutā jinā*

*Tesam dhammañca saṅgañca
Adarena namāmaham
Namakkārā-nubhāvena
Hitvā sabbe upaddave
Aneka antrāyāpi
Vinassantu asesato*

Twenty eight Buddhas,
And twelve thousand (Buddhas)
And five hundred thousand
(Buddhas)
With my head, I pay homage to.
Sands in the Ganga are but little
All the Buddhas, who entered into
Nibbāna, were countless
Their teachings and Saṅghas,
respectfully pay homage to.
By the power of paying homage
May I be free from misfortunes,
May many other dangers
totally disappear.

MAṄĀLA SUTTA

- | | |
|---|---|
| <i>Evam me sutam</i> | Thus I have heard: |
| <i>Ekam samayam</i> | On one occasion |
| <i>Bhagavā</i> | the Lord Buddha |
| <i>Sāvattthiyam viharati Jetavane</i> | was dwelling near Savatthi in Jeta's
Grove |
| <i>Anāthapindikassa ārāme</i> | Anathapindika's monastery |
|
 | |
| <i>Atha kho Aññatarā devatā</i> | When (then) a certain deity |
| <i>Abhikkantāya rittiyā</i> | The night was far spent |
| <i>Abhikkantavannā</i> | (whose) surpassing splendour |
| <i>Kevalakappam jetavanam Obhāsetvā</i> | illuminated the entire Jeta Grove |
| <i>Yena Bhagavā</i> | to the Buddha |
| <i>Tenupasaṅkami</i> | came |
|
 | |
| <i>Upasaṅkamitvā</i> | Having approached |
| <i>Bhagavantam abhivādetvā</i> | respectfully saluted (and) |
| <i>Ekamantam aṭṭhāsi</i> | stood at one side |
| <i>Ekamantam ʻhitā kho sā devatā</i> | standing thus, the deva |
| <i>Bhagavantam gāthāya ajjhabhāsi</i> | to the Buddha addressed in verses: |
|
 | |
| 1 <i>Bahū devā manussā ca</i> | Many deities and humans, |
| <i>Maṅgalāni acintayum</i> | pondered on blessings |
| <i>Ākaṅkhamānā sotthānam</i> | wishing for happiness |
| <i>Brūhi maṅgala'muttamam</i> | tell me the supreme blessing. |
|
 | |
| 2 <i>Asevanā ca bālānam</i> | Not to associate with fools, |
| <i>Paṇḍitānaṅca sevanā</i> | to associate with the wise |
| <i>Pūjā ca pūjanīyyānam</i> | (and) honour those who are worthy |

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- | | |
|--|--|
| | of honour |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing. |
| 3 <i>Paṭirūpadesavāso ca
Pubbe ca katapuññatā</i> | To reside in a suitable locality,
to have done meritorious deeds in
the past |
| <i>Attasammā paṇidhi</i> | (and) to guide oneself on the right
course |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing. |
| 4 <i>Bāhusaccaṅca sippaṅca
Vinayo ca susikkhito
Subhāsītā ca yā vācā</i> | Vast-learning, perfect handicraft,
a well trained discipline
(and) well-spoken speech |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing. |
| 5 <i>Mātāpitu Upatṭhānam
Puttadārassa saṅgaho
Anākulā ca kammantā</i> | The support of father and mother,
the cherishing of wife and children
(and) peaceful occupations |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing. |
| 6 <i>Dānaṅca Dhammacariyā ca
Nātakānaṅca saṅgaho
Anavajjāni kammāni</i> | Giving and righteous conduct,
the helping of relatives
and blameless actions |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing. |
| 7 <i>Āratī vīnatī pāpā
Majjapānā ca saññāmo
Appamādo ca Dhammesu</i> | To cease and abstain from evil,
avoiding intoxicating drinks
and heedfulness in good deeds |
| <i>Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i> | This is the supreme blessing |

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>8 <i>Gāravo ca nivāto ca
Santutṭhī ca kataññutā
Kālena Dhammassavanam

Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i></p> | <p>Reverence, humility,
contentment, gratitude
and timely listening to the
Dhamma
This is the supreme blessing</p> |
| <p>9 <i>Khantī ca sovaccasatā
Samañānañca dassanam
Kālena Dhammasākacchā

Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i></p> | <p>Patience, obedience,
seeing Samanas (bhikkhus)
and timely discussion on the
Dhamma
This is the supreme blessing</p> |
| <p>10 <i>Tapo ca brahmacariyañca
Ariyasaccāna dassanam
Nibbānasachi kiriyā ca
Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i></p> | <p>Self-control, holy life
perception of the Noble Truths
and the realisation of Nibbāna
This is the supreme blessing.</p> |
| <p>11 <i>Phuṭṭhassa lokadhammehi
Cittam yassa na kampati
Asokam virajam khemam
Etam maṅgala'muttamam</i></p> | <p>Touched by worldly conditions
the mind is not shaken
sorrowless, stainless and safe
This is the supreme blessing</p> |
| <p>12 <i>Etādisāni katvāna
Sabbattha maparājitā
Sabbattha sotthim gacchanti
Tam tesam maṅgala'muttamam</i></p> | <p>To them, fulfilling these,
everywhere invincible
in every way moving happily
These are the supreme blessings.</p> |

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METTĀ SUTTA

(Discourse on Loving-kindness)

- 1 *Karaṇīya' matthakusalena*
Yantaṃ santaṃ paḍaṃ
abhisamecca
Sakko ujū ca suhujū ca

Sūvaco cassa mudu anatimānī

He who is skilled in doing good and who wishes to attain to the state of peace should act thus (he should be) capable, upright, perfectly upright obedient, gentle and humble
- 2 *Santussako ca subhara ca*
Appakicco ca sallahukavutti
Santindriyo ca nipako ca
Appagabbho kulesva
'nanugiddho

contented, easily looked after, few duties, simple in livelihood, controlled in faculties, discreet, not rude and not attached to families,
- 3 *Na ca khudda' mācare kiñci*

Yena viññū pare upavadeyyum
Sukhino vā khemino hontu
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā

He should not commit even the slightest wrong thing which other wise men might deplore
May all beings be happy and safe,
May all beings be happy.
- 4 *Ye keci pānabhūta'tthi*
Tasā vā thāvarā va' navasesā
Dīghā vā ye vā mahantā
Majjhimā rassakā anukathulā

Whatever living beings there are; weak or strong long or big or medium sized, short, small or bulky
- 5 *Ditthā vā ye va aditthā*
Ye va dūre vasanti avidūre
Bhūtā va sambhavesī va

Those seen or unseen those dwelling far or near those who are born (Arahant) and those who are to be born

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- Sabba sattā bhavantu sukhittatā*
may all beings be happy.
- 6 *Na paro paramāṃ nikubbetha*
Nātimaññetha katthaci na kiñci
Byārosanā paṭighasañña
Naññamaññassa dukkha'
miccheyya
Let no one deceive another
nor despise anyone or anywhere
in anger or illwill
let them not wish each
other harm
- 7 *Mātā yathā niyaṃ putta*
Māyusā ekaputta' manurakkhe
Evampi sabbabhūtesu
Mānasam bhāvaye aparimānam
Just as a mother might guard her son
with her life, her only child
Just so towards all beings
Let him cultivate boundless mind
- 8 *Mettañca sabbalokasmi*
Mānasam bhāvaye aparimānam
Uddham adho ca tiriyañca
Asambhādham avera'
masapattam
Let loving thoughts for all the world
be maintained boundlessly
above, below and all around
without any obstruction, without
hate or enmity
- 9 *Tiṭṭham caram nisinno va*
Sayāno yāvata'ssa vitamiddho
Etam satim adhiṭṭheyya
Brahma' metam vihara' midhamāhu
Whether he stands, walks, sits
or lies down as long as he is awake
he should develop this mindfulness
this is called divine abiding here
- 10 *Diṭṭhiñca anupaggamma*
Silavā dassanena sampanno
Kāmesu vineya gedham
Na hi jātu'ggabbhaseyya punareti
Not falling into wrong views
virtuous, endowed with insight
and having removed attachment for
sensual pleasures
he will surely not be born again

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SUMANGALA GĀTHĀ

(Verses on Excellent Blessings)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | <i>Bhavatu sabbamangalamī</i>
<i>Rakkhantu sabbadevatā</i>
<i>Sabbabuddhānubhāvena</i>
<i>Sadā sukhī bhavantu te</i> | May all blessings be yours
May all devas protect you
By the power of all Buddhas
May you ever be happy |
| 2 | <i>Bhavatu sabbamangalamī</i>
<i>Rakkhantu sabbadevatā</i>
<i>Sabbaddhāmmānubhāvena</i>
<i>Sadā sukhī bhavantu te</i> | May all blessings be yours
May all devas protect you
By the power of all Dhamma
May you ever be happy |
| 3 | <i>Bhavatu sabbamangalamī</i>
<i>Rakkhantu sabbadevatā</i>
<i>Sabbasāṅghānubhāvena</i>
<i>Sadā sukhī bhavantu te</i> | May all blessings be yours
May all devas protect you
By the power of all Sanghas
May you ever be happy |

CATURĀRAKKHA BHĀVANĀ

(The Four Guardian Meditations)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Buddhānussati Bhāvanā</i> | The Recollection of the Buddha |
| 2 | <i>Mettā Bhāvanā</i> | The Development of
Loving-kindness |
| 3 | <i>Asubha Bhāvanā</i> | The Reflection of Impurity |
| 4 | <i>Maranānusati Bhāvanā</i> | The Reflection of Death |

1. *Buddhānussati Bhāvanā*

The Recollection of the Buddha's virtues is done by Buddhists with faith.

Those who have blind faith may do this meditation but they will not

be as successful as those who really know the virtues of the Buddha.

Verbal Recitation:

To begin, verbal recitation is helpful for beginners to get familiarised with the objects.

Thus: "*Araham, Sammāsambuddho*", etc. If one does not know the meaning of the words, the practice will not be meaningful. So it will not be so successful. Of course, you may get certain benefits. But it will be very little.

Mental Recitation:

When the mind becomes peaceful and more concentrated, it is not necessary to recite verbally any longer. Do it mentally. At the stage when one has developed mindfulness and concentration, one will be joyful and peaceful in the mind. Then one may continue to practise further to develop the mind.

Mettā Bhāvanā

Preparatory Loving-kindness Meditation

<i>Aham avero homi</i>	May I be free from enmity (dangers)
<i>Abyāpajjo homi</i>	be free from mental suffering
<i>Anigho homi</i>	be free from physical suffering
<i>Sukhī attānam purihārami</i>	take care of myself happily. (be well and happy)
<i>Mama mātāpitu ācariyā ca</i>	(May) my parents, teachers,
<i>Ñātimittā ca</i>	relatives,
<i>Sabrahmacārīno ca</i>	(and) Dhamma friends,

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Averā hontu be free from enmity
Abyāpajjā hontu be free from mental suffering
Anīghā hontu be free from physical suffering
Sukhī attānam purihanantu take care of themselves happily.

Imasmim ārāme sabbe yogino (May) all the yogis in this
compound
Averā hontu be free from enmity
Abyāpajjā hontu be free from mental suffering
Anīghā hontu be free from physical suffering
Sukhī attānam purihanantu take care of themselves happily.

Imasmim ārāme sabbe bhikkhu (May) all the monks,
sāmanerā ca novice monks,
upāsaka upasikāyo ca laymen and laywomen in this
compound,
Averā hontu be free from enmity
Abyāpajjā hontu be free from mental suffering
Anīghā hontu be free from physical suffering
Sukhī attānam purihanantu take care of themselves happily.

Amhākamī catupaccaya dāyākā (May) our donors of four requisites,
Averā hontu be free from enmity
Abyāpajjā hontu be free from mental suffering
Anīghā hontu be free from physical suffering
Sukhī attānam purihanantu take care of themselves happily.

Amhākamī ārakkha devatā (May) our guardian deities

<i>Imasmim vihāre</i>	in this temple
<i>Imasmim āvāse</i>	in this dwelling
<i>Imasmim ārāme</i>	in this compound
<i>Ārakkha devatā</i>	the guardian deities
<i>Averā hontu</i>	be free from enmity
<i>Abyāpajjā hontu</i>	be free from mental suffering
<i>Anīghā hontu</i>	be free from physical suffering
<i>Sukhī attānam purihanantu</i>	take care of themselves happily.

Anoddhisa Mettā (5) (indefinite or general *Mettā*)

1 <i>Sabbe sattā</i>	May all beings
2 <i>Sabbe pāṇā</i>	all living beings (that can breathe)
3 <i>Sabbe bhūtā</i>	all creatures
4 <i>Sabbe puggalā</i>	all individuals
5 <i>Sabbe attabhāva-pariyāpannā</i>	all personalities

Oddhisa Mettā (7) (definite *Mettā*)

6 <i>Sabbā itthiyo</i>	all females
7 <i>Sabbe purisā</i>	all males
8 <i>Sabbe ariyā</i>	all noble ones
9 <i>Sabbe anariyā</i>	all not nobles (worldlings)
10 <i>Sabbe devā</i>	all deities
11 <i>Sabbe manussā</i>	all humans
12 <i>Sabbe vinipātikā</i>	all those who are in unhappy states
a. <i>Averā hontu</i>	be free from enmity (dangers)
b. <i>Abyāpajjā hontu</i>	be free from mental suffering
c. <i>Anīghā hontu</i>	be free from physical suffering
d. <i>Sukhī attānam parihārantu</i>	take care of themselves happily (be well and happy)

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- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| i. <i>Puratthimāya disāya</i> | in the eastern direction |
| ii. <i>Pacchimāya disāya</i> | in the western direction |
| iii. <i>Uttarāya disāya</i> | in the northern direction |
| iv. <i>Dakkhināya disāya</i> | in the southern direction |
| v. <i>Puratthimāya anudisāya</i> | in the south-east direction |
| vi. <i>Pacchimāya anudisāya</i> | in the north-west direction |
| vii. <i>Uttarāya anudisāya</i> | in the north-east direction |
| viii. <i>Dakkhināya anudisāya</i> | in the south-west direction |
| ix. <i>Hetthimāya disāya</i> | in the downward direction (below) |
| x. <i>Uparimāya disāya</i> | in the upward direction (above) |

How to develop (528) kinds of Mettā

1. May all beings
(*Sabbe sattā*)
 - a. be free from enmity (dangers)
(*Averā hontu*)
 - b. be free from mental suffering
(*Abyāpajjā hontu*)
 - c. be free from physical suffering
(*Anīghā hontu*)
 - d. take care of themselves happily
(*Sukhī attānam purihanantu*)

2. May all living beings
(*Sabbe pāṇā*)
 - a. be free from enmity
(*Averā hontu*)
 - b. be free from mental suffering
(*Abyāpajjā hontu*)
 - c. be free from physical suffering
(*Anīghā hontu*)
 - d. take care of themselves happily
(*Sukhī attānam purihanantu*)

continued with 3, 4, 5,

6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12

so total: 12 x 4 = 48

a. be free from enmity

continued with b, c, d, etc.

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- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>i. In the eastern direction
(<i>Puratthimāya Disāya</i>)</p> | <p>1. May all beings
(<i>Sabbe sattā</i>)</p> | <p>a. be free from enmity (dangers)
b. be free from mental suffering
c. be free from physical suffering
d. take care of themselves
happily (be well and happy)</p> |
| <p>ii. In the western direction
(<i>Pacchimāya disāya</i>)</p> | <p>1. May all beings
(<i>Sabbe sattā</i>)</p> | <p>a. be free from enmity
b. be free from mental suffering
c. be free from physical suffering
d. take care of themselves
happily (be well and happy)</p> |

continued with
iii, iv, v, vi, vii
vii, viii, ix, and x.

a. be free from enmity
continued with b, c, d, etc.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>i. In the eastern direction
(<i>Puratthimāya Disāya</i>)</p> | <p>2. May all living beings
(<i>Sabbe pāṇā</i>)</p> | <p>a. be free from enmity
b. be free from mental suffering
c. be free from physical suffering
d. take care of themselves
happily (be well and happy)</p> |
|---|---|--|

continued with
ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii,
viii, ix, and x.

a. be free from enmity
b. be free from mental suffering
c. be free from physical suffering
d. take care of themselves
happily (be well and happy)

total: 10 x 48 = 480 *continued with 2, 3, 4,*
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. *continued with a, b, c, d, etc.*

So combining both: 48 + 480 is 528 kinds of *Mettā*

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3. *Asubha Bhāvanā*

To practise the reflection of loathsomeness, we should learn the thirty-two parts of the body (*koṭṭhāsa*).

The thirty-two parts of the body are:

1	<i>Kesā</i>	head hair
2	<i>Lomā</i>	body hair
3	<i>Nakhā</i>	nail
4	<i>Dantā</i>	teeth
5	<i>Taco</i>	skin (<i>Taca pancaka kammattāna</i>)
6	<i>Mamsam</i>	flesh
7	<i>Nahāru</i>	sinews
8	<i>Aṭṭhi</i>	bone
9	<i>Aṭṭhimiñjam</i>	bone-marrow
10	<i>Vakkam</i>	kidney
11	<i>Hadayam</i>	heart
12	<i>Yakanam</i>	liver
13	<i>Kilomakam</i>	membrane
14	<i>Pihakam</i>	spleen
15	<i>Papphāsam</i>	lungs
16	<i>Antam</i>	large intestine
17	<i>Antaguṇam</i>	small intestine
18	<i>Udaniyam</i>	pre-digested food
19	<i>Karīsam</i>	faeces
20	<i>Matthalungam</i>	brain
21	<i>Pittam</i>	bile
22	<i>Semham</i>	mucus
23	<i>Pubbo</i>	pus
24	<i>Lohitam</i>	blood
25	<i>Sedo</i>	sweat

26 <i>Medo</i>	fat
27 <i>Assu</i>	tears
28 <i>Vasā</i>	grease
29 <i>Khelo</i>	saliva
30 <i>Singhānikā</i>	snot
31 <i>Lasikā</i>	synovial fluids
32 <i>Muttamī</i>	urine

4. *Maranānussati Bhāvanā*

The reflection of death is a kind of meditation to ponder over the nature of death. There are many ways to reflect on death. I will write just a short verse for your reflection.

Life is uncertain, death is certain
Before long alas, this body will die
Cast upon the ground, bereft of consciousness
Like a useless block of wood.

*Heedfulness is the path to deathlessness, Heedlessness is the path to death.
The heedful do not die, the heedless are like the dead.*

- Dhammapada verse 21

FINAL SALUTATION

*Imāya Dhammānudhammapaṭi pattiyaṃ Buddham Pūjemi
Imāya Dhammānudhammapaṭi pattiyaṃ Dhammam Pūjemi
Imāya Dhammānudhammapaṭi pattiyaṃ Sangham Pūjemi*

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By this practice of the Dhamma, I pay homage to the Lord Buddha.

By this practice of the Dhamma, I pay homage to the Dhamma.

By this practice of the Dhamma, I pay homage to the Sangha.

ASPIRATION

Addhā Imāya Patipadāya jarāmaranāmhā parimuccissāmi

By this practice, may I be free from decay and death.

Idam me puññam āsavakkhayāvaham hotu

By this merit of mine, may I destroy the taints or intoxicants (*āsavas*).

Idam me puññam Nibbānassa paccayo hotu

By this merit of mine, may I attain Nibbāna.

Imam no puññabhāgam sabbasattānam dema

We share our merits with all beings.

Sabbe sattā sukhī hontu

May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

Well-done! Well-done! Well-done!



Sayadaw U Dhammapiya was born in Burma. He became a novice monk (*sāmanera*) at the age of nine and has been a fully ordained monk (*bhikkhu*) of the Theravada Monastic Order since 1975.

In 1979 he received the degree *Sāsanadhaja Dhammacariyā* in Pali scriptures. In 1980 he started practicing *Vipassanā* meditation.

In 1982 he became a permanent resident of Mahasi Center in Rangoon, Myanmar. During his stay at the Mahasi Meditation Center he taught *Vipassanā* meditation to monks, novice monks and nuns and conducted meditation retreats at various towns in Myanmar.

In 1986 he was assigned by Ovadacariya Sayadaw U Panditabhivamsa to reside at the Malaysian Buddhist Meditation Centre in Penang, Malaysia. During his residency in Penang, he accompanied Ovadacariya Sayadaw U Panditabhivamsa on teaching trips to Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, Germany, Australia, Canada and the United States.

In 1992 he became the abbot at Tathagata Meditation Center, San Jose, California. He is now teaching *Vipassanā* meditation at the Center. He also teaches the basic Buddhist Cultural courses to young adults as well as conducts *Vipassanā* retreats in the United States and foreign countries.

*The gift of Dhamma excels all gifts.
The flavour of Dhamma excels all flavours.
The delight of Dhamma excels all delights.
The eradication of craving overcomes all suffering.*

- Dhammapada verse 354

Sabbadānāṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti
The Gift of Dhamma excels all gifts

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DEDICATION OF MERITS

May they rejoice in the merits of this
Dhammadāna and attain the bliss of *Nibbāna*.

May all beings share in the merits gained;
enjoy good health, prosperity and happiness.

Cultivate loving-kindness and wisdom,
culminating in the attainment of *Nibbāna*,
the cessation of all suffering.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

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